

PLACE-BASED EDUCATION & CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES
OF PLACE: TEACHERS CHALLENGING THE
NEOCOLONIZING PROCESSES OF THE NEW ZEALAND
AND CANADIAN SCHOOLING SYSTEMS

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Abstract

This international research set out to exemplify the pedagogical practices of 11 teachers from Christchurch/Ōtautahi, New Zealand (Aotearoa) and Saskatoon, Canada. It explores their resistance to the various colonial and neocolonizing constructs central to contemporary mainstream schooling in both cities (due to forces such as neoliberalism). These acts of resistance were the result of contesting ideologies of time, space, curriculum and assessment. The research, therefore, describes some of the pedagogical practises of these teachers. It also considers their narratives about their usage of place-based education (PBE) approaches and their commitment to the adoption of critical pedagogies of place (CPP) to meet the real needs of their students (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous).

An interpretive paradigm was employed within a qualitative framework to underpin this research. A case study approach was also adopted and informed by a bricolage methodological framework. Primary and secondary data were collected from a number of storage sites (libraries) in both countries and through a questionnaire, interview and observation of each teacher's classroom space. The data was analysed by coding key information while drawing out any recurring themes and points of difference.

The findings reveal that certain aspects of PBE and CPP are accessible to teachers despite their feelings of being confined in terms of their ability to use time, space, curriculum and assessment within their traditional school institutions. Although their abilities to engage with PBE and CPP were limited, those teachers that had more control over time, space, curriculum and assessment were able to dive deeper into PBE and especially CPP.

A key finding of this research was the extent of awareness and engagement that the teachers had in transforming controlled, static, spaces found in the classrooms, communities and natural environments into meaningful places with students. This finding also suggests that teachers with more control over time, space, curriculum and assessment have an easier time in creating this change.

The findings also indicate that these teachers first needed to have the courage to challenge traditional systems of schooling, because teachers can become marginalized by other teachers and administrators when seen to be attempting to transform entrenched institutional (schooling) cultures. Flexibility and trust were two of the other recurring themes that emerged from the data collected. Teachers possessing more flexibility (with regards to time, space, curriculum and assessment design procedures) were most able to enact PBE and CPP. They were also the best-positioned participants to create meaningful professional relationships with their students and local community members. Issues of trust were clearly evident in recurring discussions around the increased amount of trust teachers needed to have with students for the students to be able to engage with space and place. There was also an increased amount of trust that school administrators (principals) needed to have in their teachers who were engaging with PBE and CPP.

The research participants in this study demonstrated that, in different ways, they were striving to resist the ideologies underpinning traditional mainstream schooling, and that they were able to enact change regardless of the challenges they experienced. Their perseverance to ground their teaching in PBE and CPP approaches testifies to their love of education and their acceptance of it as a legitimate process for change and growth.

Keywords: colonization, place-based education, critical pedagogy of place, bricolage, Indigenous, time, space, neo-colonization, neoliberalism, place, curriculum, assessment, Treaty, Māori, First Nations, Métis, Canada, New Zealand.

Glossary

Māori

Māori
iwi
hapū
rōpū
kaupapa
marae
whareniui
hui
Ngāti/Ngāi

whānau
whakapapa
pākehā
maunga
awa
moana
waka
te reo Māori
mihimihi
pepeha
whakataukī
kaumātua
mana

English

Indigenous person/people to Aotearoa/New Zealand
confederation of related tribes
tribe (sub tribe)
group
theme/project/subject
meeting house
traditional communal house
assembly
prefix used to indicate a tribe; descendants of ... (e.g., Ngāi Tahu)
extended family
genealogy, ancestral ties
non-Māori people living in Aotearoa, New Zealand
mountain
river
sea
ancestral canoe
Māori language
Māori introduction
also a Māori introduction
proverbs
tribal leaders
prestige, influence, and status

Place Names

Māori

Aotearoa
Te Wai Pounamu
Te Ika-ā-Māui
Ōtautahi
Te Pataka o Rakaihautu
Koukourarata
Akaroa
Ōnuku
Rapaki
Whareraupo
Rotorua

English

New Zealand
South Island New Zealand
North Island New Zealand
Christchurch
Banks Peninsula
Port Levy
Akaroa
Ōnuku
Rapaki
Lyttleton
Rotorua

Chapter One: Introduction

We must act as catalysts for social change. History, change, and transformation belong to those who care, who remember, who struggle to re-remember, who turn history back against itself, who expose the cracks and contradictions in history itself (Anna Smith, 2004, p. xvii).

Introduction

This research set out to qualitatively exemplify the practices of teachers from two cities in two different countries and their resistance to various aspects of mainstream schooling models. It shares teachers' practise of and stories about using place-based education (PBE) as well as critical pedagogies of place (CPP) with their students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

This chapter sets the stage for this study by introducing the educational climate of the research locations—Christchurch (Ōtautahi), New Zealand (Aotearoa), and Saskatoon, Canada. It also presents the research questions and outlines the implications and limitations of the research. The study focuses on 11 teachers from Christchurch and Saskatoon working in schools and programmes that are challenging the principles and practices of mainstream schooling through application of the tenets of place-based education. This approach, with its associated critical pedagogy of place, seeks to engage with and disrupt current structures of schooling in order to promote social betterment and justice, as well as ecological sustainability.

Historical and political backdrops: Setting the scene for exploring the research problem

Canada and New Zealand share a common British colonial history. They accordingly share similar problems as a result of the importation of British industrial schooling models that have generally poorly served the learning needs of some students, especially those of Indigenous ancestry.¹ In Aotearoa/New Zealand, approximately 50% of Māori students leave school without any qualifications, compared to 21% of non-Māori students (Bishop, cited in Steinberg, 2009 p. 112).² Likewise, in Canada, 53% of Aboriginal (official Canadian government term for Indigenous peoples) people do not have a high school diploma (Anderson, n.d.) as compared to the national average of 19% (Employment and Social Development Canada, n. d.).³ In addition, the demographics of the student body (discussed further in Chapter Two) are rapidly changing in both countries. First Nations (Canada) and Māori (New Zealand) populations are increasing at a faster rate than those of the dominant (majority) populations of European and British descent. Immigration in both countries is also expected to increase markedly in coming years, with the main waves coming from the Pacific Islands and Asia in New Zealand and from Asia in Canada.

¹ For the purposes of this international research project, the term 'Indigenous' is used to describe tribal peoples within a country who are (i) characterized by the distinctive identity, values, and history that distinguishes them from other peoples in the country, (ii) retain some or all of these characteristics of the original pre-colonial inhabitants of that land, and (iii) hold to, despite their legal status, some or all alternative social, economic, cultural and political institutions (Battiste, 2008, p. 192).

² The term Māori, in this research, designates the first inhabitants of Aotearoa (the name Māori gave to New Zealand). Where possible, this study addresses the different iwi (traditional alliance of closely related tribes), and hapū (tribes). There are many distinct iwi and hapū. The complex historical relationship that has informed contemporary constructs of hapū and iwi are well-described by Ballara (1998).

³ In Canada, the term Aboriginal constitutionally recognizes three distinct Indigenous groups: Indians, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Because these distinct groups have treaty-based and constitutional rights in Canada, the capitalization of the both Aboriginal and Indigenous recognizes and honours their national status. 'First Nations' is a term used among most Indian nations to counteract the 'Founding Fathers' concept expressed in the 1960s' nationalism campaign in Canada to develop English and French bilingualism as a national policy. I use the terms Indigenous, Aboriginal, and First Nations to refer to the first peoples of Canada and, with the exception of First Nations, which generally refers to Indians who have 'status' under the Indian Act, are inclusive of Indians as defined in the Canadian constitution, that is, Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples (Battiste, 2008, p. 192).

This demographic shift is playing out in a global society facing some of the greatest environmental and social challenges in its history (Kopnina, 2012; Orr, 2004). David Orr (2004) argued that current mainstream educational methods “emphasize theories rather than values, abstraction rather than consciousness, neat answers over questions, and technical efficiency over conscience ... more of the same kind of education will only compound our problems” (p. 8). His critique remains valid for the schooling system a decade on, neoliberal agendas exert ever more control over *space, time, curriculum, assessment and evaluation* (designated as the domains of interest throughout this thesis). These agendas are intent on reducing education expenditures by amalgamating school boards, centralizing funding, and increasing accountability through centralized curricula, outcomes-based education, and standardized testing (Chan, Fisher, & Rubenson, 2007; Sattler, 2012).

Deeply concerned at what these controlling influences in schools mean for students and society, some teachers within schooling systems that continue to adhere to dated colonial schooling practice (which are also influenced by neoliberal agendas), are challenging these systems. Their challenge is built on their conviction that schooling needs to be more responsive to the diverse needs of their respective students and the communities in which they live. The 11 teachers who feature in this doctoral research are representative of these teachers. All 11 have in common a commitment to using place-based education (described and discussed in detail in Chapter 2) and some are engaging with critical pedagogies of place to challenge the neocolonial/neoliberal schools they teach in.

Place-based education: Teaching as a craft of place

As Manning (2009a) noted , “In the area of place-based education (PBE), theorists, like Orr (1992), Bowers (1993) and Sobel (2006), all suggested, in different ways, that compulsory

schooling has rendered young people disconnected from their neighbourhoods, communities, and local ecologies of place” (p. 56). They and other commentators maintain that educators can use PBE to reconnect learners (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to their local communities and natural environments. Sobel (2006) defined PBE as:

The process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and other subjects across the curriculum. Emphasizing hands-on, real-world learning experiences, this approach to education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties to the community, enhances students’ appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens (p. 7).

Gruenewald (2003) used the principles of critical pedagogy (see Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1988; McLaren, 1998) to develop a form of PBE imbued with a critical pedagogy of place. This form of pedagogy aims to (a) identify, recover, and create material spaces and places that teach us how to live well in our total environments (reinhabitation), and (b) identify and change ways of thinking that lead to injuring and exploiting other people and places (decolonization) (p. 9). Critical pedagogy of place thus extends PBE to incorporate reinhabitation and decolonization as reasons for engaging with place. As central foci of this thesis, PBE and CPP underpin the research questions guiding the study.

Research questions

1. Why and how have schools and school-based programmes incorporating place-based education located in Christchurch, New Zealand, and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada,
 - (a) evolved in their development (historical analysis), and

- (b) implemented the tenets of place-based education and critical pedagogy of place in their work with students?
2. To what extent do the teacher participants in both countries provide resistance, at their respective local community levels, to the neocolonizing processes of their respective schooling systems?
 3. What challenges do the teacher participants in both countries face when attempting to provide resistance at their local community levels to the neocolonizing processes of their respective systems?

Research implications

- This research has the potential to enhance the discourse associated with both PBE and critical pedagogy of place. It also provides practical examples of teachers and students engaging with CPP.
- The practical nature of the stories and examples as constructed by the participants will help other educators and PBE practitioners gather ideas and actions that they can develop for their own use.
- This research also has the potential to demonstrate how teachers can challenge mainstream conceptions of time, space, curriculum and assessment currently found in mainstream schools.

Research design

As already indicated, the research was designed to examine the teaching perceptions and practices of teachers in Christchurch, New Zealand, and teachers in Saskatoon, Canada, who were using PBE in their practice and who were perhaps, as a consequence, challenging the mainstream schooling systems within which they were teaching. During the research, I moved in and out of critical theory, postmodern, and interpretive paradigms. In essence, I was

using different theoretical and disciplinary lenses through which to explore the research questions.

By moving within these paradigms, I was able to see and work with the different binaries (for example, teachers and students) found within education and especially with teachers potentially challenging mainstream schooling notions and practices. My use of qualitative research paradigms made me an intrinsic part of this research, especially during the data analysis stage where the ability to expose positionalities and certain biases came to the fore. I also added my own stories (italicised vignettes found throughout the thesis) to the data collected. My aim here was to exemplify my own educational practices within the purview of the research questions and to delineate any of my own biases likely to influence my collection and interpretations of the data.

I chose a case study framework because it not only facilitated my research work with each individual but also enabled me to compare and contrast stories and practices from cities in two different countries. Case study also allowed for the use of different research methods, including interview, questionnaire and observation.

Care was taken to protect the identities of the participants. The names of participants, their schools and their programmes in this study are fictitious. The only exceptions to this confidentiality provision were my advisors Drs Richard Manning and Nick Draper, who know the identities of the participants. The transcriber of the interviews also had access to this information. He agreed to sign a non-disclosure statement before he began this work.

Organization of the thesis

Chapter Two (literature review) begins with a critical autoethnography outlining my own position in relation to the research. A place-based, demographic and geographic overview of Christchurch and Saskatoon follows. Next is a brief summary of the history of schooling in New Zealand and Saskatchewan. It identifies similarities and discontinuities between both countries and both cities. The social and other problems associated with neocolonialism and neoliberalism (including their impacts on schooling), are addressed. The literature review of place-based education includes the theoretical foundations and Indigenous concepts of this type of education. Critiques of PBE found throughout the literature are also identified. The concepts of decolonization and reinhabitation as presented in Gruenewald's critical pedagogy of place are discussed and critiqued. The chapter ends with a practical, localized (Christchurch and Saskatoon) look at PBE and critical pedagogies of place, including examples from the main universities in both of these cities (University of Canterbury and the University of Saskatchewan).

Chapter Three (methodology) outlines the research design, methodology, and methods used during the data-collection process. The chapter begins with a discussion of the case study utilized, which employed bricolage as the foundation of its methodological framework. The first part of the chapter also describes the applied case study methods, including the questionnaires, interviews and observations of the participants' classroom teaching spaces. The second part outlines the data-analysis procedures that were used, including the domains of interest as well as the coding. The final section presents biographical details about the participants and overviews the programmes and schools they were teaching in.

Chapter Four explores the teachers' perceptions of and practices with respect to PBE. These are made apparent through documentation and analysis of the participants' personal stories. Recurring themes and points of difference are discussed and analysed in each of the four chapters presenting the research findings.

Chapter Five describes the teachers' perceptions of time and space and how they were using these constructs within their praxis. It also identifies the challenges they were experiencing in this regard.

Chapter Six describes the participants' use of their respective country's national, local and provincial curriculums. This content is followed by a look at the assessment techniques the teachers were using in their teaching practices.

Chapter Seven is framed according to the underlying concepts of critical pedagogy of place—decolonization and reinhabitation. It also outlines the participants' understandings of neocolonialism and the challenges they were facing not only within their schools and programmes but also personally. The chapter furthermore discusses culturally responsive teaching within the context of the various treaties signed between the Crown and Indigenous peoples of both countries.

Chapter Eight (conclusion) examines the research findings against the research questions that informed the study. These findings are organized thematically, and their implications for educational stakeholders, particularly practitioners, as well as PBE-related research are identified and discussed. The chapter ends with consideration of future research opportunities brought to light by the findings.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction and overview of chapter

This chapter begins with an autobiographical vignette which helps to provide an examination of the research problem in relation to my own teaching practices. A brief overview of Christchurch and Saskatoon follow – including a look at geographic, demographic and historical schooling trends relevant to this project. It is followed by a section that further contextualizes the research problem by exploring concepts, theories and practices associated with mainstream schooling. Counter narratives to the mainstream schooling systems are considered – through approaches found within place-based education and critical pedagogies of place. The chapter ends with a description of PBE programmes found in Christchurch and Saskatoon.

Critical autoethnography in relation to the research problem

I worked for six years at the Opening Doors Programme (ODP), a small high school programme located in downtown Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. It was a programme for students 14 to 18 years of age that have been out of school for a period of time. The programme offered regular and modified credits from grade nine to eleven. At capacity, there were 25 students as well as two teachers (one male, one female) and a programme facilitator (female). The programme's mandate was to engage students that have been out of school for a period of time and work with them in a small setting in an attempt to transition them back to a mainstream school setting. The majority of the students at ODP self identified as First Nations or Métis decent. Métis are people of mixed ancestry with First Nations and European descent.

*Our students had so many needs as most of them came from impoverished home lives that often included various forms of addiction and abuse. All of our students were disconnected from mainstream schooling in one way or another. Many were also in open custody or had judicial conditions while attending the programme. Because our students had so many needs, as a staff we sought to integrate services with Addictions Services, Social Services, and Health and Justice, whereby creating a central meeting place for workers to meet with their ‘clients’ who were our students. We knew, as educators who were predominantly white, middle class, and university educated, that we could not engage the students in the status quo mainstream teacher led “banking model” of education as Paulo Freire referred to in his seminal book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970).⁴*

We tried many things to engage our students, some that we found worked and some that upon reflection, did not work. The one pedagogy that we used from the beginning was attempting to create effective and sustained relationships with our students. This came from spending time with our students, listening to what they had to say and trying to meet their personal and academic needs in education, without trying to fit them into a prescribed schooling system that had not met their needs in the past. This was not an easy task, and with some students we were not successful on multiple occasions.

During this time I was interested in trying to integrate environmental education into our pedagogical approach at ODP. I first became interested in exploring how environmental education worked with youth when I worked at a wilderness camp in northern Saskatchewan for 5 years. Although un-researched academically, I noticed the positive effects that the

⁴ Freire critiqued traditional schooling systems as banking models of teaching and learning whereby teachers (active participants) transmit knowledge to the empty vessel students (passive objects).

outdoors had on creating relationship amongst the campers but also with the natural environment. However, ODP was not an outdoor school or an environmental education programme. At ODP we tried where possible to use environmental education as a form of learning for our students. Although we were situated in the downtown core of Saskatoon, we started a gardening programme with our students and we used the outdoors as a classroom as much as possible.

In my second year at ODP I decided to enrol in a Masters programme at the University of Saskatchewan, as I wanted to learn about other foundations and philosophies in education that I could apply in my teaching. The classes were beneficial in many ways, but two classes in particular introduced me to place-based education. Place-based education changed my view of environmental education, as I was able to incorporate its tenets and establish Saskatoon's urban centre as a place of teaching and learning. For example, we used the downtown area as a classroom and tried to build a sense of community and relationship with the surrounding businesses and residents. We focussed on projects that were localized and involved social action activities that had real world impacts for the downtown core and the people who lived in the area.

As the majority of our students were First Nations and Métis, we tried as educators to validate some of their cultural needs through addressing Treaty issues (which we were legally mandated to do). The Treaty that encompasses Saskatoon and surrounding area is Treaty 6, which is described in the following section of this chapter (below). For my teaching, I used a prominent Treaty resource from the Office of the Treaty Commission (Treaty Kit K-12). Many of the things that I tried in the beginning were done in order to satisfy the

curriculum more so than the needs of the students. This was until I took another class as part of my studies called “Decolonizing Aboriginal Education”, taught by Dr. Marie Battiste.

This class shook the foundations of what I believed because it made me question not only my personal belief system, but also my teaching practice. Much of the literature led me to analyse issues around conscientization (Freire, 1970), white privilege (McIntosh, 1990) and literature associated with critical race theory (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). I began, and still continue, to decolonize myself and my teaching practices by questioning not only my beliefs but the schooling system and its impact on First Nations and Métis students. Several seminal texts moulded my thinking in these areas (Battiste 2000, 2008; Linda Smith, 1999; Stiffarm, 1998). I started to figure out that it was just as, if not more important, for me and the non-First Nations students at ODP to learn about the customary ways of the people that inhabited the local areas for centuries. I started to change my ways of teaching/learning by inviting Elders into the school to talk about local customs and traditions of the area.⁵ This turned into holding smudging ceremonies housed in the programme led by our School District Elder.⁶ As a class we started looking at ideas of race, class and gender and how they pertained to the students and the local community. We used teaching spaces found within the local community including local shops, business conference rooms and green spaces. I started using new methods of teaching including ethnography, autobiography, and photography as a way for students to express themselves. Some of these practices started to engage with ideas of critical pedagogy of place as outlined by Gruenewald (2003), explored

⁵ Elders are First Nations knowledge keepers.

⁶ Smudging is the burning of a sacred plant (sage, sweetgrass, cedar or other depending on the Indigenous people and the area) creating a cleansing smoke used to purify people and places.

later on in this chapter. I began to realize what Stewart (2010), using the work of Barnhardt (2002), meant when she wrote, “teachers and educators are becoming aware that the values in which the current systems of schooling that are rooted in European-North American (i.e. Eurocentric) culture and that those values and those of culturally different students, such as those with Indigenous ancestry, frequently come into conflict in learning processes” (p. 247). I can’t say that my teaching and our programme was able to fully decolonize within the school system. However, we were able to question, critique and transform parts of the system that we had control of, and try some new ideas with the students we had.

During my time at ODP I recognized that the mainstream schooling system didn’t work for many students, and not only First Nations and Métis students. This led me to seek out others in the Saskatoon school systems that were using “alternative” forms of education to meet the needs of their students.⁷ I started to see that other teachers were using similar forms of teaching including PBE and critical pedagogies of place but were using it with different students than I was teaching. I then had the opportunity to move to New Zealand and see what other educators, using ideas of PBE, were doing with their students (both Māori and Pākehā).⁸

⁷ I use the term alternative to mean different than the mainstream schooling system. This is a contested term as it is used by some educators in both countries to refer specifically to special needs, and those students with behaviour issues. Hence, alternative is often viewed as a deficit model of education.

⁸ Pākehā is a Māori term for non-Māori people living in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Christchurch & Saskatoon: Geographic, demographic and historic factors informing the research

Christchurch, New Zealand

New Zealand has two main islands - Te Ika-a-Māui (The Fish of Maui: North Island) and Te Waipounamu (The Greenstone/Jade waters: South Island). The country of New Zealand was divided into provinces until 1841, but after their abolishment, provincial districts were formed. These districts do not hold any significance in terms of contemporary education policy formation (Wilson & Shaw-Brown, 1991).

According to Tau (2012) the Waitaha were the first through tribal traditions to impose their genealogy on the lands of the South Island that included the area that is now present day Christchurch. Tribal migrations of other hapū, notably, the Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Mamoe came into contact with the Waitaha. These hapū feuded over the course of many years, and finally formed a marriage alliance that saw their tribal lines mix. Ngāi Tahu became the established mana whenua (authority through whakapapa) of the land (Tau, Anderson & Carrington, 2008). Christchurch, also known as Ōtautahi, was named after an early Waitaha chieftain (Tautahi) who occupied the area that is now the earthquake devastated Central Business District of the city. Christchurch is the largest centre in the provincial district of Canterbury, which lies roughly in the middle of Te Waipounamu, on the east coast. According to New Zealand Statistics (2013), Christchurch has a population of approximately 341,000, while the population of Canterbury is approximately 560,000. Figures 2.1 to 2.3 provide a map of New Zealand and of Christchurch, and photograph of the city, respectively.



Figure 2.1: Map of New Zealand

(<http://www.korero.maori.nz/resources/map.html>)

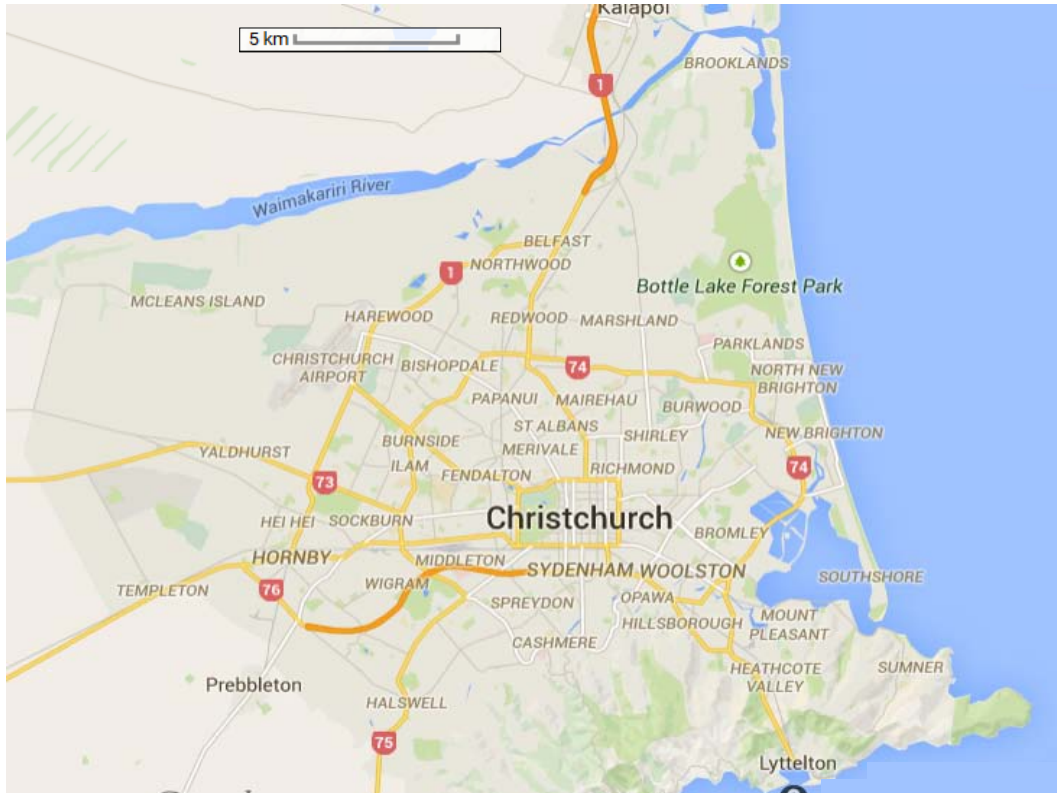


Figure 2.2: Map of Christchurch
(<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Christchurch>)



Figure 2.3: Photograph of Christchurch
(Courtesy of C. M. Tatarniuk (2013))

The Christchurch area was originally a swamp, and the wetland provided abundant food sources and defensive positions for the Māori who lived there. The Ōtakaro (now Avon) River, running through Christchurch, once supported an extensive portion of these wetlands, and there were countless mahinga kai. Mahinga kai refers to indigenous freshwater species that have traditionally been used as tools, food and other resources. The vegetation in the Christchurch area was valuable to Māori and Pākehā alike. Tī kōuka (Cabbage trees) for instance, are common in swampy areas, and were prized trees for the Māori. They were used for food and medicine. The leaves were woven into rope, baskets, and sandals. The leaves were also made into a tea to cure dysentery. According to the Tī Kōuka Whenua website, local tribes also planted them in significant places to mark out routes across the landscape. Tī kōuka has been chosen by the Christchurch city council as a symbol for the city due to its importance in local history (Christchurch City Libraries, n.d.). Other important vegetation for Māori in the Ōtautahi area included harakeke (flax), horoeka (lancewood), and kahikatea (white pine), among others. After the arrival of Pākehā, the situation changed, and due to manmade drainage, the vast majority of the wetlands are no longer evident (Tau, 1990).

European settlers arrived and began to establish themselves in 1840 following previous visits to the area by European and American whalers and traders. The area began to flourish as an agricultural hub and today agriculture and tourism are the main economies (Wilson, 2009). With the progress of agriculture much of the native bush was removed and replaced with farmland.

Christchurch has mild summers and cool winters and is characterized by an Oceanic climate. The average temperature for July is 11.3°C while the median daily temperature for January is at 22.5°C, and it has a relatively dry climate. The Ōtakaro (Avon) River flows through

Christchurch and empties into the ocean, with several small tributaries throughout the city flowing into it. The Ōpawaho (Heathcote) River on the southern side of the city flows into the same estuary as the Ōtakaro. The Waimakariri River is a much larger braided river that lies to the north of the city.

The landscape in and around Christchurch provides multiple opportunities for engaging with built and natural environments. However, challenges may exist with the prominence of earthquakes, the dangers associated with fast moving rivers, ocean currents, and weather conditions that can change quickly due to the mountain range to the west and ocean to the east.

In New Zealand, English, Māori and sign language are the three official languages. In the 2013 New Zealand Census, 92.4% of the population of Canterbury reported English as their primary language, 1.6% reported Māori, and 6% reported a non-official language. The three most common non-official languages were French (1.1%), Sinitic (0.9%), and Samoan (0.8%). In the 2013 Census, 83% of the population of Canterbury was of European descent. 1.6% of the population of Canterbury identifies themselves as Māori. In Canterbury, 15.5% of the population is over the age of 65, while 18.7% is 14 years old or under (New Zealand Statistics, 2013).

Like the Aboriginal population in Saskatchewan, Statistics New Zealand (2013) forecasts that the Māori population is expected to grow by 29% by the year 2021 and the Pacific Islander population (consisting largely of people originating from Polynesian island nations) will grow by 59% over the same period. This is an interesting trend that has striking similarities to Saskatoon.

Saskatoon, Canada

Canada is divided into 10 provinces and three territories. The territories are in the northern part of the country, while six larger provinces border the United States and four smaller Atlantic Provinces sit in and along the Atlantic Ocean. Saskatchewan is one of the six larger provinces, sitting roughly in the middle of the country. The city of Saskatoon is located in the southern third of the province and it is presently the largest centre in the province. In Canada, provincial governments exercise a significant amount of political power over several jurisdictions, including education. Figures 2.4 to 2.6 provide a map of Canada and of Saskatoon, and photograph of the city, respectively.



Figure 2.4: Map of Canada

(<http://members.shaw.ca/kcic1/mapmenu.html>)

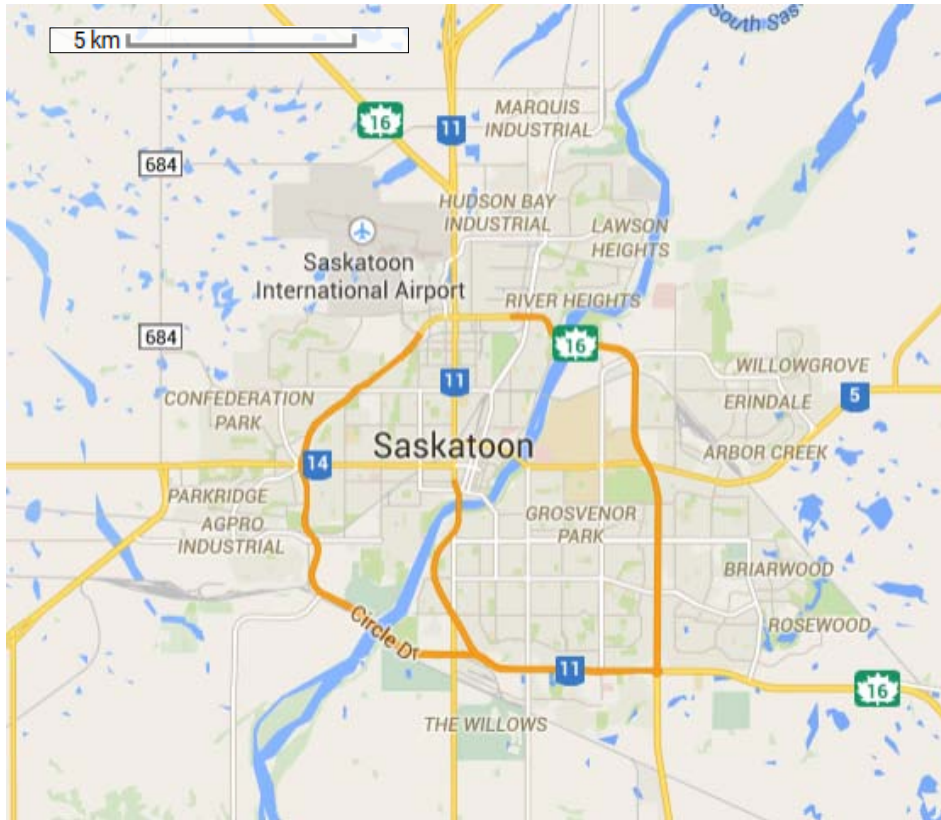


Figure 2.5: Map of Saskatoon

(<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Saskatoon>)



Figure 2.6: Photograph of Saskatoon

(<http://www.urbansystems.ca/project/city-of-saskatoon-integrated-growth-plan/>)

Sâskwâton, the Cree word for Saskatoon, is derived from the word misâskwatôminiskâhk meaning 'at the place of many berries', referring to the Saskatoon berry. According to Statistics Canada, the population of Saskatoon in 2014 was approximately 251,000 and the population of Saskatchewan was 1,114,000 (Government of Canada, 2011). The city sits within the lands of Treaty 6.⁹ First Nations peoples from the Cree, Saulteaux and Dakota lived in the Saskatoon area upwards of six thousand years before European settler contact. Note, however, within the whole province of Saskatchewan, there were more than these three groups (e.g. Dené and Assiniboine). As with the Māori hapū, tribes feuded, and intermarried. The Cree were, and continue to be, the most populous of Indigenous groups in the Saskatoon area (Archer, 1980). The Indigenous people were attracted to the plains and the area around Saskatoon because of the great herds of bison that roamed the area (Dickason, 1997). The bison were more than just a food source- every part of the animal was used for food, clothing, tools and shelter. The tribes that hunted the bison lived nomadically, following them as they migrated from season to season. According to the Wildlife Conservation Society (2015), between 30 and 60 million bison roamed the plains prior to the arrival of European settlers. The species was almost eliminated by end of the 19th century, as guns enabled the bison to be hunted easily and ruthlessly for their hides. This was done by both Indigenous peoples and settlers, who could trade the valuable hides at different trading posts throughout the province. The demise of the bison also marked the demise of the traditional way of life for Indigenous people of the Saskatoon area. Closeness to the land and the natural environment was central to the belief systems of Saskatchewan Indigenous peoples (Stonechild, n.d.)

⁹ Treaty 6 was signed in 1876 between the Queen of England and bands of Cree and Stoney First Nations. It encompasses land within central and southern Saskatchewan and Alberta. The provision signed surrendered any Indian land rights in exchange for money, supplies, and reserve land chosen by the crown. This is highly contested among First Nations people and they are still in the process of negotiating issues of sovereignty and land claims with the government of Canada (Ray, Miller, Tough, 2002).

Prior to permanent settlement of the area by Europeans, in the 18th and 19th centuries, French Canadian and British fur traders married Indigenous women. Their offspring were the Métis, who became a significant Aboriginal group within Saskatchewan and in other parts of Canada (McNab & Lischke, 2007). It was in the 1880's that European settlers including German, English, Scottish, Irish, Ukrainian and French moved permanently to Saskatoon and, like Christchurch, it became a hub of an agricultural region. Their establishment was strongly facilitated by the creation of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the early 1900's. Today, agriculture still drives the local and provincial economy, as do other natural resources from throughout the province including potash, oil and uranium.

According to the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre (2012), the city of Saskatoon is situated in the Aspen parkland biome, characterized by a comparatively flat topography. This ecoregion is classified as having a transitional grassland ecoclimate. Most of the ecoregion is now farmland but in its native state, the landscape was characterized by trembling aspen, mixed tall shrubs, oak groves, and intermittent fescue grasslands. The vegetation of the Saskatoon area was also important for the survival of Indigenous people. For instance, the Saskatoon berry from which the city is named, as well as its leaves, and wood from the bush, was an important source of food (mixed with bison meat and dried to make pemmican), as well as medicine, and for making tools and baskets. Pemmican became a staple food for the British and French fur traders as they traversed the Canadian plains.

Saskatoon is a humid continental climate with warm summers and very cold winters. According to Environment Canada (2014), the average temperature for July is 18°C while the median daily temperature for January is at -17°C. The climate in Saskatoon is comparatively

dry, with summer being the wettest season. The South Saskatchewan River is a large river which runs through Saskatoon and divides it into east and west sides of the city.

In Canada, English and French are the two official languages. In the 2011 Statistics Canada Census, 82.7% of the population of Saskatoon reported English only as a mother tongue, 1.5% reported French only, and 14.3% reported a non-official language. The three most common non-official languages were German (2.4%), Tagalog (Filipino) (1.8%) and Ukrainian (1.6%) (Government of Canada, 2011).

In the National Household Survey (2011b), 76% of the population of Saskatchewan was of European decent, primarily from backgrounds of German, English, Irish, Scottish, Ukrainian, and French. The National Household Survey (2011a) states that approximately 6.2% of the population of Saskatoon identifies themselves as First Nations and 4.2% as Métis. This survey also indicates that the primary First Nations languages spoken in Saskatchewan are Cree, Dené, Ojibway, and Siouan. Note that the Dakota peoples are one of the three sub-tribes of the Sioux, and that Saulteaux is a branch of the Ojibway nations.

Saskatchewan and New Zealand are both predicted to experience a major shift in demographics in relation to their respective Indigenous populations as well as immigrant populations. In 2003, Saskatchewan Learning (the provincial government agency that regulates education in Saskatchewan) suggested that “today approximately 22% of the school-age population is of Aboriginal heritage. It is expected that by 2016, close to 50% of the school-entry-age population (on and off reserve) will be of Aboriginal heritage” (Government of Saskatchewan, 2003, p. 19).

Shared Colonial History

Both Christchurch and Saskatoon were inhabited by Indigenous peoples for centuries prior to the arrival of European explorers. Both areas were colonized by European settlers (predominantly British) in the mid to late 1800's, and were under the control of Britain at that time. Treaties were signed in both central Canada (Treaty 6 in 1876) and New Zealand (Treaty of Waitangi in 1840) between the (British) Crown and the Indigenous peoples. These commonalities have impacted upon their schooling systems, as discussed in the following sections.

Colonialism, neoliberalism, neocolonialism and their influences upon schooling

Canada and New Zealand developed as nations through the systemic colonization of Indigenous peoples (McCaslin & Boyer, 2009; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2007). Colonization is the result of the doctrine of 'discovery' and still exists today through historically unfulfilled and unhonoured treaties that do not recognize issues of sovereignty of its Indigenous peoples (Kontinónhstats, 2011; Anaya, 2011). As outlined in Chapter One the schooling systems of both countries are still failing Indigenous students through unrepresentative failure rates. For her part, Linda Smith (1999) voiced concern that:

The control of the New Zealand curriculum by 'Pākehā dominant state' interests directly correlates with the inferior positioning of Māori subordinate 'iwi' interests, both in and outside of schooling. The exclusion of Māori language, knowledge and culture would not only mean accepting the unsavoury aspects of colonial history, it

would also lead to an increased conscientisation of Māori people of their social, cultural, economic and political oppression (p. 188).

Although some Indigenous led programmes can be found in both education systems, including Kura Kaupapa Māori schools in New Zealand and the formation of Cree and other First Nations language schools in Saskatchewan, there are still significant challenges to address this historical educational oppression (Battiste, 2013; Linda Smith, 1999).

Schooling in New Zealand and Canada has evolved over the centuries, and in particular has undergone dramatic changes based on the canons of famous scientists. Galileo removed quality from science and replaced it with the study of phenomena that could be *measured, quantified and controlled*. R.D. Laing in Capra (1997) stated:

Galileo's program offers us a dead world: Out go sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell, and along with them have since gone esthetic and ethical sensibility, values, quality, soul, consciousness, spirit. Experience as such is cast out of the realm of scientific discourse. Hardly anything has changed our world more during the past four hundred years than Galileo's audacious program (p. 19).

It was not only the sciences that took on this "audacious program" but it can be seen in schools through the classroom-based banking model (Freire, 1970) of schooling and compartmentalization of subjects offered through curricula. Although pioneers of science, like Galileo are dead and gone their legacies live on through schooling today. Schools have become compartmentalized and controlled in all facets of learning including time, space, curriculum, and assessment as outlined throughout this thesis. As Littlejohn (2006) explained,

“schooling is the intentional, packaged instruction delivered in a particular place for the purpose of teaching information, and values” (p. 63). Along with schooling and teaching of values comes social and cultural development of a society (Noonan, Hallman and Scharf, 2006). There is a question that persists: whose values and culture? For Canada and New Zealand the answer is Eurocentric and colonial.

Neoliberal assumptions dominate the policy frameworks underpinning the scope of the New Zealand and Canadian schooling systems. In summary, the four pillars of neoliberalism are: the self interest of the individual, maintaining a free market economics system, the opposition of governmental regulation (*laissez-faire*), and a commitment to free trade (Olssen and Peters, 2005). With these assumptions at the forefront, the main purpose of schools is to prepare students for life in a changing workforce (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman, 2002). Meyer and Benavot (2013) also pointed out “the orientation of public education has shifted from what used to be a focus on cultural and civic socialization, to preparation for the workforce” (p. 12).

Since European colonization, schools were run by communities and churches and influenced by mainly white male middle class parents. However, as time went on, control of schools moved further away from local communities to more centralized control including provincial and national jurisdictions but what’s never changed in either society was the fact that schools/policy decision making has always been the subject of middle class white males. According to Apple (2009), neoliberal impulses, globally, are “fundamentally restructuring what education does, how it is controlled, and who benefits from it throughout the world” (p. 1).

As with neoliberalism, power and control are also embedded in colonialism. According to Battiste (2013):

In Canada, colonialism has racialized Aboriginal people's identity, marginalized and de-legitimized their knowledge and languages, and exploited their powerlessness in taking their lands. This imperialistic system of knowledge that is considered the "mainstream" functions like a "keeper" current in a rapidly flowing river or ocean. The keeper current drags a person to the bottom and then to the top, but if one fights against the current one usually drowns (p. 106-107).

In schools, as Battiste (2013) stated, neocolonization happens through the lack of cultural relevance and inclusion in the curriculum. This could include omission of Indigenous content and language as well as anti-oppressive education.

Both neocolonialism (i.e. modern day colonialism) and neoliberalism exhibit marginalization through control. As Sleeter (2010) stated "Neoliberalism can be understood as neocolonialism through global capitalism" (p. 194). In the schooling system, the control process that is embedded in neoliberalism and neocolonization has led to institutionalization under a central authority. Once this has happened, Black (n.d.) believed, "both freedom for the individual and respect for the local are radically curtailed" (n.p.). This can be seen in both New Zealand and Saskatchewan as learning is directed by centralized Ministries of Education that also create official curriculum guidelines. In New Zealand, researchers since the 1980s, such as McKenzie (1984) and Shuker (1987), have argued that New Zealand's educational development did not have greater opportunity for all as its primary goal. Rather, it had reflected the worldview of the dominant middle classes where school systems should be used

as a means of securing and maintaining social control (in Jones, Marshall, Matthews, Smith & Smith, 1995, p. 34). Of the New Zealand education system, Hill (2011) stated:

Constant pressure to increase students' achievement so as to lift the schools profile, and market the school through open-nights and co-curricular activities created no illusions about the competitive world of schooling. Coupled with a tangible culture of managerialism and associated workload issues concerning assessment and reporting, quality assurance, constant improvement, and external accountability, the neoliberal agenda in New Zealand education appears to be alive and well (p. 55).

In response to the negative impacts of neoliberalism, Apple (2009) suggested to parents, teachers and students that there are examples of agency, counter-hegemonic activism, and interruption of domination control both inside and outside schooling. He compelled educators and activists to not only recognise but to embrace education as a political act and in doing so advocated a repositioning of education which embodied principles of *critical* education that challenge traditional patterns of schooling. Apple is not the only author to offer such a critique. Giroux (2012) also expressed concern about how the neoliberalism agenda is embodied in schools:

The most serious attack is being waged by advocates of neoliberalism, whose reform efforts focus narrowly on high-stakes testing, traditional texts and memorization drills. At the heart of this approach is an aggressive attempt to disinvest in public schools, replace them with charter schools, and remove state and federal governments completely from public education in order to allow education to be organized and administered by market-driven forces (n.p.).

The economic and political theory of neoliberalism links all members of society with free markets and private property rights (Harvey, 2005). McLaren (1998) postulated that neoliberalism is presently the prevailing socio-economic ideology of western society, which has infringed upon every aspect of our lives, including all forms of education. Gruenewald (2004) points out that “corporations, government, and the media constantly reinforce the connection between education and successful competition in the global, capitalist economy.” There is a push by corporate interests to move the neoliberal agenda into public education. Ivan Illich (1971) argued that schools as they are “alienate people from their real selves because their concern is to manipulate people into the consumer oriented capitalist world of work” (p. 18).

On a local level in both Saskatoon and Christchurch, the push of corporate interests and capitalism can already be seen through the corporatization of the University of Saskatchewan (Woodhouse, 2009) and the creation of public-private partnerships at the University of Canterbury (University of Canterbury, 2010). Corporate influences in high schools and elementary schools, through funding schemes and curriculum related initiatives, are also increasing globally (Hinchey, 2006).

Giroux and Kellner (2003), further discussed the influences of neoliberalism on schooling, and argued that the goals of Western schooling are defined by a neoliberal free market economic agenda and corporate culture that offers consumerism as the only alternative. This contributes to students forming “identities steeped in forms of competitive, self-interested individualism that celebrates selfishness, profit-making and greed” (p. 101). Environmental

and social justice issues are, accordingly, placed on the back burner due to these neoliberal influences, as observed by Giroux (2001) who noted that:

Within the discourse of neo-liberalism, issues regarding schooling and social justice, persistent poverty, inadequate health care, racial apartheid in the inner cities, and the growing inequalities between the rich and poor have been ... removed from the inventory of public discourse and public policy (p. xxii).

The public seems largely unaware of these issues, which can lead to a politics of simple acceptance as described by Apple (2009). This simple acceptance could be extended to other aspects of neoliberalism, and how they have permeated the schooling systems of Canada and New Zealand. This includes control of the curriculum, as well as standardized testing. Taking this one step further, Kincheloe (2007) suggested that due to the globalised political economic system with a neo-liberal basis, progressive forms of education are simply not being embraced, which is exacerbating poverty and its attendant suffering. Kincheloe (2007) and Sterling (2001) argued that schools act to perpetuate dominant ways of knowing through classroom practices and curriculum that are most often aligned with the dominant gender, race, culture, class and religion of the group that controls the power and wealth within that society. Within this process, Sterling (2001) suggested it is furthered by education systems which fulfil vocational, social and liberal functions which serve to replicate society and culture, while training people for employment. However, this model for education is lacking a force for change that will help develop fairness and justness in our society, and a consciousness of our connection to the rest of the world. If it is possible to overcome the control of the current neoliberal and neocolonial based schooling systems, then I believe place-based education and critical pedagogy of place as outlined throughout this thesis may

have the potential to eke out the force for change that is so clearly needed. The challenges with which changes can occur in schooling are often influenced by demographics, geography and history, which are briefly discussed in the following section.

History of schooling in New Zealand and Saskatchewan

The following section provides a brief overview of the history of schooling in Christchurch, New Zealand and Saskatchewan, Canada. It provides a summary of early history through to present day with a focus on important policies that were established in the past that still inform schooling today.

New Zealand

Before the arrival of Pākehā, each Māori tribal grouping had its own education system which included knowledge, learning and teaching integrated into their daily lives (Jones, Marshall, Matthews, Smith & Smith, 1995). After European arrival, a missionary system of schooling was developed (Stephenson, 2009). Pihama (2001) contended, “historical writings related to Māori and schooling have tended toward general discussions of the ways in which the colonial powers established schooling as a vehicle for the ‘civilising’, and social control, of Māori people” (p. 203-204). The provincial government governed the majority of schools but there were also private schools and church schools that maintained their own governance. In 1877, a ‘universal, compulsory, and secular’ primary education system was introduced in New Zealand, putting education under national control. This new system reflected the egalitarian principles of early policy-makers, and was developed to ensure the conditions for full employment. Thus it became compulsory for children aged 1-15 to attend primary school (Olssen & Matthews, 1997).

In 1914 the universality of primary school was extended to secondary schooling, provided that the student had passed the Proficiency Examination at the end of primary school (Olssen & Matthews, 1997). Not everyone was happy with the supposed improvements to the secondary schooling system because as Openshaw (1995), stated, “it was the introduction of a system that streamed and selected students for their role in life” (in Rata 2009, p. 105). According to Stephenson (2009), students who passed the exam acquired a proficiency certificate had their choice of secondary experience. Others acquired a competency certificate, and their choice was limited to a vocational curriculum (such as within the new technical high school) (p. 10).

In 1937, the Proficiency Examination was abolished. This removed the academic hurdle to access secondary education for all students. In 1944, the Matriculation Examination was abolished and a new University Entrance Examination (which could be accredited) was introduced to allow secondary schools more control over curriculum. This became known as the Thomas Report (Olssen & Matthews, 1997).

The Currie Report, published in 1962, showed that the goal of equality of opportunity was slowly being realized. Although it had “registered its concerns for Māori children, physically and intellectually handicapped children, children in rural areas, and children in the new (working class) urban suburbs” (Olssen & Matthews, 1997, p. 10). According to Ray (2009), in the 1970’s, it was suggested by many that perhaps the goal of equality of opportunity was not being realized, and educational policy needed to reflect the principle of equity, and that more resources needed to be targeted to some groups (p. 21). He further stated that more Māori people, the majority of whom were now living in urban surrounds, moved towards re-establishing and re-asserting their cultural identity. The first Māori language primary school

was opened in 1985 and the Māori Language Act was passed in 1987 making Māori an official language (p. 22).

The New Zealand Curriculum Review of 1987 recommended “educational policy change which would better cater to Māori educational needs, counter racism and sexism through curriculum innovation, and promote a more active partnership between schools, families and communities” (Olssen & Matthews, 1997, p. 11). A major reason for the lack of government action on the Curriculum Review had to do with the influence of the New Zealand Treasury on the formation of government policy. The Treasury considered that education is a private good not a ‘public good’, and it argued that education should be more responsive to business interests and the needs of the economy (Olssen & Matthews, 1997, p. 11-12).

Before the Picot Report was released in 1988, New Zealand’s education system had a centralised model of governance through regional education boards, which were directly linked to the Department of Education. The Picot Report criticized this model, and provided a framework for educational reform which was situated in the economic, historical, and political contexts of the Labour Government in the 1980’s and their neoliberal economic agenda (Newport, n.d.). In 1990, a New Ministry of Education was created replacing the old Department of Education. A great deal of administration of education was allocated to individual schools, now fitted out with ‘Charters’ and ‘Boards of Trustees.’ This increased the responsibilities of individual schools at the local community level (Bates, 1990).

The Education Review Office (ERO) and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) were also established. These changes were instituted through the 1989 Education Act, the 1990 Education Amendment Act, and the 1991 Education Amendment Act. According to the

New Zealand Ministry of Education (1988), the Education Review Office is an independent audit agency that monitors the performance of schools. The NZQA phased in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) to ensure that New Zealand qualifications are credible and robust both nationally and internationally. The NZQA and NCEA will be further discussed in Chapter Six.

Saskatchewan

As Littlejohn (2006), noted, “Before the arrival of the Europeans in Western Canada, the First Nations peoples educated their children to be members of their First Nation” (p. 63). The nomadic groups of First Nations people that inhabited the prairies were well educated as they had subsisted for thousands of years, but this historical process of inhabitation was not recognized by the first European settlers as a valid education system.

During the 19th century the area that is today named Saskatchewan was known as Rupert’s Land which was governed by the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC). Hudson’s Bay Company funded missionaries of Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian churches to build schools to teach mainly the First Nations population. European settlers were also funded to create schools. Like the churches, the schools designed their own policies and did not follow a common curriculum (Scharf, 2006). The early Canadian government believed that it was best for Aboriginal people to assimilate, by adopting the English or French languages and Christian customs, and give up their traditional way of life. Through the Indian Act of 1876, the federal government built an educational system where children were taken from their families and sent to boarding schools where they were educated for life in mainstream society. The establishment of these residential schools would have negative,

lasting effects on Indigenous cultures, who had been nomadic for centuries, but who were now forced into sedentary lifestyles on reserve land (Government of Canada, n.d.).

The Canadian Constitution Act of 1867 gave the responsibility of schooling to the provinces but the Saskatchewan government did not believe that Métis or non-status Indian children were its responsibility until 1938 (Littlejohn, 2006). In 1876 Treaty Six was signed between the Queen and local bands of Cree and Stoney First Nations in a large area encompassing Saskatoon. It allowed for the establishment of schools on reserves that were funded by the Canadian federal government. The last of these government operated residential schools didn't close until 1996 and as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2013) stated, "the ongoing impact of residential schools has been felt throughout generations and has contributed to social problems that continue to exist." It wasn't until 2008 that the Prime Minister of Canada apologized on behalf of the Government of Canada to the survivors of residential schools across Canada.

By the early 20th century local jurisdictions had established governance and organizational structures for schools and also adopted a common non-denominational Christian curriculum to be only taught in the English language. This was imposed to assimilate not only the First Nations but also Central and Eastern European immigrants. School was voluntary until 1917 when the provincial government adopted the School Attendance Act that made schooling compulsory for all children seven to sixteen years of age (Scharf, 1996).

The 1990's brought about a lot of restructuring and amalgamating of school boards that lasted into the second decade of the 21st Century. This was done as class sizes were shrinking in rural Saskatchewan as many people were moving into the cities. It was also done to cut

provincial education costs. The effects saw some schools close which led to the demise of some rural communities (Kirk, n.d).

This section has examined how schooling has evolved in Christchurch and Saskatoon. It is clear that similarities exist in their histories, particularly with respect to British colonization. The following section examines other similarities that exist in other facets schooling in these two cities.

Similarities: Christchurch and Saskatoon

Schools in Christchurch and Saskatoon (and New Zealand and Canada) share many similarities, physically, temporally, and educationally (including curriculum and assessment/evaluation). While Chapter Six will examine in depth many of the similarities and differences in the curriculum, this following section focuses on other aspects of schooling.

Barrett, Zhang, Moffat and Kobbacy (2013) found that the design of a classroom has a significant effect on pupils' learning. However, classroom design in both Christchurch and Saskatoon has remained largely unchanged for many decades. Schools and classrooms in Christchurch and Saskatoon are typically set-up very similarly. Classrooms typically have several rows of desks facing a blackboard or whiteboard at the front of the room, where the teacher stands to teach the lessons. Typical classrooms in Saskatoon and Christchurch are shown in Figure 2..



Figure 2.7: Left- Saskatoon classroom (Yeske, 2013); Right- Christchurch classroom (Newstalk ZB, 2014).

The size and dimensions of the classrooms are similar, and usually house approximately 20 to 40 students. Classrooms are situated in a larger building, typically connected to a gymnasium. The outdoor setting of the schools includes a large green space and a cemented area. In Canada, this green space typically includes a football field (for Canadian football, soccer, and other sports) and a baseball diamond. In New Zealand, the green space typically includes a cricket pitch, rugby field and a football field (referred to as soccer in North America).

The school calendar year is also similar in both New Zealand and Canada, beginning in the fall and running throughout the winter, ending in spring, with a large break (approximately two months) in the summer. This is historically based on an agrarian calendar. National and provincial holidays are recognized as well. On a daily basis, school typically begins at approximately 8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m. in the morning and concludes at approximately 3:00 p.m. The majority of classes are divided into hourly blocks. Chapter Five further discusses school scheduling and the use of time in schools.

In Christchurch uniforms are mandatory in the vast majority of schools. However, two of the schools in this research do not require students to wear uniforms. In Saskatoon, there are no

schools in which uniforms are mandatory. Attending school is compulsory until the age of sixteen in both countries.

As previously discussed New Zealand and Canada were colonized in a similar fashion. As such, the British model of industrial schooling has shaped both countries' schooling systems, resulting in many of the notable similarities that continue to exist between New Zealand and Canadian schools. In both New Zealand and Canada, when colonization began, religious education was mandated for Indigenous peoples. Both countries still have church-based schools as part of the publicly available education system. Common foundations in curriculum design amongst many colonized countries are religion and the "3R's" – reading, writing and arithmetic (Sjöström, 2001). This holds true for New Zealand and Canada as both have a history of church-based schools and retain a strong focus on the 3R's. There has been a resurgence of talk about getting back to the grass roots of education and putting more focus on the 3R's. This may be in part due to global standardized tests including the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) that have a strong focus on reading, writing, math and science. Further discussion on the PISA test can be found in Chapter Six.

Theoretical foundations and critiques of place-based education

As Gruenewald (2008) and others have contended, PBE lacks a well-developed theoretical tradition and has emerged through the practices of educators from multiple backgrounds, including environmental education (Sobel, 2006), outdoor education (Knapp, 1996), ecological education (Smith & Williams, 1999), community based education (Gregory Smith 2002, 2005), and ecopedagogy (Khan, 2010). The praxis of PBE, on the other hand, has been well-established and is becoming more developed throughout the world (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Powers, 2004; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Wattoo & Brown, 2011; Woodhouse &

Knapp, 2000). It is from emerging ideas of PBE that practitioners, over the years, have created multiple programmes, classrooms and schools around the world for students of all ages. These programmes have included creating school gardens (REAL School Gardens, 2013), revitalizing the commons in inner cities (Martusewicz, 2006), university based classes with a focus on PBE (Gregory Smith, 2007), and culturally responsive place-based curriculums/schools/communities (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, n.d.). It is clear from the literature on PBE that it was developed by practitioners and is now at a point where it, as Gregory Smith (2010) contended, “can mean anything people want it to – much like the term sustainability” (Smith & Gruenewald, 2010, n.p.).

The openness of PBE was what first attracted me to it while completing my Masters degree, and subsequently to experiment with applying it in my own teaching practice. I began by using the early literature of Gregory Smith (2002, 2005), Sobel (2006) and Woodhouse and Knapp (2000), as they outlined fairly simplistic ways of engaging with PBE based on the literature of other PBE academics and practitioners. These same academics led me, years later, to create a list of what I consider to be the tenets of PBE. From the 13 tenets, I also identified ways that each tenet can interact with other educational theories and practices and these can be found in the accompanying brackets for each tenet. This following list (see below) was used as a tool that helped me narrow the search for my research participants for this project, based on the work of Gregory Smith (2002, 2005), Sobel (2006) and Woodhouse and Knapp (2000):

1. Using the local community and environment (Education outside the classroom)
2. Hands on, real world learning experiences (Experiential education/learning)
3. Serving as active, contributing citizens (Citizenship)

4. Appreciation for the natural world (Environmental education/learning)
5. Cultural studies (Multicultural)
6. Nature investigations (Outdoor education)
7. Real world problem solving (Inquiry based learning)
8. Immersion into community life (Community based learning)
9. Multidisciplinary
10. Connects place with self and community. Surrounding phenomenon are the foundation for curriculum development (Place-based)
11. Students becoming the creators of knowledge rather than only consumers of knowledge. Student's questions and concerns play central roles in determining what is studied (Student centered)
12. Teachers act primarily as co-learners and "brokers" of community resources and learning possibilities (Teacher as facilitator)
13. Walls between the community and school buildings are crossed frequently or broken through (Education outside the classroom)

It is clear from these 13 tenets that they are very practical in application and are not meant to be a final summation of PBE but could be used as a 'tool' (Flynn, Kemp & Perez, 2009) or as a 'model' (Longhurst, 2012) for practitioners to access and to try to engage with place-based practices. Although the tenets are a good starting point for the beginning of a journey with PBE, it should be recognized that PBE has continued to evolve since the inception of this research. This thesis intends to expand both on this evolution in thinking as well as describe local examples of PBE practice in Christchurch and Saskatoon settings. The following section, accordingly, outlines some of the foundational place-based literature relevant to this thesis.

One of the first major issues confronting exponents of PBE is the definition of 'place', which has been contested by many writers. When discussing place, Casey (1997), for example, noted that:

We are immersed in it and could not do without it. To be at all – to exist in any way – is to be somewhere, and to be somewhere is to be in some kind of place. Place is as requisite as the air we breathe, the ground on which we stand, the bodies we have. We are surrounded by places. We walk over and through them. We live in places, relate to others in them, die in them. Nothing we do is unplaced (p. ix).

Other authors have used other terms to describe place, including “the commons” (Bowers, 2005; McMurtry, 1998). Place has also frequently been used synonymously with “community” (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008). Ruitenberg (2005) furthered the discussion on place by adding that:

Each place has a history, often a contested history, of the people who inhabited it in past times. Each place has as aesthetics, offers a sensory environment of sound, movement and image that is open to multiple interpretations. And each (inhabited) place has a spatial configuration through which power and other socio-politico-cultural mechanism are at play (p. 215).

Place is more than a location on a map, it has a lived history and “expands a cultural landscape to include related ecosystems, bioregions, and all the space-specific interactions between the human and the more-than-human world” (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 143). Place has

many interpretations even within the PBE community. For the purpose of this thesis the word place will be used to describe the built and natural environments that are contested by people and experienced in their own unique ways. All people experience place in separate ways especially in the case of countries where Indigenous peoples and settlers live together on contested lands like New Zealand and Canada.

At its core PBE is about the local community and learning. As Williams (2003) so eloquently explained “place-based learning is rooted in what is local—the unique history, culture, environment, and economy of a particular place. The community provides a context for learning” (p. i). Through this community based learning, Gruenewald and Smith (2008) argued:

Place based education can be understood as a community-based effort to reconnect the process of education, enculturation, and human development to the well-being of community life. Place based ... education introduces children and youth to the skills and dispositions needed to regenerate and sustain communities (p. xvi).

Park (1996) included value in his view of place. He stated “how we inhabit a place can be the most telling expression of how we sense its worth, our intention for it and our connection with it” (p. 31). The one thing that is clear from all of these definitions is that PBE is about ‘inhabiting’, ‘connecting’ and ‘well-being’ within a place.

Although PBE has been critiqued by academics including Bowers (2008), Korteweg and Oakley (2014), Nespor (2008), Tuck, McKenzie and McCoy (2014), there is still room for further critique of the theory, but there also must be stories of success. One of the critiques of

PBE is an affinity to romanticize the rural and wild places and to be overly celebratory of the “rosy past” (Donehower, Hogg & Schell, 2007). These models that hearken back to an imagined history risk alienating marginalized and Indigenous students and can reinforce inequitable social and cultural conditions or colonialist paradigms (Longhurst & Perea Warniment, 2012). A lot of PBE literature and practices have come from outdoor/environmental theorists and instructors who have been largely white, male and middle class, (Kahn, 2010; Martusewicz, Edmundson & Lupinacci, 2011; van Ejck & Roth, 2010;). This has not been addressed well in the PBE literature. Particularly lacking is an examination around white privilege (Jensen, 2005; Rothenberg, 2007) as well as the systemic impact of the development of hegemony and how this shapes the social, cultural and economic opportunities for all people (Doane & Bonilla-Silva, 2003). Although these have been acknowledged by some academics in the realm of critical pedagogy of place (Gruenewald, 2008) and Ecojustice (Bowers, 2008) there is still much more that can be done by looking to some of the Indigenous place-based pedagogies and Land-based pedagogies discussed further on in this chapter.

Others including Flynn, Kemp and Perez (2009) have been critical of PBE around the idea that “definitions of place-based education have been little more than definitions of location that belie the social, cultural, economic diversity that characterizes places” (p. 144). This holds true for much of the early literature around PBE, but again it is dealt with in the literature around critical pedagogy of place, which will be discussed further in the next section.

Critical pedagogies of place

This section outlines the literature in relation to critical pedagogy of place (CPP). First, critical pedagogy is defined. Then, the foundations of CPP are examined and how CPP works within PBE, moving towards Gruenewald (2003) conceptions of reinhabitation and decolonization.

Working in the area of critical theory/pedagogy in education, Burbules and Berk (1999) wrote:

Critical pedagogy is an effort to work within educational institutions and other media to raise questions about inequalities of power, about the false myths of opportunity and merit for many students, and about the way belief systems become internalized to the point where individuals and groups abandon the very aspiration to question or change their lot in life (p. 50).

Critical pedagogy is not only for the classroom, but extends outside the walls of the schools and engages the community. It seeks the connection between theory and practice and vice versa (Freire, 1970; Fromm, 1968; Giroux, 1988). Gruenewald (2003) deliberated within the realms of critical theory/pedagogy and adapted it to what he called a critical pedagogy of place. Critical pedagogy of place are those critical questions that need to be asked, such as What has happened here? What is happening here? What should happen here? These three key questions can be used to explore place through local culture and history (North & Harasymchuk, 2012). As Gruenewald (2003) proposed, critical pedagogy of place aims to, (a) identify, recover, and create material spaces and places that teach us how to live well in our

total environments (reinhabitation) and, (b) identify and change ways of thinking that injure and exploit other people and places (decolonization) (p. 9). He further proposed that:

Decolonization entails grasping the way that the human and natural potentialities of particular communities and places have been diminished or thwarted by patterns of domination and discrimination that benefit one group while exploiting another. Reinhabitation requires the restoration of relationships to other people and the land characterized by affiliation and responsibility (p. 346).

Thus Gruenewald contended that it is this frame of reference that will allow teachers to be responsive in their pedagogy through decolonizing/de-storying their practices, using place as a platform to challenge ideas of the colonial and neoliberal school systems. Martin (2010), similarly, challenged teachers and educators when he proposed that they should:

Critically consider their own situationality within the context of school and schooling, especially in shared/contested places. In doing so, educators gain the opportunity and tools with which to question the ideologies and politics that work to produce and reproduce power relationships within spaces/places that benefit some individuals and groups of people over others (p. 263).

Gruenewald (2003) added that local space is not an area of educational concern because it is overshadowed by discourses regarding economic competitiveness and accountability. From this, he elaborated on what he felt critical pedagogy of place had evolved from:

Place becomes a critical construct not because it is in opposition to economic well-being (it is not) but because it focuses attention on analyzing how economic and

political decisions impact particular places (Berry 1992; Haas & Nachtigal 1998; Orr 1992; Theobald, 1997). Place in other words, foregrounds a narrative of local and regional politics that is attuned to the particularities of where people actually live, and that is connected to global development trends that impact local places. Articulating a critical pedagogy of place is thus a response against educational reform policies and practices that disregard places and leave assumptions about the relationship between education and the politics of economic development unexamined (p. 3).

Bowers (2008), alternatively, took issue with critical pedagogy of place by arguing that you can't have a universal idea of decolonization, as it wouldn't allow for differing types of cultures, or take into account intergenerational knowledge. This is one of the issues that need to be further developed in Gruenewald's decolonization/reinhabitation objectives. Decolonization is a constant process of questioning power relations and structures. Reinhabitation must also always be in a 'process of becoming' (Whitehead, 1978). That is, it does not become a finality. If forms or methods of reinhabitation do become an endpoint that are not reflected upon and put back into the realm of decolonization, they run the risk of being counter intuitive and actually re-colonizing and reinforcing those power structures.

If PBE is to grow as an educational theory that can stand on its own, there needs to be a progression from being a 'tool' or 'method'. As stated by an unnamed superintendent from the state of Maine in the United States of America in Smith and Sobel (2010), "PBE is the basket; it's not the egg in the basket" (p. 150). According to Smith and Sobel (2010) this means that PBE and community based education is a whole new method of looking at how schools, their communities and their ecosystems relate to each other. It is not just a new math programme or new social studies unit. It is much deeper than that, and it continues to evolve.

One way to move forward is through engaging with critical pedagogies of place as outlined above, as well as engaging with Indigenous pedagogies of place as outlined below.

Place and its relevance to Indigenous education

PBE also aligns well with Native American, Canadian First Nations Métis and Māori educational models (Cajete, 1994, 1999; Lowan, 2014; Manning, 2009b; Penetito, 2004; Scully, 2012). It stems from an Indigenous worldview that everything is interconnected whereby people are part of the land and vice versa (Atleo, 2004; Barnhardt, 2002; Deloria, 1995, Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). Barnhardt and Kawagley (2003) reinforced this notion of Indigenous tradition through place/environment in the following:

The accumulated knowledge systems, worldviews, and ways of knowing derived from first-hand engagement with that environment were integrated into the fabric of the indigenous societies and were passed on seamlessly from one generation to the next in the course of everyday life (n.p.).

Penetito (2004), a prominent Māori academic and researcher, meanwhile, implicitly connected PBE with Indigenous ways of knowing when he argued that:

Indigenous peoples, the Māori in New Zealand for example, already have a well-rehearsed traditional and historical affinity to PBE practices. If, within a mainstream education system, this well-rehearsed tradition advantages the Māori and other indigenous peoples, then that has to be a first and should be applauded. However, focusing on PBE is educationally and culturally beneficial for all students (p. 18).

The importance of place was exemplified in the Māori community in one of my own experiences when I first arrived at the University of Canterbury. I have shared this experience in the vignette that follows:

My introduction to Professor Angus Macfarlane began by him introducing himself through a mihimihi. A mihimihi is a Māori introduction whereby the speaker introduces their whakapapa (genealogy, ancestral ties) by identifying specific geographic features associated with their tribal area. This can include their maunga (mountain), awa (river), moana (sea) or waka (ancestral canoe) to name a few. At the time I did not know what Angus was saying but in actuality this was my first introduction to Indigenous place based education in New Zealand. I also had the privilege to take a te reo Māori (Māori language) class and was able to create my own mihimihi even though I was an international student. It should also be noted that all students studying towards an undergraduate degree in education at the University of Canterbury take a te reo Māori class. After I understood what a mihimihi symbolized I began to recognize the importance of place in the Māori worldview. Māori introduce themselves not first by name but by what mountain, river, lake and sea they and their family come from. This speaks volumes as the individual's name is not first and foremost, it is their place of origin. Penetito (2004) highlights Māori connection to place in his discussion of 'spatial metaphors': whakataukī (proverbs) or pepeha (also a Māori introduction), which "are specific to a time and place and also say something about a sense of belonging (p. 5).

Some Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers have challenged critical pedagogy of place, arguing that its underlying principle of reinhabitation is not sufficient and that it must go further to address the issues of Indigenous sovereignty and repatriation (La Paperson, 2014;

Tuck, McKenzie & McCoy, 2014; Wildcat, McDonald, Irlbacher-Fox, & Coulthard, 2014). However, these theories are not yet fully developed. For instance, according to La Paperson (2014), “indigenous place-based education is land education. Place-based education, from a settler perspective, is far more inclusive. Place becomes something everyone can claim, can tell a story about” (p. 124). La Paperson (2014) goes on to say that place-based education leads to restorying and reinhabitation, whereas land education leads towards repatriation, without describing what constitutes repatriation. However, other explanations of Land education align very well with PBE. For example, Simpson (2014) argued that Land education involves reinserting people into relationships with and on the land as a mode of education, with the ultimate goal of decolonizing education and educating people within frameworks of Indigenous intelligence. Underpinning all descriptions of Land education is Indigenous pedagogy. The further development of Land education by academics and practitioners will only help critical pedagogy of place in its continued critique and practices.

Place based education in Christchurch

In New Zealand, there are several academics that have examined place-based education. These include Legge, 2008; Manning, 2009b (Critical pedagogy), Penetito, 2004, 2009 (Māori pedagogies), Brown, 2008; Das, 2007; Hutson, 2010; North and Harasymchuk, 2012; Townsend, 2011 (Outdoor education), and Manning, 2009a (Treaty education). Since place-based education is a relatively new pedagogy in schools, its implementation into the classroom setting has largely been motivated by teacher training that incorporates and promotes facets of PBE and CPP. In Christchurch, the School of Teacher Education at the University of Canterbury offers three courses that do this. For one of the courses, PBE is interpreted and applied through the Treaty of Waitangi and notions of biculturalism. For the

other courses, described below, it is promoted through outdoor experiences and relationships to the land.

EDEM688: The treaty in education today

EDEM688 is a course taught in the School of Teacher Education by Dr. Richard Manning that focuses on the Treaty of Waitangi. The course includes how this treaty has shaped New Zealand history and how it affects learning communities in New Zealand today. The course encourages participants to examine the whakapapa of the land and contested history of the land that their chosen site (school) of study is located on. It involves a more Indigenous geographical/historical approach to the analysis of place, a needs analysis (using the Treaty of Waitangi as an ethical reference point) and a strategic plan which demands action at the end of their historical/sociological inquiries.

TEPE112: Land journeys and ethics

TEPE112 is a course in the School of Teacher Education (Physical Education) taught by Chris North that examines land based journeying, both historically and in present day. Practical skills are developed throughout the course and are practiced during weekend journeys in wilderness and urban areas. Relationships with the land are researched by the students in both an ecological and cultural context.

SPCO222: Analysis of expeditioning

SPCO222 is a course in the School of Teacher Education (Sport Coaching) taught by Dr. Nick Draper that expands the student's knowledge of water based coaching with specific relation to the waka (canoe) as a vehicle for journeying and expeditioning. Students develop practical skills in these areas and descend a Te waipounamu river. An important part of the

course is examining place, socio-cultural, environmental, bi-cultural, historical and physiological contexts while on the waka journey.

Place based education Saskatoon

Academics in Canada that have addressed PBE and CPP include Fettes, 2013; Scully, 2012 (Indigenous pedagogies), and McKenzie, 2008 (Socio-ecological pedagogies); In Saskatoon, the University of Saskatchewan offers a course in the College of Education that focuses on PBE and CPP, offering student teachers the opportunity to experience it, understand its value, and learn ways to incorporate it into their own teaching.

EFDT 498 Place and critical eco-pedagogies

EFDT498 is a course taught by Dr. Marcia McKenzie and Scott Thompson. Community based learning and experiential learning are examined in relation to how they can contribute to educational, as well as personal, decolonization and reinhabitation. This is examined in a Saskatchewan context. Critical and eco-pedagogies are introduced to the students, and facets of community based learning and engagement as well as unique issues in outdoor education, are emphasized. For the urban component, students develop a photo essay highlighting their urban learning experiences. For the outdoor component, students connect place-based learning to curricular content by creating and experiencing outdoor experiences. Overall, the coursework facilitates the students' abilities to incorporate community-based learning and outdoor education into their own educational practices.

Conclusion

This chapter has set the stage for the proceeding research on the use of PBE and critical pedagogy of place in Christchurch and Saskatoon. It has included an autoethnography that is

woven into different stages of the discussion. The historic and current climate of education in Christchurch and Saskatoon has been summarized, and the history, geography, demographics, culture, and the colonization of these places have been presented. All of these aspects have shaped how education is currently being delivered. Colonialism, neoliberalism, and neocolonization have been defined and discussed, and the literature presented has exposed how these theories have had a significant impact on the schooling system. Place-based education and critical pedagogy of place offer different delivery methods for teachers. The theoretical backgrounds to place-based education and critical pedagogy of place have been discussed, and ways in which these are disseminated through teacher education in Christchurch and Saskatoon have been presented. The review of literature in this chapter has portrayed the dominance of neocolonialism/neoliberalism in the schooling systems in both Christchurch and Saskatoon, and has also presented the need for resistance to this dominance. Through defining PBE and CPP and how they inherently connect students to the world around them; it has become clear that PBE and CPP can provide a potential pedagogy for the change and resistance that is needed. The next chapter outlines the methodology and methods used for this research, including bricolage and case study, as well as data collection methods, data analysis, and profiling the research participants and their schools/programmes.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

This study provides an overview of 11 teachers from seven schools/programmes, four in Christchurch, New Zealand and three in Saskatoon, Canada. More specifically, it records the experiences of 11 teachers at the schools/programmes that are promoting change and resistance to the ideologies of their mainstream schools including place, time, space, curriculum and assessment, by incorporating the tenets of place-based education and critical pedagogy of place.

Of the four Christchurch schools examined in this study, three are “state” schools which have been mandated by the New Zealand government, and paid for in whole or in part, by public funding through taxation. Two of the state schools that participated in this study are designated special character schools. The final Christchurch school is an independent school which only receives partial financial support from the government and relies on private fees paid by parents of the students that attend.

In Saskatchewan, public schools are divided into two main types, catholic schools and non-denominational public schools. Of the three Saskatoon programmes/schools examined in this study, one is a Catholic school and two are public. Five of the seven programmes/schools are distinct from the majority of other schools in their respective cities because the teaching and learning techniques utilized deviate from conventional practices. The other two schools are more mainstream but the teachers have exhibited using PBE as well as challenging the systems in place. The schools/programmes are further described in detail in the last section of this chapter.

Overview of chapter

This chapter outlines the research design, methodology and methods applied in the data collection process which were used with research participants in Christchurch, New Zealand and Saskatoon, Canada. The chapter begins with a discussion about the case study that was utilized, which was informed by bricolage as the foundation for the methodological framework. Part One describes the data collection methods including a questionnaire, interviews and observation of the participant's teaching spaces. Part Two details the limitations of the research. Part Three outlines the data analysis procedures used throughout the research. Part Four provides a description of each of the research participants as well as their programmes/schools.

Qualitative research

This research was influenced by an interpretive paradigm within a qualitative research framework. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) pointed out "this means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3). Qualitative research is not in search of black or white, positivist answers to problems but works within the multiple grey scales that can be found throughout qualitative research. This can be attributed to the subjectivity of both researcher and participants. LeCompte and Preissle (1993), qualitative research "is distinguished partly by its admission of the subjective perception and biases of both participants and researcher into the research frame" (p. 92). As this research is focussed on teachers and their perspectives of schooling it is expected that differing worldviews based on values, culture, identity and experience among other factors will be presented throughout the research.

It also must be taken into account that the research participants are from two different countries. Although New Zealand and Canada share many similarities as a result of shared experiences of British colonialism, there remain bioregional diversities within each nation and differences in cultures, histories and geographies (briefly summarized in the literature review chapter) that play a role in both countries' respective schooling systems. Additionally, one must be alert to the differing world views of each of the research participants, and the ease with which they can incorporate the tenets of place-based education due to the institutional constraints within which they work. This research does not intend to find the "right" answers to some of the perceived negative effects of schooling but allows other researchers and educators a window into the perspectives of this researcher and those research participants who are challenging multiple neocolonial and neoliberal concepts found within the mainstream schooling systems of their respective countries.

As noted by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) a researcher "understands that research is an interactive process, shaped by one's personal history, biography, gender, social class, race and ethnicity, and those of the people in the setting" (p. 6). Hence it must be noted that I am part of this research because my subjectivity, as well as that of the research participants, is interpreted through differing contexts and lenses. To address these issues I have adopted a bricolage methodological framework that will be examined in the following section.

Bricolage

This research is informed through a bricolage methodological framework similar in scope to those outlined by Berry (2004), Denzin and Lincoln (2005), and Kincheloe (2005). The term originates from the French traditional expression 'bricoleur' or handyman that used whatever tools and materials for the task at hand (Levi-Strauss, 1966). Today it has transformed into

what Rogers (2012) called a “critical, multi-perspectival, multi-theoretical and multi-methodological approach to inquiry” (p. 2). For the researcher it is not as simple as just jumping from one paradigm to the next without understanding that each paradigm is constructed and constricted within its own ontology and epistemology as Denzin (2012) pointed out:

The theoretical bricoleur reads widely and is knowledgeable of the many interpretive paradigms (feminism, Marxism, cultural studies, constructivism, queer theory) that can be brought to any particular problem. He or she may not, however, feel that paradigms can be mingled, or synthesized. That is paradigms as overarching philosophical systems denoting particular ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies cannot be easily moved between. They represent belief systems that attach the user to a particular worldview. Perspectives, in contrast, are less well-developed systems and can be more easily moved between. The researcher-as-bricoleur-theorist works between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms (p. 85).

To work within this quandary, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) established bricolage within the concept of blurred genres to better interpret, criticize, and deconstruct. Within this concept the researcher is not bound to one paradigm but also needs to understand that bricolage has many epistemological assumptions that outline its spaces within ontology and epistemology as summarized by Kincheloe (2005):

1. a distrust of universalism;
2. that words and phrases mean different things to different people;

3. that research objects are not fixed or static;
4. that contextualisation of research is crucial;
5. that there are different historical and cultural ways of viewing similar phenomena;
6. that discursive practices are always present in knowledge construction;
7. that facts never speak for themselves – interpretation is always at work;
8. that cultural assumptions often ‘wander unnoticed within the act of researching’;
9. that there is a complex relationship between power and knowledge (p. 328-330).

There are complexities that exist within this research and framework as it is dealing with multiple perspectives that can limit, but also accentuate, the findings. It is an acknowledgement and awareness that these power-relations are at work all of the time and they can be examined through multiple lenses and perspectives found within other paradigms (including critical theory and postmodernism) throughout this research. Thus bricolage must be performed with careful consideration or a research project could become overwhelmed by an attitude that ‘anything goes’ within qualitative research. If research can find a home within paradigms, then as Kellner (1999) suggested, “the more perspectives one can bring to their analysis and critique, the better grasp of the phenomena one will have and the better one will be at developing alternative readings and oppositional practices” (p. xii). As a way to navigate the complexities of this research a case study approach was designed to bound the study and enable multiple perspectives to be incorporated in a manageable way.

Case study

Case study research as Yin (1994) elucidated, is an empirical inquiry that “investigates a contemporary phenomena within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources are used” (p.

13). Using Yin's (1994) work on bounding case studies, the case study central to this research was bound through geographic location, length of time to collect data and methods selected to collect data. The geographic areas of Christchurch and Saskatoon that were explained in Chapter Two were chosen to set manageable geographic boundaries for this research. In regards to time, the research participants completed questionnaires and were interviewed within one month after completing their respective questionnaires. Therefore it should be noted that this time frame only allowed for a snap shot of the research participant's perspectives at a moment in time and that the findings of this research do not claim to be definitive. Finally, questionnaire, interview and observation of classroom teaching space were chosen to create a triangulation of methods whereby increasing the confidence of the findings. This is further discussed later on in this chapter.

Case study also creates what Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003), called thick description that allows readers to make comparisons while allowing the researcher to reveal their perspectives and enable readers to decide whether or not they share the same perspectives. Comparisons were used as this case study set out to examine teachers from two different countries perspectives on schooling. The comparisons were not used to place value or judgement of one teacher or programme over another but sought out the recurring themes and points of difference. The following section outlines the data collection methods used for this case study.

Part One: Data collection methods

The data collection in this study involved two phases. Phase one involved the collection of primary data through an initial online questionnaire using Qualtrics software, photographs of the teachers classroom and a formal in-person elite semi-structured interview with the research participants. Phase two involved the gathering of secondary data collected from

storage sites (libraries, government offices, community organizations, school boards, internet) located in New Zealand and Canada. Ethics approval by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee was acquired on April 15, 2011. Informed consent (signature and date) was obtained from each of the research participants through a document describing the intent of the research.

Questionnaire

An online questionnaire was sent to each research participant using Qualtrics software. A copy of the questionnaire for the Christchurch research participants can be found in Appendix 1 and a copy of the questionnaire for the Saskatoon research participants can be found in Appendix 2. An online questionnaire was chosen as the research participants were in different countries and to more readily facilitate conversion of the data into NVivo software for data analysis later on. Research participants were offered to submit a hard copy of the questionnaire instead of the online form. The questionnaire was used to acquire basic demographic information as well as personal beliefs about education and schooling.

Research participants accessed the questionnaire using an online code. Once the code was activated the questionnaire was to be completed all at one time. One research participant did not have enough time to complete the questionnaire in one sitting. Therefore, he completed the questionnaire over the course of two days. It took each participant a different amount of time to complete the questionnaire, ranging from 45 minutes to 90 minutes. It was not mandatory to answer all the questions. Therefore, some respondents left some questions blank. The responses obtained from the questionnaire allowed me to format the questions for the elite semi-structured interviews as well as write a biographical overview of each of the participants that can be found at the end of this chapter.

Interviews

According to Anderson (1990), elite interviews are directed at research participants who have “a particular experience or knowledge about the subject being discussed” (p. 25). Although all the research participants had differing experiences with the subjects being addressed all were knowledgeable about the subjects in question.

The interviews took place at a location chosen by the research participant. All interviews took place within their teaching places which included classroom settings, work spaces within the school, a local coffee shop in Christchurch city centre, a restaurant in the downtown of Saskatoon and one on site at Blue Mountain wilderness centre in Saskatchewan. All interviews were recorded using a Sony digital recorder and were saved onto a computer and backed up onto a hard drive. The interviews were semi-structured in that the questions were sent to those research participants that requested them beforehand but not all questions were asked or answered during the interview. The interviews varied in time from 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes. An example of the interview questions can be found in Appendix 3. Follow up questions were also asked following the transcription of the interviews for clarification of the research participant’s responses. All interviews were transcribed using the website No Notes online services.

Observation of teaching spaces

Each of the research participants’ teaching spaces were observed either during the interview time or at another date. Pictures were taken to record the physical set up of the classroom. For those programmes that were housed in mainstream schools a picture of another classroom was taken for reference and comparison. These were used during the analysis portion of the

research for comparison to mainstream classrooms and between Christchurch and Saskatoon classrooms which is further discussed in Chapter Five.

Selection of research participants

Using the PBE literature of Gregory Smith (2002, 2005), Sobel (2006), Woodhouse and Knapp (2000), a 13 point criterion (named the tenets of PBE) as outlined in Chapter Two was created to assist in choosing research participants & participating programmes/schools. Through online research and talking with other educators in both countries, seven programmes/schools were chosen that met the criteria within the PBE tenets.

In Saskatoon, I met with Superintendent Gordon Martell of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, and Brenda Green the Superintendent of Saskatoon Public Schools, to seek permission to approach the schools and teachers within each school board. To access the Saskatoon Public Schools I had to send my research proposal to Dr. Scott Tunison, the Coordinator of Research and Measurement. Upon acceptance from Dr. Tunison and Gordon Martell, an email request was sent to four principals to seek permission to contact eight teachers within their schools. Three of the principals responded positively and one never responded to multiple email or phone requests. With the principal's approval, an email request was sent to six teachers to take part in the research. All teachers that were contacted agreed to take part in the research.

In Christchurch it was much more difficult to find research participants because I was an outsider (non New Zealander) and did not have the same knowledge of the school systems I had previously gained as a teacher in Saskatoon. The major earthquakes that struck Christchurch (2010, 2011) resulted in another obstacle and is further discussed in Part Two of

this chapter. Due to the effects of the earthquakes upon the personal and professional lives of Christchurch schools/programmes and teachers, I received only 1 email back from 10 inquiries to the potential schools/programmes and affiliated (teacher) research participants I had identified. Therefore, I decided to put my search in Christchurch on hold.

After a period of time I was able to start my search again for teachers, and by this time I had made more contacts within Christchurch as well as re-imagined my research under these new constraints. My principal research supervisor, Dr. Richard Manning introduced me to two teachers, Mark and Lisa, that he had observed using ideas of PBE in their schools who subsequently became part of my research.

Through an introduction by a colleague of mine, I also met with a woman who was one of the people involved with the creation of Horoeka School. She introduced me to Tara, one of the teachers who became part of my research. Tara introduced me to one of her colleagues, Bob, who also agreed to take part in the research. As I had two teachers from mainstream state schools and two from special character schools I wanted to find someone working in a private (independent) school which led me to seek out participants from Kahikatea School. I met Olly, the principal of Kahikatea School by chance at a presentation that took place at the University of Canterbury. I talked to him about my research and he told me about Kahikatea. A week later I sent Olly a request to take part in the research and he agreed. I thought it was important to get a cross-section of participants from the state, special character and private schools.

Ethical considerations

The case study used for this research project was small in nature with only 11 research participants. Only a small sample set could be accessed due to the specific nature of the study. Therefore only research participants were chosen who were observed using the tenets of PBE. The research is comparative in nature to draw out the recurring themes and points of difference between the research participants and by no means is meant to generalize the majority of teachers in New Zealand and Canada.

Each research participant as well as their school/programme was given a fictitious name in an attempt to conceal their identities. Each school/programme was given the name of local flora found in the area. Photographs of these local floras are provided in Part Four of this chapter. Each research participant was aware that their name would remain anonymous through any publications of this research as outlined in the research information sheet (Appendix 4) as well as the research consent form (Appendix 5). Any references to the names of the schools/programmes were also taken out of the reference section as well.

Part Two: Limitations of the research

The findings from this small-scale case study cannot be, and were never intended to be, generalized as indicative of the views and situations of all teachers engaged in PBE in New Zealand or Canada, given that it presents findings drawn from interviews with and observations (in classroom teaching spaces) of a small number of teachers from just two cities (Christchurch and Saskatoon) within these countries. Environmental factors also need to be considered with regard to the limitations of this research.

Christchurch earthquake sequence

On September 4th, 2010 and February 22nd, 2011, Christchurch was struck by two large earthquakes that changed that city forever. These earthquakes occurred at the beginning of this study when I was looking for participants in Christchurch. Throughout much of the research period, all of the eventual Christchurch research participants were (like myself) emotionally, mentally and physically dealing with the effects of the earthquakes in very different ways. For me, the earthquakes made it considerably more difficult to conduct the research in Christchurch.

I originally sent out information to 10 teachers in Christchurch, who were known to be using outdoor education and other aspects of PBE within their schools, when the second and most damaging quake occurred. Understandably, only one teacher responded during this initial approach to recruit participants to disclose the difficulties he was dealing with at home and school (due to the earthquakes). I therefore decided to delay my approach to potential research participants for the Christchurch portion of this study for one year and instead conducted my research in Saskatoon.

Eventually, six teachers from Christchurch schools agreed to participate, but when we finally met, we were all still feeling the effects of the big quake and the ongoing aftershocks. Two of the teachers taught in a school that had been so badly damaged that it was now condemned and staff and students of the secondary level of that school ended up sharing space with a residential college. This high school then relocated one year later to a shared site with a post-secondary institution. Another teacher's school was being shared by an all girls' high school and was dealing with damage to its adjoining cathedral.

Limited number of teachers using PBE

A main criterion determining which teachers I approached to participate in this study was that they were using some of the tenets of place-based education (as described in Chapter Two); either within or apart from mainstream schooling. Due to the narrow focus of my research the number of research participants that fit within the tenets of PBE was limited.

Researcher as outsider

As a visitor to New Zealand, I performed this research largely as an outsider, with limited community connections within Christchurch or wider New Zealand society. This may have caused potential research participants to have reservations about my intent, and may have been a reason why they did not partake in this study. Overall, a smaller sample size of research participants was desirable, as it allowed for greater focus and richer data than what could be gleaned from a larger quantitative study.

On balance, though, I think the disruption caused by the earthquakes was the stronger contributing factor for the reluctance of some of the potential research participants. Regardless of the fact that I was an outsider, those that did participate seemed to have few, if any, preconceived notions about me. I think this and our shared experience of the earthquakes made them more receptive to the questions I asked them and made them more willing to provide me with open and honest answers. Some of this may also have been attributed to the time I waited for things to settle down in our earth-shaken city. During this time I adopted a slow methodology approach for choosing research participants as I wanted to build relationships with them. As I discuss in the methodology chapter of this thesis, an important part of my research work was this collaborative relationship building of genuinely relational

connections (not research focussed) with each of the research participants in order to facilitate open and honest discussion of the questions I asked them.

Lack of Indigenous research participants

Given PBE and critical pedagogy of place are committed to engendering, amongst other things, social justice for minority groups and colonized peoples, I was particularly interested in gaining perspectives from Indigenous teachers employing PBE tenets in their pedagogical practice. Two participants from Christchurch self-identified themselves as Māori (40% of the Christchurch participants). However, in Saskatoon no participants self-identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuit (0% of Saskatoon participants). While searching for teachers to participate in the Saskatoon study, I did hear of one such teacher but was unable to contact him, as the principal of his school did not respond to emails or phone calls. I thought I had followed both cultural and school board protocols when contacting all of the principals. I do not know why the principal failed to contact me but it may have been for reasons associated with protecting the teacher or issues of cultural taxation. (For further information on cultural taxation, see Joseph & Hirshfield, 2010; Torepe, 2010.) The following section outlines the data collection aspect of this case study.

Part Three: Data analysis procedures

Organising the data for analysis

The data analysis involved organizing and coding the key information into the four domains of interest (time, space, curriculum and assessment) that will be further outlined in Chapter Four: Place and PBE; Chapter Five: Time and Space; Chapter Six: Curriculum and Assessment and Chapter Seven: Critical-pedagogy of Place.

Domains of interest

The domains of interest were chosen as some of the most common elements found in mainstream schooling. Each domain has been widely researched and critiqued by authors around the world. They were also chosen as they are common elements found in schools in both New Zealand and Canada. This allowed for comparisons to be more easily drawn between the two areas being researched.

Coding

Coding was done in three stages; the first stage involved manually separating the transcripts contained on Microsoft Word documents into the four domains of interest and inputting it onto a Microsoft Excel worksheet. The second stage involved taking all of the electronic data and inputting it into Nvivo software. Nvivo allows users to sort data into nodes/themes using multiple functions including word search. It was also used as a back-up to keep all data stored. The final coding was done to double check the other two stages of coding and was done by colour coding the original written transcripts.

Throughout the data analysis the term theme will be described as an integrating relational idea from the data (Richards, 2005) . As the data analysis is a process over time, themes were created through what Goetz & Le Compte (1981), termed constant comparison and described it as "events are constantly compared with previous events, new topological dimension, as well as new relationships, may be discovered" (p. 58). The themes and points of difference will be further discussed in Chapter Four, Five, Six, Seven and Eight.

Verification procedures

As a way to test reliability within this research, a triangulation of methods process was applied. The three key components of this process included a questionnaire, interviews and observation of classroom teaching spaces. As Brewer and Hunter (1989) contended, the triangulation of methods “in concert compensates for their individual limitations and exploits their respective benefits” (p. 65). While triangulation does not ensure trustworthiness within qualitative research, it does allow for a confidence in the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Although this research does not seek a positivist form of (T)ruth, or generalizability, it was important that its methods and analysis can be relied upon.

Part Four: Profile of participating schools/programmes and research participants

This part sets the scene for this research by introducing the schools/programmes as well as the research participants. An overview of the schools/programmes is presented and then the research participants are introduced through a short biography including their beliefs on schooling, education, alternative forms of learning as well those people and places that have influenced their teaching.

New Zealand research participants and their schools/programmes

Horoeka

Horoeka (also known as lancewood and is a native New Zealand tree as shown in Figure 3.1) is a secondary school located in Christchurch. It is a designated character school, which the Ministry of Education (2013) website defines as a “state school that teaches the New Zealand Curriculum, but has developed their own sets of aims, purposes and objectives to reflect their own values” (n.p.).



Figure 3.1: Horoeka (Lancewood)

(<http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/native-plants/lancewood-horoeka/>)

Horoeka was established in 2003 and was originally located in the city centre, but due to the 2011 Christchurch earthquake, the school was relocated first to a subdivision in the south west of city and then again to a subdivision in the west of the city. The school currently shares space with the post-secondary institution but is not affiliated with the institution. The current student body is approximately 400 students, aged 12-18 years old and it is a decile six school. The decile system according the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2015):

“indicates the extent to which the school draws its students from low socio-economic communities. Decile 1 schools are the 10 percent of schools with the highest proportion of students from low socio-economic communities, whereas decile 10 schools are the 10 percent of schools with the lowest proportion of these students” (n.p.).

The special character of Horoeke can be described by the following 10 tenets described by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Innovative Learning Environment Project (n.d.):

- students are central in directing their own learning
- students follow individual interests and enthusiasms
- curriculum and qualification needs are met through a student's chosen path not a prescribed route
- learning experiences extend beyond boundaries of place, time, age, methods of learning and areas of study
- the entire community is the learning environment
- families are vital and active partners in the holistic learning for students
- we encourage, nurture and celebrate creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship
- the individuality of each student is valued
- we are a high trust community, treating each other with mutual respect and kindness
- everyone is a learner and everyone is a teacher (p. 8).

Students can decide to work outside of the classroom, as well as outside of classes or courses, on topics that they are interested in. An individual education plan (IEP) is developed for each student and according to the Horoeke School website (2014):

The IEP is developed in consultation with students, parents and learning advisors. This plan helps to decide what learner directed experiences a student will engage with, and what balance of courses the student will enrol in. The plan must reflect and be underpinned by the New Zealand Curriculum, but the curriculum does not drive

the learning programmes. Teamwork, communication skills, citizenship and global awareness are encouraged. The key competencies found in the NZ Curriculum (thinking, using language, symbols and texts, participating and contributing, relating to others and managing self) are seen as important, and a student's IEP is developed to ensure ample opportunities to grow in these areas (n.p.).

An IEP meeting is held once a term at the very least, with parents, students and learning advisers (a certified teachers) in attendance.

Students are grouped in homebases with 15 students in each. Everyone is on a first name basis. Students meet with their learning advisor for 25 minutes per week. During these meetings students and their learning advisors might discuss relationships, what the student has done over the week, progress the student has made, his or her classes, new learning, the student's digital portfolio, issues the student may have, the students IEP goals, what support can be offered to the students, and careers (Horoeka School website, 2014).

The use of community and environment surrounding the physical location of the school provides important opportunities for the students to learn in unique ways. The former location of the school, in the central business district, enabled the school to make use of community resources including the central Christchurch City Library and Hagley Park (Horoeka School website, 2014).

Horoeka offers a variety of secondary school subjects including social sciences, computing, drama, dance, English, mathematics, science, and physical and outdoor education. Horoeka also offers several courses that are not provided at most other secondary schools. These

include DJ performance and music production, entrepreneurship, holistic programmes, philosophy, psychology and videogame design. Horoeke has high-end information and communications technology (ICT), and all students have the opportunity to gain qualifications in the New Zealand National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) (Horoeke School website, 2014).

Horoeke research participants

Tara is a female deputy principal at Horoeke who identifies herself as a New Zealander. She speaks Spanish as a second language, and she holds a Master's degree in education. She has been in the field of education for over 11 years, and at Horoeke for over three years. She has taught both middle years and high school.

Tara described Horoeke as a place where “students are central to their learning. [Teachers and students have] shared responsibilities/accountabilities for success. Teachers act as facilitators and learners, and learning happens where and how it happens best.” At Horoeke, support has been received for the teachers from community members who work with specific students or groups of students depending on their interest and enthusiasms.

Tara described alternative education as “not the status quo”, but believed the definition can depend on the audience and their preconceived understandings. She believed that education and learning is “about exploring and opening up opportunities. It is not necessarily training towards narrow skills or knowledge sets [like schooling], but more about growing attitudes, skills and dispositions for a lifetime of learning.” She also believed that “an important part of teaching is learning”, and that “teaching feeds, nurtures, extends, motivates, inspires and supports rather than narrowly defines or labels.”

Tara has been influenced by several academic theorists, including John Dewey, Paulo Freire, A.S. Neill, Howard Gardner, Tony Buzan, Yaakov Hecht, and Maurice Gibbons. She believed in “being entrepreneurial and constantly learning herself, so that she can best meet the needs of all whom she works with.” The students, parents, and whānau (extended family) she has worked with over the years have been the “best guides as to what works best for them. Friends and family members sharing their worst (sometimes devastating) experiences of education/schooling have guided what she aspires to never do herself.” She believed self-review is “a must”. Her own teachers have provided inspiration for her, and she has adapted some of their traits into her own teaching. This included being open minded, and “creating lots of hands-on real world learning experiences, being in the day/moment/feeling in the room.” These people that were influential in her life were not precious or selfish with their knowledge, questions and expertise, and they were people who believed in her”, and whom she describes as “explorers”. While in school as a youth, Tara stated that using the environment was “just part and parcel at our school.” She works closely with Bob who is described next.

Bob is a male deputy principal at Horoeke who identifies himself as a New Zealander. He has been in the field of education for over 21 years, and has been working at Horoeke for over 11 years. He holds a Bachelor’s degree and has taught high school.

Bob believed in using a “personalized approach to developing learning programmes that reflect the contextual talents and interests of students.” He defined alternative education as “educational opportunities that are not designed or offered within the mainstream or conventional environment”. He believed that “schooling is a delivery mechanism.”

Education, on the other hand has “learning as the core purpose”, and that it is a “process which enables learning to occur.” Bob considered that “teaching can only exist in the presence of learning. If learning is not occurring then neither is teaching. Learning is the changing of previously held understandings or skills to a newly held state. Teaching is what happened to create that changing state.”

Bob has been influenced by the work of Howard Gardner, who he said “opened my mind to another way of approaching learning, and so, teaching.” His teaching has been influenced most directly by “the educators he directly interacts with [such as] colleagues, mentors and consultants.” From his former teachers, he has adapted their “use of humour” and “bringing student’s lives into the classroom” as well as “taking learning out of the classroom.”

“Nature and wild places” are important to Bob because “they exist unchanged.” He explained “there is an honesty and purity about these places. They are not ‘an expression’ or ‘representation’ of some ‘thing’ or another. They are what they are.” Brian Fowler (the New Zealand cyclist) was one of the most influential people in Bob’s life to teach him about place. He taught Bob about local history through stories, amongst many other things.

Kahikatea

Kahikatea (a coniferous tree that is endemic to New Zealand as shown in Figure 3.2) is a primary and intermediate school located in Christchurch, a few kilometres southeast of the city centre. The current student body is approximately 30, aged 5 to 12. The school opened in 2009. It is an independent (private) school.



Figure 3.2: Kahikatea (White Pine)

(<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/78/Kahikatea.jpg>)

Kahikatea charges fees, but also receives some funding from the government. It is governed by its own independent board and must meet certain standards to be registered with the Ministry of Education. As an independent school, Kahikatea does not have to follow the New Zealand Curriculum but must follow a learning programme of at least the same quality

Kahikatea School is owned by The Holistic Education Trust (H.E.T). The educational philosophy of the school draws from the fields of education, parenting, psychology, biology, science and spirituality, while striving for a global and holistic worldview. According to the Journey to Brilliance (2013) website, the three important principles of education which are implemented as much as possible into the curriculum are:

- whole person development

- fully engaged learning
- re-connection with nature (n.p.).

The key components of the curriculum are:

- an internally focussed self-growth curriculum which complements and extends the standard externally oriented curriculum
- an ongoing, age-appropriate balance of physical, emotional, mental and intuitive development at all levels
- a broad awareness of the world and its various inter-relationships
- exploring self in the world, to grow an awareness of one's calling or vocation (n.p.).

Teaching at Kahikatea is largely individually tailored, and geared towards each child's own needs and goals. Students have a say in choosing their own learning in order to help develop their sense of empowerment and self-worth. Each teacher has 12 students, and every classroom is set up creatively by educators and learners, in a way that supports the learners' needs. Each classroom contains mixed-age groups of children, comprised of a three-year span corresponding to developmental stages of children. Classrooms are set up with various learning centres and contain extensive collections of learning materials which match the learning styles, developmental capabilities, interests, and needs of the children enrolled in that class. Educators often work with one or two children at a time (Journey to Brilliance website, 2013).

The subjects of focus at Kahikatea are arts (music, art and crafts), socio-literacy (development of relationships), sports/physical education, eco-literacy (interconnection of

nature in balance), science, and information technology (IT). There is a strong emphasis on physical well-being. The subjects are disseminated through the personal experiences of the students as much as possible.

Kahikatea research participant

Olly is a male principal and teacher at Kahikatea School who identifies himself as having European ethnicity. He has been working in the field of education for over 21 years, and has been at Kahikatea for two years. He holds a Master's degree and a Doctoral degree. In the past he has been a principal and taught middle years at a rural school.

Olly's philosophy for the Kahikatea School is a holistic experiential curriculum, building each child's innate brilliance. Olly expressed his philosophy for teaching and learning and had developed over the course of his career was really a perfect match to Kahikatea, because without knowing that the opportunity at Kahikatea existed, he had shaped his doctoral thesis all around it.

Olly has been highly influenced by his work at Kahikatea. He said "it changes your whole perspective when you're actually doing the stuff and really connecting with kids ... Educators have a really deep and significant connection with each child. I think, we think, that that's a key to who we are as well, and that's behind our philosophy too."

Harakeke

Harakeke (also known as New Zealand flax as shown in Figure 3.3) is a public secondary school located in Christchurch city central. It was formed in 1987 but its roots can be traced back to the mid nineteenth century. The current student body is approximately 250 students

aged 12-18. The school is considered to be an integrated school with special (religious) character as the school adheres to the Catholic faith. Students must wear a uniform, and both New Zealand citizens and international students are accepted. It is a decile four school.



Figure 3.3: Harakeke (Flax)

(<http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/native-plants/harakeke-flax/>)

Harakeke follows the standard New Zealand curriculum, including NCEA standardized testing. Unlike other public schools, all students partake in religious education. Morning prayers and mass services enable the students to stay involved in the religious life of the college. The schools vision for the curriculum is faith driven and academically focussed, while focussed on skills based learning and positive behaviour (Harakeke, 2013).

The subjects available to students include English, mathematics, religious education, science (including biology, chemistry and physics), drama, music, social studies, physical education, food and nutrition, textiles, languages, digital technology, graphics technology, music, media

studies, and hospitality and catering. Harakeke also has some unique on-site facilities. In 2012 a new teaching block was opened that includes food technology, science laboratories, a graphics and design area, a high-speed computer room for digital technology and a hard materials workshop. The school also has a radio station recording studio, and a large sports centre (Harakeke, 2013).

Harakeke research participant

Mark is a male who has been working in the field of education for over six years. He identifies himself as Māori and speaks Māori. He is the syndicate leader at Harakeke where he has been working for over three years, and holds a Master's degree in education. He has taught both middle years and high school.

In speaking about teaching Mark stated “the programme has to be inclusive of participants, and at times led by participants.” The Education Review Office (2013) found positive relationships among students and teachers and full student engagement in learning was evident in most classrooms. They also found there were high expectations for achievement. Mark's philosophy of teaching is to work with the students and be prepared to share leadership roles. He also believed in teaching in an environment related to what you are teaching about. For example, teaching Māori at a Marae.

Tī kōuka

Tī kōuka (also known as the cabbage tree and is endemic to New Zealand as shown in Figure 3.4) opened in 1951 and is a state secondary school located in the northwest part of Christchurch. It currently has a student body of over 2500 students aged 13-18 and rated as a decile eight school. The school is divided into four divisions, each with its own divisional

principal, dean and guidance counsellor, so that students effectively are part of a school of up to 700.



Figure 3.4: Tī kōuka (Cabbage Tree)

(<http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/native-plants/cabbage-tree-ti-kouka/>)

Tī kōuka follows the standard New Zealand curriculum, including NCEA standardized testing. Unique to other schools, Tī kōuka has a large purpose built performing arts centre, allowing for a strong curriculum in dance, drama and music. In addition, it has extensive sports courts, a gymnasium, a swimming pool and sports fields. This gives students the opportunity to be involved in a very wide range of extracurricular activities (Tī kōuka, 2013).

The faculties at Tī kōuka include creative arts, English, mathematics, languages, physical education and health, social sciences, science, and technology. Subjects are disseminated in a conventional classroom setting in most cases, making use of the facilities located at the high

school. In some cases, field trips outside of Christchurch are used to help students acquire a deeper understanding of the subject matter (Tī kōuka, 2013).

Tī kōuka research participant

Lisa is a female teacher at Tī kōuka high school who identifies herself as Māori. She has been in the field of education as a teacher for over 6 years, and holds a Master's degree in education. She has only taught high school.

Lisa prefers her classroom to be “in a group setting, and for her curriculum to be interactive and enable students to be independent learners and collaborators.” Where possible she would “prefer to take her learning outside.” She believes that “education empowers students and gives them options for their future” while “schooling is just going through the motion of learning.” Lisa's teaching has been “influenced by other teachers” who have given her “ideas on activities, how to teach certain topics and how to help students get the best out of education.”

Saskatoon research participants and their schools/programmes

Poplar

Poplar (common deciduous tree found in Saskatchewan as shown in Figure 3.5) is a public school programme based out of a mainstream elementary school in the northeast part of Saskatoon. The programme began in 2003 and has approximately 20-25 students aged 13-14 years old (grade eight). The students come from all parts of Saskatoon and have to apply to take part in the Poplar programme. The school that houses Poplar also offers kindergarten through grade eight for mainstream classes.



Figure 3.5: Poplar

(<http://natureray.com/deciduous.htm>)

Poplar is an ecological, outdoor adventure programme for students in the Saskatoon Public School District (SPSD) that provides an active learning experience. Poplar learning takes place primarily outdoors and the curriculum is taught through field studies and first hand exploration. According to the Saskatoon Public Schools (2013) website, “the students work together and form a close community while developing understanding and appreciation of environmental and social issues. Experiential learning techniques in the outdoors help the students to build their self-esteem and citizenship skills” (n.p.). The Saskatoon Public Schools (2013) website states the objectives of the programme are to develop:

- a strong sense of community with fellow classmates, teachers, and community partners
- an ability to think critically about ecological, cultural, and community issues
- a greater knowledge and appreciation of the History of Saskatchewan and its relationship to Canadian and global issues
- a greater awareness of Social Justice issues

- cultural awareness and appreciation
- greater knowledge and appreciation of the fragility of Saskatchewan's natural environment and ecological regions
- a heightened sense of accomplishment, confidence, and self-worth. Leadership, risk management, and cooperative group skills that are necessary in adventure education
- a responsible attitude towards learning and problem solving
- growth in positive communication and observational skills. Improved research, writing, and presentation skills
- a dedication to physical fitness and healthy lifestyles
- skills that underlie academic excellence and achievement in all subject areas (n.p.).

The Poplar programme challenges students academically, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Instructional field studies range from day trips in and around Saskatoon to major extended expeditions around Saskatchewan. Time is also spent in the classroom responding to and analyzing the field studies and the data collected. Poplar's three major themes are; a sense of place, a sense of time and a sense of quality. Instruction is provided in all required areas of study, including language arts, math, science, social studies, arts education, physical education, practical and applied arts, career education, and health (Saskatoon Public Schools, 2013).

Poplar research participants

Steve is a male teacher and programme leader at Poplar. He identifies himself as Canadian. He has been working in the field of education for over 21 years, and at Poplar for over six years. He holds a Master's degree in education and has worked with middle years students.

Steve stated that education is “student engagement in an educational environment that allows critical thinking about the broader world outside the indoor classroom is vital.” He explained that “providing educational experiences that support critical thinking in an ecological context is the foundation of Poplar.” Steve described the structure of the programme as holistic, and says that it “incorporates the intellectual, social, emotional, physical and spiritual.” In addition, “ecological experiences involve land-based and urban interaction and analysis. Many of the problem-based assignments that students are involved in critique mainstream thought and attempt to engage students in action for positive change in their communities.”

Steve described alternative as “different from ‘traditional’ classroom structures and teaching.” Steve stated that “education is a broader lifelong approach that happens both formally and informally in a variety of ways.” He believed schooling is “highly structured and typically follows a traditional model of indoor classroom learning with a teacher centred approach.” Steve explained that the current structures of schooling are not working particularly well as students enter adolescence there is an increase in rigidity and transmissional approaches to teaching providing an environment that is autocratic and disengaging. As a result, most students disconnect from learning and are simply going through the motions of the game called “schooling” if they have the aptitude and endurance to succeed. Steve has been influenced by several theorists, including John Dewey, David Greenwood, David Orr, Mitchell Thomashow, Richard Louv and Stan Rowe.

Janet is a female teacher at Poplar and this is her first year with the programme. She identifies herself as having European ethnicity. She holds a Master's degree in education.

Janet described the basis of the Poplar programme:

Through subject integration students are able to focus on environmental and social justice themes and approach these themes through experiential and project based learning. Their learning timelines are often fluid, and they work not to interrupt the students' curiosity and focus by changing subjects or breaking the day into short bits.

As a teacher, Janet strived "to provide opportunities for students to connect with one another, the local ecosystems, and community members." Janet stated that at Poplar "learning timelines are often fluid, we work not to interrupt our students' curiosity and focus by changing subjects or breaking the day up into short bits. Our goal is to improve student creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking skills."

Janet defined alternative education as "an alternative medium through which to achieve similar learning objectives." She believed "the medium is a big part of the learning, so the learning design in itself is a sort of curriculum." She stated that "at Poplar we carve out spaces for alternative types of learning to occur which may not be supported in a regular school environment." Janet explained there is a difference between education and schooling. "Schooling is a prescribed experience which has been determined by the government to provide a foundational knowledge to participate in society. Education is much broader than this. It includes learning in the everyday as well as within schools, families, etc."

Several academic theorists have influenced Janet. These include Rachel Carson, bell hooks, David Orr, Wendell Berry, Mitchell Thomashow, E.O. Wilson, David Greenwood, Ivan Illich, David Sobel, Marie Battiste and Paulo Freire. Janet has been influenced by her parents who are also both teachers and who “continuously supported her learning. They believed curiosity and creative exploration were important.”

Birch

Birch (deciduous hard wood tree found in Saskatchewan as shown in Figure 3.6) is a one-year programme that is part of the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (GSCS) and is based out of a mainstream elementary school in the northwest part of Saskatoon. The programme began in 2009 and has 24 students 13 to 14 years of age (grade eight). Students of varying gender, socio-economic status, and special needs are accepted into the programme. Students must apply to take part in the programme and can apply from any part of the city.



Figure 3.6: Birch

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birch>)

The Birch programme allows students to explore the issues of social justice through an environmental lens. According to GSCS (2010) the objectives of the programme are to promote the following:

- a God-centred and sacramental view of the universe
- a world view affirming the ethical significance of global interdependence, the global common good and an ethic of solidarity
- an understanding of the need for equitable use of the Earth's resources and an option for the poor
- a greater knowledge and appreciation of the history of Saskatchewan and its relationship to Canadian and global issues
- a heightened sense of accomplishment, confidence and self-worth
- a responsible attitude toward learning and problem-solving

- growth in positive communication and observational skills, improved research, writing and presentation skills
- a dedication to physical fitness and healthy lifestyles
- skills that underlie academic excellence and achievement in all subject areas (p. 3).

The GSCS (2011) website described the learning techniques used within the programme as:

‘problem-based learning’ which entails that students must think, retrieve information for themselves, search for new ideas and debate them in a scholarly environment. An ecological participatory model is used that provides increased environmental awareness, an improved school environment, involvement of the local community, pupil empowerment and a spiritual connection (n.p.).

The students work together, and form a close community. Time is spent around the Saskatoon area as well as on day and multiday trips throughout Saskatchewan. Programming themes include sustainable urban design and urban trekking, First Nations studies, boreal forest ecology, team building, winter ecology and survival skills, environment vs. community and My Impact on the World. All curriculum subjects are taught in the field (outdoors) except for mathematics. However, the students also spend time in the classroom analyzing the data collected and examining out-of-school experiences (GSCS, 2011). As stated by GSCS (2010) “All the required academic subjects are integrated into Birch’s major themes, which are Spirituality, Humanity and Responsibility ... New learning techniques are used in the programme that may be expanded to other schools in the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Board in the future. These learning innovations include one-to-one computers (every student in the programme has a laptop), problem based learning, interest based learning, and learning

in the community. The programme helps students to develop their academic skills, physical skills, participation and social skills and spiritual development” (p. 4-5).

Birch research participants

Don is a male teacher with a Master’s degree in education who identifies himself as Euro-Canadian. He speaks French as a second language. He has been teaching for over 3 years at Birch and before working at the programme he worked for many years at a mainstream school with middle years students.

In speaking about Birch he described it as, “a classroom/programme philosophy that promotes socio-environmental education that is experiential in nature. Under this model authoritative, hegemonic barriers are lifted within the student-teacher relationship and the pedagogical focus shifts from didactic education to meaningful experience and thus a critical consciousness is realized. Students are empowered to take ownership of their learning. There is a focus on the transformative and educational process rather than product.” To Don, alternative education “challenges the traditional systems and structures of education.” Don defined schooling as “the formal system to education, however one can receive an education with or without schooling. If you allow an individual the freedom to explore the world around them, inevitably education will be found ... under the rock, in the wind patterns, the crashing waves on the lake, the aerodynamics of a bird’s flight, etc. Schooling attempts to capture moments such as these, describe them, place them into textbooks, and recite them to students.” However, with education, “the individual can direct their personal experience, [and] the world around them becomes their teacher.”

Don has been influenced by several theorists that include John Dewey, Marcia McKenzie, Paulo Freire, David Greenwood, Henry Giroux and David Purpel. Don states that his wife has also influenced his approach to life, outlook on life, and hence his teaching style. His colleague (Malcolm) has challenged him to continually grow as an educator. He has also been influenced by some previous professors and teachers. Don felt most engaged with one of his teachers “who enthusiastically challenged the norm.”

Malcolm is a male teacher who identifies himself as Filipino Canadian. He has a Master’s degree in education, and has been working at Birch for three years. Before teaching at the Birch programme, he was an elementary school teacher at a mainstream school in Saskatoon.

Malcolm’s teaching philosophy is to provide a classroom where the opportunity for positive change is available. Malcolm stated, “providing educational experiences that support critical thinking in an ecological context is the foundation of Birch.” He believed in trying to “create a classroom where equality and dignity are key.” He stated that at Birch, “our students lead many of our learning areas and we focus on their passions and connections with the world to create critical thinkers who will go out into society and create change.” Much of his philosophy has been influenced by the writings of Paulo Freire, Noam Chomsky, Henry Giroux, and David Purpel.

Willow

Willow (deciduous tree found in Saskatchewan as shown in Figure 3.7) is a one-semester (half school year) programme that is part of the Saskatoon Public School and is based out of a mainstream high school in the southeast part of Saskatoon. The programme began in 2009

and has 20-25 students 15-16 years of age (grade ten). The programme aims to have a diverse student body from all areas of the city.



Figure 3.7: Willow

<https://www.regina.ca/residents/parks/community-tree-greenspace/trees-of-significance/>

Based on the Saskatoon Public Schools (2012) website the programme is set out to equip students with the skills and values necessary to be leaders in the areas of sustainable living and active citizenship. The programme includes several single and multi-day trips, consultation with field experts and practical hands on activities. Students also gain first-hand experience in the fields of sustainable design, self sufficiency, and community development through three major projects. Students run regular class meetings which give them the opportunity to make important decisions and plan new “action projects” to take on. Their action projects allow students to apply concepts they have learned while making a difference in their community. This real life practice as an active citizen is meant to show the students

that making changes in their community is possible, and to give people an understanding of what is involved.

The field trips mentally and physically challenge the students, and give them exposure to inspiring people who are leading the way towards a more sustainable culture. Assignments are meant to educate the students about the impacts of their lifestyle choices and encourage them to question their current ways of thinking. Confrontation of their personal limits enables students to grow and gain confidence (Saskatoon Public Schools, 2012).

The students and teachers become a close-knit community that is primarily student lead. Throughout the semester, students take on community responsibilities including cooking for their peers, leading wellness activities, and growing and maintaining a garden. Subjects offered within the Willow's programme include English, science, mathematics, band, wellness, and practical and applied arts (Saskatoon Public Schools, 2012).

Willow research participants

Rebecca is a female who is a new teacher at Willow. She has a bachelor's degree and teaches high school years 10 through 12. She had previously taught at high school in many different subject areas.

At Willow, the programme incorporates projects that apply to the broader community and give an exposure to places in the city that students wouldn't get in a conventional classroom setting. Rebecca said "In my mind, the purpose of education is to create positive effective citizens. ... You can't just tell students about what's out there. They need to see it, and experience it."

John was a full time teacher at a mainstream high school before creating and teaching within the Willow programme. John is passionate about sustainability and living a simple lifestyle because of the benefits this brings to himself and his community. He believed that his actions can inspire and promote change in the world. Some of his interests include music, carpentry, beekeeping, aquaponics and sustainable food production.

Summary of Interview Respondents

Table 3.1, below, provides a tabulation of the interview respondents along with their locations, school name, type of funding, and the programme name where applicable.

Table 3.1: Summary of interview respondents.

<i>Respondant Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Programme</i>	<i>Age of Students (Years)</i>	<i>School Type</i>
Bob	Christchurch	Horoeka (Lancewood)	n/a	12-18	State School- Designated Character
Tara					
Olly	Christchurch	Kahikatea (White Pine)	n/a	5-12	Private School
Mark	Christchurch	Harakeke (Flax)	n/a	12-18	State School- Special (Religious) Character
Lisa	Christchurch	Tī kōuka (Cabbage Tree)	n/a	12-18	State School
Janet	Saskatoon	Mainstream Elementary School	Poplar	13-14	Public School
Steve					
Malcolm	Saskatoon	Mainstream Elementary School	Birch	13-14	Catholic School
Don					
Rebecca	Saskatoon	Mainstream High School	Willow	15-16	Public School
John					

The following chapters delve into how each of the research participants use PBE and challenge mainstream schooling concepts of place, space, time, curriculum and assessment. We begin this journey which takes us through their ideas, experiences, and teaching pedagogies by first examining these in the context of place.

Chapter Four: Place and Place-based Education

The teachers interviewed for this study all viewed place as an important aspect of education. In this chapter, I examine not only how they were using place and place based education (PBE) in their educational programmes and schools but also the challenges some of them were experiencing when endeavouring to apply PBE approaches. According to Gruenewald (2008):

Place is essential to education ... because it provides researchers and practitioners with a concrete focus for cultural study, and because it expands a cultural landscape to include related ecosystems, bioregions, and all the space-specific interactions between the human and the more-than-human world. Place-based educators are especially interested in the power of place as a context for diverse experiences that do not and probably cannot happen in the institution of school. It is diverse places that make possible diverse experiences and diverse cultural and ecological formations. The attention to experience in place-based education locates its pedagogy in the broader traditions of experiential and contextual education and in the philosophical tradition of phenomenology (p. 143).

Gruenewald's definition set the stage for the dialogues that make up much of this chapter. These explore why community, the outdoors and authentic learning experiences were important educational facets for the teachers interviewed in this study. The first two sections in the chapter relate to the teachers. These sections look at how place had affected their pedagogical practice and the challenges they experienced when using it in that practice. The next three sections give specific examples of how their programmes/schools were using place and PBE. I have broken each section into three parts, the first of which focused on the

research participants from Christchurch and the second on those from Saskatoon. The third section provides a summation of the content of the previous sections and emphasises any recurring themes or points of difference evident in the findings of those first two parts.

Participating teachers' understanding of place and place-based education

In Chapter Three, the teachers interviewed for this study mentioned people and places that had influenced them and their teaching practice. Here, I look more closely at some of these influences, at all times paying particular heed to the notion of place and the practice of PBE.

Christchurch, New Zealand

For Lisa, PBE meant “experiencing the place for yourself and learning about the multi-faceted parts of that area.” Lisa’s marae¹⁰ was an important place to her because it is part of her heritage. Other important places were those where she had spent a significant amount of time, namely the Philippines, California, and many locations in New Zealand. She said that during her pre-service education, those teachers who taught her about “the local environment, Akaroa, Hanmer, and the central city [of Christchurch]” all influenced her views of place and PBE. Another influence, she noted, were the courses she took while studying for her Master’s degree. Other courses, she said, seemed to dismiss the potential connection between education outside of the classroom and place-based education:

I've always thought about place-based education as being sort of outdoor education, but we don't really talk about it at school. [At the] University [of Canterbury], Dr. Richard Manning has really sort of been the driver behind it. I never really thought

¹⁰Marae (meeting grounds) are used for celebrations, meetings, funerals and other events. Māori see their marae as tūrangawaewae—their place to stand and belong.

too much about it before. I've thought about trips and things, but I've never really put it into the focus of place-based education per se. We would tend to go to the place and do what we needed to do and then you go on ... In teachers' college, we went on trips. I don't know if that's place-based education. I think it's an activity— going into the art gallery and learning what you could do and talking to students there, but it's not technically considered place-based education.

As a woman of Ngāi Tahu (the local Māori tribe) descent, Lisa said she believed in the importance of incorporating the history of her ancestors into her teaching and the curriculum. “I would certainly bring in Ngāi Tahu,” she explained, “and the importance of history to people other than the Europeans, because what we are missing is the element of Māori education. We barely talk about it here, as far as my history is concerned.” She paused before continuing: “You should at least bring in how important the [local Christchurch] estuary was for Māori because it was a huge source of kai [food], a source of transportation, a source of being able to move from place to place, and we don't talk about that.” The reason why these matters are not studied, she continued, is because they are not “in the exams”. The importance that Lisa ascribed to inclusion of local iwi (tribal) history resonated with Mark.

When talking of his family, Mark, from Harakeke, provided an example of how certain people in a teacher's or student's life can influence that person's interpretation of place and PBE:

All of my ideas [about PBE] come from a plan that was started from my uncle. He had this vision of starting up a school on a marae. His idea came from talking to the teachers of the school in Queen Charlotte Sounds because that would be the high

school that worked with the local mussel farmers, and because a local farmer was saying [there] is a lack of qualified, trained people to work in the mussel farm.

As Mark reflected on his upbringing and his growing sense of place as a youth, he said his marae, Koukourarata (also the place name for Port Levy where the marae is located) on Te Pataka o Rakaihautu (known also as Banks Peninsula), was a very strong contributor in this regard. Although born in Australia, Mark and his family returned to their marae in New Zealand when he was seven. “That was my place,” he said of the marae. His parents also inevitably influenced his growing senses of place, took him to every hui (assembly) at the marae and to places across the peninsula—“to Wairewa Rūnanga [the tribal committee at Little River], to Ōnuku, over to Rapaki (near Whareraupo/Lyttleton), and to my cousins’ marae and my uncles and aunties’ at Port Levy. He considered himself “very privileged” to have had these experiences while growing up. “These places are very important to who I am as a person,” he stated. When asked to reflect more on why these places were important to him, he said it was because of the history they hold, the food they provide and the feelings of positivity and familiarity he had when in and around them.

He also explained that waterways, beaches and mountains in places other than Banks Peninsula held the same appeal because of their “kinship” with the environments he experienced when growing up on the peninsula. Of all the whānau (extended family) who had influenced him with respect to place, he considered one of his aunts to have been the most influential person. She taught him how to behave around the foreshore—of Māori etiquette in this environment. “Don’t swear,” she told Mark, “it scares away the kai moana [seafood]. Don’t yell around seafood, walk carefully around the docks, don’t disturb the wildlife.”

In terms of his formal education, Mark said that Dr Richard Manning (University of Canterbury) and his aunt (a prominent nursing ‘cultural safety’ educator) in particular influenced his PBE teaching. But other teachers had influenced him, too, both at school and university.

Tara on the other hand believed that, “People and how they interpret place are sometimes more significant than the places themselves.” It all comes down to, she continued, that “sense of tūrangawaewae—our place to stand”. She pointed out that any one person can find “different landscapes and places important for different reasons”. When asked who in her life taught her about place, she began her answer by citing one of her earliest influences - Dr Seuss (1971) and his book, *The Lorax*. Although a children’s fable it speaks, to the environmental dangers of unsustainable logging and corporate interests. Other influences included her parents, her community, her social studies teacher, and too many other people to mention that she met in her travels around the world. The Saskatoon research participants also cited influences from past experiences and people who have touched their lives as expressed in the next section.

Saskatoon, Canada

I asked Malcolm, “What led you and Don into creating the Birch programme?” The idea for the programme started, he replied, when he and Don were working together as teachers at an elementary school and began using facets of PBE in their respective teaching programmes:

We collaborated a lot even though he taught a lot of middle years and I was primary ... We brought our classes together a lot. A Grade 4 can work well with a Grade 7 or 8 student, and there would be no borders. We initially got our classes together just because they were fighting on the playground. We thought we would work as a team

and use the outdoors as our platform. So Blue Mountain [environmental centre located in Saskatchewan] was the place where we discovered that. It was a place where we could do a lot of team building, and the kids really respected each other after that. So then we thought, “What if we had a class like that?” Birch was kind of on the forefront of getting that [question] out there.

“However, Malcolm suggested that the question above produced many more questions: “How could I prove that this type of education was important? How could we prove it could make a difference?” Malcolm said he chose to answer those questions by “going back to school” (university), where he completed a Master’s degree focused on PBE and social justice. Once he found readings supporting and expanding his thinking and university teachers with whom he could engage in this regard, the answers to the questions “came really quickly”. As he discussed the programme, he was clear about the value of making place part of his students’ learning experiences. “Place gives us context and history, especially with the narratives behind those places, and what has happened in the past, and what’s now happening.” He said that place helps teachers provide valuable learning experiences for their students because both teacher and student “are part of the now” of that place; they can identify with it. PBE, Malcolm explained, enables both teacher and student to identify, for example, cases of social justice and injustice that have happened and are happening in a place and to ask one another such questions as “What are you going to do about it? You can use place very powerfully that way.”

Malcolm identified the area around the South Saskatchewan River, where he grew up, as his important place. The community there shaped his development, and he personally experienced and witnessed many emotional situations during those years. Malcolm emphasized that the river, as it flows through Saskatoon where he now lives, connected him

to the land he grew-up on, and highlighted for him his ability, “to get lost in an urban setting”, as he put it, to not feel comfortable there. His university professors in the College of Education (Foundations) at the University of Saskatchewan also had a lasting impact on his teaching practice. These people included academics like Professor Marcia Mackenzie, Professor Don Cochrane, Professor Bob Regnier, Professor Karla Williamson, Professor Verna St Denis and Professor Marie Battiste. Malcolm said that Dr. Marcia Mackenzie had been the most influential person in his teaching because she gave him the opportunity to truly reflect about place.

Steve identified several places that were important to him in his life. They included Wakaw Lake and Shekinah Retreat Centre as well as the Prince Albert National Park (all in Saskatchewan), Rossland and the Okanagan region (both in British Columbia), and the Churchill River, which runs through several Canadian provinces. All, Steve said, “are beautiful outdoor spaces” where he had “shared memorable experiences with special people.” For Steve, the land and the climate had been a huge part of his journey, and he wanted his students to have the same opportunity. Through Poplar, he said, “we are attempting to give our kids an opportunity to feel the connection [to place], even if only for a year—to disrupt the flow if you will,” by which he means disrupting everyday schooling.

Steve’s parents had been the most influential people in his life because they taught him about place when he and they travelled to many lakes and rural places. To Steve, PBE meant “accessing the best place possible to teach and learn ... If we are learning about the forest, then we should go to the forest, sit in the forest, and touch and taste and smell the forest.” Kim Archibald, a teacher who designed the first outdoor school in Saskatchewan and the

EarthQuest programme, an outdoor school in Vernon, British Columbia, were other strong influences on Steve's teaching of place.

Meanwhile, Don stated that, "Place-based education is more than education at a particular place or about a particular place. Since humans shape and develop both natural and man-made places, place can serve as a study and/or backdrop for various socio-environmental topics." Among the places Don identified as important in his life was his parents' cabin, the Blue Mountain Outdoor Centre. Of the people influential in teaching him about place, Don's parents held primary place. All of the research participants mentioned in this section have places and people in their lives that have influenced them and the ways in which they view place. This and other recurring themes are discussed in the next section,

Recurring themes and points of difference

All of the research participants mentioned in the above section had people and places they experienced while growing up that had influenced them and the ways in which they viewed place. This suggests that place-based experiences in one's youth can have a strong impact on moulding one's current thinking. For Lisa and Mark, their senses of connectedness to place were intertwined with their cultural identities as members of the Ngāi Tahu tribe (Māori). For them, place meant not only the places of their own past but also the places that have had, and still have, meaning for their own people. These places are thus ones that continue to resonate with them. Mark and Lisa's strong ongoing connection to place reminds me of the Māori concept of ahi kā roa. Ahi kā roa means, "keeping a fire alight". It can also be described as burning occupation, and continuous occupation. One may be dispossessed of one's ancestral land, but the link to it continues down the generations through, especially, the narration of whakapapa (Māori genealogy), the tracing back of one's ancestors to the time they first came

to and settled a place. In essence, the tie to such a place cannot be severed. In the Māori world view, Māori are the land, and the right to an area is accorded by descendants of the gods and from the ancestors of that place (Durie, 2012). The concept of ahi kā roa is one that has been used by Māori in Crown land courts during Māori land claims as a means of confirming various whānau (extended family), hapū (tribe - sub tribe) and iwi (confederation of related tribes) ancestral/customary rights to land, sea, flora and fauna (Bennett, 2010).

For Mark and Lisa, their Māori ancestry played an important role in shaping their perspectives of place. Lisa, in particular, thought considerations relating to students' respective ancestry and the places where ancestors resided or held dear should be incorporated into the curriculum but also expressed the difficulty in doing so. This would resonate with Manning (2009a) who maintained that PBE makes it possible to tie elements of the curriculum to the histories and peoples of local areas, thus providing excellent place-based learning opportunities.

It was interesting to observe that, as a Pākehā person, Tara used the Māori term tūrangawaewae to delineate her sense of place. The term tūrangawaewae is a very important concept in the Māoridom/language and is one not easily translated into English (Mead and Mead, 2003). When used by non-indigenous (Pākehā) people, the term can be looked upon as a culturally inclusive way to incorporate Māori terminology into their own sense of belonging and identity as Pākehā settlers on treaty lands. It can also be looked on as a term that has been culturally misappropriated by non-indigenous people to legitimise their possession lands taken illegitimately (King, 1981; Mulholland & McIntosh, 2011). This dichotomy is further explored throughout this thesis.

Several of the teachers identified specific mentors who had influenced their teaching of place. Lisa, Mark and Malcolm all mentioned university lecturers and professors. Their comment aligns with findings from Tatto's (1998) research which showed that teacher education influences teachers' beliefs about the purposes of education, the role of education, and their practice. Tara, Steve, Don and Malcolm all identified academic theorists that have influenced their PBE teaching. The majority of research participant's talked about the importance of family. Mark also mentioned his uncle and auntie. For Don and Tara, those with particular influence were their parents, and for Steve the most influence came from a colleague who designed an outdoor school.

Malcolm, Don and Steve also furthermore touched on critical pedagogies of place centred on socio-environmental topics including issues of social justice and "disrupting the flow" of schooling. These are matters that I discuss further throughout this thesis especially in Chapter Seven. Suffice to say here, and as described in the literature review chapter, a critical pedagogy of place looks to challenge mainstream ideologies and practices in schooling. However, this in itself, poses challenges which are discussed in the following section.

The challenges associated with using place in current school systems

The Promise of Place (2014) website (an American based resource developed for the international PBE community) identified several obstacles for teachers attempting to implement PBE. These can be summarized as follows:

- Teachers and administrators not knowing how PBE addresses educational standards;
- Funding for and commitment to PBE projects fluctuating from year to year, and administration to (new) administration;
- Lack of administrative support;

- Perception of PBE as time consuming;
- Teachers not comfortable in outdoor classroom settings; and
- Community associations and other groups not aware of the role they can play in PBE.

Several of the teachers interviewed in this study identified with the challenges listed above and will be further discussed in the following section.

Christchurch, New Zealand

Lisa said that while she was committed to using PBE, a range of challenges prevented her from doing so, “Planning it, bringing it together, getting students to buy into it ... Planning what you’ve got at the time and planning what you’re going to be doing there and then getting relief. You can’t take 29 students by yourself. You should take two other teachers.” She said that even if she arranged such education for those times of year when other teachers were most likely to have the time available to join her, “It would be goodwill on the part of other teachers across the school to do that.” Limited finances, in particular, stymie education outside of the classroom. She explained that the costs of having herself and two other approved teachers amounted to \$600 a day (\$200 per teacher). The extent to which PBE outside of school relies on support from teachers and colleagues within the school is evident here.

For Mark, one of the biggest challenges he faced when trying to provide PBE was a lack of time (a matter elaborated on in the next chapter). He added:

I don’t get to our local marae enough. I don’t go to the city enough, even though it’s broken. I should be walking the streets with the students so we can talk and discuss

their city. I value place-based education. However, I don't practise it enough. On reflection it [the inability to teach in a place-based way] is hard to swallow.

As Mark and Lisa are in more conventional school settings than most of the other research participants, many of them share different challenges. The next section discusses some of the difficulties faced by research participants in Saskatoon in implementing tenets of PBE, beginning with challenges in dealing with administration.

Saskatoon, Canada

According to Steve and Janet, school administrators have tended to mistrust teachers working outside of the classroom for a variety of reasons (e.g. financial accountability). Administrators have complained that they do not always know where such teachers are. They also tend to have difficulty determining how the programme works within the school's schedule and taking it into account within that schedule. Steve stated that each time his school appointed a new administrator, he and other teachers involved with the programme had to "educate" them about how PBE works. They also, he alleged, "had to renegotiate the number of students, finances for the programme, timetables and other proposal items."

Malcolm also experienced lack of support from fellow teachers and some (thus, not all) administrators:

[When we're] talking to some of our staff, they say, "Yeah, it's a good programme, but it doesn't fit into our school." What school would it fit into then? I think it's a hard adjustment, more so ... for the school, to expect us to integrate ... We've also had to educate our administration team as well, and we've been blessed with some administrative members who've been supportive in giving us a lot of freedom. We've

also had administrative members who've been very critical, [but] we welcome that because it strengthens our argument and it strengthens our programme ... It's been a challenge to bring in a new classroom within a traditional system ... But it's been getting better.

Like Lisa, Don touched on the high costs associated with taking students away from the school. He said that financial limitations play such a pivotal role in this regard that "they can counter your drive to head outside." He added he had tried to resolve the problem by taking his students outside but staying on the school grounds. Another option, he noted, would be take advantage of any outdoor education programmes or spaces on offer paid for by the school board. This is another matter I pick up on later in this chapter. Costs are one of challenges research participants have faced in implementing PBE and critical pedagogy of place. These are summarized in following section.

Recurring themes and points of difference

Some of the research participants in this study encountered fewer barriers to using PBE than others because they were working in schools or could access programmes that had already developed this form of education. This embedding of PBE meant that scheduling, administrative support and financial assistance were part of regular school practice. As such, teachers and administrators expected education outside the classroom to take place and were comfortable about that aspect of learning. The challenges that were expressed by the research participants aligned very well with those as pointed out through the Promise of Place website. This exemplifies that two locations using PBE outside the United States also have challenges associated with mainstream schooling. This could be a case that the colonial schooling system found in the United States could have similarities to those of Canada and New

Zealand. Although this is not looked at in this thesis there could be room to add a third case to this study.

For both Lisa and Mark, their schools (Tī kōuka and Harakeke, respectively) were still operating within traditional schooling structures, although the two teachers' PBE-related efforts were pushing against the boundaries imposed by those structures. Lisa and Mark said that the challenge was not one of lacking freedom to use aspects of PBE but rather one of fiscal and time constraint. Their predicament is probably the same for many teachers in mainstream schools trying to incorporate PBE into their teaching.

One interesting matter not addressed by any of the research participants concerns the compliance issues associated with taking students away from school. According to Haddock (2007), many teachers engaged in outdoor education in New Zealand said one of the main reasons preventing them and their peers from taking students off school grounds is the need to fill out too many forms. Utilizing the community both within and beyond the school grounds is an important part of PBE and is discussed in the following section.

This section has touched upon some of the challenges the research participants have been faced with in implementing PBE. These, and other challenges that confronted them, are examined further in the following chapters as they relate to time and space (Chapter Five) and curriculum and assessment (Chapter Six).

Built environments and local community for teaching

A key facet of PBE is bringing local communities into the heart of student learning. This section of the chapter looks at how the participating teachers (all urban based schools) were using the local community, both rural and urban, in their teaching.

Christchurch, New Zealand

In his pedagogic creed, Dewey (1897) argued that children's learning should be stimulated through their work within the life of their community. In Christchurch, the earthquake sequence brought Mark and his Harakeke students an unexpected opportunity to participate in reviving the city community. He observed that:

The school is really valuing the community now, and looking at how we can help the community a bit more. There is a lot of volunteering and raising money to go to different places around Christchurch where the students can help out, particularly with volunteering. That is something that we are starting to do now.

While a community can provide a beneficial educational setting, such a setting becomes even more beneficial for student and community members alike when the latter recognize the important role they can play in children's education. This claim would have resonated with Dewey (1897), who stated, "I believe that the community's duty to education is its paramount moral duty" (p. 29). Mark recounted an instance of a community member "upholding this duty" with Mark's students:

Today I took my te reo Māori [Māori language] class to a marae which was lovely. They met a man, a priest, whose name is Father Kevin Foot. He can speak te reo

Māori. He calls himself Pa wae wae—being father and being foot in Māori. And he is a very charismatic, funny man. The children really responded well to his stories, and it was lovely seeing him today. My students in class really enjoyed that. They were outside the classroom, in a church, but they felt that they could meet with a priest, which was good.

The location of a school, such as in the city centre, provides opportunities particular to that environment, for students to engage in the community around them, and in ways that they might not otherwise do. Mark said the changes in the cityscape surrounding Harakeke as the result of the earthquakes had brought unexpected experiences for his students. Prior to the earthquakes, the school was almost in the centre of the city, but now much of that city was no more. “Through place-based learning, we are seeing a city being pulled down around us, but it’s also going to rise next to us all. It will be silly to stay in a classroom and not be part of it. As a school we have to be ... we need to be out there, and get involved, no matter how.” He said that PBE also made it possible for the school and its students to be seen as doing “its bit” to help the city and its people. “I believe our school has to get out into the streets. [We need to] try to be part of any sort of decision making with the rebuild of Christchurch, even if it’s just picking up rubbish. We’ve got to be seen in the community as helping out any other way, or linking with other schools to be part of this rebuild.”

As Bob pointed out, that Horoeke School’s location in his city’s CBD meant that this urban environment could be used as “a place for learning ... [It’s] a really good thing in a way because we’re able to be a part of everything that’s going on, and we’re not stuck in the suburbs, locked inside some walls that, after you’ve done five years, you get released into the real world.” He asserted that students attending the school essentially “bought into the CBD”. Bob tells the story of students being part of a large demonstration protesting changes to the

CBD. They were photographed and appeared in the local newspaper. Some were even arrested. “A little bit of aggravation, a little bit of provocation is good,” he concluded.

The place-based approach to learning that Bob described is intrinsic to the school’s whole ethos. Education permeates out from the traditional school walls to the surrounding community and diffused back through those walls into the school (a tenet of PBE). The boundary between school-based and community-based learning is thus permeable. Communities are seen as providing a natural context for learning, which can include learning through experience, working with others, helping others and teaching others.

Mark gave an example of this when he described his students’ engagement with other schools in Christchurch, particularly in terms of taking responsibility for younger students. The schools he described mostly included Catholic schools in Christchurch’s eastern suburbs, which sustained some of the worst damage from the earthquake sequence. Harakeke students, he continued, were “helping out” at these schools by playing games with other students at lunch, helping raise money for computers in those schools and even giving the teachers a break at lunch time. Teachers could “have a cup of tea, sip on juice, while students are out there playing games with the kids. We’ve got images and photos and stories of these young 19-year-olds hugging, playing around, playing tag with them ... and both the younger students and the older students are seeing value in that. And it’s great learning, being out of the classroom.” For the students at Harakeke, working with peers at other schools in the way Mark described was just one way of engaging in the community. Such engagement, however, can take many—and simpler—forms, as discussed in the next section.

Olly brought to the fore another important facet of education outside the school when discussing how his school—Kahikatea—offers this outside experience to its students. This

type of experience, Olly said, makes it possible to tie concepts learned in the classroom into real world experience (a tenet of PBE). He used, as examples, two interconnected units of work his students had completed the previous term, one focused on animals and the other on patterns in nature and energy: “Big picture things—those concepts, those abstract notions,” as Olly put it. This learning was connected to the practical skills of gardening and “growing things” and caring for animals. Taken together, Olly suggested that these various learning activities led to students considering their own “connection with the environment and their place in the world. Because I think [PBE] is around knowing who they are as individuals, understanding their place and their contribution in the environment, and the wider world. And then for some people, [there is a] spiritual dimension to that as well.”

Until recently, Kahikatea had designated Fridays as whole-school outing days. However, taking the whole school out had become increasingly challenging, partly because of the age range across the school. The school now tended to have outings differentiated according to age. For example, Olly said, two classes of older students had undertaken sailboat training on Lyttelton Harbour, and of the school’s Friday outings had a particular educational focus, such as “a visit to the museum to learn about Captain Steve’s visit to Antarctica.” Not all Friday outings had a specific educational imperative, though. Some trips were purely recreational, such as going to the beach and swimming. In winter, students might be able to choose between ten-pin bowling and ice-skating. Other trips often combined both recreation and a particular learning experience, such as “taking the ferry over to Quail Island and learning about the restoration project out there”. But even when the outing was deemed more recreation than formal education, the school still saw it as having an educative element, in the same way that Mark saw experiences outside school as “great learning” opportunities. The permeability of the school walls, that Bob described, also seems relevant to Kahikatea’s take on PBE.

Research participants in Saskatoon had several experiences to share on their use of place and community within and beyond the school walls, which is discussed in the following section.

Saskatoon, Canada

Malcolm exemplified the placement of learning in contexts beyond the purely geographic when talking about his programme's approach to PBE:

Probably at the beginning, it was more geographical—looking at the eco regions would be how we categorized that. But I think now, in making connection with First Nations communities, we are looking to be more cultural ... We can integrate and have dialogue with students and the community and join in and enjoy what they are doing.

This focus on community means that the places where PBE takes place do not have to be those bounded by lines on a map or avoided because of stigmas attached to them. Students and learning can therefore move through and past these perceived boundaries. Malcolm said that when he and his students were engaged in a unit of work, they tried to identify and access communities within the city of relevance to that work. “[We] might be using the people from the farmers’ market or the university, or [going] over to the east side of the city to work in a seniors’ home. In our city, there are no real boundaries in that way. In due time, the local could even be [expanded to] our province as well.”

Don provided a broad and pragmatic definition of “local”—areas within the city of Saskatoon that teachers and students could travel to easily and use extensively. “We travel around Saskatoon frequently, and just outside Saskatoon ... We are blessed to be in a city that offers a lot of different experiences for our students.” He said the location chosen at any one time

was one that complemented the unit being taught. As such, the school's outdoor work fit easily into whatever was being accomplished at the time, and vice versa. "There's a logical sequence that we've formulated," he explained.

Steve also built on the notion of rooting the learning experience in the learner's location and then moving the learning environment out from there. Poplar, he said, has "really tried to build in that sense of place ... It starts local in the Saskatoon region and then expands upward." Poplar's effort to build a community outside the school has not always been understood by colleagues within the school, though: "We get a little bit of heat from within the school walls, as we are not really the part of the school community because we are gone probably half of the time." Nonetheless, he considered a little bit of heat a small price to pay for the learning opportunities Saskatoon and even beyond brought to students:

[There are] learning environments that are rural/urban, but then also yearlong studies that take us into the field, take us national, take us international. There are studies around colonization and things that are happening beyond. So place is huge, both literally and certainly now figuratively as well. We hope that the use of places is not only enriching as far as analysis and critical thinking, but also engagement. [Our students] ... are moving around from place to place, and there is variety of new life, and they are able to see something that is happening on the street, and maybe at the bus mall. You know, that is exciting learning.

Steve and also Malcolm discussed at some length the important role that community and place play in engaging students and facilitating their learning. Malcolm, for example, observed that PBE is highly engaging especially when it taps into "what's going on in our community". He said that not only are "our kids engaged" and learning from their

experiences but also they had the benefit of interacting with people in the community they might not otherwise engage with: “[We try to use] all the experts that we have, experts talking about community members and volunteers to teach our kids. Students are always thinking and engaging through them, as well, and there is the difference in generations too ... Contact with seniors and contact with all these different generations is really important.”

Steve’s and Malcolm’s comments align with Kemp (2006), who claimed, “It is time that we engage the environment and make learning meaningful to students so they are not lost in a swirl of abstraction and alienation” (p. 141). According to Steve, student engagement was one of the drivers of the Poplar programme, but this aim had evolved to the point where Poplar now also focused on students “giving back” to the communities they were learning from:

Initially it was about engagement. It was about engaging kids in critical thought. It’s evolved to the point where it’s about a number of other things, but ultimately if we want our students engaged in all these different components of Poplar and place-based education all together, hopefully we’ll provide a sense of place. We are engaged in learning, but also have a heightened awareness about being able to make changes in the communities—positive changes.

John and Rebecca’s programme also used their local community as a primary location of their pedagogy. John explained that the programme involved “projects that apply to the broader community and give an exposure to places in the city that the students wouldn’t have got.” Rebecca gave a specific example of using the community in teaching when she described taking students to the Curbside recycling facility so they could see how this

community operation worked first hand. “To me you can learn so much more from doing something than from hearing about it. It's just an opportunity to be outside, and try being outside as much as you can. Community is a big value.” The importance of community in PBE has been underscored by several of the research participants. The following section highlights the experiences that research participants from Saskatoon and Christchurch have shared with regard to using the built environment and local communities in the educational practices.

Recurring themes and points of difference

The major theme that stands out in this section is not that learning can happen anywhere but learning does happen everywhere. As Woodhouse (2001) explained:

Place-based pedagogies ... explicitly root the learning experience in the location of the learner—the home, the backyard, the school grounds, the community, the bioregion—the place the learner inhabits. A place based pedagogy approaches the individual as part of a cultural, political, social and biological context—an ecology (p. 4).

Immersion into community life is one of the tenets of PBE, and the research participants in both Christchurch and Saskatoon cited the importance of using the community around them, their respective cities especially, to enhance their teaching. They also emphasised that PBE for their students meant not only learning from their communities but also giving something of value back to those places which is starting to engage with Gruenewald's (2003) conception of reinhabitation which will be discussed further in Chapter Seven.

For the participants, choice of place allowed varying levels of PBE related student engagement, with that engagement usually being initially grounded in communities close to the school, such as the urban city or a rural locale just outside it. However, once grounded in these places, some of the participants' students also had opportunity to move well beyond the local to learn in places elsewhere in their country and abroad.

In the present study, these levels of engagement ranged from PBE as an "add on" (e.g., field trips or outings) to units of work through to PBE as an integral part of projects looking at community issues and on to PBE as the *raison d'être* for a programme or even a school. This range is exemplified by Rebecca's use of a recycling facility and Olly's use of Friday outings to engage students in "learning by doing", Bob's and Mark's efforts to link PBE into Christchurch city's increased need for assistance and involvement after the earthquakes, and Poplar's and Birch's critical pedagogy of place aim, to have their students explore issues pertaining to First Nations culture within Saskatoon and beyond (discussed further in Chapter Seven). This range of examples emphasizes the flexibility of PBE: It can take place anywhere and have many guises. This is a useful finding for practicing teachers, because it shows that the tenets of PBE can be used in a multitude of teaching situations as well as within mainstream confinements.

Comments and descriptions from some of the participants, notably Malcolm and Mark, also pointed to the important role that intergenerational knowledge transmission can play in PBE. Opportunities to meet and talk with members of the community with whom they might not otherwise engage provides students with unique, valuable insights and also allows them to relay their thoughts and ideas on community issues to people who may be able to act on them (e.g., local government authorities). Mark recognised the learning that took place amongst his

students when they met a Kaumātua (Māori Elder: in this instance an older Māori man) at a marae. Learning at the marae could be considered to exemplify an idea associated with critical pedagogy of place, as well as “third space” (Bhabha, 2004; Richardson, 2004), which will be examined in Chapter Seven. Malcolm also alluded to the value of contact between students and older generations as well as First Nations community members. According to Mannion and Adey (2011), intergenerational knowledge transmission is an important part of engaging the community as a whole. They found not only that school-linked PBE provides opportunities for intergenerational practice but that it is founded upon and requires the ongoing production of relations between adults and children within and through place-based change processes.

While this section has highlighted use of the local community and the urban environment, the following section examines how the research participants have used the local natural environment as an educational setting.

The outdoors for teaching

According to the United Kingdom Office for Standards in Education, (2008), education outside the classroom encompasses a range of provisions, including:

- Activities within a school’s or college’s own buildings, grounds or immediate area;
- Educational visits to various places during the school day; and
- Residential visits that take place during the school week, weekends or holidays (p. 6).

Several of the research participants discussed how they have used the outdoors for teaching, and how it has served as a valuable educational tool.

Christchurch, New Zealand

As Mark pointed out, just being outside of the classroom can rejuvenate the senses. On the most basic PBE level, Mark took his students outside in order to re-engage them for classroom work: “I’m not structured in a way that my kids come untied ... If they are not ready for me, I’ll go outside [with them] and play a game. We’ll play a quick solid game and bring them in. They’ve got to get oxygen in their lungs; the oxygen in their blood cells goes into their brains ... to realign their focus.” Lisa was emphatic that being outdoors in even familiar, seemingly mundane places offers students numerous, often inspirational learning opportunities. She supported her claim with the following example:

I was up in Rotorua a couple of months ago and on the way to the venue where the conference was being held, I had to walk through the Government Gardens. As I was walking through the gardens, I was thinking, “Gosh, if I was up here, what would I do? What would I do if I was at the Government Gardens for an outdoor place-based education?”

As Lisa asked herself this question, she began to see many opportunities for PBE in the gardens. She saw the opportunity for science teachers to use inquiry based learning (discussed further in Chapter Six) and discover why certain plants grow in saltwater, and how they survive. She went on:

I would ask “Those statues over there; who are these people? Why are those particular statues about history, and why those statues? Why are they prominent? What’s the big story? Why isn’t, you know, John Brown here, or why isn’t something else here?” If I

was the art teacher, I would send the students off for 15 minutes with a digital camera, and they would have to take 15 minutes to sniff around and take a photograph. Then they'd have to come back and ... draw that photograph ... I was thinking about all the things that you could do in the Government Gardens. They had a museum. You go into the museum, and you could look up the history. So in my head, I was planning this trip to somewhere I'm never going. And I was going, "Okay! If I were these teachers, what would I be doing if we had a day trip here." What would I be doing if I was the English teacher, you know. I would have them write some poetry or write some prose or write about something that they saw. Find a flower or find a tree; write a poem about it. Find something in here that you could write about, and then you have to produce a piece of writing based on it.

Lisa's narration is important not just because it offers examples of how PBE can be enacted in an outdoor place, but also important because it shows a teacher who, simply by being in an outdoors environment, was stimulated to devise simple multiple PBE activities that a range of teachers could use (a tenet of PBE). Her words evocatively convey the inspiration that an outdoor setting gave her, even though she was not teaching at the time.

"Outdoors" can take surprising forms, as evident at Kahikatea, the school where Olly was teaching. Kahikatea is set within a community garden and wooded area, which means the school shares it with members of the surrounding community. One of the windows in one of Kahikatea's classrooms opens-out onto a deck housing a tree house that students use as a learning place. The tree house was also sympathetic to the school's views on outdoor learning experiences, many of which, at the time of my data collection, were taking place in the community garden. Olly said it's all about, "just letting the kids explore and use hammers

and nails and swords, climbing up trees and building tree huts, digging holes, playing with model guns and bows and arrows.”

Other activities the children were experiencing in this outdoor area were more structured and teacher directed. Olly said his next such project with his students would focus on fires. “We are going to have a fire lighting option because kids just love lighting fires, and how do you learn about it if you don’t let them to do it?” He also saw the activity as one that would teach children about safety around fire. Having outdoor spaces easily available for the students was giving them the opportunity to learn through experience and to test their own boundaries physically, creatively and mentally. As with the fire-lighting, it also allowed consideration of safety issues; some of which tapped into the measures the school had in place to safeguard the children while they were outdoors. Giving the children the freedom to run, climb, explore and create while ensuring their safety was a fine balancing act for the school. The climate in Christchurch allows students to enjoy their outdoor schoolyard throughout the year. In Saskatoon, the harsher winters make this more difficult during that particular season. However, research participants in Saskatoon still utilize the outdoors as a significant educational tool even in winter, as discussed in the following section.

Saskatoon, Canada

Rushmere (2009) described place as “a starting point for inspiring a sense of belonging, a recognition of the importance of the other in forming ourselves, and developing a stronger sense of integrity than we now seem to hold” (p. 40). Many of the teachers from Saskatoon that I interviewed identified with this sentiment. Don, for example, said:

We'll travel, for example to, Blue Mountain because we know that it has a lot of opportunity for students to take risks—personally and collectively—and so it serves as a wonderful location to bring everybody collaboratively together. As we dive into more ... environmental- and social-justice-based issues, we seek to travel to outlying locations that complement units that we are in. I should mention to you those locations have changed every year. There has been some continuity, but if we dive into a new topic that we haven't discussed the previous year, we will find the location that complements it, or locations. We are not relegated to simply one, but that's how we choose it. It serves to enhance and further engage the conversations, and the learning experience.

Steve mentioned that over the years he had noticed students increasingly craving for longer expanses of solo time (see Knapp, 2005; Nicholls, 2009) in natural and wild settings. Such time, he explained, gave students opportunity to just be in a place, and to connect with it: “Sometimes, just being still is part of the place-based education.” Over the course of a year, Poplar offers 10 “solos”, including an urban solo. “That is the time where, you know, it's set aside, and we really guard it; like, this is something that needs to happen ... We try to protect it from interruptions.”

Janet, too, spoke of the importance of being still and observing. She discussed the sense of belonging that developed in her students from their time in forest settings. She appropriately described the experience as “a sort of rooting” that leads to a sense of belonging. “The forest ecology study is not a solo, but it's a lot of sitting in different forests, and observing for hours ... observing and recording information, and writing poetry, and sitting, and just being in a place.”

Rushmere (2009) solidifies the participants' comments about the values of solos and engaging the senses when he explained how, "Really listening to place and engaging skilfully with it helps us focus on relationships with plants, animals, values, other humans, and all the other relationships that sustain us, physically, and in our sense of self. Listening in this way to place may help us realize we cannot flourish alone, but that we only flourish in recognition of our deep interconnection with place (p. 40).

By definition, connecting with something, including natural or urban environments, means developing a relationship. And with this relationship, there hopefully comes a desire to take care of it. Rebecca referred to this taking care element as "stewardship". She said that it is a word she and her colleague used often with students. Rebecca felt that most students do not know what the word means, but they come to do so through the PBE experiences: "I think anyone can look out at the earth, and no matter what kind of god you believe in or don't believe in you can look and say this is a beautiful place, and it's a gift to us, and it's our responsibility to take care of that gift. So that would be stewardship."

Connecting with place is thus an integral facet of PBE, and it is also often incorporated into outdoor/environmental education. Malcolm explained that he began using outdoor education from the moment he started work as a teacher, and had always found it a beneficial learning experience for students. This comment led him to describe Birch's interpretation of the difference between environmental and outdoor education, and how the programme uses environmental education. In so doing, he also implicitly signified how place slots into both types of education:

For us, outdoor education and environmental education are somewhat similar, but there are some differences between those two terms. In environmental education, we feel there is more care in what we are involved in. So any place that we go to, showing that compassionate perspective to the land ... enables us to choose any venue outdoors. It doesn't have to be somewhere totally remote ... You go to a place like this [Blue Mountain], and it's an outdoor or environmental location. If anything, we kind of fit it all in.

Don, too, had incorporated education outside of the classroom in his teaching practice over the years. His teaching before he and Malcolm started the Birch programme was at a primary school. During his time there, he frequently took his classroom outside, to the school yard, especially as the weather warmed up. Here, he set up a portable whiteboard so that the students could continue with whatever they had been working on in the classroom in the sun and fresh air. He also took advantage of any opportunities available to take his students to outdoor locations beyond the school gate:

I would also look at what our division had to offer for outdoor programmes. They had a couple of programmes out through Blackstrap, an ecological area nearby, and at Eagle Creek, thirty minutes outside of town. So I would sign up for those programmes that were offered. Then, every year, right from the beginning, I would take my students out to a year-end trip to Blue Mountain, and we would do some wilderness training and survival training, and an adventure race ... The adventure race is simply ... finding markers and locations disclosed on a map and using a compass and map. They would try to find those locations. There would be around 10 of them, and they would return back to camp after completing a fairly extensive course spanning in total over 10 kilometres.

Such experiences helped Don shape his belief that education outside the classroom can promote social justice, one of the intrinsic aspects of the Birch programme. He claimed that everyone involved with the programme did not “shy away from topics and asking difficult questions, sometimes controversial questions.” Don added that teachers and students “were not afraid” to travel to organizations that had different viewpoints. “But we do so proudly with kind of the badge of social justice on our shoulder ... The students feed into that. They understand. They quickly separate the political, and gear to the direction of justice for all.” Again, this points to concepts found within critical pedagogy of place.

Don also welcomed the freedom that being outdoors brought, but he observed that teachers needed to be prepared to channel some of that freedom into learning experiences for the students:

There’s a lot of freedom of learning outdoors; there’s a lot of freedom of aspiration. It’s a powerful backdrop. It has a calming, peaceful effect where students bring an inspiration that I don’t have ... It’s again another pretty profound moment when you look at the faces of your students, and you explain to them that this is their surroundings—this will be their classroom for the day, or for the next few days. The excitement level that you see within them is pretty impressive. I mean, it doesn’t stop there. You need to make sure that you bring relevant information and that you really get them to become connected to the land around them. And so we definitely strive to do that in a number of ways, but they’re not limiting.

It is clear that the outdoors provide an inspiring educational setting. The following section discusses similarities and differences amongst the research participants in their use of outdoor spaces for PBE.

Recurring themes and points of difference

As mentioned previously in the literature review chapter of this thesis, education outside of the classroom is, of course, another key component at the heart of place-based education, and one of the tenets. “Outside” within the context of PBE can mean simply learning that takes place outdoors (beyond the classroom walls), while “outdoors” often means within the school grounds or the city or rural environs surrounding the school. However, PBE also occurs in areas colloquially known as “the great outdoors” or “wilderness” or natural environments, essentially landscapes relatively untouched by human development. Rushmere (2009), having explored the importance of wild places within the context of PBE, concluded that, “if wild ecologies are so essential to a healthy human and ecological existence, then part of our task as place-based educators is to hold that in mind for the sake of our being” (p. 21). In this section, comments from several of the research participants provide examples of how the “just being outdoors” facet of PBE as well as opportunity to be in the places Rushmere described were facilitating their teaching practice and their students’ learning. The comments from participants in regard to education that takes place outdoors indicated the diversity of places where such education can occur and also how easy it can be to access some of these places directly from the classroom. Olly’s tree house example and Don’s schoolyard lessons are cases in point with regard to the latter.

Both Don and Mark explained that they value outdoor education for bringing students together as a collaborative team and engaging them in the learning that is taking place. The

opportunity that PBE provides for enhancing student engagement in their learning is a recurring theme not only in this section, but throughout this chapter. Other themes evident in this section, such as the enhanced sense of connection to a locality, mentioned by both Malcolm and Rebecca, and greater appreciation of issues relating to social justice (Steve), also feature elsewhere in this chapter. The notion of stewardship also came to light in relation to this discussion about the relationship between PBE and outdoor education. As the Place-Based Education Evaluation Collaborative (2010) points out, “PBE fosters stewardship by helping students learn to take care of the world by understanding where they live, and taking action in their own backyards and communities” (p. 2).

Olly, Lisa, Malcolm, and Don all mentioned the ways in which education outdoors can be used to complement learning objectives. They concurred that the use of outdoor places not only enhances student engagement and environmental stewardship, but also enhances opportunity for integrated, holistic learning. The notion of integrated, holistic learning taps into the notion of authentic learning activities that have been already been exemplified in this chapter but are discussed further in the following section.

Authentic learning made possible by place-based education experiences

Authentic learning is a broad term with multiple conceptions. However, according to Rule (2006), the following four components are found repeatedly in association with exemplifications of authentic learning:

- An activity that involves real-world problems and that mimics the work of professionals; the activity often involves presentation of findings to audiences beyond the classroom.

- Use of open-ended inquiry, thinking skills and metacognition.
- Students engage in discourse and social learning in a community of learners.
- Students direct their own learning in project work.

All of these points align well with tenets of PBE, and several of the research participants have demonstrated cognisance of using authentic learning in their teaching practice.

Christchurch, New Zealand

When discussing the authentic learning experiences that PBE offers, Mark mentioned what such experiences can do for students' attitudes towards their learning. He said he and his students typically felt energised by learning outside the classroom, and this energy was reflected in body language and demeanour. Once outside, student's shoulders no longer drooped. They and he "felt relaxed out of the classroom doing something different. They could see it, taste it, feel it, touch it, smell it, talk it. And you can't do that in the classroom. There is only so much you can show in the PowerPoint or Google docs."

Mark also saw authenticity implicit in learning in a setting that is conducive to maintaining the history and culture of the student body. He stated that he dreamt of one day teaching on his and his students' marae, of having the school based there. Unfortunately, he explained, the current management of the marae was not conducive to this endeavour, but he was sure that, in time, "there will be support of my people, where we can have a school there just for place-based education." He was confident he could "put a system in place that will encompass education ... directed to the Māori students, but also ... where Pākehā brothers and sisters can find as well an education at the highest level, and not at a mediocre, simple,

standard level. I won't be complacent to mediocrity; it has to be the highest level. It's just a dream that I've had—all because of the value of place-based education.”

His dream was also fuelled by what he had observed when he took his students to the marae during one of his first teaching experiences. He said that while there, he didn't speak to his students for three hours. During this time, his students happily engaged in the task he and his students had set: “They were doing their work alone on the floor, in the marae, sitting on mattresses, hugging pillows, writing some beautiful reflection of the work they did before in Port Levy. The whole time I sat and drank coffee, talked to my cousins, and I have never seen [the students] work so hard.” He described the experience as “amazing”, as being one of his best teaching memories, even though he was “not teaching as such in the traditional [schooling] sense” at the time. His message for teachers was to provide the conditions (a place) where authentic learning can take place, and students will learn, even if teacher intervention is minimal or completely “hands off”.

Mark also considered that authentic activities should include those that emulate, to the greatest extent possible, the real-world tasks of the workplace. He maintained that engagement in the community through PBE can offer authentic, real-world experiences that prepare students for working life. In illustration of this point, Mark again referred to the mussel farms near his marae and how they, the school and local marae had come together to provide not only educational but also work opportunities for students. His description and comments on this initiative deserve to be quoted at length because they provide a good example of how a local community resource can be used as a valuable tool for authentic learning. His account also highlights most of the themes identified in this chapter, and showcases the integrated holistic education that PBE can engender. It also incorporates

internship/entrepreneurial activities, a tenet of PBE, and furthermore shows the enthusiasm that PBE can bring to its practitioners:

What happened is the school and the mussel farms got to create a programme where the students would work on mussel farms. Even when they left high school, they would get great jobs ... We have mussel farms not far from our marae because our marae is on the water's edge ... [So] we've had preliminary discussions with [a local post-secondary institution] and with other schools. We've got NCEA units and credits being drawn up ... [that will take the students] to the highest NCEA level; we're talking about place-based education from the ground up.

We'll look at science, look at water quality, look at a farm line into the sea, and look at the size of monitoring the growth and speed of growth of a shellfish from the area. The science can even go towards monitoring farm fishing in the area. Once we had the idea [understanding] of harvesting, they would go [look at the process] through eyes of sustainability and good health purposes ... Science has not always been seen as part of the subject for our students, but [now it will] be fundamental. Also English — writing reports, writing recounts, or writing weather reports, writing about research ... writing good quality paragraphs and sentences. [These] can all be done at the marae.

[We can] use the idea of growing mussels as the anchor, the large panel, and have quality values underlying the curriculum, [including] tikanga Māori. [We can] look at the guidelines, outline them and how to look after the mussels [after they've been harvested] and how they feed the people. This moves students on to good health

practices. Wash your hands; keep them clean. You shouldn't swear around the ocean because our Māori ancestors don't like it. You should never wail and scream while in the ocean ... These are all traditional [as well as] modern beliefs that help create a good citizen and a good person because students learn the behaviour, affix it to the environment.

[We can also] look at the mathematics of running good quality farms, consider the statistics. We can look at the social sciences of the relationships over at Wairua, [especially in terms of] health with Port Levy, as Wairua is famous for its tuna [eels]. I'd love for our school to have a relationship with them. All these things can happen there. I can cover physical education, and health and fitness. It can all happen from the marae.

He also dreamed of the relationship with the mussel farms leading to a self-manageable school able to create its own funds. An associated dream remains: "having a relationship with Stanford University. Why can't I have a student leave my school at Port Levy that has a Stanford stamp on it?" Such a stamp, he said, will get his students into the best schools. Mark's iwi, Ngaī Tahu, has a formal ongoing relationship with Stanford University.

Lisa was also using the wider community as a resource for teaching academic coursework. She had taken her students to Hanmer, Akaroa, and Australia's Gold Coast where they studied geography and tourism. Lisa said such trips provide students with, "a broader knowledge of what each place is about". She gave as an example her students' recent geographic mapping of an estuary, a task that generated more questions about this place: "What's the history of this estuary? Who's lived here? What's been harvested here? Who's

used this facility?” She stressed that these matters, within the context of PBE, are ones that need to be discussed. Lisa’s example also references “sustained investigation”, an aspect of authentic learning wherein the authentic activities comprise complex tasks that students investigate over a period of time (Lombardi, 2007). This type of exercise could give the students the chance to have their own questions play a central role in determining what is studied (student-centred learning), which is a tenet of PBE. While authentic learning in Saskatoon cannot take place specifically at an estuary, the research participants in Saskatoon also have many unique authentic learning experiences which are presented in the following section.

Saskatoon, Canada

According to Mantei and Kervin (2009), authentic learning should take place in settings that become increasingly complex for (and unfamiliar to) students. Solo trips certainly provide students with an unfamiliar setting in which to learn. Janet described how her school used solo trips so that students could connect with places they might never otherwise visit. She tended to use such trips as an opportunity to teach students about ecozones. She saw the experience as authentic because students could see for themselves what eco zones were, and also as place-based because students were encouraged “to try and belong in this place, listen to it, feel it, learn from it, and what would it be like to belong and have a sense of belonging to this place, and not with it, and what your behaviour would be. We need more listening, and we need more of using our senses.” The sense of place was also intensified for the students because they were required, during their work on eco zones, to use all their senses, to really study—“look for clues” as Janet explained, in all that is around them. What Janet has described is an example of how authentic learning can take place in the outdoors. It should be noted that the Birch programme also used solo experiences with their students.

I spoke further with Steve about the use of solos and he had an interesting story about using solo experiences for a class he was teaching at the university. He and a colleague were questioned by the college administration about using solos on a place-based class they were looking to teach in the summer. The administration had issue with the use of solo time and told them that those hours would not be considered as teaching time for the course. Scott remarked about the situation “I guess teaching only occurs when a teacher is standing in front of students in a classroom.” This reinforces even at a university level the idea that teaching only counts when done in a classroom but it also calls into question the issue of trust. This was also discussed above as a challenge that other research participants faced in having to prove the ‘validity’ of their programmes.

At Birch and Poplar they partner with local bicycle shops so the students have the opportunity to learn about bike maintenance at the beginning of the year. This is a hands on learning project whereby the students work on their own bicycles while accessing the local knowledge of trained bike mechanics. The predominant modes of transportation for students in both programmes are bicycle and public transit. This new found knowledge is used throughout the year as students are able to keep their bikes maintained. This activity meets several of the tenets of PBE, including hands-on real world learning, entrepreneurial opportunity, teacher as facilitator, and using the local community. Authentic learning has taken on many forms in this section, which are summarized in the following section.

Recurring themes and points of difference

Authentic learning activities, according to authors such as Bowers (1993), Orr (1992), Penetito (2004), Manning (2009a), and Sobel (2006), are necessary if students are to

construct knowledge that has meaning to them and their lives. However, as Levstik and Barton (2011) advised, “Unfortunately, schools rarely engage students in authentic learning; their experiences are usually determined in the content of textbooks or curriculum guides rather than the pursuit of meaningful knowledge” (p. 17). Lombardi (2007), said that authentic learning used role-playing exercises, problem-based activities and case studies, and that the learning environments are inherently multidisciplinary. This type of learning and its associated activities align well with the practice of PBE because, in essence, PBE is a mode of authentic learning. Place-based education therefore makes it possible to put meaning back into learning exercises. A few examples have been described in this section, but authentic learning examples will be described in the following chapters as well.

Both Mark and Lisa provided authentic learning experiences that they would like to be able to create with their students. This speaks to the school based confinements that they find themselves in as they teach in the most mainstream schools in this research but they still dream of being able to engage with their students in meaningful and authentic ways.

Mark, Lisa and Janet all provided valuable examples of teaching specific academic subjects according to PBE principles and practice. Both Janet and Lisa discussed the importance of the tangible experience enabled by places, and the deployment of senses during the learning process. As Revington (2013) suggested “authentic learning engages all of the senses” (n.p.). Authentic learning as discussed in this section is one of the themes in this chapter and also described in the following chapters. The following section ties together the experiences presented in the chapter and how they depict the current and evolving practice of PBE and critical pedagogy of place.

Conclusion

This chapter provided examples of how the research participants in this study were using place as a focus of their pedagogical practice. It is evident that the people and places that the research participants themselves had experienced were part of the lens through which they had come to view education and, more specifically, PBE. Those teachers not in specific programmes and schools founded on theories that align with PBE identified difficulties in incorporating PBE because of school-based barriers to taking students to places beyond the school and sometimes even into places on the school grounds but they were still able to dream about creating PBE opportunities for their student's that one day they may be able to fulfil.

Most of the participants identified the local community—the community surrounding the school—as perhaps the most important locus of PBE, and several had made the community an integral place of learning. Some participants saw community not only in terms of local but also national and international terms. A few participants identified intergenerational knowledge transmission as a valuable aspect of PBE. Most considered authentic learning an important facet of PBE and had worked to ensure the activities students undertook in different places offered this type of learning. For some, authentic learning had become an ingrained part of their teaching methods. Those participants able to offer their students outdoor learning and learning in natural environments considered such experiences tied in well with PBE learning objectives, readily engaged students in the learning engagement, and instilled in them a sense of stewardship for the natural environment.

In summary, all of the teachers had made PBE part of their teaching practice, and all had identified ways to use the tenets of PBE with their students. While some teachers had, as

mentioned, fully integrated several tenets of PBE into their teaching, others were only able to integrate a few, often due to the necessity to push boundaries at their schools in order to exercise PBE. The following section carries on looking at PBE and CPP but from the concepts of time and space as found in the research participants schools/programmes.

Chapter Five: Time and Space

Chapter Four provided an overview of the research participants' perceptions of place and place-based education (PBE). It also looked at how these participating teachers were using experiences grounded in PBE in their teaching practice. This chapter now provides an in-depth analysis of the participants' perceptions and use of time and space within their teaching. Although time and space are discussed in two separate parts in this chapter, they are very much interlinked dimensions, especially within schools (Gordon, Holland, & Lahelma, 2000).

Space can be defined as a continuous area or an expanse that is free, available, or unoccupied. Space also has a time dimension (Payne & Wattchow, 2008; Warf, 2008). Place can be differentiated from but not removed from that of space in terms of specificity and scale (Devin-Wright & Clayton, 2010; Lewicka, 2011) and also to the extent by which humans give it meaning (Tuan, 1977). Place often refers to a specific location, such as a neighbourhood (Fägerstam, 2012) or wilderness area (Lewicka, 2011) or one's place in the world (Massey, 2005). The following section begins the dialogue by looking at time.

Part 1: Time

Overview

The use of time in schools typically follows the linear Cartesian framework characteristic of theories of education rooted in the mechanistic worldview proposed by the likes of Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes, Bacon and Newton. These thinkers discarded the idea that the universe was holistic, organic, living and spiritual and instead proposed the metaphor of the machine (Capra, 1997, 2010). Along with this analogy of the machine came a view of time as

not only linear but also controllable. According to Slattery (1995), time viewed from this perspective is:

A variable to be controlled, managed, or manipulated for the purpose of advancing instructional objectives, improving classroom management, and enhancing evaluation results. Educational studies of time are rooted in modernist conceptions of segmentation and linear progress. These conceptions assume that isolated parts of complex systems (like schools, people in schools, or curriculum) can be divided into coherent and cohesive segments (like grade levels, control groups, or subject matter disciplines) and measured quantitatively without contamination (p. 612).

In many areas of schooling, including class scheduling, curriculum and testing, time is treated as Slattery described, above. However, the teacher participants in this research found different and often innovative ways of using time. This was despite the fact that they all felt confined, to various degrees, by linear time constructs either within their schools and/or programmes. These constraints, they alleged, were externally imposed through institutional timetables that were created while implementing ministerial curriculum guides.

Time-related challenges arising from traditional school schedules

Adam's (1995) description of mechanical schools dominated by clocks and calendars holds true for schools in Canada and New Zealand, both of which operate roughly a 10-month school year. Stover (1989) called this schedule the "old agrarian calendar summer" because its original intent was to allow children time off in the summer to help on the family farm. This same school calendar is still used today, even though the idea that prompted it is not relevant to the majority of students in both countries, given that most of them live in urban

areas. The length of the school year and the school day (usually fixed around six to seven hours of teaching with breaks for lunch and recess) have remained largely unchanged despite parents' time commitments to work having changed over the last century.

Teachers are constantly cognisant of time. From planning lessons to timed tests to disciplining students, time has been constructed within schools as a dimension to be controlled as much as possible (Adam, 1995). Linear time as it relates to lesson plans is now documented by minute to minute interactions. I can relate this to my own teaching experiences as shared in this auto-ethnographic vignette, below:

I recall being asked during both my teacher education degree and my teaching practices for lesson plans detailed to the minute. The majority of my teacher education programme involved creating standardized lesson plans for different subjects. Once I became a teacher, I was asked for a very detailed lesson plan each time I was being assessed for appointment at a different school. I found this request particularly interesting in regard to my first full-time teaching placement, which was at Opening Doors Program, a school deemed relatively alternative in most aspects of teaching but I was still mandated to use very prescriptive lesson plans.

Time within schools is also seen as a commodity or resource that is often lacking. Even in PBE programmes, a lack of time can make it difficult to reach curricular goals. Powers (2004), having studied four PBE programmes, found “the most consistent external constraint cited by the school-based participants (primarily educators) was that of a lack of time to devote to curricular change in the midst of multiple curricular pressures” (p. 23). The

following two sections outline the time-related challenges the research participants were experiencing within their schools and programmes.

Christchurch, New Zealand

Both Lisa and Mark were working in the most traditional (time-structured) Christchurch schools that participated in this research and so had the least degree of control over changing time to fit their preferred teaching practice. Both said they would like to see longer blocks of learning that would allow for a greater variety of learning activities, including those associated with PBE. Harakeke's Mark, like the other teachers, believed he could do a better job if time was a more flexible commodity at his school. The school day, he argued, "... could be longer, from maybe 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., where there are different teaching blocks. Teachers could teach the time they prefer, in the morning or in the afternoon." This, he continued, "would allow teachers to plan those ... awesome lessons or lectures that are really inclusive, and even allow teachers time with students to complete task activities." He considered the schools's 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. school day, made up of six one-hour teaching blocks, "prehistoric". He used this word advisedly, having reflected that over the course of decades, the daily school schedule had not changed, yet many other things in society and daily life had.

Lisa, at Tī kōuka, also stated she would like to see larger blocks of time for courses, such as half days or whole days, as she considered more in-depth and student-centred learning could be accomplished: "It'd be really nice to stay and have two periods together, because you could ... get a lot done, and sometimes you just get into something and then you have to stop." However, she also recognized that larger blocks could be more demanding for both students and teachers in subjects/classes such as with mathematics, where holding students'

attention for long periods can be difficult. Like Mark, Lisa did not have the large blocks of time available to her that would allow her to teach in ways she thought would most advantage her students.

For teachers, planning and preparation cannot help but be important when they have to meet the needs of their students and the curriculum within the limited time frame set aside for each subject or learning objective. Mark spoke for most of the participating teachers when he said: “There is not enough time to plan, not enough time in general. My lectures are for an hour, and in that lecture, I’m very animated. I usually try to change to different activities every ten minutes; at no time do I want my students to feel that they are not doing anything.” He admitted, however, that “usually ten minutes before my lesson finishes, I’m already thinking about my next lesson. I’m planning my lessons at home in the evening. I’m planning them first thing in the morning and, as the dean in between classes, I’m managing pastoral issues.” Adding to the pressure are the extracurricular activities that teachers take part in outside of regular teaching hours. These can erode the time they might otherwise have for planning lessons.

Even in the more alternative Christchurch schools and programmes featuring in this research, the traditional school calendar and day remained intact because it was deemed to be most convenient for parents, particularly those who worked traditional work hours. For example, at Kahikatea, an independent school, Olly said, “We follow the state school pattern of holidays and times of day ... for practical reasons really ... because that fits in with people’s busy lives. The [students] start here at 9:15 a.m. in the morning and they finish at 3:15 p.m. The holidays are the same as state schools.” Although Kahikatea can change the length and organisation of the school year and school day, its board still prefers to follow the scheduling of mainstream

schools. Olly also mentioned that families with children at different schools find it easier to plan vacations if all their children are off school at the same time.

Saskatoon, Canada

None of the schools studied in Saskatoon were privately funded, and so the teachers participating in this research had no option for changing holiday schedules within the school year, so it is perhaps surprising that the Saskatoon research participants did not express as many pedagogical challenges grappling with time constraints as their New Zealand colleagues. Perhaps this was because they had greater control over time than their New Zealand colleagues. The Saskatoon participants had created the programmes they were teaching and were also with the same group of students for the whole school day. Those time-related difficulties that the Saskatoon research participants did mention largely revolved around trying to integrate their programmes into the timelines/schedules of their respective mainstream schools.

The length of the school day at Willow is the same as that of the high school housing the programme. However (as already indicated), because the teachers are with the students all day, they do not have to adhere to one-hour-per-subject teaching. They also use weekends for community-based projects. However, Birch and Poplar, also housed within mainstream schools, have the option of starting their day before and ending it later than the mainstream classes' day, and they also enjoy the flexibility of a negotiated curriculum by using the weekends and evenings for learning.

Malcolm at Birch said he had experienced difficulty with some mainstream teachers and administrative staff who opposed the perceived flexibilities within their programme,

particularly time. “Some of them,” he explained, “are really open and liked the idea [of the programme]. Others are very traditional, as they are nearing, I think, the end of their career. For a lot of them, they are about making it 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and that’s it.” However, Malcolm continued, the 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. day that mainstream school follows would never fit the Birch format, because the programme needs to use early mornings, evenings and weekends. Despite the negativity voiced by some mainstream colleagues, Malcolm and also Don said that, overall, the majority of teachers and staff in the school were very supportive of the programme.

Steve, when discussing the issues relating to time that arose during integration of the Poplar programme into the mainstream school, stated:

We said we are going to be out of here [the classroom] fifty percent of the time, and the rest of the time we are not running on the same schedules. Our priority is to connect our kids to the broader community, so if that’s going to be a problem for the school, we can run it out of anywhere. If you want us to run it out of the university, we will run out of there. If you want us to run out of the board office downtown, we will run out of there. We don’t have a problem.

His comments raise the idea that a classroom dedicated to PBE principles can be situated anywhere; it does not have to sit within a school, as is discussed further in Part 2 of this chapter.

Responding to the challenges

All of the teachers experienced some degree of difficulty in trying to align their programmes with the dictates of the traditional 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. school day. Mark's description of this regime as "prehistoric" is worth repeating because it exemplifies how out of touch some of the teachers considered this time boundary. Interestingly, some fairly powerful voices agree with this criticism, as evidenced by the U.S. Department of Education arguing (20 years ago) that the "six-hour, 180-day school year should be relegated to museums, as an exhibit from our education past. Both learners and teachers need more time—not to do more of the same, but to use all time in new, different, and better ways. The U.S. Department of Education (1994), interestingly enough, claims that "the key to liberating learning lies in unlocking time" (p. 1). The last sentence of this quote would resonate with all of the research participants, who were doing their best, within the extent to which traditional timeframes confined them, to demonstrate how time might be unlocked within schools.

Christchurch, New Zealand

Although Kahikatea School follows the mainstream school schedule for beginning and ending the school day and for school holidays, Olly said the school alters its schedule each day according to student needs:

In the course of the morning ... we tune into energy levels so that we have breaks for physical activity, breaks for relaxation time, and breaks for thinking about our emotional and social well-being. We also ensure that we have time for our Duty to Brilliance curriculum and Building Brilliance curriculum as well. The afternoons tend to be when we are more democratic with the kids ... Typically, our afternoons start off with some relaxation time and then some individual project time or class project times

where the kids might be building things or making things or researching things, depending on their own individual pace. However, most afternoons, for an hour, the whole school has options.

This type of daily flexibility is not, of course, typical of a traditional classroom setting, and the sensitivity to student needs that it allows is definitely a facet of PBE. As stated in the literature review chapter of this thesis, PBE emphasizes students becoming creators, not just consumers, of knowledge. Creativity is arguably not a process that lends itself well to being confined within the daily prescribed schedule of subject-based learning in the mainstream school.

Bob from Horoeke, said it was important recognising the student-needs-related importance of bringing flexibility rather than rigidity to lesson scheduling. At Horoeke they had tried several different schedules, including “hour-long classes, two-hour classes, hour-and-a-half classes, mixtures and all sorts of things, and we’ve had full mornings, full-day-type approaches to things. Everything has its drawbacks and benefits.” These efforts suggested that Horoeke was not finding it easy to bring flexibility to scheduling the school’s programme, and Bob confirmed this when he said that although “the major thing is ... flexibility around the need ... it’s very tricky to work it in terms of schedule and staffing hours.” Bob also said that the change in the school’s location after the February 2011 earthquake had made it even harder to implement the sought-after flexibility. Prior to the quake, the school was close to Christchurch’s central bus exchange and its central business district. This proximity, Bob explained, meant students could start school as early as 8:00 a.m. in the morning and finish as late as 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon, as long as they completed five hours of learning for school each day. The flexible starting time was “an

acknowledgement that some people can't do mornings and want to get up later. At that time, all buses from the suburbs arrived at 8:55 a.m. Some of them would arrive a little bit later ... so the school policy was changed such that students could start as late as 10:00 a.m.” Now, because of the new location, “the bus arrives just before 9:00 a.m. and ... leaves just after 3:00 p.m.” Bob struggled with the loss of flexibility and hoped that some way could be found to return to the flexible start and end times of the school day. Given Horoeke's previous location had enabled flexible time arrangements, perhaps that “way” also related to place:

For my magic wand approach, I would have community-based learning environments or facilities. They would be the basis of delivering learning, and they would have to have much more scope than what we have now, but they would deliver learning ... not hindered by the regulations of starting at 9:00 a.m., and not finishing at 3:00 p.m. and starting the 20 of January to whenever in December, or terms ... There's this huge inflexibility in the old whole delivery of education.

According to Bob, community-based learning environments would inherently offer flexibility with respect to time, thus linking space/time with PBE and, ultimately, with learning and place.

Tara also wanted Horoeke to return to a flexible starting and ending of the school day. It would be beneficial for the students, she said, if we were “resourced so that we could stay later for the students who love to start school at 10:00 a.m.” Tara furthermore wanted a “fluid time approach” in general in order to meet people's (students, teachers, parents) needs. She thought that information and communication technologies (ICT) could provide an important means of creating a more flexible schedule. People from all over the world could be available

to help students at different times, a practice, she argued, that would work well with the school's student-centred learning. And, she went on, the resources of the internet offer a "find information at any time" facility.

Tara had recently experienced this when trying to assist a student who was interested in Einstein's theory of relativity: "We couldn't find anything that either of us could understand because it was all written for people with more knowledge than we had. But then we kept refining searches, and we finally got the coolest site that was very relevant for kids. And it was, like, oh my God, this is it, I get it. That makes sense." This incident had heightened her appreciation that the flexibility ICT offered would require teachers to move away from being "experts" with "structures of knowledge and information" to more confident practitioners with the courage to say, "I don't know [the answer] but I know how to find out. I mean, how cool is that?" Within this example Tara exemplifies the tenet of PBE that teachers act primarily as co-learners and brokers of community resources and learning possibilities.

When talking about time, Tara, Bob and Mark all implied that flexible time arrangements benefit not only students but also teachers. In mainstream schools, teachers tend to be treated to a "one size fits all" mentality when it comes to scheduling their work, as I discovered early in my teaching career as exemplified below.

I remember on one occasion at my first teaching job, my principal gave me my teaching schedule, and I was bewildered that I had two teacher preparation periods that were four minutes long and six minutes long. My principal had said they did all their scheduling through a computer programme, and most teachers had similar prep periods. As a new teacher, this didn't give me enough time to prepare anything. It gave me enough time to

breathe. As a teacher, I had to fit into a compartmentalized structure of time, which I can only hope was benefiting students in some way.

As Bob pointed out, teachers and other staff in many education settings are so used to traditional ways of scheduling the school day, they cannot begin to imagine alternative methods. He brought this matter up when he suggested that Horoeke could provide greater learning-time flexibility for its students by providing courses over both five- and seven-day weeks and during usual school holiday periods. Night classes could work as well, he thought, and could also provide opportunity to bring in members of the community as both learners and teachers. But these types of change, Bob cautioned, would require a shift in mentality amongst teachers, parents and especially teacher unions.

Community-based spaces and learning that Bob is speaking of are not new concepts, and at one stage featured quite strongly in communities. For example, in 1975 the Four Avenues School was opened in Christchurch and followed a community based approach to learning that was adapted from the Parkway Program in Philadelphia, United States and influenced by the likes of Illich (1971) and his ideas of “Deschooling” (Whiting, 2004). Also in Saskatoon during the 1960s and 1970s, schools were seen as being very much at the heart of communities. The school provided a gratis space for community events and dinners as well for children’s activities. However, as government economic policies and other factors increasingly forced schools to rent out their facilities in order to support their budgets, this use of school facilities fell away. In Saskatoon, there is renewed interest in creating schools as a centre for communities, but this is, interestingly, a trend that is emerging mainly in marginalized inner city areas. These schools tend to receive more funding by being branded ‘community schools’ and are in greater need for resources and funding. Some inner city

schools in Saskatoon are creating spaces for the largely First Nations community to meet. One school, for example, is now open to the public, who can use the cultural rooms as well as a health centre and walking track.

Saskatoon, Canada

For Malcolm and Don (who were teaching at the Birch programme), time was viewed a fluid commodity. Of the research participants, they and the teachers at Poplar were the ones most able to shape time to fit the programme rather than the programme to fit time. As Malcolm said:

Time to us is whatever makes us successful, so we really don't have time for assignments. It's how we get to our destination. So we don't go by any subject period of thirty minutes or fifty minutes. We let our kids define the time and what they think they need to be successful in a certain project. And we help them establish that, and I think that's how we have changed our time with our students.

Despite students being able to spend whatever time they thought they needed on some facet of learning, Malcolm said students were generally realistic and honest about time requirements: "You [would] think students would say let's do five hours of physical education and only an hour of math, but they don't." Malcolm's comment also speaks to the trust that the Birch teachers have in their students to organize their own learning. Malcolm's description of Birch's daily schedule positioned it as student centred and was not dissimilar to Olly's description of the daily schedule at Kahikatea. Don from Birch went beyond describing how Birch's scheduling worked in practice by explaining how it maximized and thus advantaged student learning:

We are not confined to 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., which is what [our mainstream school] timeframe is. It's interesting again with students that are engaged in their learning. They don't realize if they are still learning when we are out on our excursions. At times they are learning until 10:30 p.m. or 11:00 p.m., and we may have to point that out to them. When we do, they are quite impressed that their learning began at 7:30 a.m. and is now ending at 10:00 p.m. So our time has expanded greatly. When [students] are enjoying themselves, it's quite easy to expand your learning time and teaching time.

As indicated by the following extract from my autobiographical notes, below, I experienced what Don (above) spoke of first hand when I had the privilege of accompanying him, Malcolm and a new intake of students on their first overnight outing of the year to Blue Mountain Outdoor Adventure Centre. In the following vignette, I noted that:

Don and Malcolm use Blue Mountain as a place where new groups of students can develop relationships with one another through team building and outdoor activities. The first activity we took part in was a walk to a high point on a surrounding hill that overlooked the entire valley. Once everyone was sitting and gazing out onto the landscape Don said, "Welcome to your new classroom." I sat and watched the students' reactions to this. Some immediately understood what he meant. The others, I thought, didn't. As the day went on, there were many activities, including icebreakers, team building, wall climbing, canoeing and zip-lining, but the one that stands out was the night hike we all took together.

The focus for the hike was to engage the senses and trust oneself and others. It was a new experience for many of the students, and some were initially apprehensive but in time started to trust themselves. On returning from the hike, we all sat in a circle round a campfire, and Don and Malcolm asked everyone in the circle to reflect on some aspect of the day's events. Most people talked about their favourite activity, and of those who did, the night hike took precedence. One of the last students to speak talked about his favourite activity and then said to everyone that it was 10 pm and yet they were still in school. Don responded by reiterating what he had said much earlier that day: "Welcome to your new classroom." This time, the students' reactions told me that they all understood what he meant and were beginning to appreciate that a classroom and learning need not be a space and a process bounded by school walls.

Poplar also affords teachers and students complete freedom with regard to scheduling their time. "It is such a luxury being able to ... set our day and our week however we want," Steve said. Those involved with the programme could start their lunch hour whenever it felt appropriate. Students could go home early or stay depending on what they were working on. Ability to stay longer had significant advantages, Steve said, because it reduced the interruptions to learning that occurs in schools following the traditional schedule of set times per subject per day. Janet had similarly found giving students, whether working individually or in groups, opportunity to spend half days working on certain projects had the benefits of teaching them how to manage their time and to make choices on what to work on within those times. "I think that's important," she said, "because if you want the students to be independent, and be able to take initiative, there has to be a space where they can do it. We are not delegating what to do in every part of the day. When they need to take breaks, they can decide that themselves." Essentially, she continued, students had to appreciate that

fluidity of time meant “keeping track of their work and time themselves”. Several other research participants used the word “fluidity” in relation to time and discussed it in terms of allowing for flexibility of learning, but it was at Poplar and Birch where that fluidity definitely translated into students being responsible for managing the time they needed to accomplish their learning goals.

Recurring themes and points of difference

According to Freire (1970), the consciousness of the oppressor tends to transform everything around it into an object of its domination, including time. This ties in to the neoliberal education system, where time is controlled to the minute. This control of time is an intricate part of the neoliberal schooling system, and as Scott (1982) alluded, it resembles a factory, where “the pupils are products on a conveyor belt moving at regular, preordained intervals from one part of the school to the next” (p. 39). Rather than this highly rigid and controlled notion of time, all the participating teachers emphasized the importance they placed on the flexibility of time. The primacy of the flexibility of time was the strongest recurring theme in this section.

Olly, Bob, Tara, Malcolm, Steve and Janet all mentioned the positive benefits of flexible time schedules within their schools and programmes, especially in terms of enhancing their ability to give students the freedom to play a central role in their learning. These teachers’ beliefs in the benefits of a more flexible school day are not unfounded. Research by Wahlstrom, Dretzke, Gordon, Peterson, Edwards, and Gdula (2014) on the impact of later high school start times on students’ health and academic performance found that allowing the students to start school later, even by as little as half an hour, let the students sleep longer and that, in turn, led to improved academic attendance and performance and less tardiness.

Steve, Janet, Malcolm and Don also said that having complete freedom of time allowed them the flexibility to implement those learning options they considered best suited whatever space they and their students were using. Their comments also supported the claim that flexible time allows teachers to act more as facilitators, which is one of the tenets of PBE. Combining flexible scheduling with the flexible curriculum content and delivery that ICT offers, and which Tara referred to, could allow for implementation of ideas like flip classrooms (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Students in these classrooms gain exposure to new material via television or internet and then use “classroom” time for more hands-on approaches to learning, which could include PBE. Both Lisa and Mark, teaching in more traditional classroom settings, emphasized their preference for more flexible time options.

As Scott (1982) stated “the most essential and difficult lesson a child first learns at school is that his own work has to develop time, and not task orientation” (p. 40). Thus, in the neoliberal schooling system, the student must adapt to an environment where limitations of time take precedence over fully engaging in learning. Not having to adhere to a rigid schedule throughout the day allows teachers and students to modify in ways attuned to the students’ needs. Olly and Bob both discussed the importance that flexibility had for accommodating students’ needs. This flexibility could mean as Bob and Tara both mentioned changing the school’s daily opening and closing hours to facilitate the students’ transport to school, or changing what they were doing during the day if it became apparent that their energy levels would be better suited to some other learning content and/or activity. Malcolm’s students had the flexibility to define the amount of time they thought they needed to spend on a project to achieve the learning goals for it. At Poplar, as Janet advised, students kept track of and timed their own work schedules. According to Don, this student-centred attitude “maximizes

learning time” because it allows students to always be doing something that suits them best at a particular moment.

Several of the participants mentioned the constraints that space can have on time flexibility. For instance, as Bob at Horoeoka recounted, the physical location of a school or programme can affect when the school day starts or ends. Also, if the programme is attached to a school or resides within it, there may be expectations for the programme to adhere to some or all aspects of the school’s schedule. An example of this, Malcolm’s comments on school assemblies appear in Part 2 of this chapter. Certain spaces are well suited, however, to time schedules that differ from those of the more traditional school day. If the learning space is based around the community and the local area, learning can take place outside “regular” school hours because community work and work outside the classroom, such as in natural settings, do not adhere to a strict schedule: these events can happen at any time, as Don, Steve and Janet all pointed out.

Tara and Malcolm both spoke of using time in a more fluid and nonlinear way, such that less emphasis is placed on constantly being aware of what time it is, how long things have taken, and the general time constraints under the controls of the mainstream schooling system. Janet specifically stated that time is fluid at Poplar. These notions of time are commensurate with Indigenous concepts of time. In Western societies, time is generally viewed as finite—as a resource that should be used in ways that keep its limits in mind. According to Bain (2005), “Aboriginals ... treat [time] more from a descriptive point of view and give at least equal weight to time as an eternal quality” (n.p.). When discussing Māori concepts of time, which included referencing work by Massey (1994), Barrett and Strongman (2010) point out these concepts and positioned time as:

...cyclical time—the times of reproduction and the unfolding cycle of the seasons, the turning of the earth; the time in which our daily lives are set. This is what would have principally informed Māori practices and customs. In contrast, the Europeans had developed the awesome cultural weapon of linear time (p. 4).

The majority of research participants said a desire to move away from linear time constructs informed their teaching practice. All had found ways of accomplishing this within their programmes. Although the participants' motives for changing and challenging Western colonial forms of time were unlikely to be the product of an Indigenous perspective, they did align very well with Indigenous perspectives on time with regard to teaching and learning.

Bob told a story about his own children that not only illustrates some of the differences in time used between Māori and Pākehā but also highlights the intersection of time and space:

My kids go to primary school and one of the things that they do is kapa haka,¹¹ so that's one of the things they learn with the Māori language. My daughter and I joined a kapa haka group over at Ōnuku on the marae. We'd go over there and spend weekends practising. One of the things that's classic about the practices is that there is no recognition of time. We'll start in the morning and we'll do the song and then we'll go and do something else. It is completely natural. We all sleep in the whareniui [Māori term for traditional communal house], and we all wake up at a similar time because we have to get the space packed away for it to be used for something else.

¹¹ Māori performing arts involving singing, dancing and movement related to traditional hand-to-hand combat.

We've got a lot of people [at the marae] so we all eat together. It's a natural process ... In the evening, we'd lie down in the wharenuī, which has, by its design, carvings of the ancestor's sisters surrounding it, and you have the old kaumātua [Māori tribal leaders] stories about ... whatever they felt was relevant at that time and embeds your understanding of that place and the value of the cultural expressions around it and how they do it. It's just rich, so rich.

And every night, we'd finish the same way. There was one of the songs in our set that we were doing as a twenty-minute composition. One of them [the songs in the set] is a chant, and so it is massive—about six minutes long. It's just words, and as a non-speaker of Māori, I don't know what the words mean. It's just noise. It's just sounds that you're able to recreate, and so we were doing this very, very old song, chant ... In the evening when we lie down and go to sleep, we just repeat it after one of the tutors. And when you fall asleep, you fall asleep. We'll just keep going [until we fall asleep], and so they'll just keep going over and over, and they start at the beginning. They do their line; then they do two lines. Then they go back to one, and it's a beautiful, resonating sound when you're tucked up in bed and that's going on, and this is the way to end this ... it worked.

Lying there with my family ... in this amazing place was just a fantastic experience. Thirty or forty people were there, and you'd pick it up, and you'd pick it up and pick it up. I would never go [for] the whole thing, as I was often too tired. But it's an experience, and it's a way of saying how you do things, and does time exist? ... If anyone ever tried to timetable it and did all that kind of organization of the European/Pākehā way of doing things, it wouldn't be the same. We were a rōpu

[group] and so ... we work together when we come together at these times. It's beautiful. It's really good.

Bob not only recognized the Māori concept of time as nonlinear and cyclical but also saw it as a critical part of his experience at the marae. His description of learning in an Indigenous setting where there was little in the way of a regimented schedule provides a good example of a PBE experience because it offered a truly cultural connection for the students (Bob and his daughter) to the marae and its community. (It also helps explain Mark's desire to teach on his own marae.) Indigenous theories and practices around the concept of time would be an important component for PBE teachers to look at and work with local Indigenous communities to further challenge mainstream conceptions of time in schools.

Chambers (2008), who gained experiences from collaborations with several First Nations communities in Northwest Territories in Canada, created a curriculum of place in which she described time as an understanding of a place. When discussing this idea, she referred to the Kangiryuarmuit, the Inuit people of the North West Territories who have inhabited the land for thousands of years and taken millennia to understand the place (cosmologies, weather and land) that they inhabit. Chambers says this time "is longer than a lesson plan or a unit, a reporting period or a semester ... longer than the term of a single government or even a series of governments" (p. 116). She argued that learning compartmentalized into strict blocks of time confines it and prohibits the best outcome.

Challenging mainstream conceptions of time also facilitates alternative curricular delivery methods including authentic learning, project-based learning, inquiry-based learning, community based learning, and outdoor education as described in Chapter Six. Altering time

is also an important facet for teachers and students in being able to take static and unfamiliar spaces and turn them into living places which is further developed in Part two of this chapter and was exemplified in Chapter Four.

Part 2: Space

As mentioned, time and space are considered together in this chapter because they are intricately intertwined. Tara's claim that limitations to time affect space "because space becomes accessible when you have time to get to it" provides just one example of this interrelationship. Space can refer to the physical location, but it is something within that location that is constantly changing depending on who or what inhabits it at any one time. Sheehy and Leander (2004) discussed moving away from conceptions positioning space and time as nouns (places and dimensions) controlled by boundaries towards conceptions that present them as relational verbs—as entities whose constant interplay makes them fluid, ever changing. As Holland, Gordon, and Lahelma (2007) pointed out, "Activities are shaped by space and time, but people also seek to vary or alter spatial and embodied practices and relations" (p. 222). The authors also discussed how spatial arrangements control teachers' movement. They contend that space is not simply a backdrop to the activities that take place in classrooms. As stated by Tuan (1977), "If we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place" (p. 6). Thus, through time, space can be transformed into place. The following section examines these conceptions of space and place but first we need to look at the challenges found within mainstream classrooms.

Space-related challenges experienced in mainstream classrooms

Most teachers in Christchurch and Saskatoon had experienced a traditional education in traditional classroom settings from a young age all the way up to their university study. Such experience likely brings a level of comfort to new teachers who start their teaching practice in spaces defined by traditional classroom walls. Veitch and Arkkelin (1995) claimed that the containment of teaching and learning spaces within conventionally designed institutional environments are used over and over again not because they have been proven to work pedagogically but because they have been used in the past and are assumed to advantage teaching and learning. Bunting (2004), firm in his belief that “traditional classrooms must change”, proposes a model of generic spaces in which students can be “co-located” with teachers. These generic spaces would be multipurpose rather than designed for specific activities or learning methods, and students and teachers would have to the ability to teach and learn in multiple areas throughout the school and I would add outside of the school.

Responding to the challenges of mainstream space

Although commentators such as those just cited argued that it is time to reassess the traditional classroom as an ideal learning space/environment, the extent to which it is engrained in the schooling system presents a considerable barrier to changing this mind-set. Accounts of what this challenge meant for the research participants follow. They show that most of the research participants were intent on shaping the space within their classrooms in ways that fall outside the norms of the standard classroom.

Christchurch, New Zealand

Mark’s comments exemplified the logistics involved in having students from large mainstream schools, such as Harakeke, learn in environments outside the classroom:

I would have more education outside the classroom. It's hard to do it, especially in a school this size ... [where] you've got 19 social studies classes. In social studies, each team [of teachers] will teach something different but not every teacher teaches [during that time]. We have a rotation because of the resources. If we had a unit that we're all teaching at the same time, we'd have to take 460 kids. It is quite hard on a large scale to do that, but honestly, in senior school ... we've got five history classes ... I don't see why we can't do something.

Mark's description calls to mind Lisa's discussion (Chapter Four) about the challenges she experienced getting her Tī kōuka students out of the classroom. However, she was also experiencing a different type of space-related challenge and that was not having one constant space for her classroom because of constantly being moved from room to room in the school. For a time, she saw herself as a visitor in other teachers' spaces – reduced to the status of a placeless teacher. In one of the classrooms, the teacher had drawn lines on the floor around his desk to show that he wanted it to stay in that position. One of the Tī kōuka classrooms that Lisa used is shown in Figure 5.1.



Figure 5.1: A Tī kōuka classroom that Lisa taught in.

Lisa was generally not allowed to change the set-up of desks or change any other aspects of the classrooms she found herself in. When reflecting on this situation, she said that what she was experiencing gave her some idea of how Māori must have felt as more and more Europeans arrived in Aotearoa. “This was their space and, all of a sudden, Europeans were here, and it wasn’t their space at all. They were sharing it, or losing it, or trying to get it back.” Her reflection echoes the essence of Massey’s (2005) conceptualization of space as being more than physical, as a space of history, culture and the narratives from which meaning can be made (and subsequently place can be created).

According to Bob, when Horoeke School was based in the centre of Christchurch city, it was able to avoid teachers completely controlling their own dedicated classroom spaces or areas:

We've had a philosophy in our [city centre] school that every site should be multipurpose as much as possible. So, you should be able to do ... three subjects in one room ... I think the desire for that was that people don't grab hold of the space and take control of it ... [of them not] going to show up and say, "This is mine and it's nobody else's," and all that kind of feeling ... I think we've realized from moving around here and other places the significance in the psyche that [says] ... this is my place; this is where I come every morning, and that's where I keep my cup.

Bob described their first temporary post-earthquake location as a single-level dwelling with lots of space and green trees that felt very safe: "... after being in a high-rise building and having things fall down on us, it feels good." However, he immediately followed up this comment and said, "But you don't feel that you belong. We don't feel as though this place is ours. You don't ever seem to have the same connection ... We haven't been able to replicate our [old] home-base room." At the time Bob made these comments, the school had been in its temporary location for two years. Bob said it was still disconcerting to know he would have that space for a short term only. According to Tuan (1977), "when space feels thoroughly familiar to us, it has become a place" (p. 74). Hence, it would be difficult for Bob and his students to develop a sense of place at their first post-earthquake location in such a short period of time. Just as with Lisa who was not allowed to change her classroom around, Bob and his students yearned for a 'place' rather than a 'space'.

Tara also found the temporary location of Horoeka at its first temporary location difficult, but had eventually found a place she and her students could call their own. They had since moved to yet another location, on the grounds of a post-secondary institution. "At the first temporary

location, last year, I would go from sitting on a part of a living room floor lounge area ... to prefabricated buildings. We ended up ... with a home base... nobody else wanted to share with us ...which was cool.” Tara allowed students to take ownership of this space in an attempt to create a temporary sense of place as they knew they would be moving again. She did this by encouraging them to collect and display quotes, their artwork, statements that inspired them and then making posters from that material and pinning them all over the walls and the ceiling. When Horoeka moved to the post-secondary location, Tara and the students brought their posters to the new space, to bring a familiar place-like feel to it. Ownership of the space was again facilitated by the students taking part in designing its layout and look. As Tuan (1977) wrote, “space is transformed into place as it acquires definition and meaning” (p. 136). Tara allowed the classroom space to be transformed into a place- a location with meaning for the students.

Students and teachers in traditional mechanical schools fill an empty classroom space in accordance with subject-based school periods—spans of time that start and end at certain times. This ebb and flow is another way in which time and space interlink in the traditional school classroom. Olly from Kahikatea implied that if changes were made to one of these dimensions, then changing the other would be easier. However, effort within Kahikatea to change just the one dimension was not proving easy: “People have been in a particular way of being for 20 or 30 years and [are now] trying to adapt to a new system ... [they’ve got] trapped into bells and timetables.”

He alleged that the school was not “trying hard enough though ... state schools can do more creative things and incorporate more fresh thinking.” He suggested that coming at the problem from a different direction could work against the inertia holding back change, and

the direction he identified was very much a PBE one. Specifically, Olly thought the school's new location on an environmentally friendly 10-acre block provided ample places for learning outdoors. He felt this would help convince teachers, used to teaching in conventional limited spaces, the advantages of learning beyond classroom walls—and likewise the students' parents. He said:

We want to have plants, we want to have places for kids to grow, we want trees they can climb, dig holes and build huts [as well as] raise and care for the animals. We want the kids to be able to learn naturally, to explore and investigate but to grow up with caring for animals and plants, and do the sorts of things that traditionally kids did. Maybe a lot of people have their view that children aren't able to do those things ... Kids used to be able to walk to school and walk home and maybe run home and have lunch at home as well. But, nowadays ... people tend to drive their children to the school gate, take them and hand them over to the teacher, and be there at three o'clock to pick them up.

Olly had another interesting perspective on space, which also referenced time. He said that there is a time for the teacher to stand up (occupy the dominant space) in front of the students when teaching, but other times, the teacher needed to blend into the space occupied by the students so that the students could engage in open conversation with one another, with the teacher acting as facilitator if and when needed. Teacher acting as a facilitator is another way of allowing the students' questions and concerns to play a central role in their learning and so is a further practice that aligns with the tenets of PBE. A photograph of a Seven Oak's classroom is shown in Figure 5.2. Part of their outdoor gardening area is shown in Figure 5.3.



Figure 5.2: Kahikatea's classroom.



Figure 5.3: Kahikatea's garden area.

Bob saw an issue arising out of the present location of Horoeaka, which he considered had made some staff want the permanence of the traditional school setting in which each teacher has his or her own home room and space. This would have the benefit, he continued, of students knowing where to find each of their teachers: “If you’re not teaching a class, but students want to access your expertise for their own little project, they know where to go and find you.” The homeroom configuration also fostered a diversity of approaches to teaching, and that too could be a good thing. But, he cautioned, this use of space could work against what Horoeaka had been trying to achieve: “It’s actually a lot deeper than just space. It’s got us in a jar ... [There is a] deep-seated need in terms of space and place in schools, and where you are, than perhaps we’re aware of.” Bob said at the school’s former downtown location, the school space was divided into floors, and this had produced a school community that came to feel “natural because it was geographically sited. It was natural ... in terms of the physical spaces we had. We try to replicate that here, but we don’t have the physical spaces.” What this had taught him, Bob said, was that:

You either take into account the spaces you have available and create an environment and structures around it to make the use of it, or you create a structure that you think is what you want to have and even design a building to make that. What we did is, when we came to [the first temporary location], we didn’t adapt. We tried to apply our learning onto [the city] structure and ... it was done with the best intentions. The director of that time was saying, “Hey, we need continuity. We need things to be same.” You could see where they [were] coming from.

Bob’s musings highlighted that how Horoeaka used available space, and how they planned to use that of their new eventual site back in the central city, could “go two ways” He suggested

it could enable teachers to facilitate and “broker” community resources and learning possibilities, a role congruent with PBE, or lead to a reversion to standardized classrooms and spaces for teachers and students. As Bob also implied, continuity of a space and time to adapt to that space is needed to create a shared sense of community and place for both teachers and students. Horoeke’s experiences with use of space before and after the Christchurch earthquakes had shown them that the spaces available to them mediated their philosophies of and directions for learning. Several of the research participants in Saskatoon had also experienced this interrelationship between space and place, and how a space can be made into place with ample learning opportunities.

Saskatoon, Canada

At Willow, John and Rebecca took a space that was unused and unwanted by the rest of the teachers of the school in which the programme is situated and made it their own. They gave the space meaning, and transformed it into a place. They chose the location not only because “lots of teachers didn’t want this space” (Rebecca) but also, “because of the possibility for the kitchen to get built in. It was totally unused space in the school because of the walk-through hallway in it. I knew that if I asked, I would get it, and there may be potential to expand” (John). Both teachers could also see that shelves hid the windows and that, once they were taken out, there would be light and outdoor vistas.

Since bringing Willow into this space, Rebecca and John had continued to shape it into a (learning) place. Rebecca said that she and John had kept “coming in over the summer to make progress because before there were cupboards, and you could see sunlight coming through the cracks in the cupboards.” John laughed, as he added, “There was some kind of educational theory in the seventies that required cupboards.” Removal of the cupboards had,

Rebecca said, allowed them to “set up a growing space in our classroom. Before it was out in the hall, and then people would steal all our tomatoes.” More generally, the space had aided their intent to provide Willow as an alternative educational programme—“alternative,” Rebecca said, “even in how we set up our classroom, because it’s not traditional rows where everyone is facing the back of someone’s head. That’s not something that supports the values in the programme.”

This previously unused space, now the Willows’ classroom, still has the hallway going through it, and it has been transformed into a place with a unique classroom setting with a community feel. Students and staff from all over the school walk through the classroom as they travel from one part of the school to another. The hallway also offers a way to promote the classroom and programme to other students and staff. Figure 5.4 (below) shows part of the Willows’ classroom. The back wall with the students’ lockers marks the hallway through the classroom.



Figure 5.4: Willows' classroom.

When talking about how the classroom set-up differed from that of conventional classrooms, John focused in on what this point of difference had meant for the programme's students:

The couches give the students a feeling of privilege and kind of elite status that they don't experience in other classrooms ... We created that for them, and with them ... That makes them feel special ... to be a student in the class ... [instead] of getting a desk that you could rarely squeeze into, and that you can rarely fit your binder on—where students just have their little compartment that they fit in for an hour.

Ongoing changes to the layout of the classroom had heightened the sense of community amongst the students. "We expanded the couch collection this year, just so we can include

everyone,” John explained. “Now we can all fit in the circle, and the tables are usually set up as a massive table so that we all sit around the table, doing things and having lunch together ... it’s the little things that I think are really important in building community you never hear of.” Rebecca said that having the students co-create a space they felt comfortable in had helped them to connect the place to learning. Rebecca admitted that she enjoyed sitting with the students and not being the person in the room with the most comfortable desk and most comfortable chair. She said:

Why would I be setting up this beautiful office for myself and not for the students when they are the ones here to learn? I’m just here to facilitate that learning. We will typically sit at the front near the whiteboard, but we are sitting on chairs with them, and talking with them as much as we can.

Once again, the mention of teacher as facilitator brings in a tenet of PBE, and it seems fair to conclude that the place the teachers and students have co-created for Willow has been an important part of changing the classroom dynamic to suit this type of teaching.

Rebecca spoke for some time about her experience working in a traditional classroom where she previously taught science and how it compared with working in the Willow room. No freedom to change the classroom set-up in the science class made her uncomfortable. This coloured how she felt about the quality of her teaching and of the students’ learning. There is a distinct difference, she qualified, between teaching in a classroom where she could change student seating and other facets and teaching in a classroom where she could not. She also had found that, in the former, students got to know each other better, whereas in the latter,

“... everyone always sits in the same spot, and they only talk with the same people, and we are not getting that.”

By “that”, she meant the benefit of learning in a community setting, another facet of PBE and a mode of learning widely commended in the literature (McLaughlin, 2000; Melville, Berg, & Blank, 2006; National Research Council, 2003). She told the story of two girls who didn’t know or like each other initially, but ended up getting to know each other while they were in the Willow programme. They were now very good friends. Rebecca was sure their friendship was due to the classroom set-up. Willow provided students with opportunity to form relationships not only with peers they might not otherwise interact with but also their teachers: “... the students that have taken the programme in the past will come back and eat lunch with us. They will come to just chat.” Her anecdotes speak to the sense of community and relationship building within the school that a classroom can build if it offers a place (where students have a sense of connectedness by being enabled to lunch together or stop by and just chat. Overall, though, Rebecca’s and John’s accounts demonstrate how changing the dimensions of a space, what occupies it and how it occupies it, can markedly change the type of teaching, learning and relationship- building that goes on in that space, whereby it can evolve into a place. They also reinforced the importance that place has in creating relationships.

At Poplar, the classroom inhabits the entire top floor of the mainstream school, which has given the programme plenty of room for learning places and storage of outdoor gear. Janet said that the amount of room available gives students “a lot of choice in their work space. They choose whether they are sitting in groups or whether they are on a couch.” A backroom frequently serves as a breakout room. “Sometimes we use other rooms on our floor as

breakout rooms, and we kind of encourage that if it's not working for you, move and adjust.” As Janet further explained, the space that students have at their disposal means they can discover what they need for their own work environment, thus allowing them to have more control over their learning. Cresswell (2009) stated “Places range in scale from the corner of a room to the whole planet. They are, in the broadest sense, locations imbued with meaning that are sites of everyday practice” (p. 177). As Janet’s students take the spaces within the school and use them each day to work, learn and grow as individuals, they convert these spaces into places.

The Birch classroom also utilizes the space it occupies differently from how the other classrooms housed in the same school use their spaces, as evident in Figures 5.5 and 5.6. “I think we try to break a lot of those moulds that are instilled,” Malcolm said. “We try, from the get go, to change the structure of the classroom physically—how it’s set up, change how time is managed, change how direction for learning is engaged in the students. Students are usually learning top-down, but in our case we allow students to lead a lot of the curriculum, and we follow as guides.” Obvious in both Malcolm’s description and the photograph of the Birch classroom in Figure 5.5 is the programme’s strong commitment to student-centred use of space and student-centred learning. As Don said, the way the programme is housed is a reaction against “schooling [that] confines students into paper-decorated boxes we call classrooms and too often forces students to expand [only] ... stationary thoughts and diminishes creativity.”



Figure 5.5: Birch's classroom.



Figure 5.6: Mainstream school classroom next to Birch.

The main visual differences between the Birch classroom in Figure 5.5 and the mainstream classroom in Figure 5., above, are the type of seating and the layout of the seating. The Birch programme has couches and chairs, all facing one another in a semicircle, while the mainstream classroom seating has more rigid chairs and tables organized into small groups. The Birch classroom also has many more posters and far more art on the walls. Thomson, Hall, and Russell (2007) found that displays on the walls of a primary school they studied functioned normatively to promote and separate the identity of “teacher” and the identity of “pupil”. The walls of the Birch classroom feature intermingled informative teacher-provided posters on subjects such as geography, biology, and social justice with student work. In the mainstream classroom, a barrier of filing cabinets and shelves blocks the teacher’s desk from part of the classroom. The desks of the Birch teachers sit within the open area.

Each of the research participants in Saskatoon had been able to change space within their respective classrooms by primarily changing the set-up of the furniture. Although these changes were relatively small, they seem to have had lasting beneficial effects on the students. Of course, the other aspect of classroom space for the teachers in Saskatoon is that they only use their school-based classrooms for about half of the school year. The rest of the time, their classrooms occupy community and outdoor places as outlined next.

Challenges associated with using school grounds, local community, and wider community as learning places

Interest in developing and using school grounds as learning spaces has been evident in the literature for some time (see, for example, Adam, 1990; Lucas, 1997; Rauch, 2000). Interest in using the local community and wider community around a school in this way is also growing and is, not surprisingly, a strong component of PBE literature (see, for example,

Gregory Smith, 2005; Sobel, 2006). However, as with the other challenges considered in this chapter, the prevailing time schedules, health and safety considerations, resourcing and other factors of mainstream schooling either limit or prevent effort to use these spaces as outdoor learning place.

Responding to the challenges

Again, all of the research participants, no matter which type of school environment they were working in, saw outdoor places as important learning environments. They considered that these places provide students with experiences likely to develop their skills and engage their senses in ways and to degrees generally not possible in indoor classrooms.

Christchurch, New Zealand

Once, according to Bob, Horoeka School moved back into its anticipated custom-built facility in Christchurch's CBD, the school would again be fully able to realise its commitment to using the surrounding localities as learning places. Especially exciting at this time would be the opportunities afforded the school through its location amidst Christchurch CBD's post-earthquake rebuild programme. This "phenomenal opportunity to build a school as part of an innovative rebuilding city" would allow the school to forge/reforge connections within the newly rebuilt community, Bob said. It would also make even more apparent that "schools and young people and learning" can be and "are central to the city". Bob's description of Horoeka having to leave its original school locale emphasizes how important the central business district community was for the school: "We left a compromised building in the middle of a massive earthquake, seeing destruction and death, with no resources, and having ... experienced something traumatic, very traumatic." The challenge for the school, once it was back in the CBD, Bob said, would be to help its students act and learn as active community

citizens, just as Horoeke's students had done pre-earthquake. In essence, and in line with another tenet of PBE, Bob and his colleagues would need to give the students what *they* would need to grow into their new space so that it becomes a dynamic learning place.

All of this is not to say that Horoeke was abrogating its commitment to engaging with the communities associated with their temporary locations. Since taking up residence on the post-secondary campus, for example, the school had joined the community gardens that are housed on the premise (shared by post-secondary students and staff); as well as by members of the local community. Horoeke had also endeavoured to bring the community into their school by inviting post-graduate students and staff who had specific knowledge or expertise in an area to come and share it with their students. An occurrence soon after Horoeke set up in a newly built building allocated for it on the post-secondary grounds illustrated that using the community as a learning space and resource can be somewhat undermined by community attitudes to that possibility. The post-secondary institute mandated that the Horoeke students could only walk on certain paths and could not enter certain buildings on the campus. These restrictions, according to Bob, made the students feel unwelcome.

Although Horoeke's former central city location provided it with unique opportunities for community involvement, Tara said that "Not all the students were using it for the reason that it was maybe built for. They weren't necessarily interacting with mentors and using facilities ... It wasn't necessarily a lived expression of the intention behind it." She then said that despite the trauma and disruption of the earthquakes, the school's displacement from its original site had provided "a timely re-evaluation of priorities". Tara's own evaluation had led her to conclude that Horoeke's "special character is more than the place we are in—it is actually something that we could take with us anywhere. In fact ... learning is occurring

regardless of time and space ... This is what we have been challenged with.” As she spoke on, it became apparent that, for her, PBE no longer necessarily needed to mean learning in certain places with specially configured spaces but rather could and should reside as a strongly integrated component of a school’s philosophies of learning. This change in thinking, she argued, would make even broader the scope of where and how learning occurs, so bringing even greater flexibility and adaptability to Horoeke’s programme. Here, Tara differed markedly from Bob, who considered that the extent to which Horoeke could realise its philosophy depended very much on the spaces the students could inhabit and learn within.

Despite Tara’s re-evaluation of what space meant in relation to place and the terms of the programme, she said Horoeke was nonetheless committed at their current location to “getting out, because the whole principle of the school was to use local resources. So many of the students were completely oblivious to what those local resources were that we needed to make the connections for them.” Part of that process involved students doing cost–benefit analyses to test their complaints that certain facilities (such as the library or the park) were far away. However, said Tara, when the students timed how long it took them to get there, they found they were only minutes away. They also initially walked to the grocery store for six minutes rather than went to the cafe, which was only a two-minute walk. Tara said one of the “big things” Horoeke had strived to accomplish at the current location, “was working with students to break down [their] perceived distances and barriers of space” at their current location to create a sense of belonging and place. “It was [a matter of] perceived versus real distance, as to how accessible certain things were,” she said.

Nonetheless, Tara did agree with both Bob and the students when she said that some aspects of the school’s current location in the largely suburban area made it difficult for the students

to access some resources. “It’s a twenty-minute walk to the local community library,” she explained. “And you have to cross two busy roads.” Tara also observed that if Horoeoka knew they would be at the current location long term, they “would do things differently”. She considered that, for students, being in a temporary space had led them to make less of an investment in their learning. “Students need to have a sense of their own permanent place for learning,” she continued, “because this is an important part of enabling student-centred learning and facilitating a sense of community amongst the students.” Through this comment, Tara has demonstrated that she understands the importance of place as something with meaning beyond that of a space. However, despite the benefits of having an individual student-centred space, Tara pointed out that this type of place has one considerable drawback and that was ensuring that whatever one person was doing in that place did not impinge on the learning goals of the others in it. Consideration of others and ability to compromise were therefore important skills for the students. Tara went on:

It [the student-centred space] sounds great, but for everybody to be able to do what everybody wants to do, what does that mean? We have to have sort of have a sense of reading the world around us, to actually pick up on the fact that right now you want to listen to really, really loud big music ... but I’m really desperately trying to study for something else that I’m doing. So it is all about all those compromises that we achieve ... to basically show that we can honour that. So what are those workable compromises? It is the rights and responsibility, I suppose ... I have the right to do what I want, but I have got a responsibility to make sure I don’t basically impinge anybody else’s right to do what they want. So how do we make a workable compromise? I think those are the conversations that we have every day. When we are the last people to leave this room, when we leave at night, we leave it well. It doesn’t

matter if the people before us didn't, because it is not about what has been done, it is about who we are and what we are doing.

At the time I interviewed the Christchurch-based research participants, Kahikatea was leasing land from the government that was still partially used by a post-secondary institute, and the classrooms the school were using used to be a winery. (Kahikatea is currently, at the time of my writing this thesis, building a new school that will accommodate preschool through senior secondary school students and will open in 2016.) Being housed in a space used for horticulture had given the school access to resources that normally wouldn't be available, such as apple orchards, pear orchards and a community garden. Olly said that although the space the school currently had available to them is small and "not entirely ideal ... at the same time, it's fantastic for hands-on learning."

Nonetheless, Olly was looking forward to the spaces that the 2016 building would offer the school:

They [the spaces] will be large, open and flexible, with sustainability in mind in terms of eco-friendly materials and recycling of heat and water. They will be as eco-friendly and responsible as possible with by-products. There will be four big classrooms in each block with what we're calling a learning street up in the middle. So it's ... an open-roofed classroom. One [classroom] has a fire pit and one has got water in it—[a] kind of real reflection of the natural environment that children can engage with. There are basically four of these pods.

As with Horoeke School, the earthquakes had presented Kahikatea with opportunity to evaluate how well its pre-earthquake building had met the school's ethos. The new building would reflect that evaluation in terms of a somewhat different use of space and spaces both within and outside the school building so as to allow further opportunities for hands-on learning. The school's commitment to this type of learning had thus remained strong and provided it with a particular point of difference from mainstream schooling where, according to Olly, hands-on learning had become less utilized in the last few decades, mostly because of fear of children being injured:

I listened to an American speaker once at a conference. He was President of the Independent Schools of America. He was talking about helicopter parenting, where parents hover the moment there is any sign of danger. But for an educated youth, you need these things as a sign of learning experiences. They would be in there hovering, picking them up, pulling them out of the learning experience, pulling out of danger ... and doing all the decision-making for them. So the parents here [at Kahikatea] sign a consent that basically talks about that ... We are not so PC in terms of lot of those types of things—about just letting the kids explore.

Olly's description of hands-on learning and learning from engagement in real-world experiences taps into two more tenets of PBE outlined in the literature review chapter and will be explored further in Chapter Six. For Olly, such learning is "real learning". While the programmes studied in Saskatoon did not have quite as bold a take on hands-on learning on the school grounds, they did incorporate an even greater deal of community involvement and outdoor education into those programmes.

Saskatoon, Canada

Malcolm considered that in Saskatoon a good connection with the cities' downtown areas aligned with some of the vision for all schools in the education system. However, he said Birch's underlying principle of justice and eco-justice meant the programme used many different community and outdoor locations, a good few of which would be seen as "questionable" by mainstream and even other alternative schools and programmes. The school often used "controversial locations," he said, "those that need to be questioned—like walking down 20th Street."¹² He gave some more examples of where Birch had taken its students:

We have been to places that are questionable within our Catholic Division, such as the 5th Avenue community centre, engaging with the gay and lesbian community there. We also make a lot more connections with our First Nations community, but we do get a lot of questions around the possibility that we are focussing too much on "First Nations stuff".

Despite Birch being upfront about and acknowledged by others as a programme focused on social and eco-justice, Malcolm said he had attracted a bit of "backlash" from parents, administrators and the church by giving the opportunity for his students to engage with issues of homosexuality, gender and race. Despite this backlash, Birch persevered, as social justice issues were an integral part of the programme. The programme's emphasis on exploring other communal spaces and places with contested histories attracted less opprobrium but still brought students face to face with controversial issues. Malcolm went on about this:

¹² 20th Street is one of the oldest streets in Saskatoon and had become a very impoverished, marginalized area in the city, inhabited by high numbers of First Nations and Métis people. In the last two years, the city council has endeavoured to gentrify the area, which has pushed up land prices and pushed out many of the people previously living there.

Saskatoon is a great place with lots of history but ... seeing what has happened in these places ... may show injustices. People talk about the Marr home being the oldest place in Saskatoon, but what was happening to the land before that? What about the disagreement about the Treaty?¹³ Who was involved in the Treaty according to the history? That's getting a lot deeper than the story that was traditionally given. We try to find those places. Places that students can question within the realm of their communities and schools.

Don turned the discussion on Birch's use of community space and place back to pedagogical considerations when he referred to his observation that the dynamics of learning changed whenever he took students outside the classroom:

It's interesting when you bring students outside to varying locations. It could be an urban setting, or it could be a rural setting. Suddenly your need to be front and centre begins to dissipate. You suddenly are not necessarily front and centre anymore. It's great that the actual learning takes centre stage. The material—the subject-matter—becomes first and foremost to the students, and I think that is difficult for some teachers, but it's welcomed by me.

Don said that Birch “strives to promote the world” around its students “as our classroom”. In practice, he said, “We've expanded our space. We speak to our classroom about not having any borders, and then that's really what we visualize [with the students] at first.” The notion

¹³ The Treaty Malcolm referred to is Treaty 6, which encompasses the Saskatoon area and is introduced in the literature review chapter of this thesis.

of Birch as a classroom without borders had become “kind of a bit of a catch phrase for us.” Don continued by explaining how the notion encompassed even the physical classroom space: “It expands to our classroom that has no borders—no borders socially, no borders physically.” The notion, whether considered in theoretical terms with the students or exercised in practical terms through engagement in the community, offered the advantage, Don concluded of “a lot more teachable moments”.

As Don and Malcolm both implied, developing Birch had meant creating a place for them and their student’s within their mainstream school. Don said that the process of integrating the programme into the school (and vice versa) had been considerably more challenging than he and Malcolm had assumed it would be. He thought the reason for this was partly due to the fact that both he and Malcolm were very heavily involved with the mainstream school before starting the programme. Running Birch had meant removing themselves and their students from various school events and assemblies, and some of the school’s staff, Don explained, had not been comfortable with this departure from the school’s standard procedures. Don further discussed the importance of ensuring other staff understood the programme:

It’s been incredibly important and valuable for us to educate our staff on what we do, and the differences, and kind of our mandate to teach and to challenge the traditional system and the traditional classroom, and to present it in a different light. So we’ve had to educate our staff on that. We’ve also had to really promote an open door policy where they [staff] have been given the opportunities to come into our classroom to truly see what we do, and then we could explain it to them. But until they actually sit within the classroom, they won’t feel it. We’ve also had to educate our

administrations team as well, and we've been blessed with some administrative members who've been supportive in giving us a lot of freedom. We've also had administrative members who've been very critical, and ... we welcome that because it strengthens our argument and it strengthens our programme ... It's been a challenge to bring in a new classroom within a traditional system ... but it's been getting better.

Like Don and Malcolm, Poplar's Janet and Steve also described their programme's classroom as a space not bounded by school walls. "We have all kinds of classrooms around the community, and outside of the community as well," said Janet. When, she, Steve and their students even go on outdoor education trips as part of the programme, "It's not that we are not in school, and this is not extracurricular because it's after school. It's a typical day ... This is education for the students, continually." Steve echoed Janet's words: "The classroom is a community, so it takes on many ... different contexts." He added, "Our kids really need to know that everywhere they are is the classroom. By the end of the ten months, they are actually starting to think that way."

Steve provided as an example of the programme's "community as classroom" philosophy a trip the class had recently made to Anglin Lake (an area 200km north of Saskatoon in the boreal forest). One evening, everyone sat by the lake and even though it was eight p.m., the students were well aware that their class was in session. Steve said Poplar tries to engrain in their students the principle that their experiences outside of their actual physical classroom are not separate from but are part of it: "This is class, right now, everywhere you go, cycling down Fourth Avenue [in Saskatoon] in the bike lane—the class is in session. "In a way," concluded Steve, "Poplar exemplifies deschooling." In this context, Steve referred to deschooling as an alternative to mainstream education, following Illich (1971), who coined

the term by suggesting radical and exciting reforms for the education system and society(see also Gatto, 2008; Hern, 2008; Postman & Weingartner, 1971).

Steve also maintained that the world has changed and many workplaces with it. The changes in workplaces include changes in the configuration and use of work spaces. However, despite these changes and despite schools presumably preparing students for life and work in modern environments, schools have not kept up, he said. “Administrators and parents and everybody still have this idea” of the traditional school, even though corporate Canada and the corporate global world have “gone outside the box in so many ways. You can work at home, work at the café, and do whatever. [But] schooling is still inside the four walls.” Should a school try to do “something else”, he argued, it will probably be perceived as not doing what it is supposed to be doing as rigorously as it should. “And rigorousness ... is about making sure that you are working and giving your students lots of work ... There is this engrained perception that school can’t happen here” (the café where my interview with him took place). Birch was constantly trying to educate people otherwise, Steve claimed. “However, superintendents and even our principal will go, ‘Okay, that’s fine, but ...’, and the conversation goes back into the mainstream realm.” Janet, repeating Steve’s use of the word “engrained”, concurred: “The current format of schools is engrained in us. People ask how the students could possibly be learning because they are not sitting at a desk, and they are not listening to lectures, and they are not writing stuff down. Other questions arise like: How are we going to collect data? How are you going to test them? What are we going to mark?”

The constant need to explain and “prove” the Birch programme to others, and generally only being able to use mainstream ideologies and language to do so, frustrated both Steve and Janet, who explained:

[I]t's uncomfortable for them ... Our mentality is different ... They are not expecting us to have the information to teach to them. We are creating channels and breaking down walls, so that connections can happen, and so that they are learning because of that. We are sort of looking at an "ecosystem" that has all these webs and relationships that you are learning ... We need to connect these relationships, and therefore it can't just be in the class because then you have this huge deficit of learning. If teaching is done only in the class, then you are bluffing off all these relationships.

Steve admitted that their school board had perhaps heeded some of what Poplar was trying to achieve when it requested that schools have their teaching staff work in "collaborative inquiry teams" so as to give teachers some grassroots decision-making about where and how to have students learn. However, he considered this initiative had fallen short, and that teacher morale had suffered. He partially attributed this situation to "trust issues between administrators and teachers". This mistrust is heightened, he continued when "we, as teachers, are out there in the community, and administrators don't know what we're doing. And as the school system moves to more evidence-based and more data-based [pedagogy], the more challenged we are. This causes morale to tank with teachers." Ironically, Janet added, "when we are in the community, there are more eyes on us. We are more transparent than when we are behind closed doors in a classroom and people don't know what learning is going on with the participants." This and other recurring themes arising out of this part of Chapter Five are considered in the following section.

Recurring themes and points of difference

Skamp and Bergmann (2001) claim that teachers are uncertain about leaving the security and comfort of their classrooms in order to teach in other settings. The classroom setting is comfortable, they say, because it has remained unchanged for decades, regardless of changes in society and what has been discovered about learning processes. Traditional classrooms, according to Orr (1992), confine students to spaces in a small room occupied by rows of desks. They are “sealed in a cocoon of steel, glass and concrete” (p. 134).

All of the research participants were intent on changing this adherence to the walled and bordered learning and teaching spaces of the traditional school. They wanted to go beyond or even dispense with such borders by making outdoor and community-based venues learning locales. Both Malcolm and Tara spoke of breaking down geographical and physical borders within the community, while Malcolm and Don took this aim further in their desire to break down social borders. Rebecca told of how the use of space in her classroom had helped break down some students’ negative, preconceived notions of other students in the class, and also facilitated the creation of new and positive relationships among the students. The Saskatoon research participants were all using the local and wider communities as places facilitative of learning opportunities, but were still being challenged by mainstream school authorities and others (e.g., some parents) to “prove” that learning was indeed occurring in these settings. Despite difficulties of this kind, the teachers, convinced that learning can and does happen everywhere, persevered with using outdoor and community spaces as learning venues. Also, as Steve pointed out, the time available for learning generally expanded significantly during outside-the-classroom activities. He said he sometimes had to remind students that they were actually learning at these times, ostensibly because they were still adjusting to the idea that learning is not a standard-classroom-bound activity. Janet and Steve spoke of the classroom

expanding out from its space in a building into the community and everywhere they and their students went. The attitude they tried to impart to their students was that the classroom is always with them because they are always learning. The teachers' comments accord with Somerville, Davies, Power, Gannon, and de Carteret's (2008) claim that, "Learning place need not be confined to sites that are conventionally understood as places of and for learning. Learning about place can take place in communities ... [and] among groups of people who collaborate on projects of common interest" (p. 63). Their conclusion resonates with the Saskatoon teachers but also with Bob's claim of what he would create in terms of learning place and space if he had a magic wand.

The physical location of a programme or school provides learning opportunities particular to the immediate and further-afield communities surrounding it. Horoeke, while finding its programme as originally conceived somewhat confined by not being in its former downtown location, was starting to integrate aspects of its current local community into learning opportunities. Community gardening was one example of this. Bob spoke, with enthusiasm, of what being part of rebuilding a community would mean for both students and teachers when Horoeke returned downtown in the future. In Chapter Four, Mark echoed Bob's enthusiasm when talking of the benefits that Harakeke's students and teachers would experience once back in the city centre. For both teachers, the difficulties of dislocation that had occurred because of the earthquakes were turning into the learning advantages accruing from their schools eventually becoming a part of the revitalization of the city and its community.

Although Birch is not located downtown, the programme has a strong connection with that part of Saskatoon. This is a place where students can experience social justice issues first

hand. Being downtown exposes students to real-world issues, which is part of authentic learning (described in Chapter Four) and a tenet of PBE. When speaking of urban spaces as places with histories, including contested histories, that provoke inquiry and learning, Malcolm provided a specific example of how space can promote authentic learning and a critical pedagogy of place. Authentic learning was also described by Olly at Kahikatea, where students are allowed to explore, use swords, climb trees, build tree huts and so on (see also Chapter Four). The school's large school grounds, with their trees, gardens, open areas and greenhouses, provide ideal spaces for such activity—for giving children hands-on, real experiences. Thus, authentic learning is linked closely to space because space can either limit or facilitate learning.

The research participants all spoke at length about the importance that ability to change mainstream classroom spaces held for implementation of their programmes and/or ideals. Both Lisa and Rebecca were experiencing difficulties teaching in other teachers' spaces because of not being allowed to change the set-up of the room, including desk arrangements. Hence, they felt they were unable to transform the classroom space into a place. Having experienced the frustration of working in a classroom where another teacher had delineated his space via tape on the floor, Lisa longed for her own space. Bob saw the value of teachers having home bases not just as a physical space that they could shape in accordance with the learning opportunities they wanted for their students, but also as places where students could readily find their teachers whenever they needed their expertise or help. However, Rebecca's and Bob's (and also Lisa's) association of classroom space with teachers begs the question as to who "owns" the space in a classroom. *Is it a teacher's space? Or is it the students' space, in the sense that Tara used when talking about students taking ownership of the spaces in which they learn? Or does the space belong to both teacher and student, who collaboratively*

mediate how that space will be configured and used? If space is to be transformed into place, it needs to have meaning for both students and teachers.

In quasi-legal terms, most schools are regarded as public spaces, but there is still choice as to whether those spaces work to “emancipate” or “control” teaching and learning processes, as Fain (2004, p. 11) explained:

When we think of school as a space that should be free and open public space, we realize that school is constructed space as opposed to some form of “natural” or “automatic” space. That is, we understand that this free space exists intentionally rather than accidentally or by chance. Knowing that the constructed space called school has the potential of being either emancipating (free) or controlling (oppressive), those who make the space must choose what kind of space they want to create and then must act accordingly.

Greene (1988), too, argued that so-called “free” space must be “deliberately created” (p. 18). If we accept that schools are being created deliberately as free and public spaces, this begs another question: where does the community fit in? The research participants would probably answer this question by saying that the community is, or should be, an extension of that space and so an integral and collaborating part of it.

According to Duncanson, Volpe and Achilles (2009), “the design of a room delivers silent but very clear messages to its occupants. People see rooms in different ways” (p. 2). The mechanistic set-up of mainstream classrooms, dictated by the teacher, with single desks in rows that seem to be more beneficial for the cleaning staff than the students and the teacher at

the front, has been used in classrooms for a century, without change (Collepari, 2015). But as stated by the Victorian Institute of Teaching (n.d.) “It may be that a 'one size fits all' model or solution is not possible. It seems that different arrangements are required for different teaching and learning contexts” (p. 3). The research participants in this study would agree. Engaging with PBE becomes easier if the standard row seating and the classroom space can be changed. Most of the research participants were able to change the set-up of the classrooms they were teaching in, with these changes including different arrangements and inclusions or exclusions of desks, chairs, couches and tables. They had taken a proactive approach in allowing the students to be part of the decision-making as to the classroom set-up and where they would work and learn in it. The layout of a classroom or any type of learning space can influence how learners view their experiences in it and one another (Barrett, Zhang, Moffat, & Kobbacy, 2013). Tara, John and Malcolm under their supervision as teachers, empowered the students to take part in designing the classroom space. Tara added her own student-centred features to the room, such as quotes written by the students, which she pinned around the walls. Janet let students’ choose their work space, whether in groups, on the couch or in a back room. John said collaboration between the Willows’ teachers and students had led to the seating in the classroom taking the form of comfortable couches arranged in a circle, an arrangement he approved of because of his belief that it facilitated the building of a learning community. All these examples demonstrate how the research participants have promoted the evolution of the classroom space into a place.

Don, at Birch, also spoke of the classroom as a community. The programme used a classroom seating layout similar to that of Willow, with couches in a semicircle instead of desks and their chairs in rows. Rebecca, also referencing the notion of community, said the layout of the Willow classroom enabled students to get to know one another better, and likewise their

teachers, so much so that after completing the programme, they still returned to talk. Olly was looking forward to the open, flexible and engaging spaces that would surround Kahikatea's new school. Something that none of the research participants mentioned was using seating arrangements in their classrooms as a management tool. Most, if not all, of the research participants would dispute Dunbar's (2004) five best classroom-arrangement practices or "common-sense rules", and they would probably notice the emphasis in the fifth point on "teaching activities" rather than on student-directed learning activities.

- Students should be seated where their attention is directed toward the teacher.
- High traffic areas should be free from congestion.
- Students should be able to clearly see chalk board, screens, and teacher.
- Students should be seated facing the front of the room and away from the windows.
- Classroom arrangements should be flexible to accommodate a variety of teaching activities. (p. 9)

Although consideration pertaining to use of classroom space as a classroom-management tool did not feature in this thesis, it would provide an interesting follow-up area within the participating schools and programmes in particular and with respect to place-based education in general.

Taking students on excursions outside of the school and classroom requires a significant amount of effort on the part of teachers. As Mark mentioned, it is not an easy teaching activity, involving (as mentioned by Lisa in Chapter Four) the need to plan ahead, obtain support from other school staff and parents, and ensure adequate financial and other resourcing. However, the majority of the research participants were able to use the local

community and wider communities as learning spaces because this use had been built into the philosophies of their schools and programmes and so was funded and otherwise resourced accordingly.

Olly, while speaking of the need for schools to be more creative in how they conduct their programmes, brought in the topic of how teachers actually inhabit classroom space when teaching. He wanted to see a move away from the teacher standing up in front of the class and “talking to them scenario”. He considered “open conversation”, where the teacher sits with the students and is a part of rather than the instigator of the talk, just one “creative” alternative. Robinson (2011) emphasized the importance of the creativity that Olly spoke of:

It is often said that education and training are the keys to the future. They are, but a key can be turned in two directions. Turn it one way and you lock resources away, even from those they belong to. Turn it the other way and you release resources and give people back to themselves. To realize our true creative potential—in our organizations, in our schools and in our communities—we need to think differently about ourselves and to act differently towards each other. We must learn to be creative (n.p.).

Robinson went on and described in detail just how people can create an education system that nurtures creativity rather than undermines it. In traditional classroom environments, children are often forced to sit for long periods of time, and also have very little time outside the classroom. Confining children this way, according to Robinson (2011), can deaden their senses and inhibit authentic learning. Instead, schools should be utilising their learning spaces inside and outside in ways that engage all of the senses and promote real-world experiences.

Robinson's claims align with the freeing of space and time needed for students to travel and learn "beyond borders", as discussed by the research participants. This type of freedom first requires, though, freeing the mind to think outside the prescribed box of timetables and of classrooms as the most valid learning environments. PBE can serve this purpose because it emphasizes using space and time to reactivate the senses, engage creativity and promote change while creating place within the often controlled confinements of time and space found within mainstream schooling systems.

Conclusion

This chapter looked at how the research participants were using time and space within their schools and programmes in order to respond to the challenges of—as well as to *challenge*—the traditionally conducted, and heavily controlled education systems in Christchurch and Saskatoon. One of the particular challenges the research participants identified with respect to their efforts to change the time and space conventions of mainstream schooling was the tendency of administrative staff to try to curtail those efforts. That they did so is probably partly because of, as Steve stated, the engrained perception that learning does not happen outside the classroom. Trust issues also came to the fore in the teachers' encounters with administrators, as several of the research participants mentioned. However, as Janet and Steve pointed out, learning in the community is transparent; it is apparent to whoever is there to observe it. And because education that occurs in the community can be seen by those within it, it is far less hidden an activity than is education that occurs in those classrooms where, most of the time, the only observers of what is taking place are the teacher and the students.

Flexibility and freedom again presented as key components for facilitating the use of time and space in ways that differ from those of the traditional schooling system. It was apparent from the research participants' comments and anecdotes that flexible time arrangements allowed the participating teachers to teach content and facilitate its delivery according to, for example, students' energy levels and their desire to stay with a learning inquiry rather than move to another one. In addition, teachers could bring in learning opportunities that were facilitated by the spaces they were in or were available to them at a particular time. Not having to adhere to strict time schedules enhanced ability to capture these opportunities, providing just one example of how time and space were complementary dimensions for the teachers and their students. Their attitudes to, and preferences for, how time should be perceived and used frequently tapped into Indigenous peoples' concepts of time as fluid and nonlinear.

The transformation of controlled and confined spaces into meaningful places stood out in this chapter as all the research participants had exemplified this change. The earthquakes were a reminder of the importance of places for learning for the Christchurch teachers. As shown by Bob and Tara the transformation of space into place was so important that it had become essential to the philosophy of their school as they had switched locations multiple times and were in the process of creating new learning places that were not the same as their original place downtown. Olly also exemplified this transformation as he was part of the planning for the new school that was not looking to create static teacher controlled classrooms but instead open learning places. The Saskatoon research participants were still confined to mainstream classrooms but were able to change them into meaningful places for their students but more importantly they were creating opportunities for their student's to gain a sense of place outside the walls of the school.

As Steve stated, restricting learning to inside the classroom restricts the building of and learning about relationships. The research participants provided various examples of changes to space and time facilitating relationship-building between students and teachers as well as among students. The changes in space and time evident in the research participants' learning environments favoured this process by typically redirecting learning away from dictation by a teacher in a classroom to relatively passive students for a structured period of time towards authentic student-directed learning and shared (student and student, teacher and student) experiences. Additionally, Shapiro (1999) reminded us, "Shared experience is an indisputable essential ingredient [in the formation of local communities]; without it there can be no chance for mutual understanding, empathy, and social cohesion" (p. 12). Freedom to shape time and space in order to maximize learning opportunities is integral to PBE, as is the ability to further relationships and strengthen communities. Just as facets of space and time can facilitate or inhibit PBE, so too can curricula in terms of their content and delivery and the means by which their anticipated student learning outcomes are assessed and evaluated. These considerations are examined in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Curriculum and Assessment

I have never let my schooling interfere with my education (Mark Twain).

The previous chapter illuminated the research participants' use of time and space within their teaching to create learning places. This chapter outlines the participants' perceptions of and praxis with regard to the design and delivery of the curriculum in their schools as well as how their students' work is assessed. It also examines to what extent and how these perceptions and praxis diverge from and challenge those of the conventional schooling system. The chapter that follows is set out in three parts. The first covers curriculum design, the second curriculum delivery, and the third assessment.

Part 1: Curriculum design

Overview

The New Zealand national curriculum for primary and secondary schools (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007) and the Saskatchewan provincial curriculum (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, n.d.) have many similarities in terms of their design and the principles informing their design. These principles are evident in the curriculums' respective visions of learning and the outcomes of that learning, the subjects offered, and the competencies students are to acquire. There are differences in scope and content, of course, but overall both curriculums share a philosophical underpinning. Saskatchewan offers "broad areas of learning" that are imbued by the notions of lifelong learning, strong sense of self, community and place, and engaged citizenship. The New Zealand curriculum offers "directions of learning" and a vision that all young people will be lifelong learners who are confident, connected and actively involved. Despite the differences in wording, the intent in each curriculum is the same.

One particularly noticeable difference between these curriculum documents is the freedom that schools in New Zealand have in interpreting them as guiding frameworks, compared to those in Saskatchewan. In New Zealand, each school creates its own curriculum based on the national curriculum. Teachers, with input from members of each school's board, which includes parents, have the right to shape their school's curriculum according to their and the board's assessment of student demographics and needs. Within the above framework teachers still have a remarkable amount of "freedom to choose [learning] topics" and a high degree of agency within a classroom setting (New Zealand Ministry of Education cited in Manning, 2009a, appendix 16). As such, any one school's curriculum should tend to reflect, to a lesser or greater extent, the nature and interests of the community from which it draws its students. In Saskatchewan, the provincial curriculum applies in every school, so that curriculum is the one that teachers teach irrespective of which school they work in.

The subjects offered in the New Zealand Curriculum are English, the arts, health and physical education, learning languages, mathematics and statistics, science, social science, and technology. The Saskatchewan curriculum offers English language arts, arts education, international languages, physical education and wellness, sciences, mathematics, social sciences, career education, health education, and other, which includes Aboriginal languages, Nēhiyawēwin (Cree language), practical and applied arts, Christian ethics and Ukrainian/English bilingual education: Christian ethics. The similarity in the subjects offered between the two curriculums is evident. It should also be noted that both systems have required areas of study at each grade/year that include math, science, and English but neither te reo Māori nor any Aboriginal languages are mandatory in either curriculum. Details from

the research participants' accounts of the content and organisation of that content (design) in the curriculums of their various schools follow.

Christchurch, New Zealand

At Horoeke, the curriculum is integrated into an overall learning programme so it is not necessarily subject specific. As Tara pointed out, because Horoeke is a state school, it has to follow the national curriculum. She said she didn't see that as restrictive, even though other teachers would. She saw her view in this regard as "an attitude thing, not necessarily the reality."

Bob, also from Horoeke, was one such teacher who considered the curriculum constraining, particularly in terms of impeding the development of cross-curricular programmes. The subject-based design of the secondary school levels of the curriculum, he thought, was primarily focused on preparing students for tertiary education or the workforce. However, Horoeke gave its teachers, with student input, opportunity to design subject integrated courses (containing several different subjects), and the school could therefore be considered as having a "multi-subject" approach to the national curriculum. This approach enabled the school to "mix and match" curriculum subjects in ways that accorded with students' individual interests.

Bob agreed that designing such courses and consulting with students and parents in regard to them was time-consuming for teachers but that it was one of the reasons why students and their parents chose Horoeke. It had helped the school "gain or develop the confidence of families, students, parents, tertiary institutions, and employers," Bob said. In summing up his thoughts on the single-subject nature of the national curriculum, Bob concluded:

The challenge is for us to be able to develop programmes of learning which are multi-curricula around contexts that have been seen as a valid way to approach education. Not just prepping for the way that those subjects or those learning areas are available within tertiary institutions, but doing it the way that it needs to be done or it should be done, or could be done.

Tara's comments supported this sentiment, and her comments were useful in elucidating why Horoeoka favoured cross-curricular-designed teaching programmes. The school's interpretation of the national curriculum's (official guideline) principles, values and key competencies transcend every single subject area, she explained. The aim was to teach students to think not just in one subject such as mathematics but across subjects. Students need to "be thinking in action, and should be thinking of everything, even on their breaks." I think she would agree that teachers and administrators should be doing this also.

According to Bob, teachers at Horoeoka had had to work hard to realize its vision of cross-curricular courses designed (and frequently further adapted) to meet students' interests and needs:

Developing a really strong framework ... in terms of curriculum organization, planning and delivery ... has developed in a way where it's been very experimental, very much based on "Let's try things and we'll see how it goes, and we will adapt." This is our tenth year next year, and ... what we've learned is that for a really strongly personalized approach for the students and for a personalized approach to learning and designing personalized programmes, the school can provide quite a strong

framework around how we offer what we offer, and the students can work with it so that we can live up to the expectations. Students can work in their personal interest anytime, and they can do it in the classroom by sitting at a desk or table or they can work out in the community.

The point Bob makes in the last sentence of this quote speaks to the importance that curricular flexibility holds for advocates of PBE. The freedom that New Zealand schools have to shape the subjects of the national curriculum has enabled Horoeaka to develop cross-subject courses that students can learn not just in the classroom but also out in the community and beyond: to paraphrase a concept from Freire (1970), PBE for students is analogous to “reading the world around them” and according to Tara, has been taken on board at Horoeaka. She said that “reading the world” was a crucial part of learning at the school because learners who are reading the world around them (engaged and interested in it) can identify any number of problems meriting investigation. Problem-based learning is thus “a pedagogical approach which uses cases and problems as the starting point for acquiring the desired learning objectives” (Walsh, 2005, p. 26).

At Tī kōuka, students and the community have less input into curriculum design than their counterparts do at Horoeaka, and the teachers themselves have less flexibility than their Horoeaka colleagues in this regard. According to Lisa, Tī kōuka develops the subjects of the national curriculum mainly within the boundaries set down in the curriculum documents. Committees of teachers put together units of subject-specific work but individual teachers can add their own ideas, most of which relate to student needs. Lisa said that she puts her “own thoughts” into her lesson plans if she thinks that some aspect of the curriculum outline will not work for her students. She also said that one of the school’s social studies teachers had

recently been given “management time” to realign the nationally prescribed social studies curriculum for the school’s Years 9 and 10 students. Changes were made to the curriculum “because we didn’t have any local stuff, so as teachers we were asked what we wanted”, as were students and parents (“the student voice and the parent’s voice”, as Lisa put it). Lisa looked upon the national curriculum (and its attendant subjects) as a document that teachers could work within, but she saw the actual degree of flexibility afforded teachers confined because of the school’s requirement for students to reach subject-specific, nationally prescribed academic outcomes.

Kahikatea has a different approach again to how it puts curriculum subjects “into play” in the school. Each day of the week is given over to a particular set of subject options, and each student can choose which subject he or she wants to study during a specified time (e.g., a school term, the whole year). Olly described a typical week:

Monday afternoons might be language options, including Japanese, Dutch or Spanish, where students could choose, and we try to put the choices out to the kids and the parents a few days before the term starts. This allows the parents to sit down with the children and discuss the options and select them. On Tuesday, students could pick science and e-technology or choose cooking science ... Wednesday is a sports afternoon ... where the five-year-olds can be working alongside the 13-year-olds, depending on what they’ve chosen ... Thursday is about arts in the wider sense. Options include singing, painting, drawing, clay workshops ... The boys have been making bows and arrows, so now we offer archery as an option.

Like Horoeaka, Kahikatea has a relatively democratic approach to curriculum design. As Olly pointed out, the school's curriculum can look unstructured and unconventional to observers who see "kids climbing trees and fresh air coming in through the windows rather than [the children] sitting down in rows with beautifully rolled up textbooks and exercise books." However, he stressed there is structure and a rationale behind it:

Our whole aim is to let their [the students'] brilliance shine rather than suppress, compress or develop them in some sort of pre-ordained way ... We have our own curriculum that's in many ways separate from the national curriculum. We're an independent school, which has advantages and disadvantages, but talking about the advantages at the moment means that we can set our own curriculum, and so that means that we can spend relatively more time on social, emotional development than might otherwise be the case. We're trying to get a really good balance between the three Rs as they're traditionally understood, although we steer right away from memorization and learning for just doing things for the sake of. We very much want to have real world learning that is experiential and hands-on ... We certainly could be described as providing a holistic model of education.

The "three Rs" of learning, Olly said, are treated as mandatory learning areas across the school. Nevertheless, effort is made to shape the content of these subjects to students' individual interests: "Our mornings tend to cover the three Rs of reading, writing and mathematics. However, it's very much personalized learning journeys for all of those subjects. We keep it as grounded and meaningful and purposeful as possible through real examples of what students actually need to be knowing at the moment."

The school's very small classes, he continued, favoured this student-focused flexibility. If, for example, a student or students expressed interest in some aspect of learning that required time away from the school grounds, "it's relatively easy for us to just put the kids in the school car or get one parent to support." Teachers at the school also keep an eye out for situations that have the potential to provide students with learning opportunities which tap more into cross-curricular than subject-specific learning. Olly provided an example. The brooder for the school's chickens and ducks required a cage, and a group of students were happy to design and make it. The students made a materials list, and they and their teacher went out and bought the materials together. This turned into a project that crossed many subject areas including mathematics, English, wellness, social studies and science.

Kahikatea's structuring of the curriculum is somewhat unusual for a private school in New Zealand because, as Olly suggested, many of the country's private schools take a very traditional and structured approach to the composition of their curriculums. Although private schools have considerable autonomy to set their own curriculums and student experiences, many choose to offer curriculums characterized by clear differentiation between the various subjects of the national curriculum. In some cases, they are even more rigid in this respect than state schools because of their focus on students achieving academic excellence in curriculum subjects, a feature that is arguably one of the main reasons why parents send their children to these schools.

Saskatoon, Canada

Birch is mandated to deliver the Saskatchewan curriculum. However, as Don explained, the parts of that curriculum students actually access each year is governed to a considerable degree by what the students decide they need to learn. In essence, Birch's curriculum has

multiple forms, each constructed by the students to accommodate their learning requirements. This is not to say that students have freedom over what they learn. They must draw on the curriculum content as set down in the formal provincial documents and work with their teachers and others before confirming their learning objectives. But as Don pointed out, this approach to curriculum design is not a traditional one:

We gave our students the curriculum guides, and we had students speak to their own learning to draw on what learning outcomes they felt that they had, and how they had them ... It was impressive to us as teachers that our students could learn the curriculum ... and gain control of their learning. They knew what they needed to learn, and they knew what they were missing by the end of the year ... It became a conversation between our students and even [with] our board of trustees ... Our students communicated to the board of trustees directly with the evidence of their learning.

When talking about the role of Birch's students in the programme's curriculum development, Malcolm pointed out that the students' learning objectives typically produced subject-integrated, cross-curricular learning content. This outcome had developed over time, however, facilitated by teachers:

following students' passions ... we drew from our kids' experiences. We had the kids sit down next to the [mandated] curriculum to see what they had previously learned, and they explained it in their own language. So by the end of the process they had integrated everything in the curriculum ... and they learned it and could write about it and [they] talked about it.

Clearly evident in Don's and Malcolm's comments was their commitment to having the Birch programme promote what they referred to as a democratic way (that is, student input) of learning. They strived to help students truly understand learning and the processes associated with it so that each of them could take the traditionally designed, externally imposed curriculum and be agentic in shaping its content to their own learning requirements.

Rebecca's experiences at Willow had led her to conclude that its teachers do a good job of meeting curriculum objectives while simultaneously and creatively coming up with applied projects. She thought teachers were able to achieve this "balancing act" largely because the nature of the Willows' programme meant they rarely needed to provide evidence (e.g., documentation) of what was taught and because evaluation of students' learning lined up with standard curriculum requirements. However, the programme is only one semester long and the students have to transition back into mainstream classes for the next semester, the programme chose to adhere more closely to the dictates of the curriculum and the subjects within it.

Recurring themes and points of difference

The research participants' interpreted their respective curriculums as more than compartmentalized subjects, instructional content, and processes. Rather, they saw these aspects of traditionally designed curricula as bases that could be moulded into forms contingent with their schools' purpose, visions and objectives. As Slattery (1995) pointed out, any curriculum is shaped in some way and to some degree by the exigencies of wherever it is delivered. However, the comments of the research participants indicate that their schools' shaping of their national (New Zealand) and provincial (Saskatchewan) curriculums went

beyond and/or differed from the shaping occurring in the majority of schools in their respective jurisdictions. With the exception of the two ‘traditional’ Christchurch schools (Tī kōuka and Harakeke).

As Slattery (1995) contended:

The curriculum cannot exist in an objective vacuum outside of the context of human consciousness. Curricular goals and objectives can never create meaning; meaning is constructed within the learning context. Historical interpretation, scientific hypotheses, literary analysis, and all other curricular investigations cannot be established outside of the context of each unique educational setting. Thus, the curriculum is actually the process of understanding and not simply the scope and sequence materials dictated by district or textbook authorities (p. 623).

PBE approaches were certainly one of the main drivers of curriculum shaping in the participants’ schools and programmes. PBE positions the curriculum as content to be *grounded* in students’ experiences in local events and places. As most of the participants pointed out or implied that grounding requires students and the community to be part of the curriculum-development process. In general, the participants’ schools had drawn students, to lesser or greater extent, into the process, and some had invited parents and the community into it as well. Although, as Bob mentioned, his school had found integrating parents and community into the curricular process difficult, the school considered this approach sufficiently important to make it a dedicated part of its curriculum design.

In general, the respondents' comments revealed that PBE does not mean shaping curricular content to the extent that it conflicts with the existing government-provided curriculum documents. Although Olly, for example, deemed Kahikatea to have, as a private school, complete curricular freedom (i.e., did not need to follow the New Zealand national curriculum), he saw merit within the guidance provided by the national framework and used those parts of it that aligned with his students' needs. Bob, Tara and Lisa, all working within programmes that followed the curriculum more closely in their respective schools, found it sufficiently flexible for them to adapt content to meet the needs of their students in general and PBE in particular. Lisa described the curriculum as a document she could "work with".

In New Zealand, the nature of the national curriculum could be said to actually limit the aforementioned potential for conflict because "it *gives* schools the scope, *flexibility*, and authority to design and shape the curriculum so that teaching and learning is meaningful for and beneficial to their particular communities of students" (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007). Although, this could lead to problems if the community and those that are involved with the school are from similar ethnicities, classes, religions, genders, and/or sexual orientations could lead to learning that is based on the majority or 'cultural capital' of the groups in positions of power that are working with the schools and could lead to issues of hidden curriculum and null curriculum (both described below) (Graham Smith, 1990).

This could negatively affect those groups that are marginalized in communities and more specifically Māori and Pasifika community members and students. In essence, the national curriculum serves not as a rigid prescription but as a framework and common direction for schools, regardless of type, size or location. However, as Wedell (2009) observes, many schools in New Zealand do regard the curriculum as a strict framework and implement its

subjects as set out in the curriculum documents. This poses an even greater threat if a curriculum is not taught through a critical pedagogy of place (addressed further in Chapter Seven) then there are dangers with promoting the neo-colonial/neoliberal agendas that include 'hidden curriculum' which can be considered the unintended outcomes found within the schooling processes or can also create a 'null curriculum' whereby certain content may be deliberately excluded from learning (Carpenter, 2001; Giroux, 2001; McLaren, 1998). Both of these curriculums put Indigenous children at even more of a disadvantage as the normative culture and value systems in both New Zealand and Canadian schooling systems are again predominately 'white', 'male' and 'middle class'. This will be taken up further in Chapter Seven.

According to Hearne and Cowles (2001), curriculums that work as guiding frameworks are more beneficial pedagogically than those that act as prescriptions: "... flexibility and adaptability," they conclude, "seem to be the best determiners of success in teaching, methodology and curriculum development" (p. 54). All research participants found sufficient flexibility within their curriculums to allow them to incorporate, to varying degrees, PBE tenets into their curriculum as a whole and/or into the individual subjects offered. They also, in line with those tenets, were able to bring some measure of student, parental and/or community input into their school's/programme's curriculum development.

Such input taps into democratic education, defined by Clapper, Downey, Hauger, and Riggan (2010) as all members of a school community being able to play meaningful roles in determining what is learned and how. Bob's and Tara's comments showed that Horoeka School was definitely employing this type of democratic approach to its curriculum development. At Birch (Malcolm) and Kahikatea (Olly), democratization meant students,

with input from parents, tailoring curricular content to suit their individual learning needs. This approach had facilitated integration of PBE principles into learning content because both students and parents had either specified their inclusion in that content or been attracted to content where those principles were already evident or could be readily included.

The benefits of a negotiated curriculum (via student input into curriculum design), have been recognized as important for some time, although the extent to which that input is seen in curriculum development in general in the wider schooling system is questionable. Having considered work by Grundy (1988); Brooker and MacDonald (1999) maintained that, “If relevant and meaningful curriculum offerings are to be made to students, then it is appropriate to move beyond the question of why students must speak, to consider how students’ engagement in the construction of their own schooling experiences might be made more explicit” (p. 95).

The notion of the student-centred curriculum, another recurring theme in the participating teachers’ comments, is one of the keystones of students becoming the creators of knowledge (one of the tenets of PBE). All of the research participants mentioned student centeredness; Olly, Bob and Don emphasized it. According to Brandes and Ginnis (1996), “... with student-centred learning students are responsible for planning the curriculum or at least they participate in the choosing ... The individual is 100 percent responsible for his own behaviour, participation and learning” (p. 12). This first part of the chapter has provided various examples of how the programmes and schools under scrutiny had modified some or all of their curriculum content in line with students’ ideas and opinions. One strong example is the freedom the Kahikatea students had to select their own learning opportunities. Another is the tightly integrated role that student choice played in curricular design at Birch and

Horoeka. This again exemplifies a tenet of PBE whereby student's questions and concerns play central roles in determining what is studied.

Exercising PBE is, of course, difficult when teachers do not have the freedom to move outside a rigid school-mandated, subject-based curriculum structure. However, even here, as Lisa showed, teachers can introduce some measure of curriculum-related democratization. By introducing relatively simple changes to traditional course development practice, Lisa and her colleagues had made student and parental input part of their social studies course development. However, there would seem to be no denying that schools and programmes that are inherently more democratic in disposition can more easily stretch and morph curriculum boundaries.

Lisa also brought up an important point when she spoke of the constraining effect that academic achievement outcomes have on curriculum design. Battiste (2013) was also critical that the curriculum fits the outcomes in many schools. Thus, students are taught what is deemed necessary to attain (usually) government-specified achievement standards encapsulated in the content of government-ordained assessment programmes, including those leading to receipt of national qualifications. This consideration is further examined in parts two and three of this chapter as follows.

Part 2: Curriculum delivery

Overview

This section (Part Two) focuses on the various methods the research participants were using to deliver curricular content. These methods drew on, amongst others, thematic-, project- and inquiry-based pedagogical approaches. They are explored within two contexts: the school's

or programme's use of content in the curriculums of the two jurisdictions (New Zealand and Saskatchewan); and the teaching methods generally associated with PBE.

Christchurch, New Zealand

Kahikatea, according to Olly, follows a thematic-based approach to curriculum delivery. Many terms are used, often interchangeably, in the literature, including “cross-curricular”, “integrated” and “interdisciplinary”, in an effort to capture the essence of this approach to curriculum design and delivery (Putwain, Whiteley, & Caddick, 2011). Although each of these terms differs slightly in what it means for just how that approach is enacted, all are responses to the ideas that subject-based curriculum delivery is fragmented and over-compartmentalised, and that developing and applying skills and knowledge in more than one area of study at a time brings benefits for both teachers and learners.

Thematic-based pedagogy takes a specific area of interest, such as climate change, that lends itself to the teaching and learning of concepts and skills from across various curriculum subjects. The themes chosen often involve real-world problems and holistic teaching approaches that can be used to integrate subject materials, which, as Olly explained, helps teachers more easily incorporate the tenets of PBE:

We've got a really strong eco literacy curriculum ... We have another educator that comes along and works with each of the classes on big-picture eco-literacy projects. For instance, the topic for this coming term is water. Last term it was patterns in nature. Prior to that it was energy ... We try to help the kids to see a connection with the environment and their place in the world ... We also make time for gardening and growing things, and planting things and caring for the animals ... Soil was another big

theme just a couple of terms ago ... The kids learned about the different structures of soil, weeds, fertilizing, and composting. They also learned the structure of clays and sands and things. So for a whole school project, everybody got involved.

Olly's description also references experiential learning, evident in both thematic-based pedagogy and PBE. As the name indicates, experiential learning means learning from experience or learning by doing. Learners are immersed in an experience and then encouraged to reflect on it in ways that allow them to develop new skills and new ways of thinking (Lewis & Williams, 1994). Kahikatea developed a thematic-based approach that incorporated the whole school so it again showed that learning does not have to be grade or age specific.

Olly provided an excellent example of experiential learning at Kahikatea when he talked about the different types of poultry housed on the school's grounds. The birds had provided the inspiration for a number of theme-based units of learning, which generally also allowed the children to engage in experiential learning. The school obtains fertile eggs, which hatch out chicks and ducklings. The students are involved in all aspects of caring for the birds, including cleaning up after them. Their learning includes different varieties of poultry and their care, and it can also be opportunistic, as occurred when one of the children, while cleaning the brooding device, accidentally stepped on one of the chicks. The students held a funeral service for the bird, an activity which saw them discussing death and investigating funeral rituals and practices.

As part of an ongoing school project, the students caring for the birds also participate in a farmer's market where they sell eggs, along with other student-produced goods, such as

seedlings and jelly. This builds in an entrepreneurial aspect to the student's experiences promoting another tenet of PBE. These various poultry-related activities provide opportunities for children to learn about animal husbandry, market processes and sustainable living. It also teaches them that the outputs from one system can be used creatively for another system (as in recycling and reusing) rather than just being cast aside as waste.

Experiential education often incorporates project-based learning. Projects are assignments that involve students in problem-solving, design and investigative activities. They give students opportunity to work independently over extended periods of time, and they culminate in realistic products or presentations (Jones, Rasmussen, & Moffitt, 1997; Thomas, Mengendoller, & Michaelson, 1999). According to Moursund (1998), other defining features found in the literature are authentic content, authentic assessment, teacher facilitation but not direction, and explicit educational goals. Both these definitions work well within a PBE framework.

Lisa said that she occasionally brought project-based learning into her pedagogy at Tī kōuka. She stressed that she kept a close eye on how this mode of learning was progressing and, if necessary, intervened in accordance with student needs and behaviour:

It depends on what period of the day you get [the students] and what it is you're teaching. [It's good to] see what the mood of the class is, because sometimes I've [planned] group work and the kids would come in [and it became obvious] it's not going to happen today. You have to sometimes make changes halfway through the day ... You have to cover all things with different people differently, although sometimes in the groups, you've really got to keep an eye on things because some

people just want to hang out. So you've got to keep an eye on everybody. If you're doing group work, everyone should have something to do. You have to make sure that the kids are sure about what they're going to do. They're going to have the task, but it's got to be kind of directed by the teacher.

Lisa also said that she favoured project-based work when she thought that the students in a class would work well together in groups. If, however, this turned out not to be the case, she was prepared to bring the students back to the more traditional environment of students working on projects individually. Lisa's ideas within project-based learning differed from Moursund's conceptions in that Lisa needed more control over the projects to deal with the student's behaviour issues. Harakeke's Mark also said he adapted his methods of delivering content—"It depends on the students I'm with"—but he appeared to do so within the boundaries of a relatively structured overall approach. "I'm autocratic with my practice, ordered and structured, because I'm holding the credits. I want to give them a list of instructions so my students can learn from sequential lessons. But my next lessons always reflect on parts of my last lessons. I'm always building on my previous lessons to help with development."

Saskatoon, Canada

None of the research participants in Saskatoon explicitly stated that they changed their teaching method in accordance with student mood and behaviour, but several of them did say they used teaching methods such as thematic-based learning and inquiry-based learning. Malcolm, from, Birch, for example, said land-based learning (described in the literature review chapter) and experiential learning were featured modes of curriculum delivery. The programme also used the inquiry-based/Socratic method of teaching and learning.

It is also typically authentic learning because it relates to “real-world” experiences which is a tenet of PBE. Students work in collaborative groups and gather information in order to solve a problem, which may be one they have themselves identified in relation to a teacher-determined theme. The teacher facilitates and guides the process (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Students are typically required to state the problem in the form of a question that they then endeavour to answer. Malcolm said, “We don’t usually ask the question for our kids but want them to do the research and figure things out.”

In general, the teachers at Birch bring a thematic-based approach to their teaching because it allows them to introduce thematic topics that accord with the goals, including PBE ones, of the programme. As Don stated, the programme structures its classes:

thematically, through various units, incorporating social justice into all those units. We try to travel to various locations throughout those events. We’ve tended to see more of a social justice focus during our colder months, although it does span the course of the year. It’s just more difficult for us to get out [in the winter] to satisfy the adventure side [outdoor education trips] of Birch.

Problem-based learning typically encompasses inquiry-based learning, so it is, Don confirmed, a firmly embedded teaching method at Birch. Inquiry-based curricula create opportunities for students to explore authentic phenomena, participate in generating research questions, conduct investigations, generate their own conclusions, and communicate their findings with peers (Tseng, Tuan, & Chin, 2013). Inquiry-based learning thus places students’ questions, ideas and observations at the centre of the learning experience. Educators

play an active role throughout the process by establishing a culture where ideas are respectfully challenged, tested, redefined and viewed as improvable, moving children from a position of wondering to a position of enacted understanding and further questioning (Scardamalia, 2002). Underlying this approach is the idea that both educators and students share responsibility for learning (Student Achievement Division, Ministry of Education Ontario, 2013). As Don pointed out, Birch provides plenty of scope for inquiry-based education because it is a programme that brings its students and their teachers face to face with issues as they travel all over Saskatoon and parts of Saskatchewan. Don articulated the interrelationship between thematic-based and inquiry-based pedagogy at Birch as follows:

I'm yet to see a classroom dive into certain topics [in the way] that we do, as to the social justice topics and environmental justice topics ... I guess you could break it down to the way that the information is presented. Our students are given a lot of freedom to dive into the topics. We take our time with them because it's [the curriculum] thematically based and it's integrated. Our units are sort of subjects that are integrated into thematic units. That really allows us the time to dive into talks. I feel the other classrooms very quickly get into a topic, yet then ask for student input through the form of testing or presentation, and then quickly move on to the next topic. Whereas we really try to give our students the opportunity to learn a little bit more deeply—but then also to dive in personally a little bit more deeply. In fact, if our students don't, we hold that unit until they have the opportunity. I've never found that I had that opportunity when I was in a traditional classroom, because I felt we needed to get through the curriculum.

Willow uses cross-curricular, project-based and experiential learning as means of curriculum delivery. Rebecca stated that the aim at the school is for the children to “try to go out and learn experientially”. She gave, as an example, setting students the “real-world project” of designing an outing for the class.

One such outing involved a transportation analysis, which requires the students to compare the time and cost to traverse a route by bike, bus and car. The students plan a bike route around town, making sure the route is one also taken by buses and cars. Rebecca said she and her colleague start the project off with, “a demo ... we do a little race around the front yard [of the school], pretending that some students are bikes and cars. It’s a fun activity, but we keep track of their time. Then we do a distance–time graph so they can see when someone stops.” The students then take that example and complete their own bike ride along the route, using a stopwatch to time the route and keeping track of their velocity. They “create their own big distance–time graph for the bicycle trip ... [and] then they do math ... [which involves] unit-rate time.” They then compare this data to data they collect when doing the route in a car and in the bus and do a cost analysis of that information. The students graph these results as well. The project finishes with the students responding to reflection questions and commenting on the experience.

Willows’ commitment to experiential learning is also apparent in Rebecca’s account of a typical week at Willow. Her description of what happens on Fridays also shows Willows’ aim of providing students with holistic learning experiences.

Fridays are community job days. Friday is the day that we eat together, so we have two students cook for us. We have four students take care of recycling. We take care

of our garden and do all kinds of community jobs and those in the school. We have a whole listing of community jobs that the students do ... Two students also lead us in a wellness activity, so that's something that takes into account the physical, social, mental, and spiritual needs of the students.

Occasionally, the students also do projects on Saturday (for instance, selling at the farmers' market, which is one of their larger-scale projects).

Rebecca said she and her colleague noticed students sometimes exhibited anxiety with learning when coming into the programme, and they thought this was probably a product of Willows' non-traditional teaching methods. Mindful of this possibility, teachers and students had, by working together, come to a compromise on the mode of teaching and learning for mathematics:

We were concerned at the beginning of last year because we were trying to not use a textbook for math class. That made the students feel uncomfortable because they were so programmed to learn from a textbook ... We want the programme to be student directed, so we brought back the math textbook but we just used the chapter reviews to show that we can learn math anywhere and then can apply it back to the textbook ... It made them feel more comfortable, and it was an easy compromise for us.

One of Willows' key aims is to deliver the programme in a way that helps the students develop a connection to their teachers, the programme and one another, and Rebecca thought this too made it difficult for students to integrate back into traditional classrooms. She gave as

an example of a group of girls who had returned to “the mainstream classroom” after a semester with Willow, but came back to Willow for a visit:

These girls came back for a visit and were now part of the mainstream high school again, as they had completed a year with us. They said they were scared about going back into “normal school”; they felt like they had to start from scratch again ... They said they didn’t want to talk bad about “normal school”, but they missed Willow. I think ... they missed the community and being a part of something ... Every teenager wants to be part of something.

This is an area for further study to find out how students that take part in short term alternative programmes succeed when they return back to mainstream schools. Steve talked a little about this and although unresearched he hadn’t heard of any problems from students or parents.

Recurring themes and points of difference

For decades, curriculum delivery in New Zealand and Saskatchewan has remained largely under the influences of the “banking model” of knowledge transmission (Freire, 1970). Recently, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2013) challenged decision-makers (administrators, principals and teachers) to consider “ways of organizing the curriculum in ways other than the traditional subject approach in which all students learn the same content at the same time” (n. p.). Putwain et al. (2011) identified six characteristics of a non-subject-based curriculum: combining different subjects, emphasising project work, using sources that go beyond textbooks, emphasising holistic relationships among concepts, organising the curriculum around themes, and flexibility in schedules and/or

student grouping. All of these characteristics were evident in the curriculum-delivery methods that the research participants described. All were therefore moving away from the traditional approach. However, the extent of this move varied across the schools and programmes. Some had moved well beyond the traditional; others were making just small tweaks to the traditional but were still more comfortable following the status quo in their schools. It should be noted that the country of Finland is moving away from teaching subjects for all students and will move towards teaching topics by 2020 (Garner, 2015).

Several of the research participants, most notably Don, Malcolm, Rebecca, and Olly, were using multiple curriculum delivery methods, both traditional and non-traditional, in their programmes and schools. These four teachers had the most freedom or flexibility (one of Putwain and colleagues' key characteristics of the non-subject-based curriculum) to change their delivery methods, and more freedom to leave the school grounds. Freedom or flexibility is a key part of facilitating a non-subject-based curriculum. Lisa and Mark, the two teachers most confined by a traditional school setting, were using only a few content delivery methods. Of these, only one or two were non-traditional and were primarily implemented in response to how the students were behaving. Project-based learning is perhaps one of the easier types of learning to use in a traditional classroom setting. However, as Lisa pointed out, in contrast to some of the literature, it does require student cooperation and a good measure of teacher oversight.

Of all the curriculum-delivery methods the participants mentioned, experiential learning was the most common. Dewey (1916) was one of the first educationalists to stress the relationship between student experience, critical thinking and learning. He argued that knowledge must allow students to “experience a meaning” in situations, not replace theoretical knowledge by

practical work. Kahikatea, Birch and Willow were the firmest adherents to this Deweyan perspective. The research participants at these locations gave examples of projects outside the classroom (Olly's accounts of raising poultry and Rebecca's of gardening) where students became immersed in activities that encouraged them to become interested in and then conduct inquiry into various areas of study. Inquiry-based learning was therefore a feature of experiential learning in these three settings, and it was emphasized as a common teaching method at Birch. Malcolm spoke of the Birch students "diving" into "real-world" topics, asking and answering questions about them until they could understand them in a way that had personal relevance for them. This again supports and exemplifies the tenets of PBE and praxis.

Thematic-based learning also draws on real-world problems as catalyst topics for learning, while the focus on problems brings in problem-based learning. Both types of learning commonly featured across the schools and programmes, but they received most mention from Olly and Don. Olly said that the thematic-based approach facilitated Kahikatea's eco-literacy programme. Don said that the thematic-based approach enabled his Birch students to critically investigate social justice issues. By incorporating subjects into themes, Don, Olly and some of the other participating teachers said they could help students learn about more than just subject content. The themes, these teachers thought, helped students connect with the world around them, particularly their own community, and to appreciate the natural world. As Ghosh (1996) put it, "... school should be a vehicle for uniting mind and body, reason and emotion, self and other" (p. 50). Her comment picks up on the sensory experiences that PBE can provide for students especially when they are engaged in real-world learning.

Many of the various other methods the participating teachers were using to deliver curriculum content also align with the principles of PBE. They furthermore fit Putwain et al.'s (2011) schema, thus strongly suggesting that PBE can provide a foundation on which to reorganize curriculum delivery beyond the traditional subject by subject approach. PBE encompasses experiential, thematic-based, problem-based and inquiry learning, all of which provide students with opportunities, not commonly realised in traditional classroom practice, to collaborate on projects and problem solve. These types of learning lend themselves to alternative methods of assessment and evaluation, as discussed in Part 3 of this chapter.

According to Chin (2001), PBE lets students learn to communicate with one another and to work effectively in groups. This learning, in turn, helps them to develop interpersonal skills, which, Chin said, are reinforced when they observe models of cooperation amongst their teachers and community members, such as team teaching. Through PBE, students can not only gain a better understanding of the subject they are learning but develop new relationships with other students and adults, better understand other people and their own place in the world and develop their sense of community. The curriculums of both New Zealand and Saskatchewan identify these attributes as key educational outcomes for students.

Part 3: Assessment and evaluation

Overview

As outlined in the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education curriculum (n.d.), assessment is the act of gathering information on an ongoing basis in order to understand individual students' learning and other needs. Evaluation, on the other hand, is the culminating act of interpreting the information gathered through relevant and appropriate assessments for the purpose of making decisions or judgements, often at reporting time. Saskatchewan does not (as yet)

follow a year-end provincial standardized test for all senior secondary students, whereas New Zealand does. Saskatchewan does, however, use standardized measurements that are grade or subject specific, and it also takes part in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA; OECD, n. d.), as does New Zealand.

New Zealand follows the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) for senior secondary students, as touched upon in Chapter Two. This final part of Chapter Six looks at the extent to which the research participants were using these and other traditional curriculum-based assessment and evaluation. The following passage dedicated to the experiences of Christchurch participants focuses initially on the government-regulated standardized assessment tools available to the teachers. It then takes a closer look at how the teachers were using these and other means of assessment in their pedagogy. The section that follows provides an overview of the assessment methods the participating Saskatoon teachers could use and then also looks more closely if and how they were they using them.

Christchurch, New Zealand

In New Zealand, the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is the national qualification for secondary school students. Administered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA, 2013), it is recognised by employers and used for entrance into universities and polytechnics, in New Zealand and overseas. Students can gain three levels of NCEA across three school years by passing unit standards or achievement standards in each national curriculum subject. Assessment of proficiency in these standards is administered internally by schools as well as through external examinations conducted at the national level. According to Olly, Kahikatea considered the potential that NCEA offered for flexible

curriculum delivery tailored to individual student needs had been generally usurped in mainstream schooling:

Sadly it's constrained in traditional secondary schools by our silo thinking of the maths department, the science department, and the biology department as separate entities, and timetables and bells and all those kind of traditional things that direct children into a very narrow blinkered way of thinking. So the potential [for NCEA] is being wasted really.

He went on to say that Kahikatea had not let its learning programmes be constricted by the NCEA standards, but instead had "utilized the potential" inherent within the qualification of allowing "children a path to follow their own vision for where they want to go. We will use it in the sense that they will have a qualification that will enable them to exercise whatever they want next." His description of how the school used the qualification in its programmes had similarities to Bob's account of Horoeka's practice with regard to NZQA qualifications which included, of course, the NCEA certificates:

So we've got flexibility with NZQA qualifications to be able to have courses [of our construction]. They've [NZQA] taken away subject endorsement as of next year so you can't be endorsed in chemistry anymore unless you design a course which is called chemistry. So now, you're able to design courses, and you can be endorsed with courses. So, if you want to design a course which was called digital music performance and design, you ... [would] put in elements from technology, from IT, from music performance, from a whole bunch of different domains within the NZQA framework, different subjects if you like. You can put a whole year, course, or

semester course together, and you can be endorsed with excellence in digital music creation and design, or whatever your course is called. The standard still settles in domains, but you create courses which are multi-curricular. It's fantastic, but it's a lot of work to completely redesign and deliver that. It's a lot of hard work within a school. But it's also a lot of work to gain or develop the confidence of families, of students, of parents, of tertiary institutions and of employers just because it's educationally right.

Bob also said that while Horoeke was maximizing the flexibility within NZQA that allowed students to follow their interests but remain within the curricular and assessment boundaries of the NZQA framework, he would like to see less focus within that framework on students completing whole-year courses encompassing subjects with little or no relevance for their chosen career paths. Rather, he said, when students are close to completing high school, they should have the option to study curriculum content that will be most relevant to them in their chosen careers.

Bob also said that the rapid growth each year in the number of students attending Horoeke had challenged, and was continuing to do so, the school's ability to have courses drawing on NCEA standards but individualized to each student. His comments exemplify the type of challenge that alternative programmes can experience when trying to align their courses with government-regulated assessment and evaluation:

There was a point at probably about five years where I think we were facing issues which we could have addressed then, and the terminology I was using then was we really need to do a stocktake. We had to look at what we were offering, how we were

offering it, what's working, how do we know what's working, what do we want to deliver, how are we going to know it's going to work and how will we gather the information for that. [If we had done this] it would've narrowed down a bunch of the effort and work that we'd done ... Our staff had huge workloads and part of that is because of inefficiency. We didn't have a plan. If you want to deliver a programme at Level 10 NCEA for students, it has to fit within this framework because then students will have a clear pathway to choose to get the results they desire. And so we could've done it much earlier ... I don't know what stopped us from doing it.

Bob also thought that having NCEA results serve as the measurement of student achievement (success) needed to be challenged as well. At present, he explained, the government measures a school's success with respect to NCEA by whether 80 percent of its Level 2 and 80 percent of its Level 3 NCEA students have achieved the standards required to earn them the commensurate NCEA certificates. Horoeke's effort to provide other means of demonstrating student learning had struggled to attain official sanction. Bob gave, as an example, one type of evaluation content the school has on hand whenever New Zealand's Educational Review Office (ERO) conducts a review of the school.¹⁴

This content consisted of a "story" from each of the school's approximately 350 students. However, because on the first occasion ERO was presented with the stories it did not have the capacity to review all 350, Horoeke selected a sample of them for presentation. The school has ever since had to work at convincing the office of the merit of the stories because of ERO's distrust of them as valid assessment content: "They thought we picked out our

¹⁴ ERO is a body analogous to a school inspectorate that assesses all schools in New Zealand whether state or independent.

bright stars ... These kids are stars in their own right ... They're not just kids who are incredibly intelligent and achieving cause they're qualified achievers. They have achieved highly, but that's what you want, isn't it?" ERO's reluctance to review every student's story and their distrust of this means of assessment had left Horoeke with an ongoing dilemma. "How," Bob asks, "do you assess and evaluate progress and achievement? And if you do it in a personalized way, how do you recognize it? At the moment, we have work to do!"

Mark, at Harakeke, said that a comment from another educator summed up his own attitude as to how he thought NCEA should work as a form of evaluating student learning outcomes. "NCEA assessment is not designed to be a burden to teachers. It's more a formative assessment to see the progress and development of your students." He thought, however, that in regard to internal assessment of the standards, teachers needed more time to build relationships with their students in the interests of producing more valid and reliable assessment. He also thought that teachers needed more resources in place so that assessment methods fully complemented their teaching practice. He then expressed a concern with regard to the government's expectations of schools achieving high levels of pass rate within NZQA—a matter that Bob also referred to. Mark stated:

This year particularly, I'm really focused on my planning. Just because of time management—because each lesson has got to count ... because of the expectation of pass rates ... I'm willing to work harder ... I email my students, and my students email me, and we use Moodle [a computer-based open source learning platform] ... but I'm burning out. I will burn out, and I won't be teaching in five years' time.

While seeing some assessment merit in NCEA, Mark was critical of national standards serving as a means of evaluating student achievement at primary school level. He spoke at length on what the New Zealand Government's recently introduced programme of national achievement standards in so-called key learning areas (e.g., reading) had meant for the school. According to Mark, the school's adherence to the narrow scope of standards-based assessment conflicted with the school's broader philosophy of social justice. It put constraints on what teachers could teach and how, were an unnecessary addition to the school's usual methods of assessment and undermined the school community's determination of what they wanted for the school's students:

National standards at the primary levels are a real burden. I really struggle with [a] one size fits all system. I really believe the community—the board of trustees—should be responsible to the primary school, where they assist what goes in there and support one another. There are so many variables that affect children, and I really feel we should be giving teachers strategies and tools. Not a national standards- based level, but tools to monitor children and their progress every day as teachers. We are assessing using our observation, discussions, talking, reading, marking ... [we are] always assessing. And, as teachers, after all that reflection and assessment, that is how we design our next steps in learning. That is all we need to be doing anyway. However, if you put pressure on a teacher to have standardized tests, the students have to meet certain criteria. That's when the pressure will really affect good teaching. You will just have children that will be lectured to. They won't have time for interactive lessons.

Lisa from Tī kōuka discussed the assessment methods she used in her social studies course. “We have four tests. We have skills, values, thinking, and a knowledge test. Last year was the first year we did it. Administration at Tī kōuka expects 16 such assessments per year.” Lisa said, “That’s not the homework or the project work or the individual project that you’re doing, so it’s quite a lot.” She felt confined by these expectations: “I think it’s assessment heavy.”

In general, the Christchurch teachers viewed the government-directed assessment methods in terms of pros and cons, not only with respect to the means of assessing student achievement in general but also with respect to aligning assessment with what and how their students were learning. Most struggled somewhat with that alignment, which perhaps explains why most of them were using, to various degrees, their own means of evaluating their students’ learning. Despite his criticism of national standards, Mark was using them to monitor children’s reading ages, in part because he was required to do so. “I look at the curriculum, I look at the exemplars, all that standardization stuff ... [Those are] vital tools required for assessment that I report to the board or to parents or to the school.”

However, Mark said the evaluation tool he relied on most was his observation of his students. Evident within his comment on this practice was Harakeke’s interest in assessing children’s learning and wellbeing from a holistic perspective. “I use my personal observation, my listening to the language they use depending on the topic, how they can articulate their words and then how they express their own personal feelings or express what they need to say. I’ve always wanted to do a spiritual assessment about the children.” He also considered whether other student-related factors, such as ethnicity and home background, might be influencing a child’s attainment.

Some of his comments in this regard reveal that, despite the school's commitment to inclusive and holistic schooling, teachers' assessment of some of their students could be coloured by their own personal views of them. One of the anecdotes he provided in support of his comments concerned a group of energetic Māori boys in the school. These students, Mark said, did not fit inside "the box" of how some teachers like students to behave. Standardized systems of assessment and evaluation, he thought, could be dismissive of these students, rather than taking into account their unique personalities and ways of expressing themselves:

Teachers [at the school] seem to create an environment where it is inclusive for everyone ... but then teachers complain about some of the Māori boys. "They are cheeky". "They are rough and tumble". "They always talk too loud in class". And when I see those boys, I think they are special, I think they are gifted and talented. I think they are funny, they are humorous. I think they like expressing themselves all the time in a spiritual manner. I think the teacher needs to buy into that and not see it as disrespectful, but look at these boys as young, energetic people that just want to share their personal experiences.

At Horoeka School, Bob reiterated that although assessment is a significant part of the curriculum for senior students, there is a great deal of flexibility in terms of *how (not what)* learning content is assessed. The younger students, foundation students and Years 9 and 10 students experience little standardized assessment at Horoeka. One method that is used with these students is asTTle (Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning), which provides baseline testing in reading, writing and mathematics. As suggested by the name, asTTle is

designed to help teachers identify areas of development for any one student who needs remedial attention. However, Bob considered that the tool primarily provided information about where each student sat against the baseline in these subject areas and that additional means of assessment were needed to provide more rounded information about each student's learning achievement and ongoing learning needs:

We have, in the past ... looked at styles of assessment, learning styles, local cognitive and development stages, and that's what we want to focus on in terms of our foundation students and in terms of assessment as well. We have a digital portfolio system ... which is gathering evidence ... It's a fantastic tool for students who are working outside of the conventional structure of going to class. It is good for those students to have the capacity and place to be able to store evidence as well as for us to capture learning. So we're still in the development stages.

Tara, meanwhile, explained how Horoeke's digital portfolio system offers an alternative means of assessing students, and it is one, she said, that seemed to work well with the school's more self-directed learning model. Tara added that, in line with this tool, Horoeke asked students to self-review and/or peer review their learning before teachers shared their assessments of that learning with the students. "I just think that the self-review process is tied in with self-directed learning so strongly that we have to practise it to get better at it. So we always do that first."

Interestingly, Tara emphasized the importance the school proscribed to self-review as a means of evaluating student learning in courses such as "Level One NCEA courses ... [which] are just outcome based". Thus, for Tara, there was more to assessment than

determining if students had achieved the key competencies required by NCEA: “I’m assessing how I am providing an environment which can be nurtured or grown or stretched or extended. So that is more my assessment I suppose. Most of my SLOs [student learning objectives] are co-constructed with students. So they have a hand in setting what they are being assessed against.” The opportunity she gave students to co-construct the assessment process while still assessing them against NCEA standards is an example of effort to bring non-traditional assessment practice into traditional such practice, or vice versa.

At Kahikatea, Olly said that because the school is an independent one, it does not have to adhere to or report on national standards. He spoke further on the subject:

We decided not to report on national standards because our philosophy sees that each child is on its own individual learning path. The reality is, though, that ... because we are asking parents to pay a fee, and they don’t want to disadvantage their child, we have to maintain the confidence of the parent body that the children are not being disadvantaged. Indeed, all independent schools in New Zealand are regularly visited by the Education Review Office. They want to ensure that the children in this independent school are receiving no less a standard of education compared to another equivalent state school. So, as long as we can tick those boxes ...

Kahikatea does, however, use some standardized testing so that teachers can identify learning areas that students may need help with:

We use reading, individual reading, diagnostic reading tests that do report a reading age. And we do share that kind of stuff with parents ... It’s so that we can understand

where you [students] are at and what your next steps are ... We are not particularly worried about whether you are at the national norm, above it, or below it. As educators, I think it's really important that we have seen some of those results so that we know we have to direct attention and energy and perhaps resourcing. But we don't want to get into that kind of cycle of labelling kids.

The Christchurch research participant's exemplified different assessment techniques that were used both to challenge the norms found within mainstream schools for assessment but also ways to integrate techniques within those systems. The Saskatoon participant's are also finding unique ways to work within the mainstream systems of assessment as outlined below.

Saskatoon, Canada

Although Saskatchewan does not presently use standardized assessment for year-end evaluation, there is set of provincially mandated outcomes for each subject. Malcolm said that much of the assessment practice at Birch employs rubrics along with teachers conversing with the students about their sense of accomplishment. More specifically, assessment, as Malcolm described it, takes this form:

Our assessment for each student is almost fifteen pages. We have a rubric base, and we highlight and we dialogue with the kids so although some parts might be in formalistic parts like a three, two, one, if they haven't hit all those skill sets, we might get really specific. So we don't want to over generalize anything with our students. We have a dialogue with where they think they fit and where they want to grow. I really like our assessment, even though it is really time consuming.

Malcolm's description presents a form of assessment tending towards student-centred. Don confirmed this when he characterized this means of assessment at Birch as an informal ongoing dialogue between teacher and student, directed towards giving students a voice and helping them to develop that voice so that they can advocate for themselves and be an intrinsic participant in the process.

Don also referred to the programme's use of rubrics, which he saw as a more traditional assessment method:

Formally, we have a fairly extensive set of rubrics that spans over twenty topics. It really becomes an assessment of the skill set in so many realms. Three times throughout the course of the year we will formally go through that rubric information with the students. As a teacher, we will fill it out, highlighting the point where they sit. It breaks down the skill set to how it really should read, their strengths in reading, and what they should shoot for. They can fall within the different categories within that.

However, and tying in with the above-mentioned dialogue form of assessment, Don said the students also assess themselves in relation to the rubrics. After the students have completed the first such assessments, they and their teachers come together as a group and discuss the process so that the students can gain a clear understanding of the principles and practice of self-assessment. "In a sense," Don said, "we negotiate our way to the final product. By the end of the year, the student does the assessment on their own and presents it to us. Then we have the conversation again." In short, and at variance with traditional assessment methods, students at Birch are integrally involved in the various forms of assessment used.

Poplar has a similar student-centred approach to assessment. Janet explained that “the goal is to have students assessing themselves, and teachers setting expectations. The students ... then do the work as in-depth and [as] high quality as possible.” Students carry out their self-assessments before the teachers reveal their assessments of them. Janet said that maximising the learning time available often took precedence over assessment: “... the reality is that there is only so much time in certain projects, so we make sure to do that [only] on certain projects, and there are others where that’s not happening yet.” Steve said Poplar nevertheless tried to build in some means of evaluation during any project. This generally took the form of conversations with the students and co-creating learning achievement criteria with them. At the end of the programme, students also contributed to their own report cards:

We add onto the school division report cards [school-mandated evaluation] our own letter [personalized teacher assessment], one that jives with our holistic programme. Our programme has four learning domains, including the spiritual. For the linear side of a report card, some of it [what we comment on] fits, some of it doesn’t. We’ve got eight pages of rubrics, we’ve got comment sheets within the domains, and then the rubrics the kids actually fill out, and we negotiate the rubrics. So they can actually see the levels that they [still] need to attain. The idea is sort of the partnership.

Janet provided a more detailed account of how the Poplar students constructed their part of the report card:

The students essentially write their report card in a document that reflects on their growth and their challenges and where they want to go. They are projecting where

they want to go with their learning and [what] each of the four domains means. Then we read it over and write some feedback. But it's coming from them. The goal in the interviews is that they are leading and telling us what they think in terms of their learning areas. [They tell us] what they are finding challenging or where they are not sort of stepping up enough. [They then have] concrete goals they have for their own learning.

Steve added to Janet's comments when he said that Poplar is intent on "turning the responsibility over to the students, trying to get them to be responsible for their own learning and not giving marks. By not giving marks, not all of their success is based on marks." This mode of assessment is also part of Poplar's endeavour to build leadership and self-reliance capacity in the students and to help them develop better ideas about who they are as a person. As Janet said, self-assessment is part of "students trying to find out their identity and their belonging and build confidence, and it's pretty important." She confided, however, that some students [a very small amount] had struggled self-responsibility and had left the programme because they wanted a more competitive (among students) learning environment and "formal written marks" from their teachers. These departures had not lessened Poplar's approach to assessment. As Steve observed, conventional marking can be associated with the situation of students feeling very good about the year they have had, but then having to cope with receiving a very low mark.

Willow had incorporated community service and citizenship into its assessment practice. John said that in addition to completing and submitting weekly assignments and projects for assessment, students engage in an active citizenship component that requires them to complete a compendium of evidence from their community service work. This included a log

of time spent. Students had to do at least 100 hours of participation within the community or take “on extra work around the class”. Rebecca gave a more specific account of how this variety of work was assessed:

They [the students] first get it peer assessed. Then I [and my colleague] assess each weekly assignment ... But we are having trouble getting them to take their peer assessments more seriously. But you would in any class ... We’ve always had opportunities to resubmit [work] if they get it in early, so if they handed it on Friday, they have earned themselves the opportunity to get evaluated by me and resubmit it [if necessary]. If they hand in work on Monday, then that’s just it. So if they are not meeting criteria on the Monday, that’s kind of a problem. That means that they are not showing they met a certain curriculum objective, and then that’s going to hurt their grade. [However] we try to take as much emphasis [as possible] away from the grades box.

Rebecca’s description illustrates effort to use peer review and self-assessment as a means of removing the importance typically accorded to grades from students’ minds, so allowing them to focus more on learning the material. Rebecca said that the “marking system” (grades) the teachers did apply was done in a “very respectful way” for the students and that teachers only presented and discussed a student’s marks with him or her within the context of teacher–student interviews, which occurred several times a year. John added that students rarely complained about the grades they received from their teachers. Instead, they usually asked what they could do better.

Teachers at Willow also took time with each student to work through a detailed rubric encompassing the programme's three areas of assessment. Teachers, Rebecca said, discuss with the student "where they think they fit on this rubric, and look at the evidence they have from their portfolios. Then it's quite clear what grade they should have because they understand where they fit ... Usually we are not disagreeing with them. Sometimes they bring up something in their defence, to bring their grade up ... and that's totally acceptable." During these later interviews, students at times, according to Rebecca, identify what they have learned from their experiences while trying to make up for areas where they had "fallen short". Rebecca said she found it exciting to work with students through the interview process. She considered it exciting because it advantaged and developed their learning of curriculum content.

Recurring themes and points of difference

As mentioned earlier, the main difference in assessment of educational achievement in Saskatchewan and New Zealand is the standardized approach used in New Zealand secondary schools and the national standards applicable to certain learning areas in New Zealand primary schools. Mark, Bob and Olly all thought these standards-based forms of assessment allowed them a measure of assessment flexibility (that is, bringing in other methods of assessment, such as student self-review), but overall Bob and Olly found them constraining. As Olly reported, this reason had led to Kahikatea, a primary school, deciding not to use the standards.

In their paper on standardized assessment, Spooner and Orlowski (2013) identified critiques of standardized testing. These included, amongst many, diverting teaching time, reinforcing cultural biases, inducing anxiety in students, and taking only snapshots of student learning.

Both Bob and Mark considered standardized assessment inappropriate for primary school children, for reasons such as these. Mark and Lisa characterized standardized tests as “hard” on students because of the stress they cause them. Work by Cizek (2001), Kohn (2000, 2001), and Segool (2009) confirmed student stress and anxiety as one of several negative effects on young people of standardized testing. Olson (2009) colourfully described the “wounds of creativity” that standardized testing creates and criticizes teacher-centred curriculums for encouraging and rewarding obedience, repetition and standards while not addressing creativity. Standardized testing, it seems, does not necessarily have the entirely positive outcomes that many ministries of education and governments espouse. As Campbell (1976) points out, “The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures, and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor” (p. 85).

The majority of research participants considered more individualistic assessment a more valid representation of the unique sets of competencies and knowledge acquired by individual students. Mark favoured personal observation of his students; others stressed various forms of learner-centred assessment, such as self-assessment and portfolios, which are synonymous with authentic assessment (O’Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996). Self-assessment is not a form of assessment traditionally used in most schools, yet it was a strong recurring approach amongst the programmes and schools in this study. Malcolm, Don, Janet, Steve, John and Rebecca had all incorporated self-assessment into their final assessment methodology, seeing it as means of encouraging students to reflect on their own learning and to take responsibility for their progress. Janet and Rebecca claimed self-assessment gives students a better idea of how their learning experiences facilitate their learning because it guides them into more self-

identified intentioned learning experiences, a process that can ameliorate the learning deficiencies they may have had elsewhere.

At Birch, Poplar and Horoeka, self-assessment involved focused dialogue between the students and teachers, and not just a written assessment. This dialogue gave students opportunity to express more thoroughly what they had learned and to discuss aspects of themselves potentially influencing that learning. In a similar vein, Janet and Don saw self-assessment as an important confidence builder for students because it helped them better understand themselves and build their self-advocacy. Huba and Freed (2000) identify classrooms where self-assessment is frequent as *learner-centred* classrooms, where teachers act more as facilitators of learning than imparters of information. This type of learning environment and this type of teacher role are both characteristic of place-based education.

Conclusion

This chapter has identified the various ways that the research participants were challenging traditional approaches to curriculum development, delivery and assessment. They therefore pointed to several learning methods not used or only occasionally used in many mainstream learning environments. One of the most prominent of these was experiential learning. Kahikatea, Birch and Poplar, in particular, had grounded their curriculum content and delivery in this form of learning. Experiential learning, as described by Oliver and Gershman (1989) immediately below, is at the heart of place-based education and it readily links into other characteristics of this type of education:

The student is, at once, in the experience and having the experience. When she or he makes sense of his or her experience, she or he reconstructs it in terms of symbolic

reference; this way she or he can think of it, speak it, recall it. The experience comes first; then in a moment too fast to calculate, it is understood. It is a prehension; as such it refuses to submit to a strict chronology (p. 165).

For the research participants, the process of delivering curriculum content through experiential learning, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, thematic-based learning, and land-based pedagogies were explored throughout this chapter. All were identified by them as important and often positioned as interrelated learning methods, which relied on flexibility. Flexibility was both a need and a practice amongst the research participants as they endeavoured to incorporate these methods in their courses. For some, it meant developing whole curricular programmes built on a particular ethos, as was the case for those at Birch, Poplar, Willow, Kahikatea and Horoeka, such that these methods were a key feature of them. For others, such as Lisa at Tī kōuka, it meant working as best she could within the boundaries of a traditional subject-based curriculum.

Flexibility was also what enabled the research participants to choose or include modes of assessment that they considered more valid and useful means than government-sanctioned, standards-based methods of providing students with feedback on their learning. Several also thought that alternative assessment methods advantaged their teaching work. Mark, for example, considered that standardized testing diminishes teachers' ability and time to engage their students in interactive lessons and to build relationships with them, both aspects that he identified as important aspects of good teaching and integral to sound education. The curriculums for Saskatchewan and New Zealand both cite relationships and relationship building as foundations of those curriculums. However, the lack of description of these foundational attributes in the curriculum documents leaves substantial room for teachers to

interpret their importance and relevance to what and how they teach, and to modify that practice accordingly.

This consideration has implications for bringing PBE into school programmes because relationship building is another integral feature of it. The research participants throughout this research expressed their belief in the importance that relationships with and between students, teachers, administrators, parents and the community hold for student learning. Relationships can also be built with nature and animals, evident in Olly's example of the students' deep empathy with the chick that died. Rebecca referred to the gratitude the students expressed in relation to the sense of community they experienced in the Willow programme. Don took relationships to another level in his descriptions of students diving deeply and personally into the topics they were learning. Here, the relationships were with the learning content. Janet referred to the students in her programme who were being encouraged to find their sense of belonging both to themselves, others and place.

Relationship building is also an important feature of problem-solving and project-based learning, and often a facet of the other learning methods mentioned in this chapter. In fact, relationship building can be an unanticipated product of these methods because they allow students to work together. It is furthermore an important part of creating the trust which allows teachers and students to consider alternative ways of developing innovative and fruitful learning environments with the potential to more closely meet the needs of today's young people and the world they inhabit.

Trust is at the core of any relationship. Trust between the research participants and their students has been exemplified throughout this chapter. Teachers at Horoeke trust their

students to choose the subjects they study. Teachers and parents at Kahikatea trust their students/children to roam the school yard, try new things, and get dirty. Trust is necessary for taking students off the school grounds. And trust enabled most of the research participants to let students assess and evaluate their own progress through self-assessment.

None of these freedoms would be possible without trust, and these freedoms are all ones that challenge the traditional education system's curriculum content, delivery and assessment models. As Blase and Blase (2001) stressed, "... without trust, a school cannot improve and grow into the rich, nurturing micro-society needed by children and adults alike" (p. 23). The one trust relationship that is lacking here is that of the governments to trust teachers and their abilities as professionals to assess and evaluate students at a local level.

It will be interesting to see as both New Zealand and Saskatchewan move towards more standards based teaching and assessment if they will heed Campbell's (1976) proposition that a move toward more quantitative social indicators used for social decision-making, the more vulnerable it will be to corruption pressures. Ideas of this can already be seen in schools in United States of America that have moved towards more standardized testing and have pressured teachers and principals to cheat (see Rideau, 2009).

Chapter Seven: Critical Pedagogy of Place

Decolonizing education, then, is an act of love that generates my passion, my activism and my truth (Battiste, 2013, p. 190-191).

This chapter outlines the research participant's engagement with critical pedagogy of place (CPP). It is divided into two parts. These reflect the twin goals of Gruenewald's original construct of CPP. Part One discusses the participants' attempts to grapple with the goal of decolonization (previously discussed in Chapter Two). Part Two, in turn, addresses the participants' attempts to address the goal of reinhabitation (see Chapter Two). Because these twin goals are closely related, it is not surprising that the participants' responses to questions related to the goal of decolonization could equally be related to reinhabitation.

Part One: Decolonization

Decolonization has been defined differently by a range of theorists (including Battiste, 2013; Linda Smith, 1999) but ultimately is interpreted by an individual, whether it be the teacher or the student, Indigenous or non-Indigenous, to perceive in different ways the actions and ways of thinking that injure and exploit. The following section outlines the ways in which the research participant's from Christchurch were engaging with decolonization.

Christchurch, New Zealand

Mark from Harakeke said he sought to "decolonize the schooling system by making teachers more aware of the students and where they come from". He tended to view decolonization in terms of breaking down specific negative stereotypes of Māori people brought about through years of colonization, negative media portrayal and are embedded in societal institutions such as schools. His thinking here aligned with views of various commentators in the literature

such as Barnes, Borell, Taiapa, Rankine, Nairn, and McCreanor (2012) and Wall (1997). Mark considered small daily actions the best way of “slowly decolonizing staff’s thought processes”. When staff made what he considered derogatory statements or criticisms about students and other people, he expressed disappointment in their behaviour through the tone of his voice or by calmly but assertively challenging what they had said. He also considered role modelling an effective means of decolonizing:

Everyone knows [about] role modelling, not just for the students but to other teachers—and that’s how I believe I’m decolonizing thoughts and processes of the school. And that’s me being the best teacher I can be and breaking down barriers or changing thought processes about people and about student cultures. And that is how you slowly transfer [and] decolonize thought processes.

He went on to say that, as a Māori teacher, he needed to be a role model at all times, by ensuring, for example, that his room was always clean for other teachers and by presenting himself professionally. None of the other teachers brought up a sentiment of feeling the need to prove themselves in this way, and this may be an indication of institutional racism that exists. This is one of several examples that Mark has brought up in this research and must deal with as a Māori teacher.

In response to the concept of decolonizing praxis, Tara, at Horoeke, said: “I’m striving to resist neocolonization in my classroom, but would like to do more.” She considered Horoeke’s programme was “making a difference” by being an alternative to the mainstream, which she saw in itself as a form of decolonization:

I absolutely know that when we started with [the primary school of Horoeka], there were websites, including some people even at teachers' college, that were dedicated to finding a way for us to fail ... One person was on a personal campaign, saying that it was a form of torture to send your children to this type of school—untried and untested. But the school filled within two years ... I think the fact that these programmes are all still around, and I think the fact that you can see evidence of what other people have adopted around the country shows that changes are taking place.

Tara's comment shows how confronted she and her colleagues felt by people who did not agree with what the school was doing or who wanted, as Tara perceived it, to actively undermine the school's aims. The adverse comments and actions the school experienced during its early days suggest how embedded the notions are of what "proper" schooling is and should be. For its detractors, the school seemed to offer not a positive alternative but an alternative threatening mainstream schooling. One of the problems that can exist within Gruenewald's framework for critical pedagogy of place (and his definitions of decolonization and reinhabitation) is that the primary focus is not on Indigenous people, and is instead based on power structures and marginalized groups (including Indigenous people).

Looking at Tara's scenario through the theoretical lens of Gruenewald's critical pedagogy of place, it shows she is breaking down forms of control by questioning concepts found within mainstream schooling. Whereas, if looked at through the lens of Land-based education (as referred to in Chapter Two), her actions could be perceived as a form of re-colonization, where we have non-Indigenous people changing the ways of schooling without engaging with issues of repatriation and sovereignty. It is important to note that the programme Tara was

fighting for is based on PBE, and it has the potential to pave the way for engaging with decolonization even as perceived through other lenses such as Land-based education.

Seen from their examples, Tara and Mark look at decolonization in different ways. Within the context of Gruenewald's definition of decolonization, they are both recognizing patterns of domination. Tara is looking at mainstream schooling as a form of domination and that the alternative school they were creating was acting in a decolonizing fashion but as Bowers (2001) pointed out, decolonization as an act of resistance can not only be limited to challenging, rejecting and transforming dominant ideas. Therefore, to be able to engage with CPP a person must be able to enter the cycle of decolonization and reinhabitation. So, if Tara is engaging with decolonization, at a level of challenging and transforming dominant ideas; it will be important for her and her colleagues to critically reflect upon their teaching practices to ensure they are not recolonizing schools. Mark on the other hand was trying to decolonize from a very personal position as he was dealing with racism in his school as he has experienced and was exemplified in the previous chapters. He is battling negative stereotypes of Māori from teachers and the media and is attempting to first challenge these stereotypes and then actively engaged with positive role modelling.

The subject of decolonization arose again when Tara discussed He Kākano, a leadership professional development initiative directed primarily at school managers that Horoeke voluntarily applied to join. Tara saw He Kākano as a strong agent for school-based decolonization because it focused explicitly on improving culturally responsive leadership in schools and teacher practices to ensure Māori learners enjoyed educational success as Māori (New Zealand Ministry of Education, n.d.). She also implied that the initiative can be seen as part of a systematic approach to decolonization. Although the programme takes those

involved in it on a personal journey, its longer-term strategic aim is to have an impact at a leadership level, with that impact then making its way down to teachers, other school staff and students. Bob, the other teacher at Horoeka, was also involved with the He Kākano project and implementing the New Zealand Ministry of Education's *Ka Hikitia* strategy for raising Māori academic achievement levels. *Ka Hikitia: Accelerating Success 2013–2017* (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2013) provides New Zealand schools with specific guidance on teaching practices that facilitate leadership:

Ka Hikitia means to step up, to lift up or to lengthen one's stride. Here it means stepping up how the education system performs to ensure Māori students are enjoying and achieving education success as Māori. To achieve this, the system must fit the student rather than making the student fit the system (p. 5).

The document also discusses how leadership functions and examines different levels of leadership responsibility. It furthermore critically assesses methods currently used to develop teacher leadership, with that evaluation including assessment of whether or not they have had the anticipated achievement/success outcomes. Tara spoke with enthusiasm about the people/mentors involved with the He Kākano programme:

The people, the mentors who are part of it that I have met, are amazing ... It is amazing, useful and important to spend time with them. I think the word *mana* (prestige, influence, and status) is what I am looking for. It's that sense of being, and being so true to the principles that are guiding these things, you just exude it. You don't even necessarily know that you do. It is such integrity. Those are the people that I have met that are doing it. It has been really, really good. And

for us as a leadership team ... [it is a] good conversation piece because there is a lot of diversity amongst all of us.

The He Kākano programme is a great example of the importance of culturally responsive professional development programmes for teachers. It exemplifies Māori and Pākehā academics, community & school leaders working together towards improving culturally responsive leadership and teaching practices by identifying school based barriers for Māori and potential solutions. This is to ensure Māori learners enjoy educational success as Māori. Tī kōuka, one of the participating schools in this research, also took part in the voluntary He Kākano programme; but Lisa did not mention it in our interview. However, it is possible she did not mention He Kakano because that programme works mainly with school leaders. It should also be noted that the He Kākano programme is supported by the local Ngāi Tahu hapū (Ngāi tūāhuriri) who have advised that they believe they are seeing this taking positive “first steps” in engaging with Maori students (Lynne-Harata Te Aika/Richard Manning personal communication, September 19, 2014).

Saskatoon, Canada

Malcolm was firm in his conviction that the Birch programme was an agent of decolonization:

I like to say we do challenge neocolonization. But when you fit within the system that supports your programme, I think I would almost hate to be that token group, that classroom within the school that, you know, makes them look good. But I think that we do challenge it, and maybe that's where it needs to start. Maybe if we didn't have our class to challenge our regular schooling system and the Catholic system, what other opportunities would there be?

Malcolm and Don often worked outside of the classroom with local First Nations and Métis groups, which likely had a significant impact on their discussion of decolonization. According to Malcolm, the idea that unique programmes such as Birch are needed to effectively challenge the regular schooling system tends to be one that many educational stakeholders strongly resist. Such people, according to Malcolm, claim that incremental reforms to schooling can achieve the same aims as those of alternative programmes and schools. In support of his claim, he argued that programmes such as Birch are indeed “hard to find”. Drawing on the adage of strength in numbers, he thought other unique programmes should collaborate to form a collective, able to mount really effective challenges. It should be noted that the teachers from the Birch programme and the Poplar programme do collaborate on occasion.

In the meantime, Malcolm said his biggest challenge as a teacher was reflecting on his own thought processes and actions and how they were contributing to both colonization and decolonization processes:

I guess I always try to find situations in my life where things have happened and how I would do it differently knowing what I have read now, and different perspectives I have been shown by our professors at the university—that was the situation and how I handled it. It’s that constant reflection of decolonizing. It takes a long time to decompress all that, and stomach it, because I think I am just beginning ... I do, we do, more than what a regular classroom would do for decolonizing through history, narrative, storied perspective, and collaborating with everyone we can, but I think there is always more.

Malcolm's reflections highlighted that, on a personal level, the individual processes of decolonization constantly evolve. Even though he considered he had done considerably more to decolonize his teaching pedagogy than had teachers in traditional classrooms, he emphasized that he needed to do much more. His reflections also speak to the evaluative positioning that people take with regard to decolonizing processes. He saw constant reflection on the part of the individual vital to ensure decolonization "keeps going". While he thought there could never be an end point to decolonizing processes, he recognized that "nothing" could ever be fully decolonized.

Don, also teaching at Birch, argued that decolonization processes can be prompted by making changes within the mainstream system. Bringing in such changes were not easy. However, if done appropriately, they were usually very rewarding:

The majority of this interview highlights that we are attempting decolonization ... It's not an easy process, and I don't think it ever will be, but it's an incredibly rewarding process, personally, professionally, for the students, and for the teachers that enquire and kind of take on some of what we do ... It's been very labour intensive.

Recurring themes and points of difference

As Tuck and Yang (2012) reminded us, our own culture and history influences the type of journey we will take once we begin engaging with decolonization processes. In addition to the influences of culture and history, we can add gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, class and many other aspects of individuality. Decolonization, as Mark lived and practised it on a daily basis, differed somewhat from how the other research participants were engaging

with it. As a Māori man, Mark believed in setting an example for other, predominantly Pākehā teachers and students that would challenge any negative stereotypes they might hold of Māori. Perhaps one reason why most of the other research participants were not as engaged as Mark was with respect to decolonization praxis was because they may not have had to personally contend with issues of racism. Two of the research participants self-identified as Māori (Mark and Lisa) and one identified as Filipino (Malcolm) so they would have been likely to have endured racism as they were not protected by the safeguards within white privilege (McIntosh, 1990). All participants may, though, have had to contend with other biases associated with gender, age, religion, and the like, but perhaps their constructs of decolonization focused only on notions of race and culture. This is perhaps not surprising, given that much of the research literature in this area focuses on these aspects.

According to various authors within the critical pedagogy literature, the process of decolonizing teacher practice involves enhancing teachers' understandings of people, history, and culture, and the responsibilities teachers have as both inheritors and educators and of this colonial legacy (Dion, Johnston, & Rice, 2010). Bob and Tara both saw the He Kākano professional development programme as an important systematic approach to their personal constructs of identity as Pākehā teachers and their pathways to decolonization. This does suggest that professional development of this kind is an important way of starting teachers' personal journeys towards entering a praxis of decolonization that is consciously inclusive of the systemic colonial forces that underpin schooling systems in colonial/neocolonial societies.

Malcolm, in particular, emphasized decolonization as a personal journey that involved constantly reflecting on and learning from past experiences and people and becoming ever

more aware of the many forms of colonization around him, especially those embedded in society's public institutions (such as schools). The more he learned about colonizing, the more able he was to identify ways of decolonizing. Don alluded to decolonization as a "process" that occurs on many levels, including personally, in the classroom and in the community. He too maintained that because an individual "grows" through understanding of their experiences, it is important to decolonize through reflection.

Both Tara and Malcolm discussed opposition to their programmes because of the challenges these programmes presented to regular schooling. Particularly telling in this regard was Tara's example of a person who stated Horoeoka was a form of "torture" for children because it was untried and untested. Again, although decolonization has multiple forms of engagement, Tara and Malcolm are challenging colonial structures within mainstream schooling. Their conscious engagement of decolonization as an alternative process to the neocolonizing influences of neoliberalism on mainstream schooling recalls Smith and Katz (1993) that wrote, "Decolonization becomes a metaphor for the process of recognizing and dislodging dominant ideas, assumptions and ideologies as externally imposed" (p. 71). Within this metaphor teachers must be aware that by only changing mainstream ideologies of schooling one runs the risk of recolonizing schooling without engaging with the processes of reflection that then lead to reinhabitation and in turn lead to decolonization again.

Although the research participants faced challenges, without the challenges, whether big or small, to the regular system that come from trying the new and the different, changes cannot occur. As Toffler (1980) stressed, change, after all "is not necessary to life, it is life." However, the outcomes of each such change must be evaluated, that is, subjected to critical reflection, otherwise unanticipated negative outcomes may take hold and undermine the original intention of the change. Brookfield (1995) expressed this notion a little differently

when he argued that educational stakeholders need to engage in a continuous cycle of reflection and evaluation in order to understand actions and their implications. Change and constant reflection on each change are thus integral to decolonization and can lead to acts of reinhabitation as discussed in the following passage.

Part Two: Acts of reinhabitation

Chapters Four, Five and Six gave examples of the research participant's transforming spaces into places by giving them meaning through experiences, understanding, and relationship. This transformation of space into place is part of reinhabitation-- an act of learning to live well in our total environments. As stated by Gruenewald (2003) "reinhabitation requires the restoration of relationships to other people and the land, characterized by affiliation and responsibility" (p. 347). It is also about how people reinhabit spaces/places while engaging with forms of decolonization.

This section takes a closer look at the teachers' reinhabitation-related thoughts and actions, particularly in terms of culturally responsive approaches and integration of content from the Treaty of Waitangi (New Zealand) and Treaty 6 (Saskatoon) into learning. I have interpreted the content in this section as reinhabitation, but as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, and as Gruenewald (2008) further stated, reinhabitation and decolonization "are really two dimensions of the same task" (p. 9). Therefore, it is important to note that this is my own interpretation, and it could be argued by others who interpret the lines between decolonization and reinhabitation differently, that much of the content in this section aligns just as well with decolonization.

Christchurch, New Zealand

One of the first classrooms that Mark taught was a group of students who no other teacher could manage. The class consisted largely of boys. Ten percent of them identified themselves as Pākehā; the rest Māori and Pasifika. Mark described the students as big for their age; some were taller and heavier than their teachers. They attended school infrequently, rarely wore the school uniforms correctly and tended to be “cheeky” and “exasperate” their teachers. They also fought a lot. One of Mark’s colleagues told him the classroom assigned to these students was a “ghetto” classroom.

Mark said this comment really opened his eyes to the institutionalism and marginalism that these boys were facing in a classroom he said was “a hole” (New Zealand slang for a slum-like dwelling). He said one of the things that helped him to work with these students was creating an environment filled with culture. He set up the Māori tino rangatiratanga (sovereignty) flag in the classroom, - a potent decolonizing and reinhabiting symbol. Mark said he used it “to incite good healthy discussions and talk about the Treaty of Waitangi.” He listed some of the questions that arose and which the students discussed as a result of this action: “Why we do we have those flags? What was the flag before the Union Jack? What’s in the Treaty? What is the Ngāi Tahu [Treaty] settlement? How come there needed to be a settlement?” These questions help to invoke a sense of responsibility that is part of the reinhabitation process. The use of the Māori flag is a strong symbol with meaning that is an important part of decolonizing and reinhabiting a colonial space.

According to Mark, questions such as these denoted, “fundamental issues that make us a country, but yet the New Zealand education [system] would push it aside, and put it under the carpet. But every day in the media, it’s in our face and ... we need to discuss it.” In addition to

the flag, Mark brought other cultural artefacts into the classroom and worked to integrate Māori language into his teaching. Mark said his thinking and teaching on these matters set him apart from other teachers at Harakeke. He explained this divergence through an example: “I raise these cultural issues with my students every day ... in a safe [and] understanding environment that doesn’t go over the students’ head[s]. I speak ... in the students’ language [which is decolonizing], so I’m dropping down [to] the students’ levels and they are coming up to mine, in a language that is insightful.” It is acts of reinhabiting these colonial spaces such as these, Mark explained, that had helped him break down colonial constructs (decolonize) in his classroom.

Mark said that although his pedagogical philosophy and practice differed from that of the other teachers in the school, and from the school’s overall philosophy for that matter, no teacher had come into his classroom and challenged the way he did things. He also said that some teachers did support his efforts to decolonize (by educating about and undoing the damage of oppression) and reinhabitation (by teaching his students to live well in a place without doing damage to others), but there were also those who seemed threatened by what he was doing:

At Harakeke, I’ve been given leadership opportunities. I’ve had chances to develop programmes, which I didn’t think would happen, but it did. It’s taken me a long time to plant seeds into teachers’ heads as to why we must pay particular attention to our Māori children. I’ve had to do professional development Treaty of Waitangi teaching to staff, and I’ve had staff members leave notes on my hand-outs that this is racist. However, I wasn’t alone. Those teachers were a minority; the majority supported it, and therefore I felt safe. I felt comfortable and fine with the messages I was putting out there because the words I was saying are researched and proven. They are in

government documents, even though the sincerity of the government documents—the philosophy—may be different. I'm seeing a change in culture ... very slowly. But I can say right now that I've got people around me who are supporting me one hundred percent to make significant changes at the school.

Mark clearly enacted his responsibility as a Māori teacher at Harakeke. That he did so was confirmed by the Education Review Office's (2013) report on the school:

The teacher of te reo Māori holds a high level of respect and mana amongst teachers, parents and students. He is supporting staff and students to improve their understanding of New Zealand's bicultural heritage ... A number of activities and protocols give Māori students opportunities to identify and succeed as Māori. These include marae visits, powhiri and kapa haka (p. 7).

As reinhabitation cannot occur without decolonization, Mark's actions are acts of reinhabitation that are intermixed with a personal and professional journey of decolonization (changing ways of thinking) amongst his peers and students. He is instilling in his students an identity, and helping them find meaning in important places, such as the marae. It is remarkable that Mark was able to use positivity to see the progress made within the school instead of being confounded by the negativity and oppositional views of some colleagues. It should be noted that in the section of the ERO (2013) report on school development, the office stated that "leaders and teachers need to include more bicultural activities and understandings in all curriculum programmes" (p. 9). Despite the influence that Mark was having on the school, ERO obviously thought that the school could be doing more than it was.

Later during my interview with Mark, he spoke further about his sense of connection with Māori students and the obligations he felt towards them:

I love their passion, their history. I want to know where my students are from. I can picture their marae and whānau. I can picture their whānau with them. I know what the family has been through. I know how good their family is. I know their mother, and it helps. You just can't help it as a Māori teacher, and you can't help that you pastorally look after them ... You get angry when another teacher puts someone down in front of you in the staff room. "Oh that so and so is an ... idiot." I get angry, but I hold my tongue, and I smile and drink my tea and walk away. ... Sometimes teachers need to vent, but I feel bad when they tear up and down our Māori students, even when they don't mean to. I'm the only Māori teacher in my school trying to look after fifteen percent, which is over 53 kids, and I can't look after each and every one. I want to, but I can't. So I just hope the other teachers are keeping an eye on them as well.

Mark's statement demonstrates a commitment to reinhabitation, because it demonstrates the desire to see restoration of relationships to other people, with the hope that other teachers will build these same relationships (between Pākehā teachers and Māori students) in order to live well in our total environments (school). This statement also resonates with decolonization, as Mark has recognized how his Māori students may be marginalized. Through Mark's words here, and other statements, Mark emphasized his view that teachers have to be aware of and take into account the different, sometimes difficult, home lives, cultures and communities that form students' backgrounds. Nowhere is this understanding more important, he said, than when students come from a culture that is markedly different from that of the school:

Although their culture may be different, it is important to make sure that the basics of the culture can marry together nicely, and the school culture has to look after the culture that the students are coming from. The student should not change for the school; the school should change for the student. It's something that I believe in. And to me, that's being culturally awake. Unfortunately, there are only a few teachers that believe in that. But in time we'll see what happens.

Mark's statement that "the students should not change for the school [but] the school should change for the student" is an important one because it claims that the work of schools should be to habituate themselves to students' unique backgrounds, rather than require students to habituate themselves to the school. This claim is echoed in the *Ka Hikitia* vision statement, discussed in Part One of this chapter, and also emphasized by Tara at Horoeka. She saw the school's personalized learning approach as a means of not only responding to students' individual learning needs but also to their respective cultures: "... our special character [is that] every student is on a personalized programme. The personalization of their learning programme is absolutely important. It is kind of engrained within the programme to find out who the person is." Tara said she worked hard to embed cultural responsiveness in her teaching. She believed "personalizing learning is a starting point" for being culturally responsive; it was how she met the needs of all her students, including her Māori students. She said she had integrated considerations relating to the Treaty of Waitangi into her class in order to help her students gain a "sense of identity and responsibility for self and others". She also emphasized in her teaching "whakapapa—where we have come from, respect and accountability". Restoration of relationships to other people characterized by a sense of responsibility is fundamental in Gruenewald's concept of reinhabitation.

Bob's views on cultural responsiveness were similar to Tara's:

Culturally responsive is actively seeking awareness and information around the cultural needs of the people in your environment and ensuring that what will go in place allows for the expression of culture—to ensure that it is not suppressed and to make the most [of it], and allowing it to enhance the environment.

When discussing the needs of Māori students at Horoeke, Bob said the school identifies Māori students as part of the enrolment process. This information is part of the school's demographic data on its students, but it also provides impetus for the school's commitment to *He Kākano* and *Ka Hikitia*. Bob said that the Ministry of Education acknowledged that “We do a good job at identifying and working with Māori students, and ERO gave us a great mark on that.” The ERO report referred to here is the one for Horoeke School for 2012:

The school has made significant progress in promoting educational success for Māori, as Māori. Since the last review, the school has benefited from its participation in a national initiative [*Ka Hikitia*] to improve outcomes for Māori learners” (Education Review Office, 2012, p. 5).

To some extent, this reflects a form of reinhabiting the school structure by acknowledging a sense of responsibility towards Māori students. It could also fall in line with processes found within decolonization by breaking down the barriers that already exist for Māori students, showing once again that Gruenewald's two concepts overlap .

In addition to voicing her commitment to integrating cultural responsiveness and the treaty into her teaching, Tara outlined how she did this. For example, “... sometimes you might have to talk about what it might mean to be Māori, or how they feel, or what they want differently—whether or not it has ever come up as an issue.” She said she explicitly focused on the treaty when teaching social studies and geography to senior students. Bob had integrated the Crown’s (1989) principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi into his classroom by using te reo Māori and focusing on Māori contexts and perspectives.

Tara was well aware of her responsibility to enact the treaty as a Crown agent (teacher), but acknowledged that other teachers with little experience of te reo and tikanga Māori (where tikanga refers to correct procedure or custom) could struggle to exercise this responsibility without a whole-school commitment and professional development. She then suggested that bringing the treaty into education “is more about respect” for alternative ways of being and doing, and as such provided a perhaps easier and less “scary” entry point for teachers into the treaty, and its content. “We talk about tikanga—culturally proper or appropriate—in our school.”

Lisa at Tī kōuka was also using te reo Māori and tikanga to support her teaching in ways that could also be interpreted as aligning with the decolonization and reinhabitation processes described by Gruenewald. However, they might also be interpreted as problematic by distant observers who are unfamiliar with the colonial/institutional histories of their workplaces. Lisa and Tara’s examples, for example, might be considered as tokenistic co-optive actions. A form of cooption that simply reproduces a dominant colonial hegemonic class by either coercing or co-opting local Indigenous people’s language/customs and creating normative ways of teaching them (Gramsci, Hoare, & Nowell-Smith, 1999).

Lisa said she always greeted her students in Māori and made sure they “do not sit on the desks”. She emphasized that “Māori is used in my classroom inclusively not exclusively.” She made certain that when she and her students made “reference to any Māori history, it is done in a respectful manner”, and she tried, “where possible, to use tuakana/teina relationships”. (Tuakana-teina refers to the relationship between an older [tuakana] and a younger [teina] person and is traditional to teaching and learning in Māori contexts). Despite her efforts, Lisa said that, at Tī kōuka, “the Treaty [of Waitangi] is taught in Year 10 social studies. Other than that there is no mention of it.” This situation, she emphasized, was one that had to change, as the school was not honouring its responsibility, as a Crown entity, to enact the Crown’s principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi. This would not be straightforward because as Hayward (2014), noted, “There is no final or complete list of Treaty of Waitangi principles. These principles are continually reinterpreted and developed to suit changing understandings and circumstances” (n.p.). Teachers are in a difficult space in teaching the Treaty of Waitangi. As agents of the Crown the New Zealand teachers participating in this research have described ways in which they are consciously using the Crown’s principles to pursue the goals of decolonization and reinhabitation. Yet, these same principles are contested by some Māori for the fact that they are based on the premise that Māori ceded sovereignty to the Crown and the Crown in turn has an obligation to ensure the spirit of the Treaty. Therefore, teaching from within the framework of the Crowns principles could be seen as a neocolonizing action by some and a decolonizing action by others (such as the teachers themselves). To further complicate matters, a recent Waitangi Tribunal report declared that the Ngāpuhi iwi (and other Māori tribes) never ceded sovereignty of their land when they signed the Treaty of Waitangi (Bennett & Quilliam, 2014). Thus teachers are

confronted by the dilemma of trying to be culturally responsive on the one hand, whilst being confined by the Crown's principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi.

Like Tara and Bob, Lisa considered cultural responsiveness a highly important aspect of good citizenship because it taught respect and valuing other people's identities: "... culturally responsive is valuing and honouring and being respectful to other people." She discussed the criticism she'd encountered in various forums (such as the media) that the history of Māori, although part of New Zealand's history, is not shared by everyone in the country and therefore doesn't need to be. She considered this viewpoint short-sighted and damaging, observing that New Zealanders (or, more particularly, in the context of her discussion, Pākehā) who couldn't or wouldn't appreciate the history of Māori as part of their own heritage would have difficulty being culturally responsive to the diversity of cultures that now make up New Zealand's society. This aligns with reinhabitation because it is grappling with and learning to live well together in a place (as difficult as that is).

Although recognizing the importance of culturally responsive teaching for Pasifika students, Asian students, and those from other cultures such as the Middle East, she considered that such teaching had to come initially from a change in how teachers worked with their Māori students. She claimed that "one of the reasons the whites [Pākehā] are so predominant in New Zealand is because of the deficit theorizing [about Māori], which has been going on for many years." The "trial and error" approach to assimilating "Māori into the Pākehā culture has failed," she said. "We've come to the realization that we've got to do something different. We've got to respect their (Māori) knowledge and culture." Respecting Māori culture could be a step in the processes towards decolonization and reinhabitation, but the issues of colonial power and control still exist so must also be addressed. Also, who sets out what "respecting"

Māori would look like? Is it a tokenistic gesture or is it breaking down colonial constructs in an attempt to address issues of sovereignty?

Deficit theory places the blame of underachieving marginalized students (primarily Indigenous students in the New Zealand and Canadian contexts) onto the students, their families and their communities (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Due to historically and culturally perpetuated negative stereotypes of Indigenous peoples, non-Indigenous teachers can have an impaired consciousness that favours a tendency to use the deficit model when working with Indigenous students (Kailin, 1999; Marx, 2004). One means of honouring the treaty relationships into schools is to “braid” the histories of Indigenous people into the curriculum, so ensuring that multiple histories can be presented. It is critical, though, that as part of the processes of decolonization and reinhabitation, that the telling of these histories be reflected upon so that they are, as much as possible, recounted through the multiple lenses of those who experienced them.

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Steve, at Poplar, was doing just this. He described what the programme calls its Braiding Histories Project. The project involved three intertwined strands of analysis: an analysis by each student of his or her personal settler/Indigenous history, analysis of First Nations and Métis histories, and analysis of colonizing forces. The project takes a month to complete and culminates in “a three day First Nations experience. We also move from local colonizing factors to national and international colonization and use literature and recent immigrant stories to expose marginalization, racism, sexism, homophobia, etcetera.”

Steve said Poplar teachers strove to meet the needs of First Nations and Métis students through ongoing analysis and exploration of their colonizing history and the challenges this has presented these peoples. The programme integrates treaty education into the classroom by calling on input and advice from First Nations and Métis community members. They bring a relevant context to the history and contemporary issues surrounding the various treaties, Steve explained.

Birch's Don discussed reinhabitation primarily in terms of cultural responsiveness, which he defined as "culturally representing fairly and equally all cultures and races". He, like Tara in New Zealand, considered cultural responsiveness as a mindset and practice. However, he said he had found that those teachers who did find it difficult did so because of what he termed "their own vices". Learning to be culturally responsive therefore had to "begin with yourself, and an examination of your own vices, and identifying those, and then setting those aside, and growing personally first. So, for me, that was the process before I was able to truly and more adequately address cultural issues."

Don used very similar words to Steve when he said Birch strove to meet the needs of First Nations and Métis students by offering "a supportive and honest approach when dealing with First Nation/Métis education". In line with practice at Poplar, Birch asked First Nations and Métis elders to participate in the programme. Birch furthermore had students travel to historical locations such as Batoche (a historic Métis settlement). Don again used the word strive when he said, "We strive very strongly to create an egalitarian classroom." He also remarked that students "authentically begin a process of decolonization" because of the programme's integration of treaty-based education. Students attend interactive presentations

on the various treaties but the focus is on Treaty 6. Some of these presentations occur on Birches premises; others at First Nations and Métis locations.

These events also enculturate students to cultural protocols associated with visiting and receiving visitors. We also, Don advised, try to “intertwine the topic whenever possible in various environmental and social justice units”. This passage demonstrates that Don in the process of decolonizing his thoughts and teaching practices is now able to reinhabit the areas mentioned (such as Batoche and the other areas of Treaty 6) by understanding their meaning and history, thus transforming them from spaces into places. He is also working from reinhabitation by teaching his students to live well in spaces by giving them the opportunity to create a meaningful place through stories, histories and cultures. His students, on the other hand, are dealing with the processes of decolonization as they start to change ways of thinking that injure and exploit people and places by learning about contested histories and places from local First Nations and Métis people. As they move through their own journeys of decolonization and reinhabitation, the differences between teacher and student are similarly exhibited in the following passage.

Another aspect of the Birch programme, Don advised, was the requirement that students examine the notion of “white privilege” and its effects on Aboriginal cultures. As part of this work, students explored issues associated with the “radicalization of Aboriginals”. Malcolm added to the ways Birch was endeavouring to facilitate cultural responsiveness. Throughout the year, the programme requires students to identify and critically examine the many current injustices against local First Nations and Métis people and how and why these contravene treaty principles and agreements. The teachers help the students get underway with these inquiries by introducing them to critical race theory and then talking about the hidden

narratives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and why these stories became and are compromised (For further information on critical race theory see Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Recurring themes and points of difference

This section began with Mark's story of teaching a class of marginalized students, most of whom were Māori boys. He found that using te reo Māori and filling the classroom with cultural and Māori artefacts helped these students gain a sense of place that resonated with them and instilled not only cultural awareness but a place to engage with Māori culture. As Denton and Ashton (2004) advised, when students connect themselves to their heritage and their community, they "create their own spiritual, intellectual, and emotional fire" (p. 34).

As always, the extent to which the participating teachers could do this depended on how bounded they were by traditional schooling. Comments from some of the teachers indicated their colleagues within mainstream schooling were unlikely to give their students the types of reinhabitation opportunities mentioned here, such as the braiding histories project at Poplar, unless they themselves had embarked on or completed journeys that led to the culturally responsive understandings that Bob spoke of. As Tara said, teacher professional development was one important means of helping teachers undertake these journeys. If viewed through a certain lens that is highly critical of cultural responsive practice, some of the actions of the research participants could be considered tokenistic changes that are made only to meet standardized culturally responsive outcomes.

However, in order to confirm or refute their level of cultural proficiency, a thorough examination of culturally responsive teaching practices, using something such as a six-point

continuum (see Cross, Bazron, Dennis & Issacs, 1989), would be required. This is outside the scope of this thesis. The experiences shown here appear to be beyond tokenism (cultural pre-competence) and in the realms of cultural proficiency.

For most of the participants, discussions on culturally responsive classrooms stimulated important discussions about treaty issues in education. For Bob, Tara and Lisa, incorporating Māori culture and language into their classrooms was a form of honouring the Treaty of Waitangi. Tara and Lisa both spoke of the treaty in terms of “respect”, meaning that they sought to employ inclusive pedagogies to ensure that a range of perspectives would be explored to gain a deeper understanding of historical and contemporary Treaty issues. As noted elsewhere in this thesis, the Crown’s principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi are contested by Māori & academics. However, New Zealand’s national curriculum is a Crown document and still acknowledges the Crown’s principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi and the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa. This insists that all students can learn te reo Māori me ona tikanga (Māori language and its customs). Although schools are not required to teach about the Treaty of Waitangi, all registered teachers under the New Zealand Code of Ethics for Registered Teachers (2004) have an obligation to honour the Treaty of Waitangi by paying particular attention to the rights and aspirations of Māori as tangata whenua (people of the land).

Steve, Don and Malcolm cited treaty matters as an important part of their teaching pertaining to cultural responsiveness. Poplar and Birch used Treaty 6 as a living document for educational reinhabitation. Particularly cogent examples were Poplar’s month-long braiding histories project, which included First Nations and Métis place-based experiences, and

Birches visits by and to First Nations and Métis elders, presentations from these individuals and other members of their communities, as well as place-based experiences.

In 2007, the Government of Saskatchewan committed to ensuring mandatory treaty education for all students from kindergarten to Grade 12. A study conducted by Rohr (2012) found that provincially only 65 percent of the school administrators surveyed said that mandatory treaty education was part of their school plans. Although the 2012 study showed progress from a first study conducted in 2009, the 2012 study clearly showed that the government's requirement had yet to be fully recognized and implemented.

Of all the schools and programmes represented in this thesis, Birch and Poplar best exemplify the usefulness of place as a means of teaching matters relating to treaties between colonizing powers and Indigenous peoples. For non-Indigenous settlers (the majority of students in both these programmes), learning about these treaties and Indigenous ways of knowing and being can be most profound when they visit places of historical and other significance to Indigenous people. Their sense of place becomes altered, and they may view it differently, and thus start the processes of reinhabitation. This may be because, as a number of commentators suggest, such places become a "third space" for students and teachers (see, for example, Bhabha, 2004; Richardson, 2004).

In the Canadian context, the third space is a place where Western and Aboriginal cultural values, beliefs, philosophies, and knowledge intersect, cohabit and intermingle (Richardson, 2004). Lowan (2014), a Métis academic and outdoor educator took third space theory and adapted it to what he called ecological métissage, which is a blending of two or more ecological world views within one's personal identity, philosophy and practice. It is not

difficult to see how place-based education aligns with these notions of third space and ecological métissage. But PBE of this kind can only be achieved in a Canadian context by schools partnering with First Nations and Métis people so that students can engage with these places on both sensory and intellectual levels. Birch and Poplar programmes were exhibiting this practice. For teachers wanting to honour the treaty, and to teach the various treaties as “living, breathing documents that continue to bind us to promises made generations ago” (Government of Saskatchewan, 2013, p. 3), PBE and critical pedagogy of place offer them and their students ways of engaging with treaty issues in authentic, meaningful ways.

The most obvious difference between the Christchurch and the Saskatoon research participants with respect to reinhabitation and decolonization was the use of Indigenous language in their schools. The teachers in Christchurch modelled use of te reo Māori in their classrooms and schools, whereas none of the Saskatoon teachers talked about using any Indigenous language in those settings (Cree being the majority language in Saskatoon). One possible reason for the situation in Saskatoon is that Cree or any other First Nations or Métis languages are rarely spoken in public places throughout the city due to the colonial history of assimilation that has rendered many Indigenous languages marginalized. This is not to say that there are no Indigenous languages spoken by local community members and it does have a small presence in educational institutions but it is not comparable to the use of Māori in New Zealand.

In Christchurch and, indeed, New Zealand, te reo Māori has a presence in people’s everyday life. Māori words and expressions are commonly used in the media, and many of these have become integrated into New Zealand English. Determined efforts to revive, embrace and maintain the te reo Māori have been evident in a number of spheres over several decades,

among them te reo immersion preschools (kōhanga reo) and schools (kura kaupapa Māori). There has been renewed emphasis on language and cultural revitalization by Ngāi Tahu. They have adopted a cultural strategy - Manawa Whenua, Manawa Reo, Manawa Kāi Tahu (Our World, Our Word, Our Way) as well as made monetary funds available for Ngāi Tahu whānau to learn and share cultural practices, whakapapa and te reo (Te rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, 1996). Many of the place names found around Christchurch are Māori, while the University of Canterbury uses te reo Māori on its webpage and branding, and the language can be heard throughout its departments. Some staff and students, including the university's vice-chancellor, introduce themselves through te reo Māori.

Undergraduate students enrolled in the Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (Primary and Early Childhood) at the University of Canterbury College of Education are required to take a 15-points class (considered a half year class or three credits in Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions) in te reo Māori, participate in an overnight marae visit, and engage in a Treaty of Waitangi workshop. This is not to say that te reo is used fluently throughout the university, and there is still a long road ahead before it, the city of Christchurch and New Zealand will be bicultural. However, it seems fair to state that Christchurch is well ahead of Saskatoon in its use of Indigenous language.

On the other hand, based on the limited number of research participants in this study, Poplar and Birch have given examples how they have actively reconnected students with the land, and engaged in partnerships with Indigenous peoples in third space settings, something which has not been exemplified by any of the Christchurch schools. In New Zealand, there is a fairly new group of outdoor educators that are focused on PBE and place responsiveness pedagogies who are engaging with local culture and local Indigenous places (Brown, 2012).

Conclusion

In Chapter Two of this thesis, I described the influences of neoliberalism and neocolonialism on contemporary mainstream schooling. One of the primary aims of this research was to examine if and how the research participants' references to, and practice of place-based education, and critical pedagogy of place, were challenging the neoliberal and neocolonial aspects of the mainstream schooling systems they were working within. As evident from the examples provided in Chapters Four, Five and Six of this thesis, they were certainly challenging the concepts and practices pertaining to time, space, curriculum and assessment prevalent within today's mainstream schooling systems. This chapter has presented how and why PBE and CPP were providing them with a platform from which to exercise that challenge.

This chapter has brought to light the research participants' conceptualizations of decolonization and reinhabitation—two important features of critical pedagogy of place—and if and how the participants had brought these notions into their praxis. Those teachers who did discuss these matters usually referenced them in terms of breaking down colonial constructs and culturally responsive pedagogies. Steve, Janet, Don and Malcolm, however, were beginning to move their considerations beyond these dimensions to include other forms of marginalization, such as racism, sexism and homophobia. They were also beginning to have their students look at these matters not only within local contexts and places but also within national and international discourses. Don, for example, specifically spoke of engaging with Indigenous peoples to determine how they might go about intertwining First Nations and Métis studies with environmental and social justice issues. Although continuing to ground their students' studies in the lived contexts of local people and places, with

colonization continuing to be the thematic lynchpin, these teachers saw merit in expanding outwards from there, which is very much a classic place-based approach. They could see that colonization examined in terms of place provided a powerful link to education focused on many social justice issues.

I began this chapter with a quote from Battiste (2013), who as an Indigenous Canadian, has illustrated her strong and personal feelings towards decolonization. An individual's culture, background, and life experiences are reflected in their perception of decolonization and decolonizing education. This is evident in the words of the research participants. Mark, for instance, influenced by his experiences as a Māori teacher, shared similar sentiments to Battiste (2013). The different perceptions of decolonization from Indigenous to non-Indigenous people were explored to some degree in this chapter, but this is certainly an area where further research is warranted. While most of the teachers shared understandings of decolonization and reinhabitation and agreed that these needed to be integrated into their teaching, several of them considered people (and presumably their students) generally could only understand the value of this praxis by undertaking their own journeys of reflection and insight. Battiste (2013) perhaps captures what they were trying to express:

We each must understand our complicity, and take an active role on repairing the damage already perpetrated on the planet. We must take responsibility for ourselves, our understandings of our history, and the history contained in our knowledge, discourses, and institutions. We must be able to distinguish when the discourses are for aboriginal people (p. 190).

Certainly, the expressed thoughts and actions of the research participants showed the process of decolonization as a personal journey that could be traversed along more than one path.

Malcolm, seemingly mindful of the type of complicity that Battiste mentions, described his pathway as one that would likely never reach a destination. This was because of his recognition that he needed to constantly reflect on decolonizing in the light of new experiences and knowledge gained throughout a lifetime. Mark's efforts to take responsibility for understanding his own history and identity were most clearly expressed in his sense of responsibility towards the Māori students in his school. Tara said her commitment to honouring the Treaty of Waitangi and teaching about that treaty involved instilling a sense of identity, responsibility for others, use of te reo Māori/tikanga and accountability in her students.

Mark believed that the students do not have to change for the school, but rather that schools must change for the students. Ghosh (1996), amongst others, argued that the educational system must change before it can produce students who can make changes in their own lives, so the idea is by no means a new one. However, it does appear to be one that many schools of today either barely address or struggle with. The changes Ghosh refers to can come in many forms, but the *foundations* of change are constructed of perceptions and thoughts. Decolonization itself involves changing ways of thinking that injure and exploit other people and places (Gruenewald, 2003). Lisa empathized with this notion when she argued that marginalization includes more than just Māori students, and that cultural responsiveness should go beyond Māori students to include other cultures.

Decolonization and reinhabitation form a continuous process within critical pedagogy of place which I believe would be further complemented through critical reflection. For non-Indigenous settlers, as I mentioned in Chapter Two, there must be a constant awareness that any action put forward is part of the colonization/recolonization process. This is because the

roots of colonization can be found within the English language and the majority of cultural norms found in society and schools to name but a few. This is not to say the colonization should be accepted but more that there are many more hurdles for teachers to address.

The processes of decolonization and reinhabitation are, thus, processes that have no end. Most of the research participants in this study demonstrated awareness of decolonization and reinhabitation but had taken different routes towards developing their understandings of critical pedagogy of place. Some could be viewed as “metaphors for decolonization” while some could be interpreted as recolonizing. The one thing that has been expressed by the research participant’s is that they are engaging with and struggling with decolonization which is a positive step. I don’t know if the same could be said for the majority of teachers in Saskatoon and Christchurch. Perhaps the next question that needs to be asked is this one: “What can be done to ensure this cycle continues and grows stronger through critical reflection, without descending into forms of recolonization within schools?”

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

Ka whawhai tonu matou = Struggle without end (Ranginui Walker, 1990).

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of findings of this thesis in relation to the research questions. It begins with a summary of the previous chapters. This chapter is organized thematically into three parts. Part One examines the importance of place. It specifically addresses how the research participants transformed spaces into places, and how the use of place promoted relationship building and authentic learning opportunities. Part Two, in turn, outlines the two components found to be critical for challenging the mainstream schooling system. These are flexibility in managing time, space, place, curriculum and assessment, and the courage of the research participants to face challenges. Part Three, meanwhile, describes how and why the participant's responses reflect a synthesis of decolonization and reinhabitation into a critical pedagogy of place. The chapter concludes with future research considerations and closing remarks.

Review of chapters

This thesis has described and analysed the experiences of teachers in Christchurch, New Zealand, and Saskatoon, Canada, as they endeavoured to use the tenets of place-based education (PBE) and critical pedagogies of place (CPP) to challenge the mainstream neocolonial (influenced by neoliberal agendas) schooling systems of the two countries. More specifically, the teachers' conscious efforts were challenging the ways in which time, space, curriculum, and assessment are typically implemented and used in these mainstream systems.

Chapters One, Two and Three presented the scope of the thesis by providing syntheses of relevant literature, stating the questions driving the research, and describing the theoretical framework of the study, the methodology and methods used to collect and analyse the data. Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven presented the results.

Chapter Four set down examples of how the research participants were using PBE in their schools and programmes, the aspects influencing their teaching methods, their use of PBE and CPP, and some of the challenges they were facing. Chapter Five took a closer look at whether and how the research participants' PBE-related practices represented departures from traditional school-related use of time and space. It also brought to light the importance of taking mainstream notions of space and creating meaningful places out of them. Chapter Six outlined the curriculum design and delivery methods typically associated with PBE and CPP and explored the extent to which the participants were using these methods. The chapter went on and explored how these teachers were assessing their students' learning. Chapter Seven focused in on the research participants' engagement with critical pedagogy of place with a focus on culturally responsive pedagogies as well as the use of treaties in their teaching. Chapters Four to Seven also captured the themes emerging from documentation and examination of this information and highlighted points of particular interest, within the scope of this study, arising out of the teachers' PBE-related experiences.

Part One: The importance of place

As explained in Chapter Two, place is more than empty spaces or boundary lines on a map. The research participants' recounting of their use of place within the context of PBE positioned place as a powerful transformative educational tool for classrooms, communities and natural environments.

Transforming spaces into places: Environment, classroom and community connections to place

For all of the research participants, reference to PBE tenets provided them with the means to transform space into place. According to Tuan (1977), humanizing a space imbues it with meaning and so creates a place. Rebecca and John's transformation of the unused part of their school into a comfortable and multipurpose classroom is a strong example of this process. The other participating teachers all tried to modify their classroom space in an effort to make it a more student-centric than a teacher-centric place. Rows of desks and teachers standing at the front lecturing generally gave way to students sitting in circle or semi-circle formations with the teachers a part of that formation or students being able to choose their own learning places. Several of the teachers said they worked with their students to decorate and organize their learning spaces so as to create places meaningful to the students. Classrooms thus became more than a space to learn; they became places filled with community and relationships.

This transformative approach was also evident outside the classroom, with research participants and students engaging with place in their local community spaces as well as outdoor and natural environments. To realise this aim, participants often had to counteract the assumption of various educational stakeholders, such as school administrative staff and parents, that accessing such space is difficult (e.g., because of distance or cost).

The comments and experiences of the research participants in this thesis supported the PBE suppositions that education outside of the classroom/school can happen in a variety of places (i.e., transformed into places of learning), and that many such places can be easily or

relatively easily accessed from the classroom. Most of the research participants had been able to provide their students with the experience of outdoor learning, whether on the school grounds, the local community, further afield in the city, or those natural environments.

Even in Saskatchewan's cold climate, the research participants in Saskatoon found ways to take their students outdoors. They considered such experiences to link well with PBE learning objectives. Although the Christchurch based research participants in this study were not using areas outside the city for learning according to Brown (2012), there is presently a shift in New Zealand for place-responsive educators to localize outdoor education and adventure based activities. Several of the research participants identified the community surrounding a school as the nucleus of PBE and thus a vital place of learning. Some extended the community concept to include national and international communities. Most claimed that, for students, participation in activities that are integrated within the community or with nature enhances their sense of environmental stewardship or reinhabitation (learning to live well in our environment).

Space in the sense of the physical location of and the area around a school affects how community can be utilized. Bob and Tara found, after moving locations twice as a result of the Christchurch earthquakes, that trying to use the same educational foundations/philosophies as those used at their previous downtown location did not work in the new spaces and made it difficult for students and staff to gain a sense of place. As Tuan (1977) stated, "... permanence is an important element in the idea of place. Things and objects endure and are dependable in ways that human beings, with their biological weakness and shifting moods, do not endure and are not dependable" (p. 140). Bob and Tara are both

more aware about the importance of place and space and will be well positioned to negotiate their new space in the downtown area of Christchurch when their new school is built.

Tuan's words also articulate the type of connection that Indigenous cultures have to place. In Saskatoon and Christchurch, people from Indigenous cultures that existed prior to European colonization have strong and long-standing roots with place. In Christchurch (and in New Zealand as a whole), it was my experience that the use of Māori language in place names is (relative to Saskatoon) quite prominent and in every day talk is common, whereas in Saskatoon the use of Cree, Dené, Dakota and Métis languages and place- names are almost non-existent. Irrespective of how much or how little the general populace acknowledges the relationships these Indigenous peoples have with place, the relationships remain significant for these Indigenous groups.

For Lisa (Tī kōuka) and Mark (Harakeke), the two research participants of Māori descent, strong connections to place were intertwined with their personal senses of identities and history. For each of them, relationship with place meant more than their own experiences of that place. It also included the meaning it had for their whānau and ancestors. Their views of place were tied to their senses of whakapapa or genealogical connectedness to place/s. The feelings that these two teachers had about place reminded me of a saying shared with me by a colleague at the University of Canterbury, Lynne-Harata Te Aika (a prominent Ngāi Tahu educationalist), "We move forward by looking back" (personal communication, September 19, 2014). For many Māori colleagues, these words best encapsulate the importance that the past has for them today. Lisa and Mark, along with Malcolm and Don (Birch) and Steve (Poplar) found that PBE made it possible for them to tie elements of the curriculum and their students' learning to the histories and peoples of the local areas in which they worked. These

teachers considered this linking to be a vital part of their pedagogy and thought that it needed to be a more prevalent feature of teaching and learning in all schools. Although no First Nations, Métis or Inuit teachers from Saskatchewan took part in this study, it would have been interesting to see if they held similar sentiments towards place as Lisa and Mark did.

These teachers' comments and actions illustrate how PBE and CPP can be used to facilitate implementation of Indigenous histories and culture into school programmes, including those constrained by conventional schooling schedules and requirements. An effort to tie a people's history and culture to learning also clarifies that PBE learning happens anywhere and should happen everywhere. The several participants who held firmly to this belief had been able to implement it into their teaching. That they had done so indicates that all teachers can use PBE in this way, and provides inspiration for their doing so.

The participating teachers all saw learning from the community and its members as an important aspect of PBE, and all had incorporated it to some degree into their practice. Several participants singled out intergenerational knowledge transmission as a particularly important facet of learning from the community.

The ways in which the research participants were using PBE provide educational practitioners with insight into the diverse ways that PBE can be used to transform spaces into places. In general, these ways are centred on connecting those spaces to the local peoples, including their histories and cultures, associated with them. The teachers' experiences also suggested that once meaning is put into a space, so creating place, relationships facilitative of learning between teachers and students develop more easily and therefore deeply.

Relationship building

Instances of relationship building through PBE were common throughout this thesis. All of the research participants provided examples of how shared experiences in meaningful places built relationships between teacher and student, teacher and teacher, student and student as well as between students and the people living and working in those places.

Meaningful places can be anywhere, but outdoor education experiences offer students the often rare opportunity to connect with nature. As noted above, some of the research participants found that outdoor education experiences fostered in the students not only an empathic relationship with the natural environment but also a sense of stewardship for it. PBE can also provide students with the opportunity to build relationships with animals and to gain a duty of care towards them. Olly's school based story of the chicks his students cared for at their school (Kahikatea), and the sense of loss they felt when one of them died, is one example.

PBE in the community connects students to the people and places in their neighbourhoods and communities. As discussed, it also provides the opportunity for intergenerational teaching and learning about place and what it has meant and means to the people who live in these settings. The research participants showed that students can also build collaborative relationships with their teachers in such settings. It seems that when a place, whether classroom, community or the natural environment, comes to have significance to the students because of the meaningful shared experiences they have had in them, the students can more easily open up and connect to others. The research participants gave many examples including Tara and her students creating a meaningful classroom place or the teacher's from Birch and Poplar creating meaningful relationships while away on outdoor excursions.

Less tangible ways in which places can become imbued with meaning include the type of interactions teachers have with their students in those settings. Several of the research participants let their students set and track their own learning time, thereby giving them the freedom to delve deeply and personally into learning areas. The teachers also changed curriculum and assessment to be more student centred. They furthermore encouraged their students to take an active role in creating curricular content. These freedoms let students control their own learning (facilitated by teachers and parents) and, as a by-product, tended to create a relationship with their teachers beyond that of the traditional, usually stricter teacher–student relationship.

Some of the teachers furthermore encouraged their students to determine how their learning would be assessed, so providing a contrast to the greater control that teachers in traditional schooling usually have over assessment. Participants claimed that standardized assessment of learning outcomes destroys the types of freedoms they offered their students. They also claimed that standardized techniques undermine student development and learning in general and the type of learning facilitated by PBE in particular.

Teachers' ideas about pedagogy are, of course, shaped by their own experiences and relationships. The research participants all mentioned places with which and people with whom they developed relationships while growing up. These experiences had affected them in various ways, including their view of place. They had also contributed to their understanding of the permanent impact place-based experiences can have on students, especially in terms of relationship building with people and places.

As discussed in Chapter Six, the views that teachers hold as a result of these influences can lead to issues of teacher cultural capital or biases, which then colour the learning opportunities they offer their students and how they offer them. However, the more student-centred approaches to learning that PBE affords can diminish these biases as well as teachers engaging with the praxis of critical pedagogy of place.

The experiences that shape teachers' perceptions also influence the types of teaching methods they are aware of and are comfortable using. All of the participants were comfortable using teaching methods that align with the tenets of PBE. Methods focused on collaborative project-based learning and inquiry-based learning were favoured because of their perceived suitability for in-depth learning and relationship building characteristic of PBE. As some of the participants said, these shared learning experiences facilitate *authentic* learning.

Shared experiences and authentic learning

The research participants all provided evidence of bringing PBE principles into their teaching even within specific academic subjects. This approach typically involved providing students with experiential learning opportunities, especially those which allowed students to engage with their senses. Experiential learning focuses on experiences that bring meaning to places, which links back to transforming spaces into places. It is not surprising, then, that the participating teachers favoured this type of learning. It was, in fact, one of the main learning methods they used.

Because authentic learning is acutely linked to engaging the senses, the learning stimuli within a students' learning environment are vitally important. Semper (n.d.) believed learning is thought to be a process of the mind, much of what actually occurs during the learning

process is based on the features of the learner's environment. He carried on and said that the "variety of stimuli, the social aspect of the setting, the spatial context, and even the amount of ambient light and sound affect the learning experience" (n.p.). The research participants demonstrated an understanding of these requirements in their views on how learning environments (the classroom, especially) should be set up and in their discussions of how their students reacted to authentic learning experiences.

Part Two: Currents of change

The importance and meaningfulness of place and how it can enhance the learning experience was at the heart of the research participants' praxis. This awareness had led them to resist and change aspects of the mainstream schooling system in their respective countries.

Acts of resistance and the importance of flexibility

As shown in this thesis, PBE tends to be constrained in mainstream schools conception and use of time, space, curriculum and assessment. All of the research participants, to whatever extent they were able to do so, perceived themselves to be challenging and changing these boundaries. The changes they had made in this respect can be seen as acts of resistance to the colonial and neoliberal mainstream schooling systems of New Zealand and Canada. One thought-provoking question stimulated by these efforts is why the research participants felt compelled to resist these mainstream systems and to utilize PBE and CPP principles and practice to do so.

Again, the answer seems to lie in their own life experiences. All came into teaching having had experiences that philosophically predisposed them to embrace PBE tenets. All had of course undertaken postsecondary study, including teacher training. Half had gone on to study

at Master's level and some had taken PBE classes at the graduate level. Both the University of Canterbury and the University of Saskatchewan have classes that incorporate PBE at the undergraduate level and at the graduate level. Malcolm, Don, Janet, Lisa and Mark all said that inspiration had come from academic staff teaching the praxis of PBE and CPP. It is clear that the participants' post-graduate experiences were important in terms of encouraging them and equipping them with the knowledge they needed to usefully critique and then challenge mainstream schooling precepts.

Post-secondary teacher education can also give teachers the tools they need to critique and reflect on their teaching practices. However, as Ghosh (1996) emphasizes, improving education practice can only be achieved if those who teach teachers are themselves committed to the needs of a society and the aims and objectives of an education system for that society. This research points to the importance of place-based post-secondary classes, at both undergraduate and graduate levels, for inspiring the use of PBE in both primary/elementary and high schools.

The outcomes of this research also point to flexibility as one of the most prominent attributes required for challenging mainstream schooling systems by way of PBE and CPP. Flexibility with respect to all aspects of education examined in this thesis—space, place, time, curriculum and assessment—was a strong theme in the research findings. According to the research participants, flexibility over time spent on learning tasks and other learning schedules facilitated learning outside of the classroom, because such learning must sometimes occur at times that do not align with the traditional school schedule. Flexibility with time also facilitated an ability to meet the needs of the students as their interest and energy levels change throughout the day, the week, and the seasons.

The ability to change a classroom space is another aspect of flexibility. Several of the research participants pointed out that the option to change their classroom space was an important part of being able to practise PBE-related teaching because it made a student-centred, relationship-centred place feasible. Flexibility with regard to setting up and using the space also allows for a metaphorical breaking down of classroom walls and boundaries in thinking so that learning can happen anywhere and everywhere—in the community, the outdoors, the schoolyard, historical sites, forests, beaches, and so on.

Flexibility with regard to place as a location for learning was evident amongst all of the research participants. Their interest in the learning anywhere and everywhere approach and their incorporation in their practice of the idea that “what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value” (Tuan, 1977, p. 6) challenges the traditional concept of the classroom as the primary place of learning. The participants were all able to offer examples as to how they and other teachers could endow this “value” on spaces within and beyond the classroom walls.

The research participants were also challenging traditional modes of curriculum delivery and found ways to be flexible in this regard. Educators such as Dewey (1897, 1916) and Freire (1970) have stressed the need for children to have opportunity to value their own experiences and to be able to relate them to the curriculum content on offer and what they learn from it. Provision of this opportunity does not mean scrapping the prescribed curriculum. Rather, it means regarding the curriculum, its content and how to deliver it critically (Ghosh, 1996). The research participants were doing just that by taking curriculum subjects and determining

how they could ground learning of those subjects in place. For example, all of the teachers had incorporated the community into the curricular process.

All of the participants, to lesser or greater extent, were taking a student-centred approach to the development and implementation of curriculum content. Cross-curricular theme-based learning was evident in several of the schools and programmes featured in this research, such as at Horoeke, where students had input into designing theme-based courses. Student-centred curriculum design and thematic-based learning are both tenets of PBE. Both can be found to some degree in mainstream schooling. However, the amount of student input and theme-based learning that PBE calls for is generally much greater than that found in traditional schools and so presents another challenge to the mainstream schooling system. As this study revealed, the New Zealand curriculum offers teachers and students more pedagogical flexibility in terms of curriculum course design and delivery than the Saskatchewan curriculum does. However, the research participants in the latter were still able to find ways to exercise flexible curriculum design and delivery. Inability in this regard would likely have made PBE untenable for them.

Courage to challenge

Next to flexibility, the other attribute that the participants exhibited most in order to challenge the mainstream schooling systems through PBE and CPP appeared to be courage. All of the teachers in this study pointed out the many challenges they faced when endeavouring to use PBE, but despite these, they persevered.

In order to work well, PBE relies on a school structure (i.e., its administrative, fiscal, time scheduling and the like characteristics) that can accommodate alternative ways of teaching

and learning and that also supports these differences. Some teachers were working in schools structured specifically to provide alternative ways of teaching and learning; others were teaching in programmes within mainstream schools that made allowance for these programmes. They had therefore been able to integrate many tenets of PBE into their teaching. The remaining teachers, however, had been able to integrate only a few tenets because of their schools' firm adherence to mainstream school structures.

This last group of teachers in particular required courage to keep pushing the boundaries at their schools so that they could maintain and further their PBE praxis. Lisa and Mark, both teaching within traditional school structures, stated that fiscal, time and administrative constraints limited their ability to use PBE. But even though they could only rarely take their students outdoors or away from the school, they found ways to take education "outside the classroom". These ways included inquiry-based learning focused on local places and incorporation of te reo Māori and culture into the classroom and school.

Birch, Willow, Poplar, Kahikatea, and Horoeke are all schools/programmes created specifically as alternatives to mainstream schooling. The teachers associated with these enterprises said that they or their colleagues had created them out of their desire to offer students learning opportunities different from those generally encountered in traditional schooling. The teachers considered these alternatives afforded students learning meaningful to them individually and of long-term benefit not only to them but also to the places in which they would live and work as adults.

Support from administrative staff and teaching colleagues was an obvious factor in the success of several of the schools/programmes in the study. However, even in these situations,

there were instances of teachers having to work around negative attitudes from some administrative staff, experiencing difficulty reconciling external (e.g., Ministry of Education) reporting and other requirements with the teachers' alternative teaching approaches.

Most research participants cited the challenge of constantly needing to justify their "unique" programmes and teaching methods to principals, certain other administrators, the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office (in Christchurch), and even parents and other community members. Although trying to challenge mainstream discourse, they often still had to use mainstream terminology in regard to curriculum design and delivery, student learning outcomes, and student assessment to get their points across or as part of external reporting requirements. They thus had to work within certain binaries including mainstream versus alternative or us versus them scenarios within their own schools or with ministries of education.

There were people in official capacities who did support what the teachers were trying to achieve through their PBE programmes. The superintendents in Saskatoon (Gordon Martel and Brenda Green), for example, provided funding and support to get the programmes up and running. These people have remained strong advocates for continuance of the programmes. In New Zealand, parents and community groups have had the right to start private, special character, and/or charter (as of 2015) schools. In comparison to Saskatchewan, New Zealand seems to be an easier place for parents and communities to challenge mainstream models of schooling at a foundational level.

Trust also emerged from the study findings as integral to the research participants' ability to deliver PBE. Administrators, principals, the Ministry of Education, parents and other

stakeholders needed to trust the research participants to teach outside the conventional confines of space, time, curriculum, and assessment. This trust had to extend to the students as well, especially with respect to them taking responsibility for their learning within the freedoms offered to them. Because trust is one of the most critical success factors of a relationship, it underscores the importance that collaborative relationships, relationship building and learning communities hold for PBE.

These relationships can also extend to the community, including Indigenous communities. However, as Malcolm cautioned, backlash from parents and administrators is possible if they perceive “too much” attention is being given to Indigenous or social justice issues which is an issue in itself that needs to be challenged even further. This challenge is one that any teachers can face if they move towards exercising critical pedagogy of place.

Part Three: A synthesis of decolonization and reinhabitation into a critical pedagogy of place

This thesis took the basic tenets of PBE as at its core focus and then incorporated other ideas of PBE from literature and practice. In order to critically engage with PBE, one needs to consider decolonization and reinhabitation, which are the constructs of critical pedagogy of place (CPP). In this thesis, CPP relied upon the framework developed by Gruenewald (2003), the integral components of which are decolonization and reinhabitation.

Decolonization

Decolonization is a personal journey of conscientization (Freire, 1970). And because it is so personal, each person will perceive decolonization differently from another person because of viewing it through the lenses of their own life experiences. This does not imply that all

perceptions are equitable, and therefore, caution must be taken not to revert back to colonization/neocolonization. Several of the research participants were aware of the need to constantly reflect on their own decolonization in order to grow as individuals but also in order to teach in ways sympathetic to PBE and to be able to incorporate acts of reinhabitation. Some of the research participants were working within the process of decolonization in ways that reminded me again of the work of Smith and Katz (1993). They proposed decolonization as a metaphor by recognizing and dislodging dominant assumptions and ideas. Other participants worked in ways that led me to recall hooks (1992) definition of decolonization as an “act of confrontation with a dominant system of thought” (p. 1). These definitions and the practices of the research participant’s could be critiqued by some as they are not primarily dealing with issues of Indigenous sovereignty or repatriation of land. On the other hand, these teachers’s were grappling with issues of decolonization both personally as well as in their schools which it would seem is much more than other teachers within their schools. Some of the research participants were also engaging with reinhabitation as discussed below.

Signs of reinhabitation

The research participants at both Birch and Poplar said that integrating PBE into school programmes can provide students with significant opportunity to gain awareness of social justice issues. Due to the strong influence of North American place-based literature, place-based pedagogies seem to be more prevalent in Canada than in New Zealand, and the research participants in Saskatoon were more familiar with CPP than were their Christchurch colleagues.

The Birch and Poplar programmes gave examples of how they had incorporated social justice issues and the histories of Indigenous people into their teaching. Indigenous history and culture are so intricately tied to place in both Saskatoon and Christchurch that it is only natural for PBE to trend towards a deep connection with place-based matters. It would also seem natural that the Treaties of both countries could become a meeting place for engaging teachers and students to local spaces and places as outlined next.

Culturally responsive practices and treaties as meeting places

Both Treaty 6 and the Treaty of Waitangi also share different meanings for the different people both Indigenous and non-Indigenous that inhabit the land together. Both treaties can become a meeting ground for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to come together and stay within the concentricity of decolonization and reinhabitation rather than entering the cycle of attitudes and behaviours that characterize neocolonization. The Indigenous and non-Indigenous meanings ascribed to place through the treaties can be expressed in Park's (1996, p. 323) reference to "the two cosmologies—the two landscapes—Pākehā–Māori" that exist in New Zealand. The notions of dual or multiple cosmologies and landscapes applies equally well to Canada and can be found through Richardson's (2004) conceptions of third space as well Lowan's, (2014) description of ecological Métissage. There is still much work that needs to be done in both research and practice if teachers are going to start working within "two cosmologies", "third space" or "ecological Métissage" but if they do, PBE, CPP and the Treaties are a window into exploring those constructs.

Future research considerations

Although I discussed Land-based education in the literature review and its critique of critical pedagogy of place and place-based education, I did not address it in this thesis because only

one research participant mentioned its use within their programme and Land-based education as defined in the literature review as well as below did not align with any of the examples offered by the research participants. Land-based education presents Indigenous perspectives as paramount (see La Paperson, 2014). In their article entitled *Decolonization is not a metaphor*, Tuck and Yang (2012) articulated the strength of a Land-based approach:

We don't intend to discourage those who have dedicated careers and lives to teaching themselves and others to be critically conscious of racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, xenophobia, and settler colonialism. We are asking them/you to consider how the pursuit of critical consciousness, the pursuit of social justice through a critical enlightenment, can also be settler moves to innocence-diversions, distractions, which relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility, and conceal the need to give up land or power or privilege (p. 21).

Tuck and Yang's (2012) claim that decolonization is not a metaphor encompassing many types of social injustices is founded. However, it is an interpretation that is only beginning to be considered in the literature and therefore requires much elaboration, especially with respect to its utility for Indigenous sovereignty and repatriation of land. The theories in this area of research are constantly changing and evolving and will only make PBE and CPP stronger. The use of decolonization as a very specific notion within Land-based education may continue to evolve from, or in parallel with, the workings of CPP. The latter does not need to be a counterpart to Land-based education. Instead, it could form part of its framework. As Land-based education becomes more deeply defined, a space for PBE and CPP within its framework can and should be explored further.

Another area for future research would be looking at PBE and CPP from the perspectives of the students as I was unable to find any literature in this area. It would be interesting to then reflect with the teachers and see if their experiences and journeys within PBE and CPP would align.

Closing remark

The research participants have demonstrated that they have challenged and resisted mainstream conceptions of time, space, place, curriculum and assessment in their respective schooling system through the use of the tenets of place-based education. Although some may consider their resistance limited it needs to be commended as the majority of these teachers are working within in very traditional schools and have the courage to not only be critical of the systems in place but have enacted change. Some of the participants have engaged with Gruenewald's concepts of decolonization and reinhabitation. Their ambition and courage to do this has stemmed, in part, from their own learning and life experiences, which have stimulated their desire to make change. I believe all of the teachers would agree with Battiste (2013) who so eloquently stated:

To understand education, one must love it or care deeply about learning, and accept it as a legitimate process for growth and change. To accept education as it is, however, is to betray it. You have to have enough love of learning to have the courage to remake it, imagine it, and teach it (p. 190).

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire - Christchurch Educators

Q1 Personal Profile

Q2 Please fill in the following information

First Name
Last Name
E-mail address

Q3 Gender

- Female
- Male

Q4 Ethnicity

Q5 Is English your first language?

- Yes
- No

Q6 Do you speak any other languages?

- Yes
- No

Q7 If yes, which languages?

Q8 Do you self identify with the following group as defined by the New Zealand government?

- Māori

Q9 Which one best describes your position in your school or program?

- Teacher
- Principal
- Teacher Aide
- Program Leader
- Other
- Deputy Principal
- Syndicate Leader

Q10 What is your title?

Q11 How long have you been working in the field of education?

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21 or more years

Q12 How many years have you been at your current school or program?

- 0-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21 or more years

Q13 What is the highest level of education you have completed or are completing?

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Vocational or Poly/Technical School
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctoral Degree

Q14 Current grade level taught or working with:

- Elementary Grade/Year 1-6
- Middle Years Grade/Year 7-9
- High school Grade/Year 10-13

Q15 Program Information

Q16 What is the philosophy of your program/classroom?

Q17 How often were your classes held away from the school or program? (Including indoor and outdoor locations)

_____ Education outside the school or program

Q18 Are you supported in your teaching by the following?

	Very supported	Some what supported	Not very supported	Not supported at all	Not Applicable
Principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deputy Principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher Aides	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Secretaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Janitors/Custodians	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students'	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family and Friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Syndicate Leader	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q19 Has anyone else supported you and your program/classroom? (Corporations, Philanthropic organizations, Business sector, NGO's etc.)

Q20 Would you consider your program/classroom to be an alternative to mainstream schooling?

- Yes
- No

Q21 Define what the term “alternative education” means to you.

Q22 Is there a difference between education and schooling? If so, what?

Q23 Personal Position in regards to Teaching

Q24 What is your personal philosophy of teaching?

Q25 Which academic theorists have influenced your teaching practices the most?

Q26 Who else has influenced your teaching and how have they influenced your teaching?

Q27 What traits/pedagogy's did your teachers have when you were in school that you have adapted in your teaching today?

Q28 Did your teachers in elementary school use the local flora and fauna in their teaching? If so, please give examples.

Q29 What places are important to you in your life? Why are they important?

Q30 Who has been most influential in your life in teaching you about place(s)? Which places did they teach you about?

Q31 What does place-based education mean to you?

Q32 How important are the following in your teaching?

	Very important	Some what important	Not very important	Not important at all	Don't use
Community Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Problem-based Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bi-cultural Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ecological Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adventure-based Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Treaty of Waitangi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experiential Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Place-based	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Education					
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q33 Māori Education

Q34 Please give examples of approaches you have adopted to be culturally responsive in your teaching.

Q35 How do you strive to meet the physical/emotional/academic/cultural needs of your Māori students?

Q36 How do you integrate the Treaty of Waitangi into your class or program?

Appendix 2: Questionnaire - Saskatoon Educators

Q1 Personal Profile

Q2 Please fill in the following information

First Name

Last Name

E-mail address

Q3 Gender

Female

Male

Q4 Ethnicity

Q5 Is English your first language?

Yes

No

Q6 Do you speak any other languages?

Yes

No

Q7 If yes, which languages?

Q8 Do you self identify with any of the following Aboriginal groups as defined by the Canadian government?

- First Nations
- Métis
- Inuit

Q9 Which one best describes your position in your school or program?

- Teacher
- Principal
- Teacher Associate
- Program Leader
- Other

Q10 What is your title?

Q11 How long have you been working in the field of education?

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21 or more years

Q12 How many years have you been at your current school or program?

- 0-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21 or more years

Q13 What is the highest level of education you have completed or are completing?

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Vocational or Technical School
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctoral Degree

Q14 Current grade level taught or working with:

- Elementary Grade/Year 1-6
- Middle Years Grade/Year 7-9
- High school Grade/Year 10-13

Q15 Program Information

Q16 What is the philosophy of your program/classroom?

Q17 How often were your classes held away from the school or program? (Including indoor and outdoor locations)

_____ Education outside the school or program

Q18 Are you supported in your teaching by the following?

	Very supported	Some what supported	Not very supported	Not supported at all	Not Applicable
Principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vice Principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher Associates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Secretaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Janitors/Custodians	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students'	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family and Friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q19 Has anyone else supported you and your program/classroom? (Tribal corporations, Philanthropic organizations, Business sector, NGO's etc.)

Q20 Would you consider your program/classroom to be an alternative to mainstream schooling?

- Yes
- No

Q21 Define what the term “alternative education” means to you.

Q22 Is there a difference between education and schooling? If so, what?

Q23 Personal Position in regards to Teaching

Q24 What is your personal philosophy of teaching?

Q25 Which academic theorists have influenced your teaching practices the most?

Q26 Who else has influenced your teaching and how have they influenced your teaching?

Q27 What traits/pedagogy's did your teachers have when you were in school that you have adapted in your teaching today?

Q28 Did your teachers in elementary school use the local flora and fauna in their teaching? If so, please give examples.

Q29 What places are important to you in your life? Why are they important?

Q30 Who has been most influential in your life in teaching you about place(s)? Which places did they teach you about?

Q31 What does place-based education mean to you?

Q32 How important are the following in your teaching?

	Very important	Some what important	Not very important	Not important at all	Don't use
Community Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Problem-based Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Multicultural Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ecological Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adventure-based Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Métis Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experiential Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Place-based	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Education					
First Nations					
Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q33 First Nations and Métis Education

Q34 Please give examples of approaches you have adopted to be culturally responsive in your teaching.

Q35 How do you strive to meet the physical/emotional/academic/cultural needs of your Aboriginal students? (including First Nations and Métis)?

Q36 How do you integrate Treaty education into your class or program?

Appendix 3: Interview Questions

Opening Introductory Statement: Read aloud just prior to the commencement of each interview

This interview with (*State name of interviewee*), Teacher/Administrator of (*School details*), was conducted at (venue) on (*date*). This interview has been recorded by Brad Harasymchuk using a (*State technology: e.g. brand and model of recorder and microphones*). The interview has commenced at (*state time interview commenced*).

Closing statement: read at the conclusion of the interview:

This interview with (*state interviewees name*), was recorded by Brad Harasymchuk on (*state date*) at (*state venue*), and **concluded** at (*state time interview ends*).

Ideas/Areas for Discussion

Early Years

1. Did you enjoy the outdoors when you were young?
2. What activities did you partake in outdoor settings?
3. Who did you spend time with when outdoors?
4. Did you have an adult that introduced you to the outdoors?

University/College

1. Why did you decide to become a teacher?
2. What's one thing you learned from University/College that helped in your teaching?

3. Looking back at University/College what didn't they teach you that would have helped in your teaching?

Previous Teaching Experience

1. Where have you preciously taught?
2. What ages? Genders? Ethnicities?
3. Did you use the outdoors (settings away from the school) during all your teaching years? If not when and why did it start?

Schooling

1. When you were going to primary/elementary/high school did you recognize any problems with the mainstream schooling systems that you attended?
2. Do you see any problems with the school system today?
3. If you could change anything about the school system today what would it be?
4. What's working well in the school system?

Program Design

1. Why did you design your program?
2. Why did you leave the 'mainstream' classroom to pursue an alternative program?
3. How long did it take from inception of the program to the first class?
4. Who was supportive in the development of the program?
5. Who was critical in the development of the program?
6. Why were they critical of the program?
7. Is anyone still critical of the program? Why?
8. What type of student was the program designed for?

9. What are your current demographics of your program? Male/female, academic achievement, ethnicity etc.
10. Is there any demographic that is missing from the program?
11. Do you believe there are students that would not benefit from your program? If so, who would they be?
12. How have you incorporated social justice into your program?
13. How do use outdoor education/ecological education with your students?
14. What do students learn from using the outdoors?

School

1. What's different about your program and the school?
2. How do you integrate the program into the school and vice versa?

Place

1. What places were important to you when you were young?
2. Do you see value in using different place(s) with your students?
3. What experiences in your life promoted using place(s) in your teaching?
4. How do you use the local in your teaching?
5. How do you use the surrounding regions in your teaching? Bio-regional approach?

Geographic/Cultural?

Assessment/Evaluation

1. What kind of assessment/evaluation do you use with your students?

Formal/informal?

2. What is success for your students?
3. Do you have an example of a successful student?
4. Do you believe your principal see's success for your students the same way as you?

Change in Place, Space, Curriculum, Teaching Methods,

1. How have you changed space from a mainstream classroom?
2. How have you changed time from a mainstream classroom?
3. How have integrated the use of "places" into your teaching?
4. What teaching methods do you use with your students?
5. How do you integrate the curriculum into your teaching?
6. What are the reasons that you have changed place/space/time etc?

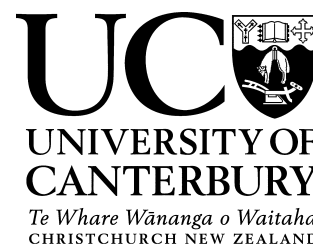
Culturally Responsive to Māori/First Nations/Métis

1. Do you specifically identify your Māori/First Nations/Métis students? If so, how?
2. What does culturally responsive mean to you in your teaching?
3. Have you been able to decolonize your teaching/classroom? How have you been able to? Any examples?

Other

1. Do you believe you provide resistance to the neo-colonizing processes of your school system? If so, how?

Appendix 4: Information Sheet for Research Participants



Using Place-Based Education

Information Sheet for Teachers/Administrators

I am a PhD student and researcher at the College of Education, University of Canterbury in New Zealand. I have worked for six years as a teacher/program facilitator at the Opening Doors Program in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. While working at the program I completed a Masters degree studying the use of ecological education with “at-risk” youth.

I am currently interested in teachers/administrators in Saskatoon, Canada and Christchurch, New Zealand that are using ideas of place-based education with their students. This may include using methods of education outside the classroom, experiential education, ecological education, bi-cultural education, outdoor education, community education and any other teaching practices that promote place-based education. I would like to invite you to participate in my present study. If you agree to take part you may be asked to do the following:

- Complete a short online questionnaire about your current teaching practices. This will take approximately 45 minutes.
- The researcher will observe the teaching space but will not be observing the students.
- Take part in a formal interview with the researcher. This will take approximately 60 minutes.

The results of this research may be used to further the discourse in the area of place-based education in the publication of journal articles, book sections and conference proceedings. I will also be looking to collaborate with any agencies that may be interested in my research including schools, community organizations, local iwi/First Nations/Métis groups and teachers. All participants will receive an electronic copy of the research upon completion of the study.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you withdraw, I will do my best to remove any information relating to you, provided this is practically achievable.

I will take particular care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. I will also take care to ensure your name remains anonymous in publications of the findings. All raw data will be held securely and kept for a minimum period of 5 years following completion of the project and then destroyed.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact me (details below). If you have a complaint about the study, you may contact the Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you agree to participate in this study, please contact me at:

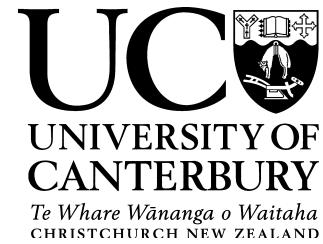
Email

Phone:

I am looking forward to working with you and thank you in advance for your contributions.

Brad Harasymchuk

Appendix 5: Consent form for Research Participants



Using Place-Based Education

Consent Form for Teachers/Administrators

I have been given a full explanation of this project and have been given an opportunity to ask questions.

I understand what will be required of me if I agree to take part in this project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

I understand that any published or reported results will not identify me by name.

I understand that all raw data will be held securely and kept for a minimum period of 5 years following completion of the project and then destroyed.

I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of this study. I have provided my email details below for this.

I understand that if I require further information I can contact the researcher, Brad Harasymchuk. If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of

Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee by email at human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz.

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Email address: _____

Brad Harasymchuk