

Talanoa:  
A contribution to the teaching and learning of  
Tongan primary school children in  
New Zealand

By

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## Abstract

Tongan migrants migrated to New Zealand with specific purposes in mind. One purpose is for Tongan children to gain the benefits of good education that New Zealand has to offer. However, there is a growing concern for Tongan parents and New Zealand teachers and schools about the quality and impact of education Tongan children receive. The study is titled, “*Talanoa: A contribution to the teaching and learning of Tongan Primary School children in New Zealand*” centres on Tongan parents who are recent migrants from Tonga and have primary school children. The research focuses on alternative approach in teaching and learning pedagogies of Tongan children in New Zealand. The research approach is drawn from Tongan language and cultural practices called *talanoa*, a communal act of social, political and critical dialogue for a purpose. The methodology is qualitative in design, drawing extensively from Tongan language and culture to research the *koloa* (values) of *talanoa* that Tongan parents practise at home. The method of data collection employed is *talanoa* (critical dialogue) conducted in groups with Tongan parents to capture their perceptions, views and experiences of *talanoa* in their various homes. In examining this unique context, data is analysed using the Tongan concept *koloa*. The values of *talanoa* when explored from the participant’s perspective are more clearly understood.

The findings of the study indicate that Tongan migrants’ home practice of *talanoa* offers a teaching and learning pedagogy which is valued as a best approach in teaching their children. The findings further indicate that *talanoa* can be extended beyond the homes and into many classroom environments.

## **Attestation of Authorship**

“I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.”

Makelesi Latu:\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

# Acknowledgement

Without the support of many people the thesis would never have been completed. For me, the thesis represents not only a significant part of my study, but also a milestone in my life. I would like to mark the occasion by expressing my gratitude first and foremost to my Heavenly Father for His blessings of the knowledge and strength.

To my family members, my husband Filimone Latu who has encouraged me to press on for almost five years and my children Timona, Tita, Ati, Mo'unga and Silia Latu who are my compatriots in the field of study. I also thank the extended family and caring and loving friends who have helped me in many ways. *Mālō 'auptio* for all your support and understanding during my years of study.

A supervisor is responsible for leading students through the challenges to final achievement. I am fortunate and greatly blessed to have two excellent supervisors. I would like to thank Dr. Linitā Manu'atu and Mary Russo for the important role they made in the development of the thesis. Their invaluable support and encouragement guided me through the challenges of carrying out the research and writing the thesis. I appreciate their patience in walking me through the process and their sincerity which meant never accepting less than my best efforts.

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While the authorship of the thesis may belong to the writer, its success belongs to those mentioned above who have contributed so much to the process. It goes without saying that any imperfections that remain are my own responsibility.

*Mālō ‘Aupito*

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# Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview of the Study

*Above all, we need to continue the process of reclaiming indigenous discourses by placing greater emphasis on our cultures and vernacular languages in our curriculum planning, teacher education and research activities. We need to continue to analyse indigenous structures, processes and emphases, and to find out about assumptions that underlie teaching and learning in our traditional societies. In this way we may finally succeed in bringing about the kind of synthesis of the best of our cultures...for the sake of learners in the twenty-first century. If we delay or fail in our task, we will continue to witness the erosion and/or disappearance of our cultures and languages as well as the type of education (ako) that provided the link between the two (K. H. Thaman, 1995, p. 10)*

## **Introduction**

In this chapter, I offer a story of how the Tongan migrants came to be the core of the study. The chapter introduces Tongan migration and the reasons for their migration. Following the aim of the study, the title and the research questions are discussed. The chapter ends with the assumptions and the significance of the study, followed by the overview of the study.

### ***A story of our many stories.***

Coxon and Mara (2000) stated that the quality and well organised nature of formal education in Aotearoa New Zealand persuaded people to migrate to New Zealand from the Pacific Islands including the Island Kingdom of Tonga. From a Tongan perspective, the quality education includes qualified teachers, that is, most teachers are registered. There are varieties of institutions with a wide field of career subjects allowing students to choose according to their interests. The well equipped classrooms and available facilities in schools enable and support both students and teachers in their roles in education. The availability of literature with many outstanding and brilliant ideas of great thinkers and writers upgrade the knowledge of migrants. Those are the characteristics of quality education that Tongan people assume to have in New Zealand. Tongans who are migrating to New Zealand are experienced travellers. Tongan people, long ago, travelled within the islands in Tonga and even travelled abroad. The reason for travelling was mainly to seek the best for their families. The 'best' refers to the

benefits of a country. For example, gaining the best education is one of the benefits in this country. I travelled from my home island (Mo'unga'one) to Pangai to attend intermediate schools, then, to Tongatapu to attend high schools. I also travelled to Fiji to attend the university. Now, I am in Aotearoa to reside and to access the education opportunities therein. I wanted my family to experience the high quality education that has encouraged many Tongans to emigrate New Zealand. Tongan people come to enjoy the benefits this country has to offer and they often call New Zealand "the land of milk and honey", a land where Tongan people find the best for their families. The high qualities of achievement in the field of education in Aotearoa (Coxon & Mara, 2000) are discussed and spread around Tonga which encourages the Tongan people to migrate.

### **People, language and culture**

Tongan people, language and culture are inseparable. They are inseparable because language and culture are part of the Tongan people's identity. Tongan language and culture, values and beliefs are part of the Tongan emigrants' cultural background. In other words, the beliefs, values, language and culture of Tongan people were not left behind in Tonga, but carried along as Tongans migrated to Aotearoa. Tongan people have lived and practised those beliefs and values most of their lives and these practices have become a part of the person.

Tongan people relate the values, beliefs and culture through storying. There are different kinds of stories<sup>1</sup>. The stories are told from generation to generation.

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<sup>1</sup> The stories are political, historical, geographical, educational, cultural, personal, spiritual, social, structural, constructional, instructional and emotional and so forth. The kind of stories depend on the topic is discussed.

There are benefits of telling stories<sup>2</sup>. Through telling stories Tongan people know more of their language, beliefs, values and culture.

Tongan people's stories are broad and complex in purpose. Nevertheless, the stories contain an agenda. When Tongans approach someone to tell stories, there are ideas in mind and questions to ask and those are the agenda within the stories. As the stories are told experiences are related, issues are discussed, other ideas arise and branch out from the main stories which make the stories broad and complex.

Sometimes, telling stories takes hours because both parties are caught up with the connections made in their stories. The stories are sometimes told metaphorically which supports people who are participating in the storying to think deeply about the ideas being discussed. After a discussion more ideas beyond those suggested are discussed. If an issue is not fully discussed, then the issue is left for later discussion.

Now that Tongan people are migrating New Zealand, the traditional means of sharing knowledge with their children is found only within the Tongan migrants and Tongan immigrant communities. The knowledges of identity (knowing who a Tongan is and how a Tongan practices traditions and customs) which hold the most cherished, the most treasured values of Tongan migrants are less evident and too often seem lost to the children.

How can we dig deep into those knowledges and values from the Tongan migrants? In Tonga, there is no community library where Tongan literature is kept for Tongan people to references. The library and the literature of the Tongan people are held within their minds and their hearts. The only way to *'a'au* (to empty out) those knowledges (of

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<sup>2</sup> The benefits of story telling among Tongan people are: Tongan people's migrations are related. The daily issues and needs are addressed. The feelings are expressed. The parents' techniques of teaching their children informally at home are explored. The Tongan language, cultural values and beliefs are preserved. The relatives and extended families are connected. The day to day aspects of life are organised. The hearts of Tongans are constructed and the traditions of the culture are told. Tongan people are positioned and their lives are structured.

language, tradition, customs) is through telling stories. That is the only way to dig deeply into the knowledge and values of Tongan migrants. Through storying, the Tongan immigrant can maintain the knowledges held within Tongan language and culture. Storying can enhance the sustainment of Tongan values and beliefs and encourages Tongan ways of pedagogy by recreating teaching and learning techniques. Storying can assist Tongan people living in New Zealand to maintain the “home ways” while becoming accustomed and acclimated to the ways of New Zealand languages and customs.

### ***The aim of the study***

The review of literature indicates that Tongan language and culture are valued by Tongan children, but neither language nor culture is included in the teaching and learning in the primary schools supported by the mainstream, dominant culture of multicultural New Zealand. The exclusion of Tongan language, values and culture, as mainstream practice, prevents active retention of traditional Tongan values and identity when Tongans prefer to live in New Zealand.

Human development research repeatedly urges that while developing into an adult, maintaining connection with the ancestral background sustains security and a place in the world (K. Thaman, 1993). Parents at home are aiming to instil in their children Tongan language and culture but these can die out early and quickly after children start New Zealand government-provided primary education due to exclusion from the consideration of the educational agents. Tongan children’s teaching and learning in the classroom is known to improve and strengthen when the native language is encouraged (Tagoilelagi-Leota, McNaughton, MacDonald, & Farry, 2005). The encouragement of Tongan practices by the children is unlikely to occur if Tongan language and culture are constantly excluded in mainstream curriculum, policy and pedagogies. An inclusion of

Tongan language and culture would not replace the current pedagogies, but would add to what teachers provide in the classroom to help teach the Tongan children.

The principle focus of the study is pedagogy for use in the primary years education. *Talanoa* is suggested as a pedagogy that best explores the knowledge, strengths and merits of using the Tongan language and cultural practices in the teaching and learning of Tongan children.

In this study, *talanoa* was used as the method of research. It was grounded in meaningful sites of learning for Tongan primary school children, their homes in New Zealand. The investigation focused on how *talanoa* is used in the homes as a pedagogical approach. Although the research literature addresses many aspects of educating Tongan people in Aotearoa, very few have employed *talanoa* as its research method and *koloa* as the conceptual framework.

### ***The title of the study***

The study is titled: ***Talanoa: A contribution to the teaching and learning of Tongan Primary School children in New Zealand.***

In the study I seek the Tongan parents' *koloa* of *talanoa* as a contribution to teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children through inclusion of *talanoa* as an additional pedagogical approach. The contribution does not mean that the present pedagogies are bad or poor but in this study I argue that if non Tongan teachers knew the Tongan children's culture well, they would be able to teach in the best possible way. The *koloa* question then is, 'What are the best practices for schooling our Tongan primary school children?' and How does *talanoa* in the home contribute to better teaching and learning by Tongan primary school children? With the title of the study provided, the broad outline of the main question follows.

## ***The research question***

The overall research question is: ***‘How do talanoa practices in the Tongan homes contribute to the teaching and learning of primary school children in New Zealand?’***

The main research question is fleshed out in specific sub-questions as guides during *talanoa* (discussions):

- *Ko e hā ‘a e talanoa? (What is talanoa?)*
- *Ko hai ‘oku talanoa ‘i homou ‘apí? (Who participates in talanoa at home?)*
- *Ko e ‘api talanoa nai ‘o moutolú? Fēfē? (Do you consider your home to be a talanoa home? How?)*
- *‘Oku mahu’inga nai ‘a e talanoá ‘i ho famili? ‘Uhingá? (Does your family value talanoa? Why?)*
- *‘Oku kau fakakū e fānaú he talanoá? (When do children join in talanoa?)*
- *Ko e hā e talanoa ‘oku mālie’ia ai e fanaú? (What are the talanoa that you consider to be meaningful and interesting to the children?)*
- *‘Oku ako fēfē ‘etau fānaú he talanoá? (How do children learn from talanoa?)*
- *‘Oku tau ako ‘i fēfē ‘etau fānaú ‘aki e talanoá? (How do we teach our children through talanoa?)*
- *Ko e hā e lea ‘oku mou talanoa’aki ‘i ‘apí? ‘Uhingá? (What language do you use for talanoa at home? Why?)*

The sub-questions only guided the *Talanoa*. Two or three questions may be discussed in one story for the stories around these questions are linked. Remember that these questions are not for an interview but to guide the researcher in digging deeply into the participant’s storying.

## ***The Assumptions***

The assumptions made are based not only on my view as the researcher conducting the study but by the prevailing views in the field of education. I assume that as Tongan parents migrated they bring *talanoa* with them. *Talanoa* belongs to Tongans and they usually practise *talanoa* at home. *Talanoa* is a Tongan way of conversation although other Pacific island nations do *talanoa*. *Talanoa* is a principle source of learning for Tongans. *Talanoa*, as the habit and conduct of discourse in Tonga, is frequently witnessed and practised by children while at home. Discourse is therefore a principal means of home-teaching (Tagoilelagi-Leota et al., 2005) which suggests it would be a principle and familiar means of formally teaching children.

The parents speak in Tongan to their children at home and in communities located in New Zealand (Taumoefolau, Starks, Davies, & Bell, 2002). Therefore, having the parents speak Tongan at home to their children helps most Tongan children living in New Zealand to become bilingual (Aipolo & Holmes, 1990; Taufe'ulungaki, Benson, & Pene, 2002) and those students would benefit from familiar forms of language used in their formal education (Taufe'ulungaki, 1991). Many research studies have verified that knowledge of and proficient use of rich language forms and expression is inseparable from academic achievement no matter the language used.

Using *talanoa*, the familiar forms of expression, in school could accelerate and deepen children's adoption of new knowledge and additional languages whether in the formal school setting or at home.

Therefore the aspects of the study are:

1. *Talanoa* as a pedagogy is a Tongan practice in the home.
2. *Talanoa* is a source of knowledge from Tongan language and culture



3. *Talanoa* has a great variety of values.
4. *Talanoa* as a contribution to research literature in the field of education.

### ***The significance of the study***

The outcomes of the study may reveal to the wider community of primary education a possible educational pedagogy to assist in the teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children in New Zealand. The research may also benefit others who may be embarking on a similar study by revealing the challenges that Tongan migrants face and the strategies they use to overcome any challenges. Furthermore, the findings of the research may interest some government agencies such as the Ministry of Education as well as organisations such as Community Education and tertiary institutions.

### ***Overview of the study***

This First Chapter has introduced the rationale of the study, followed by the aim and assumption of the study, which leads to the issue to be discussed. The chapter ends with the overview of the study. The rest of the thesis is divided into six further chapters.

The Second Chapter details the context of the study and the Tongan conceptual framework of *koloa* (non-materialistic) that theorises and frames the study. The chapter also details the concept of *talanoa* drawn from Tongan language and culture which is also used as a research method.

Chapter Three offers a review of the recent research literature pertaining to the basic concepts, *talanoa* practices, underpinning my study. Subsequently, the characteristics of primary school children are outlined as defined by the literature in this area, particularly that which is written within New Zealand.

The Fourth Chapter contains a discussion of the methodology where my theoretical position of knowledge construction alongside the conceptual framework of *talanoa koloa*. The research context and the participants are then introduced. *Talanoa* groups, ethical considerations and how the data is analysed are also presented in this chapter.

A general overview of the participants' backgrounds and the development of the common themes which emerge from the data are supported by substantial extract from the *talanoa* transcripts.

The Fifth Chapter outlines the findings which are discussed more fully in the sixth chapter. The discussion covers the discovered meanings of *talanoa* and the contributions of *talanoa* to children's study such as a Tongan knowledge construction, cultural practices and educational values of *talanoa* that support learning.

In the seventh chapter, the findings are summarised. The strengths and limitations of the present study are discussed. Implications for enhancing the teaching and learning of primary school children are also given. Directions for future research are presented in the final section of the thesis.

## Chapter 2: The Study Context

### *Introduction*

In the chapter I illuminate two concepts drawn from Tongan language and culture in order to dig deeply into the knowledge of Tongan migrants in New Zealand. The concepts, *koloa* and *talanoa*, are detailed in this chapter in relate to how Tongan migrants value them in their homes.

This section addresses the status of the Tongan people which leads to the positioning of the study and the researcher. The uses of language in a culture are important to understanding the society, especially in Tonga where social status categorises people and defines their roles and responsibility within the culture.

Tonga is a highly stratified society based on a hierarchical chieftainship system under the headship of the *Tu'i Tonga* (King of Tonga). Every person belongs to a particular social class, such as *Kakai Tonga tu'a* (commoner), *Hou'eiki* (chiefs/nobles), and *Tu'i* (The king). Each class has certain *ngafa* (responsibilities) and *fatongia* (obligations) clearly defined and bound by age-old customs and traditions. Rigid rules are applied to contact with the king and the *hou'eiki*. For example, there is a special language used for addressing the *Tu'i Tonga* and the *hou'eiki*. One example of the special forms of language used is *talanoa*. *Talanoa*, which means to 'talk' and is used when discussing commoners or people. When *talanoa* is used to address the *hou'eiki*, it is *me'a* (to talk). When *talanoa* is used to address the *Tu'i Tonga*, it is *folofola* (to talk). Therefore, it is important that I, the researcher, position myself as a *fefine-Tonga-tu'a* (a Tongan woman). I use the language of the *kakai-Tonga-tu'a*. Since I am a *fefine-Tonga-tu'a* researcher, any comparison in the study of the *kakai-Tonga-tu'a* will be more from a Tongan woman's point of view.

In cultural ceremonies, the *fafine-Tonga* (Tongan women) have their own *koloa* (artefacts of great value) such as *fala* (mats), *ngatu* (tapa cloth) and *kato teu* (baskets filled with a variety of perfumes and fragrant). The women are responsible for presentation of those artefacts. This practice continues in New Zealand by the *fafine-Tonga*.

The *fafine-Tonga* have their own stories to tell and love telling them. When the *fafine-Tonga* get together they chat and tell stories with and about others without the constraint of time. There are characteristics of storying<sup>3</sup> that are usually experienced when *fafine-Tonga* meet to talk.

The following section discusses the people and land of Tonga, education in Tonga and migration of Tongan people to New Zealand. This is done as the story of a new land.

### **The people and land of Tonga**

The population of Tonga is located largely in the main five inhabited island groups: the Tongatapu group to the South, the Ha'apai group in the centre, the Vava'u group to the north, the two Niua groups which are closer to Samoa and the 'Eua group to the eastern side of the Tongatapu group. According to the 1996 census, nearly half of the citizens of Tonga lived overseas most notably in New Zealand, Australia and the United States of America (Statistics Tonga, 1996). Although Tonga consists of many small islands, they speak one dialect. Tongan language is consistent throughout Tonga except for the two

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<sup>3</sup> Those who tell stories nod their heads when agree or disagree; laugh when amused; cry when sympathising and showing joy; talk quietly to catch attention; raise the voice to stress a point made; lower their voice to tell a secret and question to clarify as the storying progresses.

islands of Niua, which are close to Samoa and seem to be influenced by the Samoan language. Tongan people who are migrating to New Zealand are from Niua, Vava'u, Ha'apai, 'Eua and Tongatapu. The stories of their migration are typical of emigrants who seek the benefits found in New Zealand.

### **Education and Tongan language**

Education has been compulsory at the primary level since 1876. The 1974 Education Act requires that every child between the ages of 6-14 to attend school. The major objective of the Ministry of Education in Tonga is the provision of a balanced program of education for the full development of children, both as individuals and as productive members of society. Churches and other private organizations play important roles complementary to the Government's role in education (Ministry of Education, 2006).

Tongan language studies are included in all levels. Therefore, more chance exists for the child to encounter and to learn more about the Tongan language and culture. Tongan language and culture is thoroughly integrated in the schools. However, English language is introduced in the Tongan schools when the child is in year three (3) of primary school and is used throughout the later school levels. The 'push for English' is thought to provide more economic opportunity which encourages the Tongan people to speak English in Tonga. For example, office employees tend to use English in the work places.

Most Tongan families in New Zealand have children of the age group (6-14) attending primary school. These children have attended total emersion pre-schools. Tongan primary school children "may result in lacking beginning concepts gained in early childhood" (Ministry of Education, 2007). I argue that the absence of Tongan language and culture from the primary schools and generally in mainstream New Zealand seems to indicate that New Zealand does not recognise the cultural values of Tonga and the

Tongan immigrants; even though Tongan culture is rich in all aspects of culture, custom and tradition including music, stories, dance, and cuisine. Despite the lack of general recognition and acknowledgement of Tongan worth to New Zealand society, most Tongan migrants maintain their culturally-base activities in their private homes hoping to continue the tradition of producing good members for this society. The study, based on ‘talk’ (*talanoa*) with Tongan migrants suggests that Tongan migrants in New Zealand have something of great value to use in the teaching and learning of their primary-aged children.

The collective nature of the Tongan people has inspired many to migrate to New Zealand. Through education, Tongan migrants often help family back home by providing monetary remittance on a regular basis. The next section examines more fully why Tongans migrate.

### **Education and Migration from Tonga**

Some people migrate to New Zealand to reunite with their families, while some migrate to work to help families back home through remittances. Among the elite classes of Tongan society, as part of the government’s educational scheme, children were sent abroad to New Zealand and Australia to be educated. Furthermore, while migration was generally restricted to members of the aristocratic class, a few of the commoners who were highly successful in academics, were also given the opportunity to travel overseas (Lee, 2003) (particularly to New Zealand and Australia) to pursue further education. Through this effort Tonga slowly developed into a society with a twentieth century economy and infrastructure, while the opportunities for further education abroad were maintained and participation depended on high academic achievement in college.

Tongans live a collective and communal life to enhance survival and prosperity. Tongan migrants help other families in New Zealand as well as their own family in Tonga,

extended families as well as immediate families are helped. Therefore, the principle purpose of migrating, for most Tongan migrants, is to find the best for their family, even if that means never returning to Tonga.

Apart from the idea of helping the family back home and establishing and reconstituting a Tongan community in Aotearoa, the most common reason for Tongan families' migration is to enable their children to gain better and even the best possible education by Tongan measure. Lee (2003, p. 52) stated that Tongans believe strongly in the importance of western formal education and those who leave Tonga take this conviction with them to their new homeland. The value of formal western defined education is seen in gaining more opportunity for well-paid work and careers.

Education and helping the family are in fact interconnected in the Tongan view. Parents help their children by migrating where they can receive a formal western-defined education. In return, the children help their family by becoming well educated and this enhances the family's status and, ultimately, its financial position. These interconnections are conveyed and strengthened among the Tongan parents and extended family (Latu, 2006).

As Tongan people migrate, they don't carry their material belongings. They bring along the language and culture. The only record of the language and culture is verbal and written in memories that are conveyed from generation to generation by way of storying. The stories of culture, captured within the words, phrases, and forms of the Tongan language, are the valued treasures (*koloa*) that the study explores and which is described more fully in Chapter Two.

Living in a new land has its own ritual and social status. The next section discusses the relationship of the Tongan migrants and the tangatawhenua (Maori of New Zealand)

and the anthropologically and historically related inhabitants of the other islands of the southern Pacific Ocean.

### ***A story of the new land***

In this section I discuss the relationships with the tangata whenua, Pakeha, the British Crown as governance, and the mainstream practices of New Zealand. Tongan migrants and their language and culture have been homogenised with the term 'Pasifika' as a result of it being outside the main stream cultural practices and languages of New Zealand. In the study I recognize the relationship among the peoples included in the term Pasifika, particularly the Tongan people, and the New Zealand cultures represented by Tangatawhenua of Aotearoa and the Crown. The design of the research acknowledges that Tongan parents and the researcher are in partnership in constructing Tongan knowledge within Aotearoa New Zealand. The partnership will contribute to how the Tongan migration works beside the Treaty partnerships between the Crown and Maori, and how that partnership includes a Pasifika people's obligation to honor the Crown governance. This study will contribute to the understanding of Treaty partnership and responsibilities within that partnership.

The purpose of the study is to explore and define how the Tongan people's voice and being might influence and be involved within the education of their children attending New Zealand publicly-financed schools in accordance with established New Zealand policy and law. The study hopes to show how Tongan participation in educational research can extend fully in the Aotearoa New Zealand governmental practice and policy especially in educational policy and practice. The study hopes to contribute to the protection and sustainment of the Tongan language and culture of those who have migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand. Just as the Treaty of Waitangi guarantees protection to *Tangata whenua* to ensure their *tinorangatiratanga* in this country, this



research aims to define a means of upholding the mana of the Tongan people in education.

The lure of Aotearoa as holders of financial capital attracts the Tongan migrant and persons of many cultures including those of other South Pacific nations. These migrants are hired to work on farms, in the factories and other industries and businesses. New Zealand has become a multi-cultural country (Mutu, 2004). These migrants not only access to the industries and businesses in New Zealand but they educate their children while they have the opportunities.

In New Zealand, the collective term 'Pasifika' is applied to peoples from the six nations of Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue, Tokelau and Fiji (Pasifika Education Research Guidelines, 2002; Statistics New Zealand, 2002). 'Pasifika' or Pacific peoples are, therefore, not a homogeneous group, even though there are ethnic similarities in the languages, cultures, and histories of the peoples from the different Pacific nations. Each grouping of people from the different southern Pacific nations have a unique language, culture, as well as a separate set of values and beliefs (Manu'atu, 2000). Only a broadly defined location, type of land feature, and a shared diversity act as the uniting factors of the collective term 'Pasifika'.

I argue that in the *fonua fo'ou* (new land), Tongan migrants are coming to realise how they have been homogenised under the term 'Pasifika' and acculturated and possibly eliminated by the prevailing mainstream language, culture and sets of values and beliefs of twenty first century New Zealand. Many Tongans confirm that they are still practising the unique treasure (*koloa*) of the Tongan language and culture and strive to hold the strong beliefs in the values of Tonga in their homes. Parents are attempting to maintain Tongan language and culture, values and beliefs and this is often by sharing

stories of traditions and cultures with their children. However, the practice of storying is difficult to maintain when the mainstream is following a different course.

## ***Koloa***

The concept *koloa* (what ones value) is drawn from Tongan language and culture. *Koloa* is significant in Tongan language and culture because *koloa* embraces values and beliefs. Expressions of *koloa* demonstrate the appreciation and admiration that Tongan people have towards what they value and treasure. For Tongans, *koloa* carries many cultural values and great importance. The Tongan constructions of *koloa* are material or tangible and non-material or intangible.

What counts as *koloa*? What do Tongan people count as *koloa*? The material or tangible *koloa* are what we are able to see and touch for example, Tongan *fala* (fine mats), *kelekele* or *fonua* (lands), *fānau* (children), *'api* (homes), *ngāue fakamea'a* (handicrafts), and *kakai* (people). Analysis of the tangible *koloa* is through contextual analysis where a person is able to make a conclusion by judging appearance.

The intangible *koloa* are the invisible qualities which we cannot see and touch but are underlying cultural values and behaviors such as *'ofa* (compassion), *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *feveitokai'aki* (reciprocity), *tauhivaha'a* (caring and maintaining interpersonal relations), and *fakama'uma'u* (restraint behavior). Analysing non-material *koloa* is through linguistic analysis where a person is able to make a conclusion through people's performances and behavior in different social contexts. In Tongan context, the values of *'ofa*, *faka'apa'apa*, *feveitokai'aki*, *tauhivaha'a* and *fakama'uma'u* are measured according to how often one is practising the values in the society.

There are many expressions of *koloa* often expressed metaphorically<sup>4</sup> in different forms and meanings. These expressions are often heard in a presentation made by *fefine Tonga tu'a* (Tongan female commoner) or a presentation of a speech in a function or ceremony.

Since *koloa* is of highly valued, *koloa* is most carefully and purposefully safeguarded. The following expressions of *koloa* describe how the Tongan people come to value what they value.

### ***Mata'i koloa.***

*Mata* is the face. Our *mata* is regarded as the chief part of the body. Our face is a physical constitution of our identity (Manu'atu, 2000). We are identified by our faces. For example, *ko e mata 'atā pē'ene fa'é* (She is the resemblance of her mother). *Ko e me'a ia 'oku 'ilo ai ho matá* (That is how your face is identified). *Mata'i koloa* is specially used to refer to the best of a number of valuable *koloa*, for example, *ko e mata 'enau koloá 'a e kie 'a e fefiné* (the best of their *koloa* is the woman's *kie* (a fine single woven white mat)). *Mata* also refers to the appearance or face of the *koloa* as in *fala*. For instance, *Ko e fala mata faka'ofa'ofa* (It is a beautiful woven *fala*). The *mata* of the *fala* is smoothly woven and displays exceptional design. When the suffix 'i is added as in *mata'i* it means to 'the eye-of', or point-of focus, purpose of. As of *mata'i koloa*, it is defined as foremost in one's estimation. *Mata'i koloa* is the "eye-of" *koloa* that a person's regard as the foremost in his/her estimation. Metaphorically *mata'i koloa* refers to children. The children are the "eye-of" the parents. Parents take exceedingly good care of their children as they do of their eyes. Parents realise they are raising *mata'i koloa* so will find or secure the best way of raising and safeguarding their child.

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<sup>4</sup> The expressions of *koloa*: '*Mālō/Fakafeta'i e ma'u koloa*' (One gratefully appreciates the '*teu*' (the finest *fala* (mats), *ngatu* (tapa) received or presented). '*Koe koloa 'etau mo'ui*' (Our lives are *koloa*. Having breath from day to day is *koloa*). '*Koe koloa 'o hoku manavá*' (The children are the *koloa* of my womb). *Koloa pē ho'o lava maí* (Your presence/being here is appreciated). *Koloa 'a Tonga ko e fakamālō* (Tongans have little to say but to be grateful). *Kuo tō hotau koloa* (We have been enriched).

### ***Koloa fungani.***

*Koloa fungani* is similar to the word *mata'ikoloa*. *Fungani* is a noun meaning something is better than all the others, that is, the best of all. It is equivalent to the top row of flowers on an ornamental girdle as in the *Kakala* (K. H. Thaman, 1988). *Fungani* also refers to especially tasty dessert eaten last to finely finish a meal. When *fungani* follows *koloa*, it is an adjective. Again *fungani* is the *mata* of *koloa* for it is the pinnacle of all that is being discussed or considered.

### ***Tauhi koloa.***

*Tauhi koloa* means to tend, look after, take care of, to keep or adhere, to preserve, to keep inviolate, and to maintain. Combining *tauhi* and *koloa*, as *tauhi koloa* refers to a person that is the tender, keeper, carer, adherer and preserver of *koloa*. *Tauhi koloa* confirms the responsibility upon an individual. The parents are the *tauhi koloa* (keepers of children). They have the responsibility to *tauhi mata'ikoloa* (look after children) at home at all times until the child is fully grown.

### ***Fakakoloa.***

Prefixes, suffixes, adjectives and adverbs vary the meaning of *koloa* when they are added. The main source of translation used here is by C. Maxwell Churchward (1959) author of the Tongan Dictionary. The causative prefix '*faka-*' means causing something to happen. *Fakakoloa* is a verb meaning to enrich. From a Tongan cultural view point, *fakakoloa* shows that people are enriched from presentation of a *koloa*. For instance, the messages given by the speakers stimulate and convince the minds and hearts of the listeners by connecting ideas from the message with daily experiences. The audience are *fakakoloa* when they make connections with and learn from the message. The people who are present in the presentation feel and count the message delivered as their own *fakakoloa*, because they have made the connection between the message delivered and

their daily experience. Coming to know and making a connection is *fakakoloa*. In return, the audiences usually express *ko hotau 'aho fakakoloa eni* (this is our enriching day). That is, the message applies directly to their daily practices.

### ***Koloa'ia.***

When the suffix *-'ia* is added to the term *koloa*, as in *koloa'ia*, it is an adjective meaning wealthy, rich, abounding in goods or treasure. *Koloa'ia* is similar in meaning to the word *ma'u koloa* (rich, wealthy). For example, *Kuo mau koloa'ia* (We have been enriched). A person is *koloa'ia* or *ma'ukoloa* as he/she feels that he/she is filled with or full of resources as the *koloa* being given is received. The message received has somehow changed (e.g. enlightened, encouraged, enriched, uplifted) the feelings of the audience and prompts the expression of their appreciation. The feeling of *koloa'ia* (abounding in goods) is experienced.

### ***Koloa'aki.***

The word *koloa'aki* is a transitive verb meaning to regard something as wealth or treasure. *Koloa'aki* indicates that a person's *loto* (heart) is set on *koloa*. It reveals the connection of *loto* and *koloa*. There is a Tongan saying: *Ko e feitu'u 'oku 'i ai ho'o koloaá, 'e 'i ai foki ho lotoo* (where your treasure lies so lies your heart). *Koloa'aki* or *loto'aki* unmasks a person's unwillingness to give away his/her *koloa*. *Koloa'aki* shows the values of *koloa*. If something is of high value to a person, it is well kept, there is hesitation in lending and reparation is required should the item be damaged. The *koloa* is valued. Tongan people cannot contribute with nothing. They contribute with *koloa*.

### ***Talanoa***

*Talanoa* is commonly practised by those who live in the Pacific Islands (Capell, 1991) and specifically on Tonga for the discussion in this study. *Talanoa* is the medium of knowing, the source of knowing, and the ways of knowing among Tongan people. In

other words, *Talanoa* is the knowing theory in which people know about things from enacting *talanoa*.

*Talanoa* stems from cultures in which oratory and verbal negotiation have deep traditional roots (Vaiioleti, 2003). The concept of *talanoa*, for Tongans, is the same as it is for Samoans, Fijians and other nations situated in the Pacific Ocean, although some may have local variations. *Talanoa* is a naturally arising practice for most Pacific peoples. The idea of *talanoa* stemming from their culture asserted that *talanoa* draws upon the nuances of the culture. *Talanoa* is a Tongan cultural relationship expressed in words, senses and body language (Manu'atu, 2000, 2004; Manu'atu & Kepa, 2006).

When a suffix, a prefix and a word is added to the word *talanoa*, then the meaning is altered. *Pō talanoa* is a process where Tongan people create, exchange, resolve and share their relationships through talking, when they tell stories and relate experiences in their favourite time and space. *Fakatalanoa* is causing someone to *talanoa* and encouraging others to *talanoa*. *Talatalanoa* is to talk endlessly. *Fokotu'u talanoa* is to suggest and propose ideas to *talanoa* about. These terms will be further discussed later in the thesis.

In Tongan culture, *talanoa* has proven to be an efficient and accurate way to reach and search the *loto* (hearts) of Tongan migrants. The *loto* of Tongans is where the intangible *koloa* is placed and kept. Through *talanoa* (storying) the *koloa* in the *loto* of Tongan migrants are revealed in their stories. The stories are wrapped, hampered and sometimes concealed, but the values of the stories are revealed by storying. The valuable ideas of storying are wrapped as well as the Tongan people tell their stories. Through *talanoa* (discussions and storying) a person is able to “pour out” (*lilingi, hua'i*) the *koloa* of knowledge that are hidden in the hearts and minds of Tongan migrants. *Koloa* then

provides the lens for doing the fine-grained analytical and interpretive work that result from *talanoa*.

### ***Talanoa as Koloa***

Thaman (1988) explains the western system of thinking is supported through reading and learning from written texts. Teaching and learning are based on written literature that guides both the teacher and the learner. Learners must gain the capability to decode symbols and associate them with the meaning of spoken words in order to understand and learn from the written text. Concurrently, the Tongan system of supporting thinking, teaching and learning occurs through the verbal expression of *talanoa* (Halapua, 2005). The methods and contents of verbal expression of *talanoa* are advantageous because the ideas are prearranged and structured before putting them into writing. Combining *talanoa* and *koloa* suggest a specific question: Why is *talanoa* a *koloa*? The following possible responses to the question outline the aspects of the study.

*Talanoa* is *koloa* because:

1. The parents' ideas are made known. The thoughts and ideas of parents are revealed simply and easily through common dialogue and declaration.
2. The Tongan traditions and values are valued. The traditions and heritage are given the status of a place and time to be valued. The genealogy is told from generation to generation.
3. The hearts of Tongan people are constructed to value the concepts like love, respect, maintaining the relationship, showing consideration, responsibility, willing to do something and inward warmth that creates feelings to perform certain tasks.

4. The hearts and minds of Tongan people are educated. When the hearts and minds of Tongan people are educated they can make connections. The storying raises the conscious mind of children to make connections within the contexts of their environment.
5. *Talanoa* reveals a person's ability to talk which is sometimes referred to as '*poto he talanoá*' (know how to talk) or '*pōto 'i talanoa*' (very skillful in *talanoa*), and people are sometimes known through the way they *talanoa*. The skills of storying are identified and continuously upgraded as Tongans become more creative in mind and thinking in a metaphorical way.
6. The life of Tongan people is structured through *talanoa*. The '*ulumotu*'a (head of the family) calls a meeting sometimes called a *talanoa faka-e-lotofale* (talking within the house). The meeting is to structure or restructure the family into their positions, plan the duties of each family member, perform various responsibilities and evaluate each performance and even to contribute to a family function. The '*Ofisakolo*' (head of the village) calls a *fono* (a village meeting) to discuss rules and important matters in the village environment. The structuring of the families and village are carried out through *talanoa*.
7. The Tongan language is maintained in Tongan families in Aotearoa. Tongan language is spoken in the homes, utilised in *talanoa*, and telling stories through *hiva* (music) and *faiva* (dances).
8. Tongan values and cultures are preserved. Tongans cannot live their Tongan traditions and cultures without discussing and understanding them.
9. The family relationships and connections are made and remade through constant connection of ideas and feelings through conversation.



10. The hierarchical status of a Tongan person is made known. Through *talanoa* a Tongan becomes known as a minister, a teacher, a noble, and so forth.

Therefore, the *koloa* of *talanoa*<sup>5</sup> and what *talanoa* can do<sup>6</sup> are hidden in the hearts and minds of Tongan migrants and that can only be “poured out” through *talanoa* (storying).

Tongans migrating to New Zealand are carrying very little of their belongings known as their *koloa* (materials) when they travel. Possessions are left behind due to size and weight, and they can be reproduced or reacquired in the new land. The reproduction of material *koloa* applies to Tongan people’s *poto* (skills of doing things) and *‘ilo* (knowledge) that they carry from Tonga. The *poto* and *‘ilo* are primarily passed on from generation to generation through *talanoa* (storying).

Through storying the knowing theory<sup>7</sup> of Tongan people are passed on. The knowledge and skills are not written completely in books but written in the *loto* (hearts) and *‘atamai* (minds) of parents. Tongan parents preserve these *‘ilo* in their children through storying. The *talanoa* (stories) are the *koloa* of *‘ilo* and *poto* that are practised in the homes of Tongan migrants. Those who are unaware of the importance of *talanoa* in terms of family teaching and learning techniques could possibly view these contributions as merely stories to entertain or pass the time. Having established the *koloa* of *talanoa*, it is used as the conceptual framework for the rest of the study. The next section elaborates *koloa* as the conceptual framework.

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<sup>5</sup> *Koloa* of *talanoa* is what *talanoa* brings about. That is, *Talanoa* connects relations, relates new ideas, raises consciousness, organises responsibilities, sustains relationships, evaluates tasks, deconstructs ideas, reflects histories, preserves traditional language and culture, and maintains peace and friendship.

<sup>6</sup> *Talanoa* (storying) enables a person to visit new places, revisit old places, recall important events, catch up on late news, find family connections, relate personal experiences, transfer skills and illustrate knowledge by verbal conversation in transferring knowledge.

<sup>7</sup> The intangible *koloa* of *talanoa* is passed on through *talanoa*. That is, the knowledge of reproducing and remaking Tongan artefacts, knowing the history of Tonga, knowing the genealogy of families and their connections, knowing the language and culture of Tonga, and knowing the hierarchical status of people in Tonga are powerfully related and conveyed to its people.

## ***A Conceptual Framework***

*Koloa* is a collective term that speaks of the diversity created by people. *Koloa* comprises many different aspects of Tongan language and culture. For example, as mentioned earlier, the materialistic *koloa* in the *fonua* (land) of Tonga is *Koloa*. The constituents or the components<sup>8</sup> of the *fonua* are its *koloa*. All the constituents lie within the *fonua* of Tonga and are regarded by Tongans as *koloa*. The underpinning aspect of *koloa* (ideas) will ‘unpack’ the philosophical, social, cultural underpinnings, as well as the qualities and educational values of the study. The aspects make the concept *koloa* complex and very deep in meaning.

The philosophical aspect of *koloa* is the knowing values and the quality of ideas. *Koloa* qualifies precious ideas that are valued and counted important. Knowing who we are, why and how we do what we do, are *koloa*.

Cultural aspects of *koloa* are the aspirations of Tongan migrants to the greatness and opportunities (Coxon & Mara, 2000) that this country has to provide. The hearts and minds of Tongan migrants are to be connected in order to aim for the best. When the hearts and minds of Tongan migrants are connected the aspirations are easily reached and achieved.

The spiritual aspects of *koloa* are the great feelings and strengthening of the soul and heart of Tongans from an inspired story or from a delivered talk in a congregational meeting. Feelings from listening to an inspirational talk or story touch the hearts and mind and make connections. The connections are shown by the laughter, nodding heads, tears and sometimes by walking the talk.

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<sup>8</sup> The constituents or components of a *fonua* are the *lea mo e anga fakafonua* (language and culture), *kakai* (people), *tala tukufakaholo* (legends of the traditions), *tofi'a* (patrimony, inheritance/heritage), *fua* (raw produces), *lotu* (religion), and *ngāue fakamea'a* (handicrafts).

The educational aspects of *koloa* are the applications of *koloa* (knowledge) to Tongan migrant's lives. When Tongan people are able to apply and practise *koloa* (knowledge) in the present situation, then *koloa* is educationally valued. *Koloa* describes the aspiration of Tongan people.

There are motives<sup>9</sup> that drive Tongan people to contribute with *koloa*. These are non-material aspects of *koloa* that Tongan migrants possess. There is no other way to dig deeply into the non-material *koloa* in the *loto* (hearts) of Tongans, but to *talanoa* (tell stories). Telling stories or *talanoa* (storying) is practised by Tongan people in their homes, in school, at work, in church, and wherever Tongans convene.

In summary, the study indicates that there are Tongan people known as Tongan migrants are attempting to provide a voice to define what should occur in the teaching and learning of their children growing up in New Zealand. These Tongan migrants are staying in New Zealand as a means of acquiring the best western-style opportunities for their families. They migrate with particularly Tongan values, beliefs, language and culture that can be maintained and retained in this new land. To accomplish retention and maintenance to Tongan *koloa* (treasures) as the knowledges (factual, emotional and skill-based) of the sets of values and beliefs along with language and other cultural practices, the children must be taught not just at home, but also during the hours of school attendance. This study hopes to identify how that teaching might best be done using the Tongan culturally attended practice and pedagogy of *talanoa*.

The next chapter reviews the literature for this study. *Talanoa* as found in the field of research is further discussed.

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<sup>9</sup> Tongans contribute with *koloa* because of *'ofa* (love, kind, affection, charity); *manatu ki fa'itoka* (recalling those who are dead); *tauhi vā* (maintaining the relationship); *fiefia* (joy, glad), *fetoka'i'aki* (showing consideration), *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *fatongia* (responsibility), *loto lelei* (willing), and *loto māfana* (inwardly warm).

## **Chapter 3: Literature Review**

### ***Introduction***

As a Pasifika/Tongan researcher, I deliberately reviewed the research studies conducted by Pacific peoples. My purpose was to find those who used a Tongan conceptual framework and to locate who used a Tongan/Pasifika research method to study Tongan migrants. However, other literature is also given in support of my reasoning and case. Research conducted on the education of Tongan children in Aotearoa is described briefly, to provide an insight into the concepts of the study, particularly the Tongan cultural concept, *talanoa* and its effectiveness in the teaching and the learning of Tongan children.

*Talanoa* has been used by people of the Pacific area in their research studies (Latu, 2006; Maka, Johansson-Fua, & and Pene, 2006; Manu'atu, 2000). Out of the reviewed studies, very little study has drawn from Tongan language and culture. However, there are developing works on *talanoa* as a research methodology. There is no specific research conducted on the concept of *koloa*.

### ***Teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children***

There is a growing body of literature based on studies conducted in New Zealand on young children of diverse cultures at primary school age. These diverse cultures are the Pacific ethnic groups who have migrated to Aotearoa and continue residing there. The studies by previous researchers were mainly carried out on Tongan people/children throughout New Zealand including Wellington, Christchurch, Manukau, and South Auckland. These studies were mainly to maintain the Tongan language while shifting to English is increasingly happening in most Tongan communities; to know how to speak

the Tongan language; and to develop Tongan language literacy and skills (Aipolo & Holmes, 1990; Holmes, 1997; Holmes, Roberts, Verivaki, & 'Aipolo, 1993; Lee, 2003; Starks, 2005; Tagoilelagi-Leota et al., 2005; Taumoeofolau et al., 2002; Wong & Fillmore, 1991).

In particular, Holmes and fellow researchers suggested that more Tongan language pre-schools should be established. When more Tongan pre-schools are established, there is a greater possibility for Tongan language and culture to be taught, learned, and further encouraged in New Zealand (Holmes et al., 1993). Holmes (1997) highlighted the requirement for using the mother tongue in various domains. She writes that parents must speak Tongan to their children at home and Tongan language should be the first language spoken in a Tongan home in New Zealand in order for children to highly achieve spoken and text literacy in any language.

The study by Taumoeofolau and others highlights the need to maintain Tongan language and culture. This group of authors state that the maintenance of language and culture is the responsibility of Tongan parents, guardians, and the greater community of peers, ministers in Tongan churches, and leaders in Tongan communities in New Zealand (Taumoeofolau et al., 2002).

Another writer states, it is an advantage to have bilingual - Tongan children in the classroom. The study confirmed that children who are bilingual, well versed in their mother tongue and the universal language (English), do well academically (Tagoilelagi-Leota et al., 2005).

Several studies suggest that central values and practices from Tonga have been retained in Tongan families who migrated to Australia (Lee, 2003; Morton, 2001) and New Zealand (Schoeffel et al., 1996). However, most New Zealand resident

Tongan children prefer the New Zealand majority culture and language (English) for their principal usage and ignore the ancestral culture that they migrated with from home (Aipolo & Holmes, 1990).

Stepping away from New Zealand based studies, Fonua (2004) focused on language learning practices of adult/child interactions in home and school environments of Class 1 children in Tonga. The study adopted a qualitative approach using ethnographic methods of collecting data, making participant-observer notes, audiotaping, videotaping and interviewing. Kata (2006) in her research utilised observation by an audio-tape as a research method. Katoanga(2006); (Kautoke, Fatai, & Vivili, 2006) used *talanoa* as an informal interview on a one on one basis in their study. Another study carried out on Tongan students by Lutui and Langi (2006) using questionnaire as the method of collecting data. Questionnaire was followed by a semi-structured interview were utilised in these researches (Heimuli, 2006; Kilioni & Kupu, 2006; Veikune, 2006). Faletau (2006) employed survey followed by focus groups as methodology. Whereas, Tolu and Fa'anunu (2006) seem to doubt the methodology of *talanoa* that it would not gather authentic and trustworthy data and therefore, used other methodologies like observations, questionnaire and document analysis in their study. According to Maka et al., (2006), most of the approaches adopted by teachers are not cultural ways of transmitting knowledge and can be seen as processes of expediency rather than the best approach to teaching skills and knowledge. Therefore, *talanoa* is the cultural ways of acquiring information and ideas from people we come to contact with.

Manu'atu (2000) focused her study on the secondary school children however, *pō talanoa* was used as her research method. Manu'atu argued that *talanoa* has a purpose, significance, a consequence or an output. It is a contextualised and purposeful activity. *Talanoa* is defined as a construction, reconstruction and a

deconstruction of Tongan social 'realities' (page 56). Latu (2006) studied Tongan adults but an English version of *talanoa* (conversation) was employed.

There is no study to date that employ the Tongan concept of *koloa* as a conceptual framework for their studies or *talanoa* as a research method.

Use of *talanoa* is supported by the following authors. Holmes suggested developing the skills of using the mother tongue and parents speaking Tongan at home to their children (Holmes, 1997). Aipolo & Holmes (1990) assert that having a more positive attitude toward Tongan language and cultural practice may maintain the Tongan language and culture. Tagoilelagi-Leota et al., (2005) suggests that being 'bilingual' is an advantage in the classroom. Adults and children's interactions in the home can practise language learning (Fonua, 2004).

Although, the majority of the Tongan/Pacific research reviewed here are linguistics, none of them have used *talanoa* to emphasise the maintenance and development of Tongan language and culture. Determining the appropriateness and effectiveness of *talanoa* in the lives of Tongan migrants was not accomplished. Among the most frequently used and best documented instruments were interviews, observations, and questionnaires. *Talanoa* as a research method was not used. Each study separately captures relevant relationships between children and parents in a restricted scope.

However, the reviewed studies bring insights to this study. The Tongan language is usually the principle language spoken in the homes of Tongan families. Parents at home help maintain Tongan language by speaking Tongan to their children. Tongan children in classrooms are bilingual. Finally, more Tongan based preschools are being built throughout the Auckland region which means the children are experiencing other than home-based learning in Tongan. These reviewed studies provide evidence that Tongan children in New Zealand would likely benefit from teaching and by learning in a

manner reflective and sensitive to the Tongan cultural imperative. The research literature on Tongan primary school children show no application of *koloa talanoa* as a means of learning or teaching.

### ***Talanoa in the literature***

Although works on *talanoa* indicate it as a developing research methodology for Tongan-based work (Otsuko, 2006; Vaioleti, 2003), the literature shows the authenticity of *talanoa*. *Talanoa* is well positioned to be the most appropriate method to research the Tongan migrants in New Zealand. Vaioleti argues that a cultural synthesis of the information, stories, emotions and theorising made available by *talanoa* produce relevant knowledge and possibilities for addressing Tongan issues. *Talanoa* allows more *mo'oni* (pure, real, authentic) information to be available for Pacific research than data derived from other research methods (Vaioleti, 2006).

Otsuko (2006) stresses that a culturally appropriate methodology makes fieldwork more reliable and valued. Cross-cultural research must interpret the human condition in its social, cultural and historical context in order to understand it. The use of *talanoa* supports the concept of rapport found in Western social research. Burns (1990) confirms that:

A face-to-face interaction assists in the establishment of rapport and higher level of motivation among respondents (Burns, 1990, p. 302).

Talking things over rather than taking rigid stands; oratory and verbal negotiation have deep traditional roots in Pacific cultures. Therefore, the way of the people of the Pacific nations is spoken rather than written (Halapua, 2005; Pasifika Education Research Guidelines, 2002).

Prior to the advent of the western civilization and the coming of the missionaries, the only thing we had was *talanoa*. That was how history was created. That was how we knew we were Tongan. That was how we knew we own the land. That was how we knew our *kāinga* (relations). That was how we knew our *hou'eiki* (chiefs). That was how we knew our



*Tu'i* (king) because of the *talanoa*, nothing was written, without a pre-determined agenda, it was very open (Halapua, 2005, p. 2).

The sense of *maheni* (familiarity) and *fe'ilongaki* (knowing each other's background) among people themselves creates a sense of trust and therefore allows people who participate in *talanoa* to freely tell their stories, experiences and even practices at home, the private place for Tongan families. Manu'atu affirmed that:

*Talanoa* creates a sense of *maheni* (familiarity) and *fe'ilongaki* (knowing each other's identity and place) among Tongan people. When a group of Tongan people gather they usually engage in *talanoa*, *fakatalanoa* (to encourage discussion when they do not know each other), *pō talanoa* (when they already know each other), or *talatalanoa* (in which they talk about selected topics or talk endlessly). Tongan people come together to *talanoa* about their experiences, express their aspirations, voice their issues, and speak their different perspectives in forums, meetings, seminars, and radio programs (Manu'atu, 2000, p. 15).

The literature positions *talanoa* as the most appropriate and trustworthy research method to gather authentic information from the targeted participants. Tongan histories and knowledge are orally perpetuated through generations and therefore Tongan people are best approached through *talanoa*.

The next chapter further discussed *talanoa* as how this study utilised as a cultural research method.

## Chapter 4: Methodology

### *Introduction*

In this chapter I outline the research methodology and procedures that I used in the study. Included in this chapter are descriptions of the conceptual framework, selection and description of the site and participants, procedure for data collection, how the data was analysed and reported, and the limitations and ethical considerations that were taken into account during the study.

### *Theoretical position*

The topic of the study, “*Talanoa: A contribution to the teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children in New Zealand*”, proposes a qualitative methodology to conduct the research. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) offer a definition of qualitative methodology:

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. 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” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 2).

Qualitative research is based on the assumption that individuals living and interacting within their own social worlds construct ‘a reality’ (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Qualitative researcher’s main interest is in understanding how people construct meaning from their life experiences and how people make sense of the world that they live in.

Patton (1990) explains:

Qualitative research is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting – what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what’s going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting” (Patton, 1990, p. 1).

Based on these key features of qualitative research, it is necessary to adopt basic qualitative methodology for the study. Conducting the research as a qualitative study enables me to study Tongan migrant's lived experiences within their own natural setting. A qualitative methodology also allowed me to use a developed research methodology in the field of educational research (what is *talanoa*) (Otsuko, 2006; Vaioleti, 2003) to gather participants' perspectives on *talanoa*. As qualitative research primarily uses the researcher as the main person for data collection (Cresswell, 1998), the opportunity to carry out research with my own people was both challenging and exciting.

As a Tongan researcher, I recognise a particular theoretical lens that I bring to the study (what is *koloa*). I, being an inside researcher, am familiar with Tongan language and culture. Nevertheless, it is necessary that cultural research studies such as the present study be encouraged, as researchers can help to bridge research that has not yet been done among international bodies of literature and local knowledge of the research setting and its subject.

### ***Talanoa: A research method***

Although *Talanoa* as a research method has been used widely in academia, *Talanoa* is still developing as a research methodology (Maka et al., 2006; Vaioleti, 2003). *Talanoa* has been utilised as a tool to reach political resolutions as well (Halapua, 2005, 2006; Talanoa Excerpts, 2000, 2001, 2004). The section following focuses on the literature discussing *Talanoa*.

*Talanoa* is considered to be an appropriate approach when researching educational and social issues of the people of the Pacific nations (Fletcher, 2004; Otsuko, 2006; Vaioleti, 2003). *Talanoa* as a research method is more trustworthy, relevant and widely supported within the Pacific Island nations, because of the meaningful engagement

within the research process (Vaiotei, 2003). *Talanoa* is used in this study to facilitate a culturally sensitive, collaborative approach between the researcher and the parents as they tell their stories. Halapua (2005) in an interview with the Matangitonga Newspaper stated that *talanoa*, as a possible research method that is culturally sensitive and aligned with the Pacific culture, was first used in 1993 when the Pacific Islands Leaders met in Tahiti. It was further employed and developed in the Cook Islands when the country became economically bankrupt. Therefore, *talanoa* has been used as a tool for reconciliation in the political scene in the Pacific (Halapua, 2005, 2006; Talanoa Excerpts, 2000, 2001, 2004).

The culturally appropriate method of *talanoa* makes fieldwork more reliable and valued (Otsuko, 2006). *Talanoa* bridges the gap between researchers and participants, so that both sides feel at ease and are better able to communicate with each other openly and freely. Thus, the study as a qualitative study uses a Tongan approach based in Tongan language and culture called *talanoa* as its method for data collection. In the research, *talanoa* draws together the participants to recall, talk and tell their lived experiences and practices in the homes. Through *talanoa*, the participants are encouraged to talk personally in groups about the thinking and practices at home used in teaching their children.

As a research method, *talanoa* is grounded in Tongan language and culture. Manu'atu (2000) further developed this approach when she used it in her study as an approach to personal and collective critical dialogue. Through *talanoa*, the participants in this study talked personally and in groups about their thinking and practices at home in teaching their children.

Hence, *talanoa* research is collaborative. It removes the distance between researchers and participants and provides respondents with a human face they can relate to. *Talanoa*

research is all about storying, based on face-to-face verbal interactions between researchers and participants (Vaioleti, 2003).

In my own perspective, *talanoa* is not only a research method but has characteristics<sup>10</sup>.

The data collected from the study and the discussions of the findings are the *talanoa*.

The context of the research is discussed in the next section.

### ***The research context***

Most of West Auckland is within the boundaries of Waitakere City, the sixth largest city in New Zealand, roughly from [Te Atatu](#) to [Glen Eden](#), Henderson to [New Lynn](#), Massey and Avondale. A traveller takes 20-30 minutes by car to reach these suburbs from the city centre (New Zealand Online Community, 2008; NZine, 2008).

The selection of the research context was based on the literature reviewed. Of the research made on the Tongan people in New Zealand, no study to date has been performed in the western suburbs of Auckland nor has any focused on the daily practices in the homes of Tongan parents.

The Tongan total immersion Early Childhood Education (ECE) centre, Vaevaemanava Preschool's network was approached to recruit the participants. Vaevaemanava Preschool is one of two Tongan Early Childhood Centres in West Auckland. The majority of Tongan children's parents approached for the study have children who previously attended Vaevaemanava ECE centre and are now attending primary schools.

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<sup>10</sup> *Talanoa* is highly structured and highly political. It is open, meaning everyone can *talanoa*, while *kofukofu* (cover up or keep to oneself). It is open but *heliaki* (to say one thing and mean another). It is open but not *talaihangamai* (something said because a particular person is present).

## ***The participants***

The participants are Tongan parents (mother and father are both Tongan). They have children attending primary schools and they speak Tongan in their homes. The selected number of participants represents about fifty percent of the Tongan population in the selected school (Vaevaemanava Preschool) site. The twelve (12) participants are parents of twelve families: six (6) mothers and six (6) fathers. The six mothers and six fathers were drawn from fifteen different families.

The invitations to participate in the research were offered to all parents meeting the criteria, stated in the Information Sheet (Appendix 1A), by telephoning the homes first, which was followed by a visit in person to the parents to convey the invitation. The first twelve to accept the invitation were informed of the time and place to meet to *talanoa* about the research process and participation.

The participants were organised into three groups of four people. The first group consisted of four fathers; the second group were four mothers; and the third group were two mothers and two fathers. The participants were randomly selected to form the groups.

Participants' identities are confidential and their names are not used in the final report. Their specific participation is only known by the researcher and those assisting with the transcribing of the transcript.

## ***Participants' Backgrounds:***

The participants in the study were chosen because they were Tongan parents who use Tongan language at home and have primary school age children and who were, at the time of the study, residing in the West Auckland suburbs. Most of their school aged children attended primary schools in the western suburbs too. For the confidentiality of

the participants' identities, their names are not mentioned in the study, rather it uses Group A: Participants One, Two, Three, Four; Group B: Participants Five, Six, Seven, Eight; and Group C: Participants Nine, Ten, Eleven.

### **Group A: Participants One - Four**

This group consists of four fathers.

#### *Participant One:*

He is the father of eight children, with three of the children attending primary school in West Auckland. These three children are Tongan-New Zealand born. He is Tongan. He migrated with his family to New Zealand. This participant works fulltime as a painter and a panel beater.

#### *Participant Two:*

Participant Two is the father of five children. Two of the children are in primary school. His wife is a fulltime mother at home while he works fulltime in a factory in West Auckland. They migrated as a family to New Zealand and all their children are Tongan-born.

#### *Participant Three:*

He is Tongan. All his four children are Tongan-New Zealand born. Two of the children attend primary school in West Auckland. The participant is not working. At the time of the data collection, he was staying home with the children while his wife worked.

#### *Participant Four:*

He works as an accountant in one of the Tongan preschools situated in West Auckland. He is a Tongan, a father who migrated with his family from Tonga. Two of his children are at primary school. He lives in West Auckland. He passed away during the writing of the thesis.

## **Group B: Participants Five-Eight**

This group consists of four mothers.

### *Participant Five:*

She is a mother of two children. According to her, her *mokopuna* (grandchild) is one of her children. Her youngest daughter is in primary school, while the eldest attends one of the universities in Auckland, New Zealand. Her family migrated from Tonga. She is a registered nurse by profession. She and her husband both work fulltime.

### *Participant Six:*

She migrated from Tonga, met and married her husband in New Zealand. She is a mother of one child. Her son attends one of the primary schools in West Auckland. She does not work fulltime, is self-employed, gifted with a talent for quilt making, and who awaits her son arrival home after school.

### *Participant Seven:*

The participant is the mother of six children. Two of the children attend primary school in West Auckland. She and her family migrated from Tonga. The participant does not work, but stays home while her husband works fulltime.

### *Participant Eight:*

She is the mother of six children. She participated in the study because she is also a mother to her two *makapuna* (grandchildren). Her *makapuna's* mother remarried leaving her two children to the grandmother to raise. The *makapuna* attend a West Auckland primary school. She does not work fulltime, but takes sewing courses. She is a widow. She is a Tongan migrant.



## **Group C: Participants Nine-Eleven**

The group was arranged as a mixed group, that is, two fathers and two mothers. It was not formed until the commencement of the *talanoa*, when one participant could not come to the *talanoa* group. As a result, the group had only three participants, two fathers and a mother.

### *Participant Nine:*

The participant is the only mother in the group. She is the mother of seven children. Three of the children go to a West Auckland primary school. She migrated recently from Tonga with her family. She is a fulltime mother and stays home while her husband works fulltime.

### *Participant Ten:*

The participant is the father of six children. Three of the children attend primary schools in West Auckland. He works full time as a truckload driver while his wife is at home being a fulltime mother.

### *Participant Eleven:*

He works full time as an upholsterer in a furniture factory while his wife is a fulltime mother at home. He migrated with his family from Tonga. He is the father of five Tongan and New Zealand-born children. Four of his children attend primary school in West Auckland.

## ***Data collection***

In the study, the participants were drawn together to critically *talanoa* (discuss) about the concept, and to *talanoa* about the daily practices in the home and how *talanoa* becomes a way of teaching and learning for Tongan children in New Zealand.

The *talanoa* (in the case of this study included critical dialogues, discussions, telling stories) were in the Tongan language. The main research question was fleshed out in sub-questions (see Chapter 3) as guides to *talanoa* about the practices as lived and practised by Tongan people in their homes.

There were two sessions for each group. During the first session, the participants discussed the guiding questions. In the second session, the participants reviewed the Tongan transcription to validate, make amendments, clarification and/or additions to the scripts. The data was tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. Note taking was taken when appropriate.

Finding an appropriate location for the *Talanoa* research sessions as a group and a place quiet enough to be able to tape record in was crucial. Telling participants to travel to AUT Wellesley campus would be expensive because of petrol. Taking them to a chapel in a church would be uncomfortable for those who are not members of that church. However, I felt it would be relevant to conduct an educational research in a place of education.

Therefore, I sent a letter requesting the *Vaevaemanava* Board of Trustees to allow the three *talanoa* research sessions to take place in the school building after school hours. The letter was sent in the hope that they would accept the request because I am a Tongan and the school is a Tongan Preschool. This took two weeks, due to the Board's meeting calendar dates, and it was accepted. The data collection, the *talanoa* sessions, were conducted at the *Vaevaemanava* Preschool building. The venue was most convenient to both the researcher and the participants.

Light refreshments were provided at the end of each *talanoa* session in appreciation of their time and support. Light refreshments are part of the ordinary custom of Tongan people and was not used as an inducement to participate in the research. During the

refreshment, an interactive conversation continued around the topic of research and learning issues. Those conversations were also considered for possible use in the research with the approval of the participants.

### ***Transcripts***

The tape-recorded *talanoa* were transcribed after all the three *talanoa* sessions were conducted. I transcribed them with the help of my daughter. I chose my daughter to help me transcribe mainly to ensure the confidentiality of data and for ethical reasons. The original transcript was given back to the participants for checking and to verify that they were willing to allow their stories and perspectives to be used in the research. The participants were informed that they could edit, add to or delete from the material in the transcript. The transcripts were edited accordingly and changes were made based on the feedback received.

The summary of the final report is available to participants on request. The process of obtaining the summary was detailed in the Information Sheet. Participants are to be notified by telephone when the summary report is available and the report will be given to them. An advantage of being an inside researcher is that the participants assume that the researcher knows and can decode the ideas being shared. Tongans are used to wrapping or covering *talanoa* as it occurs and an insider can unpack the essence more easily. A mutual trust is additionally noted.

### ***Ethical considerations***

Ethical approval was gained from the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEK). The ethic approval was agreed that all participants in the study would be referred to by pseudonyms. Sensitive data which might put them at risk was removed or modified with the agreement of the participants.

The Information Sheet (Appendix A) for the research was given before-hand to every potential participant for their understanding of the study. Their participation was voluntary. Although some of the participants I did not personally know; they live in the same community as me. As a result of the *talanoa* sessions, I got to know the participants as peers.

When the participants decided to take part, they were invited to participate in a *talanoa* session for at least two hours, focusing on lived practices the participants use at home. The participants were informed that the *talanoa* would be in groups. Before the data from the *talanoa* was analysed the participants would have an opportunity to check the accuracy of the transcript. Confidentiality was assured that the stories would not be known to anyone else. *Tauhi vaha'a* (Reciprocity) ensures that the stories are kept within the *talanoa* session unless approved for future use. Participants could withdraw from the study at any time for any reason and withdraw information they have provided before the information was analysed.

The Informed Consent Form (Appendix B) was signed at the start of the *talanoa*. This is to ensure that ethics is obtained. Again, before each *talanoa* sessions, participants were reminded that confidentiality was assured and that their identities would be kept secret, their names would not be used and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time.

### ***Data analysis***

Cresswell (1998) suggests that the transcripts are read several times to gain a general overview of the data. During the first reading, notes were made in the margins of each transcript. The second reading was conducted while listening to the tape recordings with special attention paid to the emerging themes, participants' perceptions, and the meanings assigned by participants to specific words.

*Talanoa* is analysed in Chapter 6 of the study, using the conceptual framework of *koloa talanoa* to analyse emerged ideas from the *talanoa* (data). The emerged ideas are the *talanoa* valued by Tongan migrants, such as: *talanoa* as stories; *talanoa* as source of knowing; *talanoa* as history; *talanoa* as processing; *talanoa* as communications; and so forth. There is no exact analytical element which can be used for analysis but the analysis depends on the stories given by the participants.

The *talanoa* were summarised in Tongan language for the convenience of the participants and then translated into English language. Observations of body language (for example, the silence, tears, laughters and nodding heads) were noted to enhance accuracy of the information shared during the *talanoa*. The analysis of the findings is presented and discussed in Chapter 6.

### ***The Limitations***

The study challenged me as the researcher to persevere. The recruitment of the participants took a great deal more time and effort than anticipated. Replies to the invitations to participants took three to four weeks, even though the invitations were delivered in person to the homes or placed in the mail box. Often, when the invited parents were at home at the time of invitation delivery many refused the invitation due to work engagements. In order to have participants, Tongan parents known to the researcher were recruited. I am grateful to the participants as not only did they not turn their back on me but they were willing and supportive participants in the research.

The limitations to the study are the generalisation versus the specificities. The comparison cannot be in general. The Pacific/Pasifika includes all the Pacific islands as a whole. The migrants include settled and unsettled migrants. The study is values driven and therefore there are collective values, migrants' values and even researcher's values. Therefore, the study did not produce generalisations but provides specificities.

# Chapter 5: Findings

## *Introduction*

Drawing from the *talanoa* (data), in this chapter, the common themes generated across the participants from the *talanoa* are listed. Extracts from the *talanoa* transcripts are presented to support these themes. The writing of the *talanoa* (data) was not as easy as when it was spoken. From spoken to written data and from Tongan to English language, the guiding questions outline the participant's responses. Having the texts in Tongan language captured the nuances of the data. The translation of *talanoa* from Tongan language to English language may have resulted in some loss of meaning. Body language (for example, lots of laughter and tears) are also indicated in the texts to confirm the authenticity of the data.

## *Emerging Themes*

There are some themes that emerged from the *talanoa*. These themes are lived, practised and shaped by the participants in their homes. The themes are used in the study to frame the ideas that were contributed by the *talanoa*. In order to utilise the data, I presented as many relevant details as possible from the *talanoa*, and simply let the accounts "speak for themselves", permitting the reader to construct their own understandings and meanings (Waller, 2005).

The following sections are the guiding sub-questions and the stories from participants are stated in the Tongan language. Since *talanoa* is branching out and usually, when people *talanoa*, they discuss so much more than the topic needs be discussed, two or more sub-questions were also discussed when one sub-question was given. Therefore

the number of guiding questions is lessened, from eight to five questions, when the findings are presented. The English translations are also given.

### **Sub-Question 1: *Ko e hā 'a e talanoa? (What is Talanoa?)***

*A mean of communication*

All the participants define *talanoa* according to daily practices and experiences at home. More than half of the participants define *talanoa* as a way in which they can communicate and understand each other. Parents get messages across to their children through *talanoa*.

*Ko e talanoá...ko e taimi ia 'oku ou fetu'utaki mo femahino'aki ai mo 'eku fanaú 'i hoku fāmili.*

*Talanoa...is a time to communicate and connect with my children at home (Participant One).*

*Ko e talanoá ia ke fai he vā 'o ha tokoua pe tokolahi ange*

*Talanoa should happen between two or more people (Participant Two).*

*Ko e talanoá ko e founa ia 'oku mau fetu'utaki ai 'i 'api mo e fanaú, mo hoku fāmili. Ko e founa ia 'e taha 'o e fetu'utaki.*

*Talanoa is how we communicate verbally with our children and family. Talanoa is one way of communication (Participant Five).*

*Hangē pē ko e lave 'a e kau tangata ko 'eé, ko e talanoá ko e fetu'utaki... 'i ha vaha'a 'o ha tangata mo ha tangata, kulupu mo ha kulupu, vaha'a 'o ha fefine mo ha tangata. Kapau ko ha kulupu, 'oku fai ai pē 'a e fetu'utaki.*

*As others mentioned, talanoa is communication...between men, groups and between a man and woman. Communications still happen in groups (Participant Four).*

*Ko e talanoá ko ha anga mahu'inga ia 'o e fetu'utaki fakafāmili. Kiate au, kapau he'ikai fai ha talanoa, he'ikai fai ha fetu'utaki mo ha femahino'aki.*

*Talanoa is the way to value each other in the family. To me, without talanoa, a family may not understand and communicate with one another (Participant Six).*

*Ko e talanoá ko e fetu'utaki pe ko e fepōtalanoa'aki ia 'a e matu'á mo e fanaú ki ha ngaahi me'a 'e lelei ai 'a e fāmili. Hangē ko e ngaahi fiema'u 'a e fāmili, ngaahi me'a 'e tokoni ki he fāmili ke to e fakalalakaka ange 'i he ngaahi feinga fakaakó. Ko e talanoá ko ha ngaahi fetu'utaki pē ia 'a e fāmili, pe ko e fepōtalanoa'aki pē 'a e fāmili. Talanoa is to communicate or that is when parents and children critically discussed things that would be of benefit to the family, such as the*

family needs, the development of education in the family *Talanoa* is the communication within the family or discussion within the family (Participant Seven).

*Ko e me'a ko e te u fetu'utaki ai mo hoku fāmīlī ko e talanoa.*  
*Talanoa* is the way I communicate with my family (Participant Nine)

*Ko e talanoá ko ha me'a ia ke fai ai ha femahino'aki. Ko e 'uluaki pē me'a kuo u fakakaukau ki ai ko e femahino'aki ka e lava ke fai e fetu'utaki 'i he talanoá.*  
You understand each other through *talanoa*. I understand my family well when I *talanoa* with them (Participant Eleven).

*Talanoa shows connections:*

*Talanoa* shows the connections within the family, and with others, as commonly mentioned among the participants. Knowing each other and the relationship between family relations and other people is through *talanoa*.

*Kapau ko ha kulupu, 'oku fai ai pē 'a e fehokotakī, fetaulakī, mo e fetu'utakī.*  
Connections, meetings and communications still happen in groups (Participant Four).

*Ko e talanoá ko e kī ia 'oku tupulaki ai e ma'uma'uluta, fe'ofa'ofa ni, femahino'aki mo e fehokotakī... ko e talanoá ko'ete feinga ia ke 'ilo'i 'e he'ete fanaú 'a hoto lotó.*  
*Talanoa* is the key to develop the spirit of steadfastness, friendliness, understanding each other and connectedness... *talanoa* is when you open your hearts to your children (Participant Six)

*'O hangē ko 'enī, ko u sio atu ka koe 'e 'ikai ke lava ke ta felōngoaki ka 'oku hanga 'e he talanoá 'o fakafehokotaki kitaua. Ko e me'a ia te ta lava ai ko e 'o connect – ko 'eta talanoa.*  
For example, when I meet you for the first time, we won't know each other unless we *talanoa*. *Talanoa* connects us, connects me with my family (Participant Nine).

However, Participant Two believes that *talanoa* is a device, that is, a device that caused the children to learn new things as they connect ideas and make the ideas meaningful during *talanoa*. Children recognise and are aware of new ideas linked together.

*'Oku hanga 'e he talanoá 'o 'uluaki foa'i 'a e 'atamai 'o e fānaú ke nau fanongo ki he me'a fo'ou 'oku te fai 'e kita mātu'á... ko e ngaahi me'a fo'ou ia ki he'enau fakakaukau mo 'enau 'iló na'e te'eki ke nau 'ilo kinautolu ki ai kimu'a... ka e tupu mei he talanoa 'i he kai, teuteu ke*



*mohe he efiāfi 'a e fāmili mo ha fakataha 'oku fai he akó, 'oku 'i ai e ngaahi me'a fo'ou ia 'oku mafoa 'i honau 'atamai 'o tupu ai 'e nau fakakaukau ki he ngaahi me'a fo'ou ko iá.*

*Talanoa* cracks open the children's mind to listen to new things... things that are new to them that they have not experienced. These new ideas are in their minds, when the family is *talanoa* during meal times, before going to bed and at school, cracked open the children's mind to think about those new ideas (Participant Two).

#### *An approach to teaching and learning*

*Talanoa* is an approach to teaching and learning. Children learn as they question, discuss, interview, clarify, and even explain themselves.

*'I he taimi lahi 'oku 'i ai e puputu'u mo e fie'ilo pea mo e fakafehu'i meiate kinaua. Ko e talanoá ko e founa pē 'eni te u lava 'o veteki ai ha fihī mei he'ena fakakaukau' mo 'ena loto fehu'i 'i he kamata'anga 'o 'ena akó, pea mo hona 'amuí foki.*

There are times of confusion, curiosity and questions from my children. Through *talanoa*, it is my responsibility to unpack complicated ideas and query the mind of my children during their primary school ages and their future (Participant Eight).

*Talanoa* evaluates, assesses and analyses a job being done. *Talanoa* reminds children what they did in school and brings out individual experiences during the day.

*Kapau he'ikai te mau talanoa pea he'ikai pē te u 'ilo 'e au 'a e me'a 'oku fai he akó he 'aho ko iá. He'ikai 'ilo 'e hoku hoá 'a e ngāue na'e fai 'i 'api he 'aho ko iá.*

If *talanoa* does not happen at home, then I would never know what my children had done in school that day. Even my husband would never know what is happening in our home (Participant Nine).

#### **Sub-Question 2: Ko e 'api talanoa nai 'o kimoutolú? Fēfē? (Do you consider your home to be a *talanoa* home? How?)**

##### *Homes of talanoa*

More than half of the participants stated that they *talanoa* in their homes. They spend most of their time together discussing and reflecting upon what has been done at school; what experiences they have come across; and many other things they are interested in.

For example:

*Ko hoku 'api ko e fāmili talanoa.*

My home is a family of *talanoa* (Participants Two).

*Ko e 'api talanoa ho mau 'apí. Ko e toki mohe pē 'ae kau leká ko e toki 'osi ia 'a e talanoá.*

My home is a talanoa home. *Talanoa* only ends when the children are sleeping (Participant Nine).

*'Oku tokolahi foki homau 'apí. Pea ko e taimi pē 'oku mau fakataha aí, kau ia ha me'a longoa'a mo'oni 'a e talanoá, he 'oku talanoa atu ē ki hē, pea talanoa atu ē ki hē...Ko 'eku 'ilo'i 'oku kau hoku 'apí 'i he 'api talanoa.'Oku hoko 'a e talanoá ia ko ha me'a fakafiefia ia 'i he fetautaulaki mai 'ae familí ke fetala'aki'a e ngaahi me'a ne fai he 'aho ko íá.*

There are many of us in our home. When family members get together, it's a noisy time because everyone is talking. I know that my home is a talanoa home. Talanoa time is an enjoyable time where everyone gets to tell each other what they had gone through during the day (Participant Ten).

*Ko e 'api talanoa 'o 'okú, ka ko e tautau tefito ki he taimi 'oku lahi ai e polopalemá. Ko e taimi ia 'oku mau toki tangutu fakamaatoato 'o vahevahe 'a e ngaahi talanoa ko ia 'oku fiema'u ke mau talanoa ki aí. Kapau 'e 'ikai ke mau tangutu hifo 'o talanoa'i, 'e 'ikai pē ke lava 'o veteki e ngaahi palopalema ko ia 'oku mau fetaulaki mo íá.*

My family does *talanoa* most of the time; especially when problems exist. That is a time to sit down and *talanoa* to solve the problems encountered by the family (Participant Eight).

However, some parents honestly stated that they rarely *talanoa* in their homes due to other commitments. The time to *talanoa* is not enough due to parent's occupying themselves with their own interests. The limited time at home with the children is not enough.

*'Oku 'ikai ke lahi ha taimi talanoa 'i hoku 'apí, ko e 'uhi pē ko hoku hoá 'oku 'ā pongipongia pē ia 'o 'alu ki he ngaué. Pea ko 'ene ha'u pē he efiáfí 'o ma'u leva 'a e me'a tokoní pea loto leva ia ke mālōlō, 'ikai leva ke fu'u 'i ai ha taimi ia ke mau fepōtalanoa'aki mo e fānaú.'Oku si'isi'i ke u fakatokanga'i 'oku mau tangutu hifo ke talanoa 'i homau familí.*

There is not enough time to *talanoa* in my home, because when my husband returns exhausted from work, he needs to eat and rest (sleep). There is no time for me, my children and my husband to *talanoa*. We hardly sit down as a family to talk (Participant Seven).

*'Oku ou pehē 'e au 'oku fai pē 'a e talanoá ia 'i hoku 'apí ka 'oku 'ikai fe'unga. 'Oku lahi ange taimi ia 'oku ou fiema'u 'e au ke u sio he'eku polokalama he tv...*

We *talanoa* at home but it is not enough because most of the time I want to watch my favourite TV programmes (Participant Three).

*'Oku 'ikai ke u ma'u 'a e kongā lahi 'o e talanoá, ko e 'uhi ko e vaha'a taimi ko é 'oku ou 'alu ai ki he ngāuē. Ko e taimi lahi ia 'eku mavaha mei 'apí. Fakafuofua ki he houa pē 'e ua ki he tolu 'oku ou 'i 'api ai, ko e taimi pē ia 'oku ou lava ai 'o talanoa mo 'eku fānaú. Ko e lolotonga ko é 'o e 'ahó, ko e houa 'e valu 'eku fakamoleki ki he ngāuē. Pea ko e vaha'a taimi ko é 'o e foki mai ki 'apí ko e houa nai pē ia 'e tolu. 'Oku lahi ange 'a e taimi ia 'oku mole he taimi 'oku ou 'alu ai 'o ngauē, 'i he taimi ke talanoa mo e fanaú. 'Oku fakafuofua nai ki ha houa 'e ua pe tolu 'oku ou feohi ai ke u talanoa mo e kātoa 'o 'eku fānaú, pea 'oku 'ikai ke fe'unga ia. 'Oku to e kau foki mo e faka'osinga 'o e uiké ke fakalavalava ki ai 'emau talanoá.*

Most of the time I don't get to *talanoa* because most of my time I spend at work. About two to three hours at home are the only time to *talanoa* with my children. I spend eight hours a day at work. When I have to spend more time at work then I can't *talanoa* with my children. The two to three hours after work is not enough for me to *talanoa* with my children. A good time for me and my family to *talanoa* and to catch up is the weekend (Participant Eleven).

Simultaneously, the participants know that a well developed home does *talanoa* (discuss) things frequently. *Talanoa* is effective in the homes if *talanoa* is encouraged.

*Ko e 'apí 'oku toutou talanoá ko e 'apí ia 'e fakalakalaka. Ko e lahiange 'a e talanoá, ko e leleiangē ia 'a e famili 'i 'apí, pea fakalakalaka e tafa'aki kotoa pē.*

A frequently *talanoa* home is a well developed home. The more we *talanoa* the better family is at home, and every aspect is developed (Participant Three).

*Te u langaki 'a e ongo 'i he ki'i tamasi'i ke tokanga ki he akó he 'oku ou tokanga ange ki ai pea u talanoa ange ki ai pea talanoa mai kia au. Ko e fiema'ú, ke langaki atu e talanoá ka e talanoa mai ke te 'ilo 'a e me'a 'oku 'i hono lotó mo 'ene fakakaukai.*

I must create the positive feelings within the child towards his schooling when I talk to him and he talks to me. The thing is, parents should start the conversation in order to know the child's perceptions (Participant Two).

*'Oku malava 'e he'ete fa'a talanoá 'o 'omai e fa'ahinga tau'atāina ke te hanga 'o 'a'au e ngaahi koloa fufū mo e ngaahi me'a lilo ia ne 'ikai ke nau fakakaukau ki ai. Ko e lahi ange koe 'ete talanoá, ko e lahi ange ia 'a 'enau 'iló pea ko e lahiange ia 'a e ngaahi fakakaukau fakatupulekina meiate kinautolú.*

*Talanoa* frequently brings the kind of freedom to empty out the hidden treasures and private ideas they (children) haven't thought about. The more we (parents) *talanoa* (tell stories), the more knowledge they

(children) have and more developed ideas from them (children) (Participant Five).

### **Sub Question 3: 'Oku kau fakakū e fānaú he talanoá? (When do children join in talanoa?)**

#### *Children's participation in talanoa*

The parents have their own way of including children in *talanoa*. Most parents stop their children from participating in *talanoa* when people are visiting their homes due to cultural beliefs. For example:

*Kapau 'oku ha'u ha kakai kiate au, 'oku ou 'osi tala ki hoku 'ofefiné 'e 'ikai ke ha'u ia ke fakahoha'asi au. Kapau te u talanoa mo 'eku ta'ahine lahi pea te u hū mo ia ki hono loki 'o talanoa ai. 'Oku 'ikai ke to e 'ai ia ke to e fanongo ki ai e ongo ki'i ua iiki*

I already told my daughter that if someone comes home to me, she is not to bother me... if I need to *talanoa* with my oldest daughter, I make sure that my *mokopuna* (granddaughter) and my young daughter do not listen and participate (Participant Five).

*Ko e taimi pē 'e taha 'oku ou fa'a hanga ai 'o ta'ofi ha'ane fehu'i pe talanoa, ko e taimi 'oku ou talanoa ai mo ha kakai 'i homau 'apí. 'Oku a'u ki he taimi ko é 'oku 'i ai ha kakai 'i homau 'apí, 'oku holi ma'u pē he taimi lahi ke talanoa pe fakafehu'i, ka 'oku ou fa'a hanga ma'u pē 'o ta'ofi he taimi lahi ke 'oua na'a ha'u ha kakai pea ha'u ke talanoa. 'Oku 'ikai sai ke ha'u he taimi ko iá, 'aki pe 'etau ngaahi 'ulungaanga faka-Tonga, ke tau tauhi e vā e talanoa mo e tokotaha 'oku te talanoa mo iá.*

The only time I stop my son from questioning is when I talk with some friends in my home. When people visit my home, my son would love to question but I always stop him due to cultural beliefs, to keep the relationship between those you converse with in *talanoa* (Participant Eleven).

*Pea ko'ene hau pē ha taha ki 'apí, 'osi 'eke ia: Ko hai hono hingoá? Ko hai ia? Ko 'ene ha'u mei fe'ia? Ko 'ene ha'u ki 'apí ní 'o hā? ... (kakata)... 'Oku 'ikai ke tokanga ia pe ko hai 'oku ne faka'eke'eké. Kiate au, 'oku 'ikai tali ia 'i hotau anga fakafonuá.*

When people come home, my son would ask the: Who? What? Why? Where?... (laughs)... My son doesn't care who he questions. To me, it is not accepted in our culture (Participant Ten).

*Kapau 'e ha'u ha kakai lalahi ia ki 'apí, 'oku 'i ai 'a e fa'ahinga talanoa ia mo e fa'ahinga hua 'oku tau fai 'oku 'ikai totonu ke nau kau ai mo fanongo ki ai.*

People visiting my house sometimes shared *talanoa* or jokes that are not acceptable for my children to listen to (Participant Four).

However, it seems that the church influences the beliefs of most Tongan families that children should have a chance to voice their needs and share their experiences through *talanoa*. There are times when children are allowed to voice their needs through *talanoa*. Silence, in Tongan culture from children, is not encouraged. Parents consider the children's voice necessary to the development and improvement of the family. Therefore a one-on-one *talanoa* is practised in some of the families.

*Ko e siasi ko eni 'oku ou kau ki ai 'oku fakahoko he efiāfi Mōnite kotoa pē 'a e efiāfi fakafāmili pea 'oku 'i ai e taimi ai 'oku fakahā 'e he tamasi'i 'a e me'a 'oku tokanga ki ai. He 'oku 'i ai e me'a 'oku nau tokanga ki ai ka 'oku 'ikai 'oange ha nau faingamālie ke nau lea mai ai. In my church, families do Family Home Evening (FHE) once a week. The children are given a chance to share their problems, needs, and experiences that they have come across during the week or for the next week. It's a time when children have a chance to *talanoa* with their parents (Participants Three).*

*'Oku 'i ai 'a e taimi 'oku ou talanoa taautaha ai mo 'eku fanāú. 'Oku hanga 'e he talanoa taautaha ko'eni 'o fakalelei'i e ako mo e 'ulungaanga 'o e fānāú ke fakalalakaka'i ai 'a honau 'ulungaanga mo' enau akó. He 'ikai lava ia 'i ha 'aho pē 'e taha, mahalo na'a lava e 'aho 'e tolu ko ha tokoua pē kuo lavá pea mahalo ko e uike kakató 'e toki mei lava ke u talanoa taautaha ai mo ha tokotaha.*

I run in my family a 'one-on-one' *talanoa* with my children. This one-on-one *talanoa* improves the children's education as well as their behaviours. It may not complete in one day but it takes about three days to talk to my children individually (Participant One).

*Ko e taimi ko é hono fakalalakaka'i 'o e fāmili, ko e taimi ia ke hū mai ai 'a e fānāú 'o kau hono talanoa'i ha me'a ke tupulekina mo fakalalakaka ai 'a e fāmili.*

I include my children when there's a need to develop the family (Participant Four)

In addition, a couple parents shared the idea that when they feel like *talanoa* to their children then it is the right time to *talanoa*.

*Koau ia 'oku 'ikai ha taimi tukupau ia ke u talanoa ai mo hoku fohá. Ko fē pē taimi 'oku ou ongo'i ai ki hoku lotó ke talanoá pea u puke mai leva hoku ki'i fohá 'o talaange,...(fakate-lo'imata)... "kou 'ilo na'a ku fakatokanga'i 'e au ia na'e 'ikai sai e me'a koé". 'Oku 'ikai ha taimi pau, fai'aki pe ongo'i hoku lotó...Fa'a taimi 'e ni'ihi, ko e 'ai ke mau 'alu ki ha feitu'u kuo pau ke u talanoa ki hoku fohá ke ne 'ilo'i e feitu'u*

*ke mau 'alu ki ai pea mo e me'a ke ne fai 'i ha'amau a'u ki he feitu'u ko ia.*

To me, there is no exact time set to *talanoa* with my son. Whenever I'm prompted to *talanoa*, I would hold him against me and said, ...(suffuse with tears)... "I noticed what you did was not appropriate". There is no exact time, whenever my heart feels like... Sometimes when we are about to go somewhere, I have to tell my son about the place we would go and what he should do in that place (Participants Six).

*Ko e taimi lelei taha pē 'ae taimi koé 'oku fiema'u ai 'e he fānaú ke tau fepōtalanoa'aki ai mo kitautolu mātu'á. Ko e 'uhí, he'e fiema'u pē foki e fānaú ia ke nau talanoa. Ko e me'a leva ia 'a'aku ko e kumi ha ku taimi ke u talanoa ai mo 'eku fanaú.*

The best time to *talanoa* is when the children feel like talking. Children love to talk. I have to give up my time to talk with my children (Participant Seven).

Other possible times to *talanoa* that some parents find are meal times, especially dinner and travelling. These times enable the parents to *talanoa* to their children because they have always enjoyed eating and traveling in the car. They find it the best time to *talanoa* with their children.

*Ko e meimei taimi ke mau tangutu ai 'o talanoá ko 'emau taimi kai efiāfi. 'Oku fai pē ia he ngaahi houa kai kehé ka 'oku 'ikai ke kakato ai e fāmilí 'o hangē ko e houa kai efiāfi.*

We usually *talanoa* during our dinner time, because everyone is at home. It is done also during other meals of the day, but not all family members are present like they are during dinner time (Participant Eight).

*Ko e taimi 'oku ou discipline ai 'eku fānaú ko e taimi koe 'oku mau kai ai, he ko u tui, ko e taimi ia 'oku loto lelei ai 'a e tokotaha kotoa pē.*

If I want to discipline my children, I do it when we have our dinner, because I know everyone is in a good mood to listen when they are eating (Participant One).

*Kau e taimi kai ia he taimi lelei...he kapau 'e fai e kai ia ka 'oku kei 'i tu'a ha ki'i leka, 'osi lele ia ki fale...(kakata)...neongo 'oku longoa'a e taimi kai he talanoá, ka ko e taimi loto lelei ia hoku familí ke mau talanoa ai.*

Meal time is a good time... if a child is outside, he'll run inside to eat...(laughs)...Although it is noisy to *talanoa* at meal time, but that's when my family are willing to *talanoa* (Participant Ten).

*Ko e fo'i taimi ko ia 'oku mau mavahe ai mei he falé ki ha ngaahi feitu'u, 'oku mau talanoa ai, pea 'oku tatau pē foki ki he taimi 'oku mau foki ai ki 'apí, 'ave fānaú ki he akó, ō ki he shopping... 'oku mau talanoa pē ka e 'oua leva kuo mau a'u ki 'api.*

When we depart to where we plan, like going to training, taking them to school, and going shopping, we *talanoa* until we arrive back home (Participants Two).

*Ko e taimi 'oku mau talanoa lahi taha ai mo hoku ki'i familí, ko e taimi 'oku mau 'alu ai ki ha 'ekitiviti. 'Oku ma'u ai 'enau fiefiá pea hangē ko ha taimi lelei ia ke mau talanoa ai. Hangē ko ha taimi 'oku ma 'ave ai kinautolu ki he KFC...(kakata)... te nau fiefiá lahi ange pea te nau fie talanoa mai ange 'i hono 'ave kinautolu ki ha feitu'u.*

We spend most of our time talking when we are going to an activity. They are so happy and it's a good time to talk. Like, taking them to eat in the KFC restaurant...(laughs)... they would be more than happy and they would be willing to talk when spending a night out (Participant Eleven).

*'Oku ou ngāue lahi'aki 'eku talanoa mo 'eku ta'ahiné 'i he taimi 'oku ou 'alu ai 'o 'ave ia ki he akó mo e taimi 'oku ou piki ai ia mei he akó. 'Okú ma talatalanoa leva ki he me'a na'e hoko he akó he 'aho ko iá. Ko e to e taimi lelei foki 'e taha 'oku mau faka'aonga'i ki he talanoá, ko e taimi kaí. Ka 'osi e kaí 'e hoko atu ai pe mo e pō talanoa.*

I usually *talanoa* with my daughter when I drop off her to school and pick up her from school. We talked about what had happened in school that day. Another good time for us to *talanoa* is our meal time. *Talanoa* would continue after the meals (Participant Five).

**Sub Question 4: *Ko e hā e talanoa 'oku mālie'ia ai e fanaú? (What are the talanoa that you consider to be meaningful and interesting to the children?)***

*Talanoa mālie (Interesting talanoa)*

There are *talanoa mālie* (interesting stories) that children love hearing often. Most of the participants shared that the most interesting stories children love hearing are histories, that is, when their parents talk about their childhood experiences, the parents' home island in Tonga, their individual families, their school days, and how parents met, dated and finally married.

*Ko e me'a mālie taha ia kia kinautolu mo 'enau fakakaukau' fekau'aki pea mo hoku tupu'angá. 'Ikai ngata pē 'i hoku tupu'angá ka mau to e talanoa ki he tupu'anga 'o 'eku ongo matu'á*

The most interesting thing to my children is to know about my childhood life. Not only mine but my parent's as well (Participant One).

*Ko e talanoa fakaoli mo mālie 'a e talanoa ko ia ki motú, 'a e 'ikai ke to e'i ai ha me'a ke ma'u mei ai e mo 'uí ka ko e fo'i niu motu'ú moe toutai...*

It is a fun and interesting story, the story about our island, that nothing else to earn living but copra and fisheries (Participant Two).

*'Oku sai'ia 'eku fānaú ke fanongo he ngaahi talanoa kau kia kita mo hoto tupu'angá, 'apiako na'a te ako ai mo e hā fua ...*

My children loved listening to stories about my youth including the schools I attended (Participant Three).

*Ko e me'a 'oku mālie'ia ai 'a e fānaú he taimi ne 'eva mai ai hoku malí kiate aú...(kakata)... mo hono fa'a talaange foki kia kinautolu ke nau sio ki he piki hoku nimá, mo e lavea hoku matá hono fa'a tā au he taimi ko é ne 'eva mai ai 'a hoku hoá kiate aú...(kakata).... Ne 'ikai ke sai'ia 'eku ongomatu'a 'i hoku hoá...(kakata)....*

My kids enjoyed listening to my stories telling how their father and I got married...(laughs)...how my mother usually beat me up, show them scars on my arm and my face, when my husband dated me ...(laughs)... my parents didn't like my husband ... (laughs)... (Participant Seven).

*Nofo ma'u pē 'a hoku ongo ki'i foha iiki, hangé ha'ana misí, 'o 'eke 'a e me'a ko ee na'e hoko 'i Tonga 'i he 'emau 'i ai. Teuteu 'emau 'alu ki Tonga, pea ko e kongá lahi ia 'emau nofó, ko e talanoa pē 'o kau ki Tonga.*

It's just like a dream and very exciting to my two younger sons listening to stories about Tonga. They will find out the truth when we go to Tonga in December (Participant Eleven).



However, a mother admitted that children also find it interesting to *talanoa* about their own life experiences.

*Ka ko e me'a 'oku sai'ia taha ai hoku fohá, ke fanongo ki hono talanoa'i hono kei si'isi'i. 'A e me'a ko é ne hoko ki ai he'ene kei si'isi'i mo kei pepeé. Pea ko 'emau nofo atu pē mo ha fanga ki'i tamaiki, 'oku ha'u 'o talamai, "Mom, talaange ki hoku fanga friends 'a e me'a ne hoko kiate au he'eku kei si'i, 'o a'u pē ki he'ene kau faiaiko 'i 'apiakó... (kakata)... My son loves to hear stories about him, what was happening to him when he was a baby. He also love sharing it to people that visit our house, even his teachers at school ... (laughs)... (Participant Six).*

### *Talanoa fakaako (Educational stories)*

The participants acknowledged that they teach their children and let them learn through *talanoa* at home. The stories of the parent's past experiences are compared to the present lifestyles to teach the children.

*'I he taimi 'oku te talanoa ai ki he taimi na'a te tupu hake ai, na'a te tupu hake 'i ha famili masivesiva, talanoa ki he me'akai ho'atā he taimi ko iá. 'I he taimi 'oku te hanga ai 'o fakafehoanaki 'a e kuo hilí mo e kuongá ni pea te fakamahino 'a e tu'unga faingata'a na'e 'i ai 'ete mo'ui he taimi ko iá, 'oku puke 'e he fānaú 'a e ngaahi talanoá pea 'e tō mahu'inga ki he fānaú, pea he'ikai to e loto 'a e fānaú ke hoko tatau kia kinautolu 'a e me'a na'e a'usia 'e he ngaahi mātu'á. Ko e ako lahi ia ki he fānaú.*

I told my children that I grew up in a poor family. My lunch was not fancy like yours (children). Most of the times there was no lunch. I felt children learned from my own story. I also taught my children by comparing the past, the trials that I went through in my childhood, with the available present (Participant Eleven).

*'Amusia mu'a kimoutolu 'oku ngaahi ho'omou lunch. Ko Tonga he'eku kei akó, ko'ete mapumapu pē he pongipongi pea te toki ha'u kuo te fevalevaleaki mai ki 'api he efiāfi. Pe 'oku 'i ai ha me'a ke te kai 'e toki kai fakataha pē he efiāfi.*

You are lucky to have your lunch nicely prepared when you go to school. In my school days, I just whistled to school in the morning without lunch then returned home exhausted after school for dinner (Participant Nine).

*Na'a ku fanongo ki he'eku tamaí he na'a ku tupu masiva. Pea 'i he'eku tupu masivá, ko e 'uhinga ia na'a ku 'alu ai 'o 'oho pehē 'i loki akó, pea ko u kei pehē ange pē kia kinautolu, 'oku kei laka ange pē 'eku ako 'i Tongá 'i he'enau ako 'i Nu'usilá ní. 'Oku ou hanga pē 'o fakafehoanaki pehe'i hei'ilo na'a fakatupu fie ako kia kinautolu.*

I listened to my dad because I was poor. Because I was poor I did my best in the classroom. I even said to my children that my education in

Tonga is far better than what they have gained here. I compare my days with theirs so they can learn from it (Participant Eight).

Simultaneously, Participant One and Four teach their children by ways of *pu'i* (telling someone to do something). Addition, subtraction, colours, shapes and budgeting are taught when the children are asked to do something. For example:

*Kou fa'a fai e fanga ki'i pu'i ki hoku ongo ki'i foha 'e ua ta'u 5 moe ta'u 9. Ki hoku foha ta'u 5, "Alu 'o 'omai ha huhu 'e 5". 'I he'ene a'u ki he kopaté, ko u 'eke atu, "Ko e huhu 'e fiha ai? Tene lau e huhu pea talamai ko e huhu 'e 10. "Omi e huhu 'e 5. Ko e huhu 'e fiha 'oku toe?". 'Oku ne to e lau pea talamai ko e huhu 'e 5 'oku to e. 'Oku ne ako pē ai ke ne lava 'o fai e fika kolé. Hangē ko hono valá, ko 'ene to'o mai hono valá ko u fehu'i atu, ko e hā e lanu ko iá?, pea kapau 'oku hala pea te u toki fakatonutonu atu pē. Ko e fuó, ne toki kumi mai fo'i pulu 'akapulu 'eku leká pea u 'eke ange ko e ha e fuo 'o e fo'i pulu 'akapulu ko ená talamai 'e ia ko e fuopotopoto pea u talaange 'ikai ko e fuolōloa. Ko e fanga ki'i fekau iiki mo faingofua ka 'oku fakaako pē ia.*

I have two sons, ages 5 and 9. I give them simple commands. To my five year old son, "Go get five forks". When he reaches the cupboard, I ask, 'How many forks are there?' He counts the forks and replies 'there are ten forks'. Come with five forks. How many left? He then counts the left over and said 'five'. The child learns to add and subtract at the same time." He continued," I often ask him, 'what colour is your clothes?' He would tell the colour and if he does not know it then I correct him by saying the right colour. When they play with the rugby ball, I ask, 'what shape is the ball?' they say, 'circle'... then I correct them by saying that it has an oval shape. Simple *pu'i* but it teaches them and they learn from it (Participant Four).

*'Oku ou fakakau 'eku fānaú ke mau talanoa ki he tu'unga fakapa'anga 'oku ma'u 'e homau fāmilí. 'Ikai ngata pē he'enau 'ilo taimi 'oku hū mai ai e pa'anga 'a e fāmilí ki he pangikē, ka'e fakafuofua leva 'enau holí ki he pa'anga ko ia 'oku mau ma'ú. 'Oku ako'i leva ai e fānaú ia ki he patisetí, uelofeá, moe fiká.*

I include my children when we *talanoa* about the family budgeting. In that, not only that they know when the family income comes to the bank but that their needs are limited according to the family's income. They also learn concepts of maths, budget and to save for their welfare (Participant One).

On the other hand, some parents talk to their children and at the same time they demonstrate what has been discussed. Children learn as they observe the demonstration.

*'I he hili hono fakamatala'i, te u 'ave leva ia ki he falekaukaú, fakahinohino ki ai hono fakaava e vaí, fakatāta'a'i e me'a ne u fakamatala ki ai.*

After talking about it then I take them to the shower and show them what I have talked about (Participant Five).

*Neongo 'eku hela'ia he foki mei he ngāuē, 'oku kei loto pē hoku ongo fohá ke u ako'i kinaua 'i he kilikiti. Ko u fá'a 'ave kinaua ki he mala'é 'o mau fá'a va'inga kilikiti pea ko e taimi ia 'oku lahi ai 'ena ngaahi fehu'i. 'Oku mahino kiate au 'oku na ako mei he va'ingá ni.*

Even though I am tired, just returned home from work, my children still want me to teach them how to play cricket. I would take them to the field and showed them whilst I am thrown with heaps of questions. That's assured me that they are learning the game (Participant Ten).

Parents are not only great teachers at home but they are chief judges, and loving friends for their children.

*Ko e tamaí moe fá'eé 'a e faiako fika 'uluaki 'i 'apí... 'I 'apí 'oku te hoko ai kita ko ha fu'u fakamaau, ko ha neesi, ko ha faiako, pea 'oku te to e hoko pē ko ha kaungāme'a lelei. 'Oku ako pea ako'i ai e fānaú 'aki e talanoá. Kamata pē ke te leá 'oku 'alu fakataha pē mo e ako'i...Fá'a taimi ni'ihí ko e 'ai pē ke te lea 'osi 'ilo pē 'enautolu ia ...kakata...ko e 'alu atu pē 'a e talanoá ko e 'alu atu ai pē mo e akonaki'i.*

The father and the mother are the number one teacher at home. At home I become a chief judge, a nurse, a great teacher and a friend. *Talanoa* teaches and learns at the same time. When I open my mouth to speak...(laughs)... it goes with lessons not only to teach the children, but for them to learn from (Participant Nine).

*Talanoa* with the children and correcting their mistakes immediately teaches them a lesson.

*Kapau 'e 'i ai ha fá'ahinga 'ulungāanga 'e hā ngali fakamātatu'a pea te lea leva he taimi pē ko iá ki he fānaú ko e 'uhi ke nau ako mei he'enau fehalaakí. Hangē ko ení: Ko e taimi 'oku tui ai he'eku ta'ahiné 'a e vala 'oku 'ikai fé'unga mo taau ke ne tui, 'oku ou tala ki ai 'oku 'ikai hoa ia mo taau mo e teunga 'o e finemuí.*

I *talanoa* with my son/daughter immediately when I recognised their mistakes. They learn from their mistakes when discussed right at the spot. For example, When my daughter is wearing inappropriate dress I would tell her that the dress is not the young woman's standard (Participant Seven).

Home is the 24hours schooling. Therefore, the teacher in school is only a supplement to the parents at home.

*'Oku 'ikai ko e akó pē 'a e talanoa ko ia 'i loki akó, ka 'oku fai houa 'e 24 ia 'i 'apí. 'Oku ako'i 'i 'apí 'a e me'a kotoa pē.*

Education is not just to talanoa in the classroom but the 24hours *talanoa* in the home. Everything is taught in the home (Participant Nine).

**Sub-Question 5: *Ko e hā e lea 'oku mou talanoa'aki 'i 'apí? 'Uhingá?*  
(What language do you use to *talanoa* at home? Why?)**

*Language of talanoa*

When given to share the language used in *talanoa*, more than half of the participants stated that Tongan language is the first language spoken in their homes. The *talanoa* is mainly shared in Tongan.

*'Oku mau talanoa faka-Tonga pē. 'Oku ou ako 'i pē ke nau lea faka-Tonga he 'oku ou mahu 'inga 'ia pē ke nau lea faka-Tonga... fai e pu 'i mo e fekaú 'oku fai pē he lea faka-Tongá. Toki 'alu pe ia ki he akó 'o lea faka-pālangi ai.*

We are *talanoa* (talking) in Tongan. I teach my children to speak Tongan because it is important for them to speak Tongan... I do little commands and ask them to do things in the Tongan language. The child will speak English at school (Participant Five).

*Ko e tu'u he taimí ní 'oku teke 'a e lea faka-Tongá 'i homau 'apí. Neongo 'oku 'ikai lava e tokotaha 'o talanoa faka-Tonga, 'oku 'ikai tuku ai 'emau talanoa faka-Tongá.*

Tongan language is stressed in our home. Although one of the children cannot speak Tongan fluently, that doesn't stop us from Tongan storying (Participant Eight).

*'I he 'eku nofo 'i 'apí, 'oku kau 'a e lea faka-Tongá ia he lea mahino 'oku ou ngaue 'aki 'i 'apí ki he 'eku fānaú. Ko u talaange kia kinautolu, "Te ke lea fakapālangi pe 'i 'apiako, ka 'i ho 'o ha'u ki hení, te ke lea faka-Tonga pē.*

In my home, I talk in Tongan to my children. I tell them, "You speak in English in school but when you come home, you have to speak the Tongan language (Participant Nine).

*'Oku mahu 'inga pē ke tau fetu 'utaki mo 'etau fānaú 'i he 'etau leá... neongo e mālohi 'a e fānaú ke nau ngāue 'aki e lea fakapālangí, ka 'oku teke pē ke nau lea faka-Tonga 'i 'apí.*

It is important to communicate with our children in our language... though the usage of English language is strong in our children, but we have to push them to use the Tongan language at home (Participant 10).

*Ko e lea 'oku ou ngaue 'aki lahi 'i 'apí ko e lea faka-Tongá, si 'isi 'i pē ke ngāue 'aki ha lea fakapālangi. Ko hoku taimi mo 'eku fānaú ko e taimi 'oku si 'isi 'i ka ko e taimi ia 'oku mahu 'inga. Ko hoku tūkingata ke lea faka-Tonga ki he 'eku fānaú ke 'oua na 'a mole 'a e leá.*

I use the Tongan language at home, we hardly talk in English. My time with my children is limited butt it is very important. It is my utmost to

talk in Tongan to my children in order to maintain the language (Participants Eleven).

However, some Tongan families prefer to use both English and Tongan language when they *talanoa* in their homes. Encouraging both may result in the survival of the mother tongue. Not only that, but the children are now at school and they mostly speak in English.

*‘Oku mau talanoa fakapālangi mo faka-Tonga pē ‘i ‘api. ‘Oku mahu’inga pē ‘ene lea fakaTongá ka ‘oku ou faka’amu ke ne ako ‘ae lea fakapālangi he ko e fetu’utaki ia ‘i he fonuá ni ‘i he lea fakapālangi.*

We use both the English and Tongan language at home. My son’s Tongan language is important but I want him to use the English language because it is the communicative language in this country (Participant Six).

*‘Oku mau talanoa pē he ongo leá. Ko e ‘ilo he taimi ní ‘oku fiema’u ke ua e leá, ke fakatou poto he lea faka-Tongá mo e lea fakapālangi.*

We talk using both the languages. Today, it is found that it is important to have two languages, to be able to speak both the English and Tongan language (Participant Eight).

*‘I ‘api ‘oku ou lea fakapālangi au ki he’eku kau leká ke fakalakalaka ‘enau lea fakapālangi.*

We *talanoa* in English and Tongan language at home. I want my child to improve his English by speaking English to him at home (Participants Seven).

## **Summary**

The findings outlined in the chapter have been articulated for each participant. Furthermore, the findings sought to identify some emergent themes across the participants as a group. These emerging themes are the *koloa* presented by the participants, which are discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 6: Discussion and analysis of the findings

### *Introduction*

In this chapter I attempt to discuss *talanoa* in the light of *koloa* for its social, cultural and educational underpinnings, qualities and values, which will be an advantage to the mainstream educational situation in the teaching and learning of Tongan children in New Zealand. This means that the practical experiences by which Tongan families live and practise in their various homes are identified, described, classified and outlined from the perspectives of the participants as were revealed in the *talanoa*. A metaphor of *koloa* is told to help the reader visualise how Tongan people present *koloa* in a cultural function to add more value to the study. The discussions of *talanoa*, social construct, cultural practices and educational values are presented followed by the analysis of the findings in the light of *koloa*.

### *Koloa as a metaphor*

When Tongan women attend a Tongan cultural function or ceremony, families and relatives are gathered to the home of the *'ulumotu'a* (head of the family). The women contribute *koloa* also called as *'teu* (artefacts presentation). The *koloa* are *feta'u* (the deceased's blanket) if it is a funeral, *ngatu* of various length and design, *fala* of various kinds, varieties of flowers being arranged, gift baskets filled with good smelling perfumes, and metres of fabrics are given. The *koloa/teu* are piled together as the women *haha'o* (sit around) in the house of the *'ulumotu'a*. Then the female *'ulumotu'a* classifies the *koloa* according to their value within Tongan culture. If the collected *koloa* are too much, then some of them will be left for a later family function and the *'ulumotu'a* will be responsible for that. After the classification then the *'ulumotu'a* calls out: "*kuo faka'ofa'ofa 'etau koloá/teú*" (the *koloa* is now ready to present). This means that the women have presented their best and it is arranged according to how Tongans

value each item at such cultural occasions. The *koloa* is now ready to present in the Tongan traditional function.

*Talanoa* (daily practises), willingly shared and presented by the participants in *talanoa* groups, are the *koloa*. The compilation of *koloa* when collected for a Tongan cultural function is like collecting data from the participants in the study. The *talanoa* (data) was collected as the participants freely shared their daily practices through *talanoa*. The '*ulumotu*'a is like the researcher leading the study. Like the '*ulumotu*'a sorted and arranged the *koloa*, the participants' stories are collected together then the researcher classifies them (the stories) according to the key and emerging themes from *talanoa*. The thesis is likened to the *koloa* being readied for presentation at the function. Only the relevant ideas are taken into consideration while others are withheld for later discussion. This is likened to the leftover *koloa* for another function. Therefore, the metaphor is summarised as:

The women give *koloa* in a function = Participants contribute stories in the research

The '*ulumotu*'a = the researcher

The *koloa* = the data

The sorting out of *koloa* = the classifying of data as they emerge as themes

The *koloa* ready to present = the thesis

The left over *koloa* for later function = the unused data for further study

Consequently, the *koloa* presented will not only *fakakoloa* (enrich) the family but also the people who collected and presented the *koloa* as well. Similarly, the thesis will not only *fakakoloa* the researcher but those who have contributed to the study. The literature in the field of research will also be *fakakoloa*. These *fakakoloa* are in terms of feeling connections, illustrating considerations, and displaying respect.

This chapter is the presentation of *koloa* from *talanoa*. *Koloa Talanoa* is what Tongans value greatly. Tongan people value *koloa talanoa* as their best method of traditional

connection, meditation, peace promotion, consideration, teaching and learning approach. The *koloa* of *talanoa* may enhance the attitudes of parents and teachers towards the Tongan language and culture and can be added to the present pedagogies used by teachers working with primary school children in schools. The following sections discuss the *talanoa* as commonly emerged in the *talanoa* (data). They are the social constructions of *talanoa*, the cultural practices of *talanoa* and the educational values of *talanoa*. Each *talanoa* is detailed in the following sections. Other *talanoa* emerged from *talanoa* are also discussed.

### ***The social constructional koloa of talanoa***

*Talanoa poto (Applying the knowledge being shared).*

The strength of social construction of *talanoa* lies in how Tongans construct *talanoa*, to suit the context where *talanoa* is taking place, the people who are participating in *talanoa* and the topic of the *talanoa*. In a Pacific nation community, especially of Tongans, people will behave differently as they talk depending on the age, gender, cultural rank or community position (Vaiioleti, 2003). An example of *talanoa* with the subject age group would be:

People visiting my house sometimes shared *talanoa* or jokes that are not appropriate for my children to listen to (Participant Four).

At the same time, an example of cultural behavioural of *talanoa* would be,

When people come home, my son would ask the: Who? What? Why? Where? My son doesn't care who he questions even if the stranger is listening. To me, it is not accepted in our culture" (Participant Ten).

Participant Four believes that children at home have their own chance to *talanoa* with him. Participant Ten believes that questioning people by her children is rude and it is not accepted in Tongan culture. In the context of the Tongan family at home, parents' and children's *talanoa* are informal. Children are allowed to freely share what they



experience. When adults' *talanoa*, sharing jokes and stories that are inappropriate for children, the children are not allowed to participate.

The construction of Tongan families is based on the cultural connections in the family.

A family *talanoa* is general because it has to suit all ages, both adults and children.

There are some *talanoa* that needs to be covered because of our children; while some is freely shared. That's when we see the importance of *talanoa* in the homes. (Participant Three)

More than half of the participants defined *talanoa* according to how they practise in the homes. Most definitions highlighted the significance of *talanoa* in Tongan families.

There are some common definitions mentioned across the groups and some newly emerged ones. The most common definitions are the way to communicate within the family households, extended families and others. Communication within the family shows the good relationship and that "the establishment of good interpersonal relationship and rapport within the families" (Otsuko, 2006) are practised and maintained. Communications within the Tongan families enable the family members to reflect upon activities and work done in school; daily experiences seen and joined; and thoughts, concerns and issues. They are interested in "the way people talk about their lives is of significance, that the language they use and the connections they make, reveal the world they see and in which they act" (Vaiioleti, 2003). *Talanoa* validates the experiences and ways of Tongan peoples in Aotearoa.

People are *loto lelei* (willing) to contribute through *talanoa* when there are good interpersonal relationships among them. The *loto* of the family members are in good harmony and therefore willing to share ideas and make connections. They would *talatalanoa* (endless talking) without the constraint of time (Manu'atu & Kepa, 2004).

The parents, Participants Two, Nine and Ten, believe that their homes are homes of *talanoa*. This belief supports the idea that *talanoa* is commonly practised by Pacific

Islanders, as it stems from their culture in which oratory and verbal negotiation have deep traditional roots (Vaioleti, 2003). It is apparent that Tongan families who have built relationship and develop ideas through *talanoa*, frequently *talanoa* due to the history of Tongan people which is passed through narration from one generation to the next through *talanoa* (Halapua, 2005). Tongan families intelligently use this habit of *talanoa* in teaching their children,

*Po talanoa* can empty out little by little the *koloa fufū* (hidden treasure) so that children did not even think about. The more I *talanoa* the more my children learn and the more ideas are being developed from them (Participant Five).

The homes that *fa'a talanoa* demonstrate that parents allow time for their children to *talanoa* and share their views. Parents, Participants One, Two, Five and Nine, utilised *talanoa* during family prayer and meal times, when they are at home, when they are travelling to school and work and whenever they prompt to *talanoa*. To them, *talanoa* is a family routine. The more time they spend together to *talanoa*, the closer they are as a family and the more teaching and learning takes place.

However, it is a pity that parents like Participants Three, Seven, and Eleven declare *talanoa* is not effective in their homes. The fathers are busy, either with their favourite TV programme, professional work or they are not interested at all to *talanoa* with their children. Work engagement takes most of the parents' time which make teaching and learning challenging or difficult in the homes.

Fortunately, a solution to this problem was raised by Participants One and Two. It is the responsibility of the parents to *fakatalanoa* (to encourage discussion). *Fakatalanoa* will not only provide an opportunity for the child to open up and *talanoa* but to understand what is in the child's mind (Manu'atu, 2004). *Fakatalanoa* is the initiative parents put forth to start *talanoa* when the children are not prepared to *talanoa*.

Another essential point Participant Three suggests is that *talanoa* within his family is not enough. *Talanoa* is not enough because there is no priority set in the family in which time is set aside for the family to *talanoa*. In fact, this most important activity to be done in a family is not likely to happen. However, he continued that *talanoa* plays an important role in the life of the children. A family is progressing towards its goals when they frequently *talanoa*, *fakatalanoa*, *talatalanoa*, and *pō talanoa* “about their experiences, express their aspirations, voice their issues and speak their different perspectives” (Manu'atu, 2004) at home.

The evidence shows that *talanoa* is formed in the heart. “When I *talanoa* with my child, I give him my heart” (Participant Six). *Talanoa* reveals that thoughts remain sacred in the heart of the parents to their children. These perspectives are paralleled to the idea of ‘talking from the heart’ (Halapua, 2005).

“Most of my days in New Zealand, I often communicate with my heart about a good future for my children. I hope that my children will achieve from their education ...(suffuse with tears)... I always “talk with my heart” about those good achievements ... I’ve discussed them with my children and set them as goals for my children to aim ... I’ve told my children my aspirations for them to achieve. I dream of the time that they will progress from Primary school to College then University” (Participant One).

The ‘talking from the heart’ is related to the Tongan saying “‘*Oku ou talanoa mo hoku lotó*” (I am communicating with my heart) (Manu'atu, 2004). This illustrates that thinking and planning precede *talanoa*. That is, the parent is actually thinking before talking with them. The idea that is spoken was planned ahead and followed up by the parents. Parents want the best for their children. “*Talanoa loto*” emphasizes envisaging progress, holding a vision of goodly parents who get the best education and other opportunities that will pour forth in the future of their children while family resides in New Zealand. Through *talanoa*, family members socialise and, at the same time, educate the *loto* to be *poto*, using the *talanoa* shared from the heart. These kinds of

stories *fakakoloa* (enrich) the hearts of Tongans with happiness and friendship with other people in the community.

### ***The educational koloa of talanoa***

Children learn through different kinds of talanoa. All participants *talanoa* (talk) with their children. Some *talanoa* (stories) are *fakaoli* (causing amusement), *fakamamahi* (causing pain or sorrow), *fakamaatoato* (serious), *faka'ofa* (sympathy or pity), and *fakalaumālie* (spiritual). Providing all that, the stories are educational because children appear to be learning from the stories through their response. Examples of each story are illustrated to further explain and detail each kind of *talanoa* (story).

### ***Talanoa fakaoli (amusing talanoa):***

The children laughed, made comments, even joked and compared today with the past; that is when they learn from *talanoa fakaoli*. A *talanoa fakaoli* creates the sense of close relationship between parents and their children as well as teachers and their students. *Talanoa fakaoli* creates a feeling of *māfana* (inwardly warmth) and *mālie* (interesting) (Manu'atu, 2000) in the hearts and minds of the students to consider concentration on their works. A *talanoa fakaoli* told by Participant Six as her son always laughs when she relates the story of when he was a baby, “Taking off his nappies to change is something that he finds amusing. The nurse said that her son would be a “show off” person as he grew up. He would never forget this incident” (Participant Six). From this *talanoa fakaoli*, the child has come to value the relationship with his mother at home which may find practise in the classroom.

Participant Eight related a story about how she met her husband. They created a sense of *maheni* in a *fale faiva* (theatre) where they *talanoa* (chat) and ‘*fe’iloaki*’ (to see and greet one another). From a Tongan teacher perspective, this *maheni* (to be personally

acquainted with) brings the idea that Tongan children usually focuses and concentrates in class if they *maheni* with the teacher. For example, when the child knows that the teacher knows her parents, he/she will react differently in the classroom, mainly for the better (i.e. work is well done, behaviour is self-controlled, concentration is long and tasks are fulfilled on time). For the child to act like this in the classroom is a *koloa* (blessing).

### ***Talanoa fakamamahi (sad talanoa):***

The stories of gossiping (Participant Eleven), rumour and hatred about someone mainly to put people down is known as *talanoa fakamamahi* to the children. Those stories create a spirit of hatred in the hearts of their children towards those who the adults are discussing.

Participant Three related the idea that the children are like a camera. They run around the house taking pictures of the household. If *talanoa* at home is more argument and quarrel, then it causes contention and corporal punishment. The children then learn to yell, shout and cause trouble at home as well as in other places.

This kind of *talanoa* brings the opposite of the first *talanoa*, *talanoa fakaoli*. When the hearts of the children is far from wanting to study, there is a Tongan saying: “*Ko vaihi ē ha’ane to e fie ako*” (Never would he want to study). On the other hand children are flexible. They can be motivated by *talanoa fakaoli* to cheer up and renew the teacher’s rapport.

### ***Talanoa fakamaatoato (serious talanoa):***

When the participants relate stories to the children, it reveals the spirit of seriousness or concern so that the children desire to follow the participants’ lead. Participant Nine states that her father taught them the concept of saving money in the bank when they

were young. The rumour makers called them “the two dollar children” as they each banked two dollars into their account every week. The children ignored these comments and deposited their money. The father was seriously doing this for he knew he was teaching his children. Unfortunately, today, her (Participant Nine) children are resistant to banking the \$2. The seriousness of the stories depends on the person who is relating the stories. The family tradition of *mo’ui fakapotopoto* (living sensibly) is linked here through *talanoa*. The mother is relating the story to her children to enhance sensible living in her children’s lives.

***Talanoa faka’ofa (sympathetic talanoa):***

Listening to stories move them to feel passionate towards one another, child can become excited and learn at the same time. Participant One related his mother’s story when she came from her island, the island of Ha’apai, to attend college on the main island of Tongatapu. She left her family, came to stay with other family relations in Tongatapu, predominantly to study. She sacrificed her time, need, and longing for her family. She went through homesickness, hunger, illnesses and other afflictions. She could not tell her relatives her feelings and her needs but patiently faced all those difficulties in order to accomplish her one and only goal, to achieve exceptionally well in education. Children are educated by such sympathetic stories.

In terms of *koloa*, the hearts of the children are constructed to value the concept of consideration for others. The hearts are sympathising with the family members who have gone through such difficulties and therefore, create feelings of commitment to do better, to complete works, to pass exams, to love parents, and to achieve goals.

### ***Talanoa fakalaumālie (spiritual talanoa):***

Children are encouraged to behave with morality and ethics and to practise honesty both in the classroom and whatever field they may be. They apply the teachings from the parents at home to any situation they may face in life.

A *talanoa* of this sort is detailed by Participant Two about the \$50 found by his son in the school swimming pool. His friends suggested using the money to order food but the son refused. He took the money to the teacher. When the teacher discovered that he found the money he congratulated him and thanked him for his good deed.

The child is taught to be honest by those at home. When he is away from home, application of such *talanoa fakalaumālie* (spiritual stories) is applied. Doing good deeds, like Participant Two's son, reveals the kinds of parents behind the children, just as in the saying "Behind a great man stands a great wife". The good actions from the children tell that there are spiritual *talanoa* told in the homes. Similarly, a child's outstanding performance in the classroom shows that there is superior teaching and learning taking place in the classroom.

### ***Talanoa mālie and māfana (energetic and inward warm feeling talanoa)***

Based on the notion of educational *talanoa*, the stories that identify as *talanoa mālie* (interesting stories) emerged from the *talanoa* groups. In theory, *talanoa* can become an experience that is *mālie* when it draws upon the passion, knowledge and moves the heart, mind and soul of the participants to a realm of deeper understanding beyond what is experienced (Manu'atu, 2000b, 2004). For most families, *talanoa mālie* in the home are those where children loved listening to stories from their home island; stories about the parents' childhood; stories about the parents' schools; stories about the parents' wedding; and even stories about themselves. In other words, the stories that children

find most interesting are the stories about their people, land, language and culture. Children found those stories meaningful and interesting. The stories move their hearts and minds to learn about their cultural and ancestral identity.

The notion of *mālie* and *māfana* (Manu'atu, 2000) were experienced in the *talanoa* (discussions) groups. For example, most participants were willing to share practices because they realised the importance of *talanoa* (storying); the appropriateness of the topic and the data collection method; the familiarity of venue; the good personal relationships among the participants and the researcher bringing about *mālie* and *māfana* to *talanoa* (talk) freely about their daily practices. When participants experience such feelings in *talanoa* (storying), then *mālie* exists, at the same time, teaching and learning also happens.

When people are engaging in *talanoa* (telling stories), *talanoa* (storying) continues on and on as one idea links to and builds upon another. These ideas become connected. It makes the *pō talanoa mālie* (energetic and interesting) and *māfana* (inwardly warmth). When these feelings exist in *talanoa* (storying), telling stories is difficult to end. That is, when people engage in *pō talanoa*, they create 'realities' based on 'pre-existing' realities (Manu'atu, 2000, p. 56). As a result, the amount of time consumed was not recognized and *talanoa* (storying) was hard to end. *Talanoa* (Telling stories) continued as we shared the refreshment. Therefore, the two hours of *talanoa* in each of the groups were too short. As one participant admitted, "Our *talanoa* today is enthusiastic. It makes us more awake" (Participant Six). Thus, the *talanoa* is *mālie* and *māfana* because participants realised that their actions at home is relevant in their children's teaching and learning.



## **A teaching and learning approach**

*Talanoa* is an approach to teaching and learning. Children's curious minds are best approached by *talanoa*. For example: "I try my best by varying my methods of teaching and disciplining them but *talanoa* is the best method to approach my children" (Participant Eight).

The idea relates and connects with Vaioleti's (2003) definition of *talanoa* that '*talanoa* is a face-to-face conversation whether it is formal or informal'. *Talanoa* (storying), employed by parents at home, teaches children and the children are learning from them. The parents' teachings are innovative when used to approach discipline and teach their children to learn deeply. For example, sitting down with the children to *talanoa* (talk) enables the parents to find out about the day's achievement in school, the children's likes and dislikes, their good and bad experiences, as well as the next day's plan. Sitting down with the children best demonstrates how parents do have time to *talanoa* (talk) with their children.

### *Past history*

Most families like to tell stories about the parents' past histories. They make comparisons of the past and the present as teaching and learning devices for their children today. Such lessons are based on the difficulties that the parents faced. For example, parents went to school carrying no lunch (Participant Nine); grandmothers ironed their parents' school uniform with the charcoal iron and on the lantern's glass (Participant Five); parents' completed the chores at home to help their mothers before going to school (Participant Six); and because parents' family had little financial wealth, they studied hard to gain a good education (Participant Eight).

These *talanoa* (stories) make implications upon the children's lives. These traditions and practices are valued through the sharing. These values of traditionally doing 'the best' for the family are passed from generation to generation. The chain of teaching and learning continues.

*Pu'i (telling someone to do something)*

Parents like Participant Four teach mathematic concepts by ways of *pu'i* (telling someone to do something). The *pu'i* is a command to the children with the intention of the learning from it. In addition, Participant One teaches concepts like budgeting and welfare as well as maths by family *talanoa* (discussion) of income. Children are taught about the family income, not only to learn about income and budgets, but to be aware of spending accordingly. The *talanoa ako* indicates teaching and learning is carried out by *talanoa*. The *talanoa* told by the parents is valuable because what parents share, the children usually treasure and remember. Children learn from *talanoa* and apply the lessons to their daily lives.

*Demonstration: walk the talk*

Language, family heritage and genealogy, legacy and cultural values are preserved through *talanoa* at home. Parents like Participants Five and Ten teach their children by *talanoa* and demonstration at the same time. Having said that, it reminds me of a Chinese proverb: "Tell me and I'll forget; Show me and I'll remember; Include me and I'll understand". Including children and demonstrating works for them is one form of indigenous educational practices. Tongan children learn as they observe (K. Thaman, 1996).

## ***The cultural values of talanoa***

*Talanoa* brings about the culture practised in the family. This is obvious from the study when parents express concerns about the choice of language used at home to *talanoa*. The use of language is also significant when Tongans *talanoa*. Language used has to be appropriate to both adults and children. It is often said that culture shapes our beliefs and the way we behave and where there are conflicts in the cultural expectations between a teacher and her students, pedagogy is used to bridge the gap. But pedagogy also is always linked to the culture in which it originates (Barrow, 1990). Therefore, *talanoa* bridges the gap. The following cultural ideas were identified.

### **Language of *talanoa***

More than half of the participants stated that Tongan language is the first language spoken in their homes, and that the *talanoa* is mainly shared in Tongan. They continue to *talanoa* in Tongan with the hope that their children will hold onto their mother tongue.

Teaching and learning history through *talanoa*, informs the children of their culture. *Talanoa* helps to preserve history and maintain Tongan beliefs, values, language and culture. *Talanoa* opens the minds of children to learn by recognising the meaning behind a *talanoa*.

Tongan children are constantly and consistently exposed to the majority culture and language (English) in New Zealand (Aipolo & Holmes, 1990). However, some families use both English and Tongan to *talanoa*. Often the children are shifting to English as a second language and while the parents are talking to them in Tongan, children are responding in English. “The first language for my children is English, but my husband does not understand English well, so we *talanoa* in Tongan (Participants Six).

Participant Six later recognised the consequences of not encouraging and persuading children to speak the Tongan language. She continued, “Once my husband died, my family’s *talanoa* now are in both English and Tongan” (Participant Six).

The study recognises that the parents value the significance of speaking the mother or ancestral tongue in the new land and encouraging bilingualism. Knowing and speaking two or more languages is an advantage to the children’s education (Tagoilelagi-Leota et al., 2005). Mainstream New Zealand education now supports and encourages children to be bilingual. Participant Five related a courageous story that pushed her to enforce the spoken of Tongan language by her children at home when she talked to her daughter’s teacher. “The teacher reported to me an award achieved by my daughter because she is bilingual. My daughter had helped two new Tongan students in class. She was the interpreter to the new students in class” (Participant Five). From this experience, it is clear that parents need to talk with the teachers for the “construction, reconstruction and deconstruction” (Manu'atu, 2004) of their children’s education. Talking with the teachers can be a wakeup call for parents to be aware of the achievements being made and for short comings to be addressed from home.

### **The participation of children in *talanoa***

An aspect of cultural practices held within *talanoa* (storying) is the participation of children in *talanoa* (discussions). Apparently, parents like Participant Four do not like people visiting their house who tell stories or jokes that are not acceptable for their children. Again, this fact is linked to the language of *talanoa*. Some parents are telling their stories without *kofukofu’i* (covering up) by *talanoa fakapatonu* (telling explicitly) in front of the children. Visitors sometimes articulate vocabularies that are not appropriate for children. Nevertheless, Tongan can manipulate words to *heliaki* (use

metaphorically), or talk straight depending on who participates in *talanoa* (Vaioleti, 2003).

*Talanoa* is a way of *femahino'aki* (to understand each other) and *fetu'utaki* (to communicate with one another; being connected or related). When children participate in storying with the parents, a sense of understanding is created.

*Talanoa femahino'aki* is descriptively used here to affix storying in a secure position. Secure position is an end product of an unsecure process of storying commencing with an opening idea and with a positively firm outcome with agreed decision at the end. *Femahino'aki* through storying brings about the sense of *nonga* (peaceful), *falala* (trust) and that everything is *maau* (in order) between the parents and the children because both parents and children have *talanoa* (critically discussed) the issue and finally come to an agreement. For example: “When a problem exists in the family, it is *talanoa'i* (discussed), until it is solved (Participant Seven).

*Fetu'utaki talanoa*, on the other hand, clarifies that *talanoa* (storying) is a verbal communication which is the appropriate procedure that connects people as they *talanoa* (tell stories). Without *fetu'utaki talanoa*, people who are storying find it hard to tell stories if they are not familiar with or connected to the group. *Fetu'utaki*, also, brings about the sense of *fekau'aki* (related), *felōngoaki* (to see and converse with), *fe'iloaki* (to see and greet one another) and *fehokotaki* (connectedness) among Tongan people. Through *talanoa*, Tongans learn their *fehokotaki* through their *hohoko* (genealogy), discovering how the families are connected. For example: “I introduce myself to people I meet for the first time to find connection” (Participant Nine). Not only that but *talanoa* relates and greets those who are engaged in *talanoa*.

Parents like Participants Five, Ten and Eleven believe that children only participate in *talanoa* (discussions) when it is just their family to *talanoa* (discuss). When people visit

the family the children are allowed to do their own activities in their room while the parents *talanoa* (talk) with the visitors. The parents believe that it is Tongan culture that children should not talk when adults are visiting the family or while family adults are talking. There are well understood customary rules concerning who can speak and the order in which they should speak (Robinson & Robinson, 2005). Deference is shown to elders and those with *tu'unga he nofo* (prestige) and status in the society. However, it is often hard to stop the children from interrupting *talanoa*. Children sometimes or most of the time '*kau'i talanoa*' (to join in a conversation when not asked or wanted) whenever they feel like doing so.

*Kau'i talanoa* visualises the constructions of storying in a Tongan context. The children's limitations to *talanoa* (join in the discussion) refer to the notion of *to'u* (the variant of ages). The variant of ages means that children are not ready to join the adults when they *talanoa*. Storying is constructed considering the age of people and children are allowed only to *talanoa* among certain constructions of discipline. The interruption in a *talanoa*, when one is not a part of the *talanoa*, is counted as disrespectful action in the Tongan culture.

Based on the notion of *talanoa*, the prevention of children from *talanoa* shows the contrast in beliefs between Participants Two, Nine and Ten. They believe that children are progressing when they are given the opportunity to *talanoa*. It also shows the good interpersonal relationship with other people who are participating in *talanoa*.

Therefore, a parent may argue that the prevention of children from *talanoa* can contribute to their reluctance to share their needs and unwillingness to voice their practical experiences when they are asked. On the other hand, the children's *kau'i talanoa* may positively enforce their abilities to contribute to the teaching in school.

### ***Talatalaifale (talanoa within the house)***

Parents use *talanoa* to *tala* (to tell, to inform, to advise) (Churchward, 1959). This is not done once a month but every day (Participant Nine). Parents call their children together and inform them of their chores before the family prayer. This is the time when all family members are quiet and listen to whoever is speaking. *Tala* gives you an idea about attentive parents who always follow up the *talanoa loto* or the vision being outlined for their children.

Views on the best times to *talanoa* (talk) vary. Parents like Participants Six and Seven confirmed that the best *talanoa* times are when parents are prompted to *talanoa*. Other parents like Participants One and Eight feel that the best time to *talanoa* is meal times. Specifically, according to Participant Eight, the best time is the dinner time, when everyone is eating. Everyone is in a good mood. An additional family's *tala* is best during meals especially dinner and going out for activities (Participants One, Eight and Eleven). These are good times because everyone is in a good mood to listen, participate and accept what has been *tala* as advice.

While children are being limited to *talanoa*, an idea raised by Participants One, Two, and Three, who are faithful members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) is that families hold a Family Home Evening (FHE) once a week. In this FHE, the children have the opportunity to voice their needs, share experiences and even state their likes and dislikes. In return, parents listen to their children. The parent's *talatalaifale* (household warning not intended for outside ears) is given during the FHE. Needs are tended, problems are solved, words of advice are given, and chores are arranged during a FHE. *Talatalaifale* is another instance when parents teach their children within their homes.

Similarly, parents like Participant One carry out a one-on-one *talanoa* with his children. This one-on-one *talanoa* takes time but the father is able to have a face-to-face conversation (Vaioleti, 2003) with the children. In this one-on-one *talanoa*, the status of the children's education is discussed and the children's behaviour is reviewed and disciplined if necessary. Although the process of one-on-one is long, it is still practised in the family. These parents take time to *talanoa* with their children.

### ***Talanoa opens the mind***

A new definition comes into view when *talanoa* is used as a device that cracks open the mind of the child to learn new things. Having more time to *talanoa*, opens the minds of the children so they can experience new ideas which use *talanoa* as a device for teaching and learning. A device, according to The World Book Dictionary is an intention or desire (Barnhart, 1969). Through *talanoa* the intention and desire of parents are passed on to their children. That is, through their intention and desire in *talanoa* a problem is solved, a plan is proposed, a family is connected, *ako* is encouraged, teaching is endorsed, and learning is achieved (K. H. Thaman, 1995). *Talanoa* is a device that needs to be utilised in the home to teach and encourage learning.

### ***Summary***

A discussion of the findings in this chapter continued the dialogue in relation to the emergent themes with each participant's transcript and across the range of transcripts. In summary, participants in the study have practised *talanoa* in their homes in many ways that contribute to the teaching and learning of their children. Each participant's *talanoa* is unique in ways of approaching their *talanoa*.



## ***Talanoa is koloa***

Therefore, the findings and its discussion bring to light the following values (*koloa*) of *talanoa*.

- *Talanoa poto*: the child is able to apply the knowledge being shared in *talanoa*.
- *Talanoa ako*: the child is able to learn from *talanoa*; educate others through *talanoa*; parents educate their children; teachers in school teach and educate children.
- *Talanoa fakapotopoto*: the child is considering the value to inform everyday cultural practices and can not hurt others feelings. Tongans when they *talanoa* are able to ‘wrap’ their *talanoa* according to the values of people who are *talanoa*.
- *Talanoa lelei*: the child is able to use the framing moral and ethical practices according to the standard and traditional culture where the child belongs.

## **Tongan children becoming *koloa***

- *Pōto`i lea*: they are skilful in giving speech
- *Pōto`i talanoa*: they are skilful in telling stories
- *Pōto`i fakamatala*: they are skilful in discussing ideas and explaining themselves
- *Mata kāinga*: they know the family relations, and demonstrate the value of love towards extended families. When the child knows the *kainga* (extended families) he is willing to contribute in obligations and fulfil responsibilities within the circle of the *kainga*.

- *Nima poto*: children are very talented in crafting, daily chores. Whatever responsibility is given he knows what to do.
- *'Ilo'i kita*: children know who they are. They know themselves and what they should be doing.
- *Anga faka'apa'apa*: children are very respectful and have good manners.
- *Anga poto*: children know what to do in certain aspects.
- *Anga nofo*: children are self-disciplined.

Notice the use of Tongan terms in the study because the children learn more of the language when the terms are stated with the meanings followed.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the conclusions supported by these findings and discussions. Then the limitations of the study will be identified. The implications to mainstream New Zealand primary schools will be outlined. Finally the direction of future research is presented.

## Chapter 7: CONCLUSION

### *Introduction*

In the chapter, after briefly summarizing the research findings, the strengths and limitations of the study are discussed. The implications of the findings to enhance the teaching and learning of students' in primary schools are proposed with suggestions for potential future research.

### *Summary of findings*

In the research I addressed the following research question: *How does talanoa contribute to the teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children in New Zealand?* The findings presented in the thesis represent some of the contributions of *talanoa* to the teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children in New Zealand as developed from *talanoa* with groups of Tongan parents in the West Auckland suburbs.

The social constructions, cultural practices and educational values of *talanoa* are the key themes that bring about the contribution of *talanoa*. Out of the key themes emerged additional themes that contribute to the teaching and learning of Tongan children. The additional themes are the homes of *fa'a talanoa* (*talanoa* frequently), *talanoa mālie* (meaningful *talanoa*), *cultural language of talanoa*, children's participation in *talanoa*, and *talanoa fakaako* (educational *talanoa*).

In summary, while the findings from the study confirm a number of related *talanoa* factors explored in previous studies which contribute to the teaching and learning of primary school children, all *talanoa* are educational. This includes *talanoa fakaoli* (causing amusement), *fakamamahi* (causing pain or sorrow), *fakamaatoato* (serious), *faka'ofa* (sympathy or pity), and *fakalaumālie* (spiritual) which appear to be the

additional *talanoa* factors that contribute to the teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children. The way parents relate *talanoa* to their children will determine the purpose and moral of the *talanoa*.

The *koloa* is now completed. The *koloa* is the thesis which contains the best *koloa* of knowledge from Tongan parents. The *koloa* will *fakakoloa* the teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children in New Zealand. Therefore, I have named it “*Talanoa Koloa: Ko ha fakakoloa ‘o e ako ‘a e longa’i fānau Tonga ‘i Nu’usilá*” (*Talanoa Koloa: A contribution to the teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children in New Zealand*). The thesis helps to *talanoa’i* (discuss) those *talanoa* most useful as pedagogical approaches mainly for the benefit of Tongan primary school children in New Zealand.

### ***The strengths and limitations***

A number of strengths can be identified in the research, which include the following:

- The appropriateness of the methodology. Through *talanoa*, this research has explored approaches that *talanoa* itself can contribute to the teaching and learning of primary school children. A Tongan methodology is appropriately significant to investigate and to elaborate on Tongan beliefs and cultural practices.
- The exploration has identified positive features and constructive suggestions for ongoing improvements to the teaching and learning of primary school children.
- A significant contribution to the limited New Zealand literature on the teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children is provided.
- The engagement of parents provides an opportunity for the parent’s voice to be heard and furthermore, validates their teaching and learning approaches and practices of the Tongan homes.

- The impact of the research process had on my personal and professional learning and understanding. Moreover, consideration of the underpinning epistemologies of various quantitative and qualitative approaches to research continue to challenge the nature and the purpose of post graduate education for Pacific nation people.
- The familiarity and the organizations of participants, not only among themselves but to the researcher, was a strength that supports the sharing of experiences among the participants. It enabled the study to dig deeply into their daily practical experiences and therefore to collect reliable data.

Some limitations of the study are recognized, particularly in the level of generalizability. The present research addressed family practices within the homes of Tongan parents. Parents from other ethnic groups may not pursue the same *talanoa* experiences in their context. While limitations exist, I am confident of the benefits and findings this research has uncovered to me and others. This study provides insights into approaches that may not be included in other research designs. In particular, by using the *talanoa* approach, parents' practical experiences were captured at an individual and small group level. The data are not all used in this study due to word limits and therefore, they are kept to my own references for later studies and other written articles.

Consideration needs to be given to the existence of the *talanoa* approaches identified in the study and their significance to the improvement of teaching and learning at the primary school level. Reflections of the research findings will possibly bring changes into teaching and learning practices.

### ***Implications:***

Based on the findings of the study, what suggestions can be made for better practice? That is, how would the study contribute to the enhancement of teaching and learning in schools? I suggest that the findings in the study highlight the need for greater consideration of a number of aspects in the *talanoa* practices of parents' teaching and children's learning in the mainstream New Zealand education, specifically at primary school. As mentioned earlier, this study can also contribute to the understanding of the treaty partnership between the Crown and *Tangata whenua*. The study is the Tongan people's *koloa* that contribute to the *tangata whenua* of *Aotearoa*. Another study will be carried out at a later date which will be more than the scope of this study. I would argue that the findings of the study could bring awareness to school administrators, teachers, parents and children in the following ways.

Firstly, given that the findings of the study indicates various ways that *talanoa* contributes to Tongan children's teaching and learning, the question arises of how to create a teaching and learning methodology that is more conducive to effective teaching and learning for all students. The school might want to consider creating different approaches and more conducive methods for teachers which would directly benefit the teaching and learning given the multi-ethnicity of current students in New Zealand schools. This could be achieved by greater and on-going *talanoa* between the teaching staff, parents and students in the school.

Secondly, the findings may cause the teachers in the academic programme to recognise individual differences in their classrooms and to make an effort to vary the teaching techniques and motivate students to learn in a more effective way. Parents meanwhile are pressing forward to support their children with social construction of *talanoa*, educational values of *talanoa* and the cultural practices of *talanoa* that will continue to

motivate and encourage children's teaching and learning. Together, they will enhance an environment of effective teaching and learning both in the homes and the schools.

### ***Suggestions for future research:***

Assuming that mutual understanding between teachers and students contributes to effective teaching and learning, it is my hope that other researchers will draw upon and extend my findings into other areas of research on the teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children in New Zealand. The unfinished *talanoa* from the *talanoa* groups is available to initiate another koloa of thesis as a new study. Should a broad range of methodologies be applied to this area of study, it may well be that our understanding of the complexity and intricacy of ways influencing the teaching and learning of primary school children is deepened. My challenge to current and future researchers is to be critical and aspire for rich, positive change leading to reciprocity and mutuality in primary school education in the New Zealand mainstream. The methodology of *talanoa* should be further encouraged but to *talanoa* with the **primary school children** on their view of *talanoa* in their homes. These are ideas that I believe require further research and investigation.

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## Glossary of Tongan Terms

*The glossary of Tongan terms is arranged according to the Tongan alphabets. They are: a, e, f, h, i, k, l, m, n, ng, o, p, s, t, u, v, ‘*

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>ako</i>               | teaching, learning, education                            |
| <i>faiva</i>             | dances   |
| <i>fakaako</i>           | educational  |
| <i>faka-e-lotofale</i>   | within the house   |
| <i>fakakoloa</i>         | to enrich; a contribution                                |
| <i>fakalaumālie</i>      | spiritual  |
| <i>fakamāatoato</i>      | serious  |
| <i>fakamālō</i>          | thanks, gratitude  |
| <i>fakamamahi</i>        | causing pain or sorrow                                   |
| <i>fakama’uma’u</i>      | restraint behaviour                                      |
| <i>fakaoli</i>           | amusing, funny   |
| <i>fakafiefia</i>        | causing amusement  |
| <i>fakakaukau</i>        | ideas; mind; suggestion                                  |
| <i>fakatalanoa</i>       | to encourage discussion when they do not know each other |
| <i>faka’ofa</i>          | sympathy or pity   |
| <i>faka’ofa’ofa</i>      | beautiful  |
| <i>fala</i>              | double-strand mat  |
| <i>falala</i>            | trust  |
| <i>fale faiva</i>        | theatre  |
| <i>fa’a talanoa</i>      | frequently dialogue                                      |
| <i>fefine Tonga tu’a</i> | Tongan female commoner                                   |
| <i>fehokotaki</i>        | connectedness  |

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <i>fekau'aki</i>                      | related   |
| <i>felōngoaki</i>                     | to see and converse with  |
| <i>femahino'aki</i>                   | to understand each other  |
| <i>fetu'utaki</i>                     | to communicate with one another                                     |
| <i>fe'iloaki</i>                      | to see and greet one another  |
| <i>fe'ilongaki</i>                    | knowing each other's identity and place; being connected or related |
| <i>fono</i>                           | a village meeting   |
| <i>fungani</i>                        | top row of flowers on an ornamental girdle                          |
| <i>heliaki</i>                        | use metaphorically  |
| <i>hiva</i>                           | music   |
| <i>hohoko</i>                         | genealogy   |
| <i>hou'eiki</i>                       | chiefs  |
| <i>kakai</i>                          | commoners; people   |
| <i>kāinga</i>                         | relations   |
| <i>kau'i talanoa</i>                  | to join in a conversation when not asked or wanted                  |
| <i>kofukofu'i</i>                     | covering up   |
| <i>koloa</i>                          | values, what ones value   |
| <i>koloa'ia</i>                       | rich  |
| <i>koloa'aki</i>                      | to regard something as wealth                                       |
| <i>ko vaihi ē ha'ane to e fie ako</i> | Never would he want to study or learn                               |
| <i>loto</i>                           | hearts  |
| <i>maau</i>                           | in order  |
| <i>māfana</i>                         | inwardly warmth.  |
| <i>maheni</i>                         | familiarity   |
| <i>makapuna.</i>                      | Grandchildren   |
| <i>mālie</i>                          | very interesting; energetic   |

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>mālō 'aupito</i>        | thank you very much   |
| <i>mata'i koloa</i>        | the best of the best  |
| <i>mokopuna</i>            | grandchild  |
| <i>mo 'ui fakapotopoto</i> | living sensibly   |
| <i>noa</i>                 | any kind, ordinary, nothing-in-particular, purely imaginary   |
| <i>nonga</i>               | peaceful  |
| <i>ngāue fakamea'a</i>     | handicrafts   |
| <i>pō talanoa</i>          | talking among, talking through the night  |
| <i>poto</i>                | knowledge; knowing what to do   |
| <i>pu'i</i>                | telling someone to do something   |
| <i>tala</i>                | As a verb: to inform people, to tell, to relate, to command, to assert, to ask and to apply, to give information about tradition, to ask for medicine, to apply to the government (in the context of Tonga) for a section of land. As a noun: it refers to a thorn, a prickle, a spike, a barb or a bristle |
| <i>talanoa</i>             | critical dialogue; stories; experiences; practices  |
| <i>talanoa'i</i>           | critically discussed  |
| <i>talanoa fakaako</i>     | educational stories; stories to learn from  |
| <i>talanoa fakapatonu</i>  | speak explicitly  |
| <i>talanoa loto</i>        | meditation, reflection  |
| <i>talanoa mālie</i>       | meaningful and interesting stories  |
| <i>talatalaifale</i>       | household warning not intended for outside ears   |
| <i>talatalanoa</i>         | endless talking or to talk endlessly  |
| <i>tālave</i>              | to engage in a long and keen or serious <i>talanoa</i>  |
| <i>tauhi koloa</i>         | keeper of tangible goods  |
| <i>tu'i</i>                | king  |
| <i>tu'unga 'i he nofo</i>  | prestige, power in the society  |

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <i>vavae, vaevae, vavahe</i>        | to share  |
| <i>'api</i>                         | homes   |
| <i>'ilo</i>                         | to know; to recognise;  |
| <i>'ofisakolo</i>                   | head of the village   |
| <i>'oku ou talanoa mo hoku lotó</i> | am talking with my inner self; I am communicating with my heart |

## Appendices

### Appendix 1A:

# Participant Information Sheet



#### **Date Information Sheet Produced:**

26 October, 2007.

#### **Project Title**

Talanoa: A contribution to the education of Tongan primary children's teaching and learning in New Zealand.

I am a student currently enrolled in a Master of Education programme at AUT and I would like to invite you to be a voluntary participant in my research.

#### **What is the purpose of this research?**

The research will explore talanoa in terms of teaching and learning of Tongan primary school children by their parents in the homes. The thesis seeks/aims to contribute to the literature on educating Tongan primary school children in New Zealand.

The main research question is:

How does talanoa inform and contribute to the teaching and learning of Tongan primary children in New Zealand?

#### **How was I chosen for this invitation?**

You have been chosen to participate in this study by the following criteria:

You are a Tongan parent who lives in West Auckland and you have a child (or children) who are currently attending Primary School and you speak Tongan at home.

#### **What will happen in this research?**

After you give your consent to participate in the research you will be divided into three groups. There will be a group for four mothers, another group for four fathers and a mixed-group with two mothers and two fathers.

The talanoa will be audio-recorded and each session is anticipated to last two hours. Notes will be taken during the talanoa sessions. There will be two talanoa sessions per group based on the key themes identified on the notion of talanoa.

The talanoa will be transcribed in the Tongan language and they will be returned to you to check for their accuracies and to make any changes, if needed.

#### **What are the discomforts and risks?**

Talanoa cannot take place when the participants are uncomfortable. Talanoa is grounded on trust and feeling comfortable to talk, discuss and share stories with others. You do not have to discuss matters if you do not want to. The stories conveyed in the talanoa will only be used for the purpose of the research

#### **How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?**

Not applicable



### **What are the benefits?**

The benefits in participating in this research will include the following:

Deepening your understanding of the 'place' of Tongan language and culture in the education of Tongan children in New Zealand

Deepening your understanding of the Tongan concept of talanoa

Extending your knowledge of the values of Tongan language and culture in Aotearoa

Encourage the spirit of māfana and support for Tongan people's education in New Zealand

You will be acknowledged for your participation in the research.

### **What are the costs of participating in this research?**

There will be no financial cost to you in participating in this research. The research will take up four (4) hours of your time in two separate sessions.

### **What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?**

You will be given time to discuss and share your knowledge about the topic alongside three other people in the group.

### **How do I agree to participate in this research?**

You can give your consent to participate in the research by signing the Consent Form if you read and understand the information provided here and you feel that all your questions are being answered.

### **Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?**

Yes, the researcher will organise a meeting with all the participants to disclose the results of the research. A summary report of the findings will be given to you upon request.

### **What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Linita Manu'atu, Tel: 921 9999 ext 7345 or e-mail [linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz](mailto:linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz)

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Madeline Banda, [madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz](mailto:madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz), 921 9999 ext 8044.

### **Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

#### **Researcher Contact Details:**

Makelesi Latu, E-mail: [latu\\_makelesi@hotmail.com](mailto:latu_makelesi@hotmail.com) or on mobile 021 117 7895

#### **Project Supervisor Contact Details:**

Dr. Linita Manu'atu – Tel: 921 9999 ext 7345 or e-mail [linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz](mailto:linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz)

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on  
10 September 2007, AUTEK Reference number 07/159.**

# “Fakamatala fekau’aki mo e Fekumi ni”



**‘Aho: 26 ‘o ‘Okatopa, 2007**

**Hingoa ‘o e Fekumí:** Talanoa: A contribution to the education of Tongan primary children’s teaching and learning in New Zealand”.

(Liliu fakaTonga: Talanoa: Ko ha tokoni fakaako ki hono ako’i ‘a e fanauako Tonga ‘i he Lautohi Pule’anga ‘i Nu’usila).

‘Oku ou lolotonga ako ‘i he ‘Univesiti ‘o e Tekinolosia ‘o ‘Aokalani (AUT University). Ko e Fekumi ni ko e kongia ia ‘o ‘eku ako ki hoku mata’itohi ko e Master in Education. ‘Oku ou fakaafe’i koe ke ke kau mai ki he Fekumi fakaako ko ení.

## **Taumu’a ‘o e Fekumi:**

‘Oku taumu’a ‘a e Fekumi ni ke ne tatala e ngaahi ‘ilo fekau’aki mo ‘etau koloa fakaTonga ko ia ko e talanoa ka ‘e fakatefito pē ‘a e Fekumi ni ki hono talanoa’i ‘a e mahu’inga fakaako ‘o e talanoá ‘i hotau ngaahi ‘apí pea mo ‘etau nofo ‘i he fonua ni. ‘O ka kakato leva hono tohi e Fekumi ni ‘e tĕnaki e ngaahi ‘ilo ko ení ki he Ngaahi Fakamatala Fakaako ‘o e Ako’i e fĕnau Tongá ‘i he Lautohi Pule’angá ‘i Nu’usila ni.

‘Oku tefito ‘a e Fekumi ni ‘i he fo’i fehu’i ko ení: ‘Oku anga fĕfĕ ‘a ‘etau ako’i ‘etau fĕnau ‘i Nu’usila ni ‘aki ‘etau koloa fakaTonga ko ia ko e talanoa?

## **Na’e anga fĕfĕ hono fili koe ke ke kau ki he Fekumi ni?**

‘Oku makatu’unga hono fili koe ke ke kau mai ‘i he Fekumi ni ko ‘euhí ko e tokotaha Tonga koe pea ‘oku ke nofo ‘i he Uesite ‘o ‘Aokalaní; ‘oku ke ma’u fĕnau pea ‘oku nau lolotonga ako ‘i he Lautohi Pule’angá pea ‘oku ke lea fakaTonga ‘i homou ‘apí.

## **‘E fakahoko fĕfĕ ‘a e Fekumi?**

Ko e’uhí kuo ke tali e fakaafe ko ení ‘oku ke tau’atĕina pe te ke loto ke ke kau ki he Fekumi pe ‘ikai.

‘E vahevahe kimoutolu ki ha kulupu ‘e tolu ke mou talanoa ai – ‘a ia ko e kulupu ‘e ‘i ai e ngaahi fa’ĕ ‘e toko 4, mo e kulupu ‘e ‘i ai e ngaahi tamai ‘e toko 4 pea mo e kulupu ‘e ‘i ai e ongo fa’ĕ mo e ongo tamai.

‘E fakahoko ho’omou talanoa ‘i ha houa ‘e ua pea ‘e tohi mo hiki tepi ke ma’u kakato ho’omou ngaahi fakamatalá.

‘E tohi fakama’opo’opo ‘i he lea fakaTonga ‘a ho’omou ngaahi talanoá pea ka hili iá ‘e toe fakafoki atu kiate kimoutolu ke mou fakatonutonu pea mo liliu ha me’a ‘e fehalaaki.

### **‘Oku ‘i ai ha fakatokanga keu tomu’a ‘ilo ki ai fekau’aki mo e Fekumi ni?**

‘Ikai.

### **Ko e ha e ngaahi lelei te u ma’u mei he’eku kau ki he Fekumi ni?**

‘I ho’o kau mai ki he Fekumi ni te ke ma’u e ngaahi lelei ko ení:

- ‘e toe fakalahi atu ho’o fakakaukau ki he anga e nofó mo e pou pou ki he ako ho’o fānaú
- te ke fanongo ki he ngaahi koloa ‘o e talanoá pea tānaki ai ho’o ‘iló
- fakaloloto ho’o fakakaukau ki he mahu’inga ‘o ‘etau lea fakaTongá ‘i Aotearoa
- te ke loto māfana ke pou pou mo tanumaki e ako ‘a e kakai Tongá ‘i he fonua ni

‘E fakakau homou hingoa ‘i he kakai Tonga na’e tokoni mai ke talanoa’i e ngaahi fakakaukau ‘o e Fekumi ni.

### **‘Oku ‘i ai ha totongi ‘eku kau ki he Fekumi ni?**

‘Ikai.

### **‘Oku ‘i ai ha faingamālie kehe ke u fakakaukau ki ai ko e’uhí ko ‘eku kau ki he Fekumi ni?**

‘Io. Te ke lava ‘o fakakaukau heni ke fa’u mo fakalahi ho’o network mo e kakai Tonga ‘i he mala’e ‘o e akó ‘i Nu’usila ni.

### **‘E fēfē ha’aku fakahā atu ‘oku ou loto ke u kau ki he Fekumi ni?**

Kapau kuo mahino kiate koe ‘a e Fakamatala ni, pea fakafiemalie kiate koe ‘a e ngaahi tali ki ho’o fehu’í pea ke fakamo’oni leva ‘i he Foomu Tali ke Kau ‘i he Fekumi ke fakahā ai kuo ke loto ke ke kau ‘i he Fekumi ni.

### **‘E lava ke u ma’u ha fakamatala ki he ola ‘e ma’u mei he Fekumi ni?**

‘Io. Te u toe foki mai ‘o ui ha fakataha mo kimoutolu ke u fakamatala’i ai ‘a e ola ‘o e Fekumi ni. ‘E lava pe ke ‘oatu ha Tohi ‘o e Fekumi ni ‘okapau te ke fiema’u.

### **Ko e ha ‘eku me’a ‘e fai kapau te u ta’efiemālie ki he Fekumi ni?**

Kapau ‘oku ‘i ai ha me’a te ke ta’efiemālie ki ai fekau’aki mo e Fekumi ni pea ke kataki ‘o fetu’utaki kia Dr. Linita Manu’atu, ko e Faiako ia ‘o e ngāue ni ‘i he tu’usila ko e [linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz](mailto:linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz) mo e telefoni (09) 9219999 ext 7345. Kapau leva ‘oku ‘i ai ha me’a te ke ta’efiemālie ki ai fekau’aki mo hono fakahoko ‘o e Fekumi ni pea ke kataki ‘o fetu’utaki kia Madeline Banda, Executive Secretary, AUTEC, Auckland University of Technology ‘i he tu’asila ko e [madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz](mailto:madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz) mo e telefoni (09) 921 9999 ext 8044

### **Ko hai te u fetu’utaki ki ai fekau’aki mo e Fekumi ni?**

Ko e tokotaha ‘oku ne fakahoko e fekumi ni:

Ko au Makelesi Latu ‘i he tu’asila ko eni: [latu\\_makelesi@hotmail.com](mailto:latu_makelesi@hotmail.com) telefoni mobile 021 1177895.

Mo e Faiako: Dr. Linita Manu’atu ‘i he tu’asila ko e [linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz](mailto:linita.manuatu@aut.ac.nz) mo e telefoni (09) 9219999 ext 7345.

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee  
10 September, 2007, AUTEK Reference number 07/159.**

**Appendix 2A:**

**Consent Form**



**Project title:** Talanoa: A contribution to the education of Tongan primary children's teaching and learning in New Zealand.

**Project Supervisor:** Dr. Linitā Manu'atu - Senior Lecturer in Education

**Researcher:** Makelesi Latu

Indicate your response by a ✓ (tick)

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 27 August, 2007.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that identity of my fellow participants and our discussions in the focus group is confidential to the group and I agree to keep this information confidential.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the focus group and that it will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that while it may not be possible to destroy all records of the focus group discussion of which I was part, the relevant information about myself including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will not be used.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes   
No

Participant's signature:

.....

...

Participant's name:

.....

...

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

Date:

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on  
10 September, 2007, AUTEK Reference number 07/159.**

## Appendix 2B

### Foomu Tali Ke Kau 'i He Fekumi



#### Hingoa 'oe fekumi:

Talanoa: A contribution to the education of Tongan primary children's teaching and learning in New Zealand".

(Liliu fakaTonga: Talanoa: Ko ha tokoni fakaako ki hono ako'i 'a e fanauako Tonga 'i he Lautohi Pule'anga 'i Nu'usila).

**Faiako:** Dr. Linitā Manu'atu

#### Tokotaha fekumi: Makelesi Latu

Kataki ka ke lau 'a e tohi ni pea kapau 'oku mahino kiate koe pea ke faka'ilonga'i 'aki 'a e ✓  
'i he ○ 'a ia 'oku ha atu he to'ohema.

- Kuou lau pea mahino kiate au 'a e ngaahi fakamatala fekau'aki mo e fekumi ni 'a ia 'oku hā 'i he foomu "Fakamatala" 'o e 'aho 26 Okatopa, 2007.
- Kuo tuku mai e faingamālie ke u fakafehu'i pea kuo u fiamālie ki he ngaahi talí.
- 'Oku mahino kiate au 'a e mahu'inga ke malu'i 'a e ngaahi talanoa kotoa pe te mau fakahoko 'i he Fekumi ni pea ke ngata pe 'i he kulupu 'a e ngaahi talanoa ko ia 'o 'ikai toe mama ki tu'a ha me'a.
- 'Oku mahino kiate au koe talanoa 'e fakahoko 'e he kulupu ni 'e hiki tepi pea mo tohi.
- 'Oku mahino kiate au te u lava pe 'o to'o hoku hingoá mo 'eku ngaahi fakamatala kotoa pe mei he Fekumi ni kimu'a pea kakato hono tanaki 'oe ngaahi fakamatala, pea 'e 'ikai ha'ane kau kovi 'e taha kiate au.
- Kapau 'e 'ikai ke u toe kau ki he Fekumi ni 'oku mahino kiate au 'e 'ikai lava ke faka'auha kotoa 'a e ngaahi lekooti 'o 'eku ngaahi fakamatala kuo u lea'aki 'i he kulupú, 'e 'ikai ngofua ke toe ngaue'aki ha fakamatala kuo tohi pe hiki tepi fekau'aki mo au.
- 'Oku ou loto lelei ke u kau 'i he Fekumi ni.
- 'Oku ou faka'amu keu ma'u ha tatau 'o e Tohi Fakamatala 'o e Fekumi  
(kataki 'o faka'ilonga'i pe taha): 'Io ○ 'Ikai ○

Tokotaha 'oku kau he Fekumi:

Fakamo'oni:.....Hingoa.....

Ngaahi fakaikiiki 'o e tokotaha 'oku kau 'i he Fekumi

Telefoni ('api):..... Mobile .....Tu'asila e-mail : .....

'Aho :.....

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 10 September, 2007, AUTEK Reference number 07/159.