

The importance of people and place: Reimagining school curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Abstract

Place can be defined simply as space that matters to humans, exposing their subjective and emotional attachment, transforming space into a site of human significance. This research is located in the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region on the East Coast of the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. The study explores what a ‘notion of place’ means to educators funded through the Ministry of Education Learning Experiences Outside The Classroom (LEOTC) curriculum support project, and how their perspectives and insights could inform school curriculum design.

Place-based pedagogy is an interdisciplinary approach that engages with a geographical location focusing on understanding local history, cultures and the ecology of a place. Learning in a contextual setting can imbue in students and teachers an understanding of how events have shaped spaces into places and created a sense of community. It encourages the creation and sharing of stories, challenging prevailing assumptions and the exploration of new or different perspectives, inspiring people to feel a sense of belonging, locally and in the broader world. Engaging in place-based approaches provides for schools an opportunity to interact with community partners outside of its education establishment, potentially broadening the ways schooling can be viewed and perceived.

This research study is underpinned by ecofeminism, a theory and movement related to women and the environment, and an ethic of care, a form of relational ethics. The study design involves photo-elicitation and semi-structured interview methods, and is analysed using thematic analysis and aspects of visual narrative analysis. Since the Ministry of Education has announced local curriculum design to be one of its professional learning and development (PLD) priorities in relation to the Leading Local Curriculum Guide series, such an inquiry is timely. This research thus contributes to ideas of developing holistic, meaningful and balanced curriculum – specifically related to a place-based approach. Informed by the perspectives and insights of LEOTC-funded educators, this study develops an understanding of a ‘place’ as a basic human requirement, enabling a reimagination of local curriculum contexts as a challenge to much of what dominant culture and schooling teaches. It is premised on the view that a ‘sense of place’ supports the formalisation of the relationship between humans and their environments as co-habitators.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this work is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge, 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.

Signed:

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Emma McFadyen

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Chapter One: Introduction

This research study is located in the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region on the East Coast of the North Island of Aotearoa/New Zealand. It explores what place means to educators funded by the Ministry of Education Learning Experiences Outside the Classroom (LEOTC) curriculum support project (n.d.), and how their perspectives and insights could inform school curriculum design. The educators provide experiential learning opportunities using place-based approaches, and in their work is the potential to broaden the way schooling can be viewed and perceived. This study is conceptually framed by the value for a ‘sense of place’ I associate with a landscape, by ecofeminism and by an ethic of care. This ecofeminist ethic of care guides my ontological consciousness, actioned through a set of principles, and supports the ethical aspects of the study. Following a statement of rationale and conceptual framework is a chapter overview that provides brief insight into the process carried out by the research exploration.

The rationale and the research questions

In Aotearoa New Zealand, it is suggested that there has been emphasis on a western European colonial approach to education which has undermined indigenous ways of knowing and being, imposing foreign values and belief systems on Māori (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2019; Penetito, 2009). It is important for the education system of Aotearoa New Zealand to provide adequate opportunities for all to have a regular and consistent “ontological identification” with place and the kinds of relationships most favourable for this development (Penetito, 2009, p. 5). It has been over ten years since Penetito (2009) made this claim, but the marginalisation of indigenous cultures and the earth’s ecological systems continues, with damaging implications, nationally and internationally. This same European colonisation and the undermining of indigenous cultures can be compared to the relationship of humans, as the colonisers, to the earth’s ecological systems, as the colonised (Blenkinsop et al., 2016). Morse et al. (2018) share similar sentiments and suggest the reimagining of a relationship with the world and add the importance of place becoming an integral part of educational work. Penetito (2009) advocates for place-based education, an interdisciplinary approach that engages with a geographical location focusing on understanding local history, cultures and the ecology of a place. Learning in a contextual setting can imbue in students and teachers an understanding of how events have shaped spaces into places and created a sense of community (Penetito, 2009). It encourages the creation and sharing of stories, challenging prevailing assumptions and the exploration of new or different perspectives, inspiring people to feel a sense of belonging, locally and in the broader world (Barane et al., 2018). Engaging in place-based approaches provides opportunity for schools to interact with community partners outside of its educational establishment (Barane et al., 2018), with the potential to broaden the ways schooling can be viewed and perceived.

Research exploring people's different perspectives of place and how they engage in and with place can support the New Zealand Curriculum, the "principal function [of which] is to set the direction for all student learning and to provide guidance for schools as they design and review their curriculum" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 6). Inquiries that can provide insights to the members of a local school community by gathering their thoughts, can contribute ideas to the development of holistic, meaningful and balanced curriculum. Such an inquiry is timely, given that the Ministry of Education (2020) announced local curriculum design to be one of its professional learning and development (PLD) priorities in relation to the Leading Local Curriculum Guide series. Without such inquiry, there is the risk of maintaining a western lens on schooling, prioritising the concepts and language of a dominant European worldview, and perpetuating an ongoing approach to pedagogy and practice involving the marginalisation of alternative ways of thinking and knowing regarding people and place.

This research study explores the insights and perspectives and 'notion of place' of local community educators funded through the Learning Experience Outside the Classroom (LEOTC hereafter) support project (Ministry of Education, n.d.). The new knowledge arising from this study has the potential to address the ways to reimagine much of what dominant culture and schooling teaches (Gruenewald, 2008). It has the potential to show an understanding of a 'sense of place' as a basic human requirement, formalising the relationship between humans and their environment as co-habitors (Penetito, 2009), through their interrelations with a place. Ecofeminism and an ethic of care provide a lens to view and acquire the new knowledge as the perspective helps to attune to particular individual beings (Kheel, 2009). The new knowledge could support theory-construction of a concept of place, while the insights gained from the participants could support a critical analysis of secondary data in the form of localised curriculum resources. The research relates to one of the key points for designing and reviewing local curriculum, which is to be "responsive to the priorities, preferences and issues" of the community and people (Ministry of Education, 2019, p. 5).

The study is framed by the following question and sub-questions:

What does 'place' mean to LEOTC-funded educators and how could their perspectives and insights inform school curriculum design?

- RQ 1 What is 'place' and why is 'place' a relevant concept in school curriculum design?
- RQ 2 What values in regard to 'place' are evident in the perspectives and insights of participant LEOTC-funded educators, and how do their inter-relations with 'place' influence these values?
- RQ 3 Why are the perspectives and insights of participant LEOTC-funded educators relevant to school curriculum design, and how could they inform curriculum design?

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this research study can be explained using a photograph of ‘my place’ (Figure 1). The photograph depicts my daily walk to a beach access point where I live. I often meet neighbours as I go about this routine, and, together, we check the surf conditions. If I were to title this photograph, I would call it ‘Cherishing our place’. ‘Cherishing our place’ explains my ‘lived-space’ (Soja, 1999), and the ways I know and understand have been informed

Figure 1 Cherishing our place



Source: Author

through my lived-experiences with people and places.

I had a curiosity and wonder for the world around me from a young age, and chose a profession in primary teaching to continue to actively seek out challenge and new experiences, using inquisitive thinking with like-minds (children). I specialised in environmental education, establishing an environmental education programme in a school early in my career, which helped me to form networks across Aotearoa New Zealand. Later, these networks led to working in organisations as an environmental educator. My experiences contributed to a focus on place-based education with a particular wondering about the idea of place and why I was attached to the place in the photograph. This way of thinking, I have discovered as a graduate student, enables me to frame a philosophical connection with ecofeminism, an ethic of care, and ecofeminist pedagogy.

The origins of ecofeminism date to Francoise D'Eaubonne, who coined the term more than forty years ago, with the understanding that ecofeminism is a theory and movement related to women

and the environment (Estévez-Saá & Lorenzo-Modia, 2018). When explaining ecofeminism, Kheel (2008) refers to a quilting metaphor, suggesting ecofeminist theorising is a collective of people coming together to weave their ideas and experiences into the quilt (Kheel, 2008). I relate this idea to where I live, and how through reciprocity with place, I interconnect with the earth's inhabitants and its systems, listening and being informed by the knowledge that is shared. Ecofeminism is then a diverse range of ideas, principles, and knowledge rather than a single philosophy (Estévez-Saá & Lorenzo-Modia, 2018). An ethic of care is a form of relational ethics, where human connection is created based on encounters and relationships with each other in situational contexts (Clement, 1996; Noddings, 2013). Educators who are informed by an ecofeminist ethic of care call for relational shifts where humans behave in intelligent and caring ways towards themselves, each other, the earth's inhabitants and its systems (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). I incorporate an ecofeminist ethic of care into my pedagogy, involving the ways my philosophy is actioned in my work, caring deeply for my relationships with people and the place I have photographed. An ecofeminist perspective provides a lens for educators, like myself, questioning the social and conceptual structures supporting a dominant western worldview, that continues to inform traditional formats, pedagogies, and classroom structures. An ecofeminist practice coincides with an ecofeminist perspective, playing a role in this questioning, as both politics and pedagogy are enactments of power relations (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010).

A set of five principles guided the formation of an ontological consciousness as a means to support planning, implementation and evaluation of this research study, ensuring an ecofeminist ethic of care was practised (Stephens, 2017). The set of principles are: being gender sensitive; valuing voices from the margins; centring nature; selecting appropriate methods/methodologies; and undertaking research towards social change (Stephens, 2017). Each principle has individual value and is applied to context-dependent situations, with an awareness of marginalised groups, critiquing existing social norms, and supporting the reimagining of alternative possibilities (Stephens, 2017). These principles are used to develop an awareness of any potential relationship and power issues in the study, and to apply reflexive strategies to mediate situations (Day, 2012). It requires a consciousness of the possible dynamics, involving how the participants are varyingly located with and around relations of power, e.g. in the community, as well as myself, and how these positions can impact the study. The study's methods ensured the participants had greater control over the direction of their individual interview so power was not retained by me as the researcher, but the power was shared (where possible) to reduce a potentially intimidating researcher-participant power dynamic (Briggs et al., 2014).

The set of five principles revealed ethical considerations regarding metanarrative in the research study. The metanarrative concept involves two worldviews, an indigenous worldview and a western worldview. I acknowledge post-structural concepts whereby people ascribe meaning to

those places in which they live (Jarratt et al., 2019). Unique characteristics are then associated with an individual or community's belief system based on their knowledge and understanding. I recognise the complexity of having multiple belief systems in a place, which can also amalgamate and overlap with one another, causing an unfinished and messy entanglement. Yet, in order to communicate such complexity for this study, there are times metanarrative, involving the idea of two worldviews, is used.

Overview of the chapters

Chapter One introduces the rationale and the research questions. In Chapter Two, the concept of 'place' and its relevance to school curriculum is explored through a literature review. This review comprises three parts: place theory; a critical pedagogy of place; and critical pedagogy of place theory in relation to school curriculum. The section on place theory explains a number of theoretical perspectives on place and how these perspectives are multifaceted and overlap with one another, creating messy entanglements. A critical pedagogy of place defines two discourses, critical pedagogy and place-based education. Together, these discourses identify place as the context for people to practise transforming the oppressive aspects of reality (Gruenewald, 2008). When comparing a critical pedagogy of place with school curriculum, discussion involves a 'rehabilitation and decolonisation approach' (Gruenewald, 2008). This approach is situated in place-based pedagogy and practice (Halbert & Salter, 2019), showing alignment with localised curriculum.

Chapter Three explains the methodology, with each section of the research study fitting together to provide a seamless and coherent approach to carrying out the research. The underpinning theoretical framework of the methodology, as already noted, is ecofeminism, an ecofeminist ethic of care, and ecofeminist pedagogy. The study design refers to the criteria established for participant eligibility and the participants who volunteered for the study. It includes the research methods of photo-elicitation and semi-structured interviews. The data collected in transcripts, were thematically analysed while photographic evidence was subjected to visual narrative analysis. Ethical considerations are discussed using reflexive analysis, which involved researcher self-critique, careful consideration of the power relations between the researcher and the participants, and the quality and integrity of the research study.

In Chapter Four the findings are discussed, revealing three themes that emerged from the data, named 'Relationality', 'A moral compass', and 'The gifting of knowledge'. 'Relationality' refers to the pattern showing the participants' various interconnections with place. Within this theme narrative analysis is used to give voice to the individual participants' narratives, including: a relationship between people and place involving the past; broadening to encompass the lived experiences of the participants; and intertwining to explain a complex entanglement with time-

space. ‘A moral compass’ addresses the participants’ lived-experiences in place and how these experiences affect their values and perspectives. The threads from this pattern involve the valuing of different worldviews, guardianship, and healthy communities. ‘The gifting of knowledge’ addresses a pattern emerging from the participants’ lived-experiences discussing the multiple ways they access place knowledge, the reciprocal way knowledge is shared, and the value the participants place on gifting this knowledge.

In Chapter Five, the findings and literature review are synthesised, presenting new knowledge. The discussion includes a study of place-meaning and its relevance to school curriculum, focusing on Soja’s Thirdspace (Soja, 1999) process. This process provides a lens used to gain new knowledge from the participants’ perspectives and insights on place, showing alignment with the local curriculum guide (Ministry of Education, 2019). The new knowledge reveals two worldviews in contention: an indigenous worldview and a western worldview. The participants display an ability to navigate these socially constructed worldviews through their work, which relates to critical pedagogy of place theory. Insights from the participants’ narratives emphasise the relevance of a ‘reinhabitation and decolonisation approach’ (Gruenewald, 2008) to informing school curriculum design. The approach discusses a local-global consciousness where ‘the local’ (as in a school community) has agency to create a local curriculum, which can potentially challenge ‘the global’ in school curriculum design, using the Leading Local Curriculum Guide series (Ministry of Education, 2020) as a means to valuing the restoration and representation of people and place and support the health of a community.

Chapter Six is the conclusion, where the threads from the previous chapters are pulled together. These threads reveal how post-structural concepts of place support an understanding of the participants’ ‘notion of place’. A synthesis of the findings and critical pedagogy of place theory displays two worldviews (an indigenous worldview and a western worldview). This synthesis supports Penetito’s (2009) work, stating “a negotiated relationship between the two [worldviews] is imperative but not unproblematic” to education (p. 21). A reflexive approach is used to discuss the limitations of the research study, along with the idea of struggle being part of the research process. This struggle supported the growth of my confidence and academic skills as a researcher. Insight from the research study and the research process informs further study, involving the exploration of a negotiated relationship between the two worldviews regarding ‘place’, the implications for school teachers wanting to mediate and bridge these worldviews for collaborative partnership, and the concepts of ‘cultural repair’ and ‘connection-based knowledge’ (Young, 2019) to support the restoration and representation of people and place for healthy communities.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This research study is an exploration of what place means to educators funded by the Ministry of Education LEOTC curriculum support project (Ministry of Education, n.d.), and how their perspectives and insights could inform school curriculum design. Through an ecofeminist perspective, I relate to the idea of reciprocity with place and an interrelationship with the earth's inhabitants and its systems. I am informed by an ecofeminist ethic of care, calling for relational shifts where humans behave in intelligent and caring ways towards themselves, each other, the earth's inhabitants and its systems (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). In this study, I define place simply as "space which has been ascribed meaning" (Jarratt et al., 2019, p. 409). Nomikos (2018) adds "mere space becomes place when it is transformed into a site of human significance – when its particular aspects come to matter to individuals and communities" (p. 454). Yet 'place' is also multifaceted and interweaves and overlaps varying perspectives across diverse disciplines (Cresswell, 2015). Place provides opportunities to explore new or different perspectives, challenging prevailing assumptions and inspiring people to feel a sense of belonging (Barane et al., 2018). For this reason, place-based approaches can be recommended in conjunction with the national New Zealand Curriculum when developing local school curriculum—a current professional learning and development focus of the Ministry of Education (2020). The following literature review clarifies place and its relevance to school curriculum design. It explores place theory, a critical pedagogy of place and the importance of a critical pedagogy of place in relation to school curriculum. There is a large volume of work involving the concept of place, contributing to many discussions and debates. This research study explores only a small area of the place discussion, addressing key points supporting why place is relevant to school curriculum design.

Place theory

An understanding of place involves people making meaning of their relationship to it. Agnew, a political geographer, sums up these interactions and fundamentally defines them through three aspects of place, involving "locale, or place as setting for social interactions; location, or place located in geographical spaces; and sense of place, or attachment between people and place" (Agnew et al., 2003, p. 606). In the most obvious sense, places are geographically located. They have "fixed objective co-ordinates" and when the word place is used as a verb in everyday language it often refers to 'where' as in a "notion of location" (Cresswell, 2015, p.13). As "things in the world, the list of places are endless" (Nomikos, 2018, p. 454). Their scope can range from a small area in a closet to the entire planet (Nomikos, 2018) and can be described as "locale" (Agnew et al., 2003, p. 606). Places are considered to have a concrete form or material setting, where people carry out their everyday lives (Cresswell, 2015). They are a way of "making sense of the world, of knowing, understanding, experiencing, and valuing the world" (Nomikos,

2018, p. 454), showing a “subjective and emotional attachment people have to place” (Cresswell, 2015, p. 14).

There is wider debate regarding place, with the central argument involving a multitude of theoretical perspectives each arguing a different understanding of a notion of place. These various perspectives can be outlined by three levels, which address different ways of thinking about place (Cresswell, 2015). First, Cresswell (2015) explains a descriptive means to understanding place, with relation to “the common-sense idea of the world being a set of places” (p. 56) and can be perceived “as a unique and particular entity” (p. 56). A second level applies a social constructionist approach. It continues to pay attention to the idiosyncrasy of particular places, much like the descriptive means, but explains the unique features of a place in relation to “instances of wider processes of the construction of place”, like post-colonialism or capitalism (Cresswell, 2015, p. 56). Such an approach might be viewed through the lenses of Marxism, feminism, and post-structuralism (Cresswell, 2015). Cresswell’s (2015) third level is linked to a phenomenological approach to place. This approach seeks to explore the essence of being human in a place. Heidegger’s (1971/2001) concept of ‘dwelling’ supports this way of thinking. He acknowledges the importance of people being grounded in their surroundings, making a subjective connection to the idea of being at home, and ‘with’ or ‘in’ the environment. As a caveat, Cresswell (2015) notes that these various ways of thinking are not siloed, but overlap with each other.

The overlapping concepts of place are involved in various entanglements, contributing to a broader understanding of place, and, simultaneously creating complexity. One complex concept involves an intricate relationship with place and space. Tuan (1977) explains this concept through an experiential perspective saying “what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place” when an individual or group of people start to know it well, and bestow meaning and value upon it (p. 6). It means space and place require each other to understand the other. “From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space, and vice versa” (Tuan, 1977, p. 6). Entwined in the space and place concept is a “continuum of movement” (McAnany & Lamoureux-St-Hilaire, 2020, p. 17). This is an entanglement of two approaches which create hybridity. One approach is the material aspect of ‘locale’ with a focus on sedentism or pause (McAnany & Lamoureux-St-Hilaire, 2020; Tuan, 1977), while the other involves movement and mobility, where people let go and withdraw their hold on things and places (McAnany & Lamoureux-St-Hilaire, 2020). Tuan (1977) adds “if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place” (p. 6).

Harries' (1997) work acknowledges the relationship between movement and pause and says through the advancement of technology, our sense of place is no longer situated and bound to a specific place. Instead, technology and communication have created freedom by diminishing distance through mobility. Therefore, one place can be traded for another (Harries, 1997). Harries (1997) contrasts two ways of understanding space, a homogenised perspective, one of objectivity, "neutral with respect to values", while the other perspective is "regional, heterogenous, and freighted with values" (p. 178). A balance is required to enrich experience through the freedom to explore space on one hand, with an understanding that the world is a dwelling where people attach place-meaning concepts, on the other (Harries, 1997).

The relationship created with space through movement provides an opportunity for pause. It is through the pause in movement that people can reflect on the ways they connect socially with a spatial context, potentially informing a 'notion of place'. Within a place there is scope for the movement and mobility concept to occur. Henri Lefebvre, an urban theorist, contributed to ideas associated with everyday life, exploring the contrasts between people's bodily rhythms and the rhythmic demands of living in a modern society (Cresswell, 2015). Through a phenomenological lens, Lefebvre (1991) claimed that social relations are affected by space, with space being socially produced (cited in Benade, 2021). Soja's (1999) work with regard to Thirdspace was influenced by Lefebvre's understanding of space, with Soja proposing the "trialectics of spatiality" (p. 265), advancing the understanding that places are both "produced and producing" (Cresswell, 2015, p. 70). Soja (1999) describes the trialectics of spatiality, as consisting of "Firstspace (conceived space)" (p. 265), and "Secondspace (perceived space)" (p. 266), with Thirdspace acknowledging the "lived-space" (p. 267). When the trialectics of spatiality are combined with "the trialectics of being", emphasising "ontological trialectics of spatiality-sociality-historicity", it becomes a "way of conceptualizing and understanding the world" (Soja, 1999, p. 262). "Thirdspace consciousness" (Soja, 1999, p. 270) provides a heuristic process, which "enables us to see beyond what is presently known, to explore 'other spaces'... that are both similar to and significantly different from the real-and-imagined spaces we already recognize" (Soja, 1999, p. 269).

Lefebvre recognised the "complex ways in which the body interacts with the world is its lived experience" (Benade, 2021, p. 7). Lived experience can be interpreted as "the way the self, the body, makes sense of the world, and its own experiences of the world" (Benade, 2021, p 7). This view may be supported by Seamon (2018) who states "bodily dimensions of our human constitution contribute to the nature of human experience" and are a "lived relationship between movement and rest" informed by people's "actions, experiences and occasions" (Seamon, 2018, p. 52). It is the everyday movement and pause patterns which are part of a "habitual time-space lattice", which people are mostly unaware of and contribute to 'life just happening and

taking place' (Seamon, 2018, p. 52). The notion of 'place becoming' is a post-structural concept and involves an unfinished and messy entanglement (Anderson & Harrison, 2010). Understanding and making sense of this 'unfinished and messy entanglement' is provided by a triad involving "relationships, resolutions and processes" (Seamon, 2018, p. 66). Seamon (2018) states that adding a third element supports a stronger understanding of place through the study of processes, and helps create change.

While some theorists focus on the ways people live within a place, there are others who explore a local-global dynamic involving place. Massey (1994) supports the idea that space and place are interconnecting and in continuous flow through the dynamics of social relations, particularly concepts of power regarding gender and race. She discusses places "best thought of as nets of social relations" and that the "openness of localities" are "always provisional, always in the process of being made, always contested" with their construction and character being "formed in inextricable linkage to other places" (Massey, 1993, p. 148-149). Massey (1994) examines "power-geometry of time-space compression" and acknowledges "different groups, and different individuals, are placed in very distinct ways in relation to these flows and interconnections" (p. 149). She says the point is not who moves and who does not, though important, but rather the power differentials in relation to this mobility (Massey, 1994).

Cresswell (2015) acknowledges just how convoluted the idea of place is by recognising the different examples of specific places theorists have used to explain their work. He states it is not only that places are different in the sense of their location, but that there is a "complicated relationship both to the past and to other places near and far" (Cresswell, 2015, p. 113). The way place has been discussed shows it is a way of understanding the world, meaning anybody can bring their own theory and insights on a place to convey a 'notion of place' (Cresswell, 2015). It is important to develop an awareness of the ways people understand place, and to acknowledge the diversity of place theory, being careful not to concentrate all efforts and resources in one area involving a 'notion of place' (Cresswell, 2015).

A critical pedagogy of place

A critical pedagogy of place can be defined by "two distinct literatures, critical pedagogy and place-based education", which can offer "a much needed framework for education theory, research, policy and practice" (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 308). A critical pedagogy of place can then influence an understanding of the diversity of people and culture, and foster an ecological consciousness, supporting "personal awareness and environmental citizenship or community-membership, as well as intellectual and backcountry skill development" (Goralnik et al., 2014, p. 182). This development can have a "direct bearing on the well-being of the social and ecological places people actually inhabit" (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 308). To explain how a critical

pedagogy of place can achieve this development, is to define critical pedagogy and place-based education in the context of a globalised world.

Critical pedagogy has roots “in Marxist and neo-Marxist critical theory” (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 210), with projects underpinned by critical pedagogy attempting “to be discerning and attentive to those places and practices in which social agency has been denied and produced” (Giroux, 2011, p.3). Critical pedagogy theorists focus on and challenge “the assumptions, practices, and outcomes taken for granted in dominant culture and in conventional education” (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 308). Freire’s (1970/2017) discussion of “situationality” (p. 82) is germane. People are “in a situation”, which they can affect and simultaneously be affected by (Freire, 1970/2017, p. 82). If a person is challenged by their thinking when reflecting on their situation, it can result in them acting critically on the situation (Freire, 1970/2017). Arguably, the act of a person reflecting on their situation is tied to reflecting on the space or place they occupy. The action they take can result in changing the relationship they have with that space or place (Gruenewald, 2008). The “spatial dimension of situationality, and its attention to social transformation” shows the connection critical pedagogy has with place-based pedagogy (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 310).

Place-based education is an interdisciplinary approach, and engages with a geographical location focusing on understanding local history, cultures and the ecology of a place. Its purpose is to develop in students a care and respect for their environment, “of the place where they are living” (Penetito, 2009, p. 16). Learning in a contextual setting can imbue in students and teachers an understanding of how events have shaped spaces and created a sense of community. It encourages the creation and sharing of stories, challenging prevailing assumptions and the exploration of new or different perspectives, inspiring people to feel a sense of belonging, locally and in the broader world (Barane et al., 2018). The generation of such thoughts and actions enables geographical location to become a place for people. Engaging in place-based approaches provides schools with an opportunity to interact with community partners to create meaningful knowledge and understanding through the resources and uniqueness of the place they live in (Barane et al., 2018).

A critical pedagogy of place necessarily requires engagement with a process of conscientisation. This translation of Freire’s (1970/2017) Portuguese usage, “conscientização” (p. 9), refers to a process of consciousness raising, a political act of “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire, 1970/2017, p. 11). Encouraging such consciousness means identifying places “as the contexts in which these situations [of contradiction and oppression] are perceived and acted on” (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 311). In order to achieve awareness, Freire recommends “reading the world” along with “reading the word” (Freire & Macedo, 1987, p. 29), which Freire emphasises

as a dialogical relationship (Benade, 2015). A person can interpret and comprehend “the images of their own concrete, situated experiences with the world” (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 311), while also acknowledging that by reading the word, they continuously read the world through the lens of other people (Freire & Macedo, 1987). The two literacies are dialectically entangled and conscientisation occurs when students become aware of the oppressive elements of their reality, clearing the way for them to action change for themselves and others (Freire, 1970/2017).

Like Freire’s notion of conscientisation, a feminist pedagogical perspective argues the importance of consciousness raising, the presence of an oppressive social hierarchy, and reimagining this structure with the potential of social transformation (Weiler, 2001). Contrasting this alliance between pedagogies is the critique that Freire’s notion of conscientisation can be perceived as a metanarrative derived from critical pedagogy, and “seen as rationalistic and even masculinist” (Benade, 2015, p. 105). Freire’s work has received criticism from different perspectives, yet he maintains the position that “education is non-neutral or that educators ought to exercise an option for the poor” (Benade, 2015, p. 105). He emphasises the idea that people can have a critical consciousness of these contradictions and oppressions or the conditioning on their lives, with the potential to overcome their reality, creating opportunity for autonomy (Benade, 2015).

A critical pedagogy of place can draw attention to issues related to a globalised world. Historically, globalisation has been aided by colonisation (Perkins & Thorns, 2012). It reflects a Eurocentric, linear consciousness, that “typically [separates] humans and the rest of the world” (Jickling et al., 2018, p. 33). European ways of knowing have thus become predominant, encouraging “habitual dualisms like subjects and objects, human and non-human, men and women, colonizers and colonized, culture and nature, civilisation and wilderness, modern and primitive” (Jickling et al., 2018, p. 33). Greenwood (2018) drawing from Foucault, states that “historically forced systems of power/knowledge construct people’s understandings and their operational worlds... [thus] unconsciously individuals are not only shaped by the[se] dominant discourses but also actively put them to work” (p. 133). The dualisms can “be understood as hierarchically related... reinforced in language, social practices, curricular documents, learning objectives and in the material configurations of our learning environments” (Jickling et al., 2018, p. 33). These binaries position humans both centrally and at the apex of existence (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010; Jickling et al., 2018). Jickling et al. (2018) propose ‘wild pedagogies’ to critique and disrupt “assumptions of both hierarchies of importance and centrality” (p. 33).

It can be suggested that the Eurocentrism that characterises globalisation is also responsible for marginalising local epistemologies, highlighting colliding worldviews. This point is illustrated by Cresswell (2015) citing an early example of colonial imposition on place. When tasked with mapping a coastline and naming it for a “place of empire”, Captain Vancouver was perplexed by

the movements of “native canoeists” (Cresswell, 2015, p. 15). Rather than setting a course of direction from one point to another, the canoeists took instead convoluted routes. Unlike the “colonialists” who considered the sea as blank space, the canoeists understood the sea as “a set of places” correlating with notable spirits and dangers (Cresswell, 2015, p. 15). Johnson (2010) states it is these “indigenous knowledges which are increasingly being pushed aside by the ‘gray uniformity’ of globalization and its progenitor, European colonization” (p. 829).

Gruenewald (2010) identifies place as a means of bridging this “culturally constructed epistemological divide” (p. 144). A critical pedagogy of place is an approach to achieve such bridging, by supporting decolonisation and promoting reinhabitation, combining an acknowledgement of past oppression with looking at how to live together without further harm to one another and the earth’s inhabitants (Gruenewald, 2010; Kayira, 2013; Scully, 2012). Scully (2012) adds reconciliation as an additional goal to support decolonisation and reinhabitation, in a “context of healing from the legacy of the residential school system” (p. 155). Kayira (2013) shares a similar perspective encouraging the use of a postcolonial lens to highlight a framework which allows for multiple voices, especially from marginalised groups, to share their perspectives and create alternatives to dominant European narratives.

A critical pedagogy of place creates the opportunity to recover a geographical and ecological experience with place (Gruenewald, 2010). According to Blenkinsop et al. (2016), European colonisation and its undermining of indigenous cultures parallels the relationship of humans (the colonisers), to the earth’s systems (the colonised). These authors’ postcolonial view is reflected in their rejection of anthropocentrism, a philosophical perspective that humans are the centre point of existence and are separate from and superior to the earth’s inhabitants and its systems (Boslaugh, 2016), a perspective arguably allied to the colonisation of indigenous peoples. Instead, Blenkinsop et al. (2016) advocate for attentive and sustained practice focused on listening to the colonised, a rejection of the history of patriarchal thinking, related to colonisation, that has helped to shape social relations.

Morse et al. (2018) too take up the concept of ‘wild pedagogies’ when reflecting on the role played by their lived experiences in the wilderness to developing their ontological consciousness. ‘Wild pedagogies’ suggest not only a reimagining of peoples’ relationship with the world, but an acknowledgment of the importance of place as integral to educational work. In the ‘reimagining’, Morse et al. (2018) point to a “deeper understanding of relationship – remarkably different from the colonially infused concept”, and discuss concepts of “wildness and *self-will*” (p. 245). Their view may be supported by Barane et al. (2018), who recognise “we come to know ourselves by interacting in the world about us and meeting ‘the others’” (p. 18). These meetings “take place” (Barane et al., 2018, p. 18) and through these events individual and social growth is developed to

enable participation in community life. For Gruenewald (2008), a critical pedagogy of place “embraces the link between the classroom and cultural politics”, though recognises the limits and problematic nature of the classroom setting (p. 318). The school and school curriculum, however is “the local context of shared cultural politics” (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 318), and supporting students to have local experiences can challenge and foster “connection, exploration, and action in socioecological places” (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 318).

A critical pedagogy of place in relation to school curriculum

The New Zealand Curriculum states that its “principal function is to set the direction for student learning and to provide guidance for schools as they design and review their curriculum” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 6). The focus of the Leading Local Curriculum Guide series (Ministry of Education, 2020) is to support schools to weave elements of the national curriculum together with a locally designed curriculum. The Ministry of Education (2020) emphasises the importance of schools’ visions being created in collaboration with all members of the school community, acknowledging what is distinctive to their location (Ministry of Education, 2020). A school’s vision should be inclusive and guide the direction of its curriculum, utilising the integral resources in the school community (Ministry of Education, 2020). A pedagogy of place appears to align with the visioning for local curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2019), providing support for a ‘reinhabiting and decolonising approach’ (Gruenewald, 2008) to local and national curriculum.

The release of the localised curriculum document (Ministry of Education, 2019) may suggest a shift away from emphasising a European colonial approach to school curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand. This approach has been instrumental in undermining indigenous ways of knowing and being by imposing foreign values and belief systems on Māori (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2019; Penetito, 2009). Such policies may be dated back to the 1867 Native Schools Act, which undermined indigenous ontologies, by using primary schools as a way of assimilating Māori to European society (CORE Education, 2020). Halbert and Salter (2019) discuss how knowledge is colonised by dominant European curriculum narratives, and support a “critical reading of curriculum” questioning “what and whose knowledge has been ‘organised’ into the official curriculum” (p. 19). A reinhabiting and decolonising approach, part of critical pedagogy of place theory, uses the “spatial dimension of situationality”, and questions “what and whose knowledge is privileged in this way” (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 19). This approach, mindful of situationality and conscientisation, encourages the exploration of the different perspectives on local historical narratives, by addressing colonising pedagogy and practice. For the people living in places where their knowledge has been ‘disorganised’, it can lead to reinhabitation of the curriculum using a place-based approach (Halbert & Salter, 2019).

The choice of language in curriculum documents can indicate the privileging of European colonial narratives and marginalisation of indigenous narratives (Halbert & Salter, 2019). These authors, drawing on examples from “British and Aboriginal relations” (p. 19), consider how postcolonial and revisionist historians have contested “underpinning messages”, by challenging the language and concepts associated with words like “settlement” when discussing cultural perspectives. Instead, they suggest counter-wording like “invasion” to support the different perspectives on colonisation (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 19). Jickling et al. (2018) express a similar argument regarding “wilderness” and how indigenous people have been removed from lands in the “name of wilderness protection” (p. 30). These authors suggest re-thinking “notions of pristine wilderness and the role such visions have played in colonisation” (Jickling et al., 2018, p. 30), with the associated language filtering through curriculum documents (Halbert & Salter, 2019).

Jickling et al. (2018) recognise a “human-centredness” (p. 34) stemming from a “Eurocentric consciousness” passed on through colonial narratives (p. 33). The authors argue that focusing on human-centredness can cause people to lose touch of themselves as natural beings. Reconnecting as a natural being means recognising that humans are part of ecosystems and have similar dependencies on the living world as other forms of life. It is important to understand “that this multispecies, multicentric world is a communicator” (Jickling et al., 2018, p. 37) and there are different ways for people to interpret what they hear, and to “frame these messages from the world in more just and respectful language” (Jickling et al., 2018, p. 37). A critical pedagogy of place supports such ecological understanding and consequent social action (Gruenewald, 2008). It provides “a way of engaging students in knowledge production, connecting with their lived experiences and making meaning about their space and place in History and the future of their communities” (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 20). A critical pedagogy of place can support democratic and student-centred education, where the students can be “creative participants within the unfinished stories they are learning about... seeing themselves as part of the world being described” (Gare, 2008, p. 30). Yet, Jickling et al. (2018) state:

thousands of years of boundary-making [cannot be dissolved] with intellectual assertion, as in ‘nature is a human construct’ or ‘we are all nature’, [but there is opportunity for new] relationships and commensurate language [to] arise slowly out of action – actual engagement in new ways of being present to, and interacting with, the world (p. 36).

This view is consistent with an indigenous worldview, which is moral, sacred and in unison, connecting to “the lifeways of a particular landscape” (Narvaez et al., 2019, p. 4). It is, however, a worldview that “rarely fits into the frameworks of industrialised societies” (Spikin, 2019, p. 27),

with its dominant western worldview that emphasises fragmentation, disenchantment and amorality (Narvaez et al., 2019). Penetito (2009) states it “is neither the former “holistic” view of the world nor the latter ‘commodified’ view” that is the valid choice, arguing instead that a “negotiated relationship between the two is imperative but not unproblematic” (p. 21). Young (2019) states the dominant western worldview “has resulted in, and perpetuates, the current epidemic of separation” (p. 221). He proposes ‘cultural repair’ by transforming this separation through the process of reconnecting, suggesting a model based on an “intergenerational transfer of skills and connection-based knowledge” (Young, 2019, p. 221). For Penetito (2009) an indigenous pedagogy contains three fundamental approaches: a “sense of place” as a basic human requirement; “Indigenous peoples” formalising “the relationship between themselves and their environment as co-habitors”; and a pedagogy, which embodies epistemologies and ontologies, should be encompassed by a “conscious union of mind and spirit” (p. 20). Defining a complex pedagogy this way does not do justice to it, yet must still be addressed. Both Young (2019) and Penetito’s (2009) work fits with a reinhabiting and decolonising approach, with Gruenewald (2008) stating, from an educational perspective, “it means unlearning much of what dominant culture and schooling teaches, and learning more socially just and ecologically sustainable ways of being in the world” (p. 319).

When ideas of “co-becoming” (Suchet-Pearson et al., 2013, p. 187) are “in contrast to ideas and ways that tend towards control, they have the capacity to disrupt common thinking and practice” (Jickling et al., 2018, p. 29). A critical pedagogy of place can disrupt common thinking using “holistic, situated approaches” as a way for looking past “dominant cultural references to the nation in particular” (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 20). Halbert and Salter (2019) suggest these situated approaches can reinhabit and decolonise a national curriculum and present opportunities for cosmopolitanism. The local narratives found in places can then connect to “global themes, ideas and challenges” and “may open new possibilities for local-global consciousness” (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 20). A local-global consciousness provides an opportunity to decentre hegemonic narratives. It recognises there is “not one globalisation, but rather ‘globalisations’” (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 20), or processes that contribute to globalisation and function at varying levels in which ‘the local’ plays a fundamental role (Perkins & Thorns, 2012). A local-global consciousness can create an understanding of “spatial orientation to global, national and local markers” and how some places are legitimated as the centre (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 20). It is the centring of these places “as ‘the global’ (in Europe) and ‘the national’ within western epistemologies” which “marginalises local places and knowledges” (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 20).

The local curriculum guide (Ministry of Education, 2019) that supports schools to design and review their local curriculum, does arguably show a responsiveness to such thinking. The

Ministry of Education (2019) states a school's local curriculum "should be unique and responsive to the priorities, preferences, and issues of [the] community and [the] people", while using "all elements of the New Zealand Curriculum... as the framework in designing [its] local curriculum" (p. 5). The Ministry of Education (2019) recognises the "ongoing process" involved in local curriculum design with an understanding that as part of the journey, a school continues to "challenge and evaluate" its "ideas, systems and processes" (p. 5).

Conclusion

A 'notion of place' involves many overlapping theoretical perspectives. In its simplest form, place can be defined as 'space where meaning has been ascribed' (Jarrett et al., 2019). The relevance of place to school curriculum design draws on critical pedagogy of place theory. Two literacies, critical pedagogy of place and place-based education bridge the "culturally constructed epistemological divide" (Gruenewald, 2010, p. 144), involving the different perspectives people have on place. A critical pedagogy of place addresses these dominant narratives and the marginalisation of alternative knowledges through localised curriculum. In the Leading Local Curriculum guide, the Ministry of Education (2019) does convey the importance of a local curriculum vision being created in collaboration with all members across the community. Yet, critical review of this guide suggests that the Ministry of Education does not explicitly emphasise the importance of acknowledging dominant western European colonial narratives and the marginalisation of alternative ways of thinking and knowing. Without insight into these complex issues and support into how schools can navigate such discussion, there is the potential risk of perpetuating an ongoing approach to marginalising alternative epistemologies regarding people and place. Therefore, research which gains insight into the perspectives of different community members widens curriculum discussions. These insights enable an understanding of place-meaning from various points of view, informing school curriculum design, and have the potential to help schools address knowledge constructs when reviewing and designing their local curriculum.

A widely interpreted concept, place is a way of people understand the world (Nomikos, 2018), while carrying out their daily lives (Cresswell, 2015). Gruenewald (2008) discusses a critical pedagogy of place and recognises the school and school curriculum as providing a "local context of shared politics" (p.318), creating opportunities where students have local experiences that challenge and foster learning in socioecological places. LEOTC-funded educators are members of the local school community with insights in critical pedagogy of place that provide these local experiences for students through their work. These educators can offer a valuable perspective regarding localised curriculum and could support schools to address knowledge constructs when reviewing and designing school curriculum.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This research involves an exploration into what ‘place’ means to educators funded by the Ministry of Education (n.d.) LEOTC curriculum support project, and how their perspectives and insights could inform school curriculum design. The research design incorporates a theoretical framework informed by ecofeminism, an ecofeminist ethic of care and ecofeminist pedagogy. It uses photo-elicitation and semi-structured interview methods, with data analysis involving thematic analysis and aspects of visual narrative analysis. The ethical considerations in the study involve researcher self-criticism, power relations between the researcher and the participants, and the quality and integrity of the research.

Theoretical framework

This qualitative research study is underpinned by an ecofeminist paradigm and an ethic of care. Ecofeminism originated as a theory and movement related to women and the environment (Estévez-Saá & Lorenzo-Modia, 2018), while an ethic of care stems from relational ethics that assumes human connectedness in context (Clement, 1996; Noddings, 2013). Related to critical theory, both concepts bring “to human awareness the coercive and irrational elements in a dominant ideology” (Tuttle, 1984, p. 849). The two concepts, ecofeminism and an ethic of care, focus on empathy, but not as an abstraction, “rather as a practice arising from the ethical and aesthetical envisioning of eco-caring” (Estévez-Saá & Lorenzo-Modia, 2018, p. 143). Eco-caring is a main component of environmental education, including place-based education, which correlates with ecofeminism. Ecofeminism provides environmental education with a philosophical learning framework and environmental education provides a relevant context for ecofeminism to contribute scholarly environmental philosophy and education for an audience of educators (Goralnik et al., 2014). For cohesion, these concepts are referred to as ecofeminism, an ecofeminist ethic of care and ecofeminist pedagogy, and create the theoretical framework for this study.

Ecofeminism

Francoise D’Eaubonne first coined the term ecofeminism more than forty years ago and the paradigm has evolved significantly over that time (Estévez-Saá & Lorenzo-Modia, 2018). Estévez-Saá and Lorenzo-Modia (2018) state it would be naïve to talk about ecofeminism in the singular as a diverse range of ideas and experiences have been identified. Kheel (2008) draws attention to the diversity of these ideas through the frequent use of a quilting metaphor. This image of a quilt invokes ecofeminist theorising, suggesting people gather together to create the quilt. Their collective ideas and experiences are interwoven to form the quilt, rather than relying on a single philosophy (Kheel, 2008). When looking closely at the interwoven threads of an ecofeminist quilt, fundamental patterns emerge.

One such pattern involves the understanding that throughout history western patriarchal society has created systems of degradation, subjection and exploitation of women, the earth's inhabitants and its systems (Estévez-Saá & Lorenzo-Modia, 2018). This relationship is centred around domination and shares interconnections with various forms of oppression related to "racism, classism, heterosexism, and speciesism" (Kheel, 2009, p. 16), though these examples are not an exhaustive list. Fundamental to these forms of domination are a myriad of dualisms, including rational/irrational, masculine/feminine, good/evil, to name a few (Kheel, 2009; Stephens, 2017). These binaries are often pitched against each other with one being privileged as superior and the other inferior. These "dualist constructs" can be perceived as the underlying components of a "rationalist paradigm and... its scientific method" (Stephens, 2017, p. 566). Another aspect of this argument involves the categorisation of earth's various inhabitants and its systems into a cohesive whole, for example the category 'nature' to essentialise animals and plants (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). The same can be said for groups like 'woman' creating an essentialised 'other' seen as a symbol that contrasts and is subordinate to man and culture, and is easier to objectify through abstraction and detachment (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010; Kheel, 2009; Li, 2013; Stephens, 2017). An ecofeminist perspective calls for relational shifts in thinking based on human interdependence with each other, the earth's inhabitants and its systems, where conceptual patterns better reflect non-dualistic and non-hierarchical systems (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010).

The language, metaphor and narrative of an ecofeminist perspective offers an alternative discourse to support eco-caring. It enables a response to and critique of hierarchical language that encourages humanist and anthropocentric thinking (Estévez-Saá & Lorenzo-Modia, 2018; Li, 2013). These authors discuss the coherent practical dimensions of ecofeminism created through the successful orientation of ethical and political projects, demonstrating ecofeminism as having a theoretically enriched history. Ecofeminism's main principles continue to be developed widely in literature, with more people writing about aesthetic realisation and other cultural instances, involving concepts of care, compassion, and reciprocity through a lens of empathy (Estévez-Saá & Lorenzo-Modia, 2018). Ecofeminist narratives have the means to disrupt dominant conceptual patterns with a focus on valuing interdependence with, and dependence on, the earth's systems and its inhabitants (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010).

Ecofeminism is directed towards political action, with cultural influences in ecological problems being central to shifting ecologically destructive practice and creating a more democratic future for everyone (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010; Li, 2013). Political action can take the form of collective effort to critically examine the existing social norms, exploring the possibilities of establishing new ethical norms in local and global contexts (Estévez-Saá & Lorenzo-Modia,

2018; Herles, 2018; Li, 2013). An existing social norm is anthropocentrism, a viewpoint universalised as a “master perspective” by western culture (Plumwood, 2002, p. 98). Anthropocentric thought and action recreates and maintains “the practice of privilege” marginalising others, such as women, minority races, the elderly, children, and the earth’s inhabitants and its systems (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010, p. 124), characterising them as inferior, unnecessary, and open to exploitation, thus excluding their voices (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010; Li, 2013; Plumwood, 2002). An ecofeminist ethic of care enables a reorientation and creates an awareness of how “the master perspective lacks certain kinds of self-knowledge” [revealing] various kinds of culture-wide rationality failures” (Plumwood, 2002, p. 99). It supports the awakening of natural caring involving instincts, intuitions and feelings of empathy (Kheel, 2009; Noddings, 2013), and “helps us attune to the interests, needs and desires of particular individual beings” (Kheel, 2009, p. 47).

An ecofeminist ethic of care

An ecofeminist ethic of care enables a focus “on individual beings as well as larger wholes” and “acts of ‘attention’ that promote moral imagination and enhance empathy” (Kheel, 2009, p. 48). Empathy helps care for and about individual beings and the earth’s systems (Kheel, 2009). An ethic of care can be associated with relational ethics, connecting to experience developed through the encounters and relationships of human beings in a situation (Clement, 1996; Noddings, 2013). An ethic of care “prefers acts done out of love and natural inclination” (Noddings, 2013, p. 140). These acts are situated in social complexity, with the ontological view that the act is defined in relationship to others, and is a social construct. An ethic of care enables a focus on the repercussions the act has on others, and the subsequent acts of the individual, but also the feelings and responses of those involved toward the act (Clement, 1996; Noddings, 2013). To explain the function of an ethic of care, Noddings (2013) uses the analogy of a relationship between a parent and child, a relational dyad, empowering both the giver and receiver. As the one caring, the parent responds to “the needs, wants, and initiations of the second... she [they] feels with the other and acts on his [their] behalf” (p. 140). The child acknowledges and reciprocates, for example with smiles or wriggles. Both must decide how each will respond to the other (Noddings, 2013). Kheel (2009) explains this relationship as “an embodied response that expresses our feelings for others through concrete actions” (p. 48), a statement echoed by Goralnik et al., (2014) who add that these actions are “guided by dialogue, attentiveness, self-awareness, and context” (p. 188).

An ecofeminist ethic of care has a “contextual approach that investigates the roots of environmental problems with a view to removing the external and internal factors that block the growth of empathy” (Kheel, 2009, p. 48). Consciousness of the contextual can be maintained and actioned through these five principles: being gender sensitive; valuing voices from the margins; centring nature; selecting appropriate method/methodologies; and undertaking research towards

social change (Stephens, 2017). These are guided ontologically through an ethic of care and have evolved from critical systems thinking and cultural ecofeminism (Stephens, 2017). The principles pay particular attention to marginalised groups, critically examining the existing social norms and support the reimagining of alternative possibilities. The principles are context-dependent and each have individual value. They can be used as a means to planning, implementation and evaluation of a research study (Stephens, 2017).

Ecofeminist pedagogy

Ecofeminist pedagogy, involving the ways a teacher's philosophy is actioned in their work, calls for a relational shift. If humans are to behave in intelligent and caring ways towards themselves, each other, the earth's inhabitants and its systems, then there is a need to evade a dominant western worldview, continuing to inform traditional formats, pedagogies and classroom structure (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). An ecofeminist perspective provides a lens for educators to question the social and conceptual structures supporting a rationale for domination. An ecofeminist practice plays a role in this questioning, considering both politics and pedagogy are enactments of power relations (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010; Li, 2013). The main components of an ecofeminist pedagogy involve genuine dialogue, providing contextual experiences, and collective effort with a critical, yet caring, philosophical praxis, a union of practice and reflection enacted from theory (Benade, 2015).

An ecofeminist pedagogical perspective places emphasis on building flourishing relationships, encouraging self-affirmation in students, developing them intellectually, and showing a sense of care towards their growth as holistically moral people (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010; Noddings, 2013). The main components of supporting students' moral development include "modeling, dialogue, practice and confirmation" (Noddings, 2013, p. 143). An educator can display these components through genuine dialogue to develop flourishing relationships. Noddings (2013) adds "true dialogue is open... conclusions are not held by one or more of the parties at the outset" (p. 143). Genuine dialogue encourages reciprocity, showing a deep understanding of the self in relation with others (Herles, 2018). The foundations of genuine dialogue are "built on respect and a deep sense of the intrinsic value of the other being... [in] a relationship held together by humility" (Harvester and Blenkinsop, 2010, p. 126). Narrative too is part of the genuine dialogue setting. Its examination can support "philosophical theorizing on social and political issues" (Herles, 2018, p. 6), supporting critical praxis and nurturing empathy when first person narratives are shared in classroom contexts.

Experiential teaching through an ecofeminist lens, involves learning through hands-on experience, and can develop students as holistically moral people. It requires teachers facilitating and supporting their students to develop the ability to be critically conscious, and "to fully

recognize interconnectedness with the community and... resist [anthropocentric] domination” (Herles, 2018, p. 8). Schools are places where a ‘logic of domination’ can reside, especially conveyed to students through the hidden messaging of school buildings. This message locates and limits learning inside a room, rather than engaging with the earth’s inhabitants and its systems outside a building (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). It can even be communicated on a deeper level suggesting energy is cheap and plentiful, through wasteful use, or buildings are designed for the function of educating many students, without a concern for the impact of the surrounding environment (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). The cultural system of schools and their internal structures that establish guidelines and foundations implicitly convey how someone might function in society (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). To overcome oppressive thinking, a teacher advocating for ecological and cultural responsiveness cannot act alone. A collective school-wide ethic of care is required to create contexts where caring can “extend beyond the self-circle of immediate relationships to form communities of care with those in shared contexts across time and space” (Goralnik et al., 2014, p. 189). A collective extension of care has the potential “to care about and for distant others in exploitive or oppressive relationships” (Goralnik et al., 2014, p. 189).

When engaging in ecofeminist pedagogy, a careful re-evaluation of current educational practice is required (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). Herles (2018) discusses the importance of preparing students to engage with problems beyond the classroom by providing authentic contexts. It can empower students “to enhance their critical thinking skills and encourage praxis in a meaningful way” (Herles, 2018, p. 7). Educators who provide authentic experiential learning contexts can support students in establishing flourishing relationships, developing genuine dialogue, challenging a logic of domination, and providing the means for positive social change (Herles, 2018). Place-based education, as mentioned in Chapter Two, can contribute to providing positive social change. It offers students the opportunity to examine and practice “relationship-building and maintenance with oneself, learning community, and place as an environmental, social and political entity” (Goralnik et al., 2014, p. 190). It is through place-based learning that educators, along with students and the community, can critically re-evaluate pedagogy. This re-evaluation can change relationships, structures and practice, embedding a pluralistic approach equally supportive of everyone’s knowledge, including students and the community (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010).

Study design

The ecofeminist paradigm outlined above underpins the study design, providing the design both cohesion and rigour. It ensures a contextual approach when investigating the cause of environmental problems with a focus on recognising factors which obstruct the growth of empathy (Kheel, 2009). An ecofeminist perspective was actioned through five principles: being

gender sensitive; valuing voices from the margins; centring nature; selecting appropriate methods/methodologies; and undertaking research towards social change (Stephens, 2017). The study engaged participant-educators who use a pool of funding through the Ministry of Education, and are situated in a particular place. Through their work, these educators engage students in local experiences involving aspects of critical pedagogy of place theory, which display a relationship to ecofeminism by means of eco-caring and is a main component of environmental education (Goralnik et al., 2014). The study's methods incorporate photo-elicitation and semi-structured interviews, with data analysis involving thematic analysis and aspects of visual narrative analysis. These methods align with an ecofeminist perspective and were chosen to support aspects of natural caring, being sensitive to instincts, intuition, and feelings of empathy, to ensure I was attuned and actively listening to the interests, needs, and aspirations of the participant-educators' individual voices (Kheel, 2009).

Participants and participant eligibility

The participant criteria are specific to a Ministry of Education funding pool called Learning Experiences Outside The Classroom (LEOTC) that supports “community-based organisations to provide students with learning experiences that complement and enhance student learning”, and is aligned with the national curriculum (Ministry of Education, n.d.). The geographical location of this study was confined to the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region where two known organisations are funded by the LEOTC-funded project. These organisations employ three LEOTC-funded educators each, who are diverse in terms of age, ethnicity, gender and experience. From the six educators, three volunteered to be participants in the research study, two educators from one organisation and one from the other.

The organisations were approached via their public email addresses found on their websites. Emails were sent to these addresses asking if the email could be forwarded to the educational leaders of the organisations. In the email, information about the intentions and logistics of the study were given, asking the educational leader to forward the email onto any educators in the organisation. If the educators were interested in being participants in the study they were to email me at my university email address. When emailed by the potential participant-educators, I replied with an invitation to meet and explain the study in more detail. During that meeting, information was shared involving the study's requirements from the potential participant-educators, ethics involving privacy, confidentiality, and minimisation of risk, and the gaining of consent from the participant-educators. I left the meetings with signed consent forms, and consent forms to publish photographs from two of the participant-educators, with the third participant-educator later emailing the consent form (refer to Appendix B).

Due to the geographical location of the study being confined to the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region, and the relational nature of the education profession in the region, to disclose any further

information about the participant-educators could risk exposure of their identity. Pseudonyms have been given to the participant-educators to respect their rights of privacy and confidentiality.

Research methods

To apply an ecofeminist ethic of care lens to the research methods, I used the five principles mentioned previously to ensure a focus on the individual participants and that my decisions promoted moral awareness and empathy (Kheel, 2009). Photo-elicitation is a process involving the researcher or the participant providing photographs of a subject and discussing their photographic decision-making through semi structured interviews (Briggs et al., 2014). This study involved participant-driven photographic elicitation. It highlighted the participants' experiences through their discussion of place images, personally related to them and their work. The photo-elicitation process transformed the interviews in the study, adding a collaborative component by empowering the participants to lead the discussion (Feng, 2019), so that the interviews took the form of a relaxed conversation. The participants provided rich and detailed information throughout the interview when discussing their images of personally meaningful experiences. As the researcher, I was able to understand the participants' notions of place at a deeper level through the visual support.

Each participant-educator was offered a camera, but made the decision to take photographs on their own device or send me copies of the photographs they had taken prior to the study. A suitable time frame was negotiated with each participant to organise their photographs related to their idea of place and attached to their line of work. These photographs were sent to my university email address to be printed, and each participant's individual collection of photographs was brought along to their semi-structured interview for discussion.

The semi-structured interview method was chosen for its flexibility in a range of questions, prompts and probes. Semi-structured interviews are adaptive, especially when used in conjunction with resources, like photographs, assisting participants to engage on a deeper level with the topic being researched (Galletta, 2013). The framework was consistent for each interview, with topic questions being open-ended and flexible through wording and sequence arrangement (refer to Appendix B). This framework of questions was a scaffold to support each participant as they navigated the direction of the interview (Cohen et al., 2017), with an hour of the participants time predicted for each interview. The data gathered from the semi-structured interviews was situated "in the experiences of the participants", with place theory guiding the "existing constructs in the particular discipline" (Galletta, 2013, p. 45).

Data collection and data analysis

The data collection and analysis involved audio recordings of the semi-structured interviews being transcribed. These transcripts were compiled and reviewed using thematic analysis and visual narrative analysis.

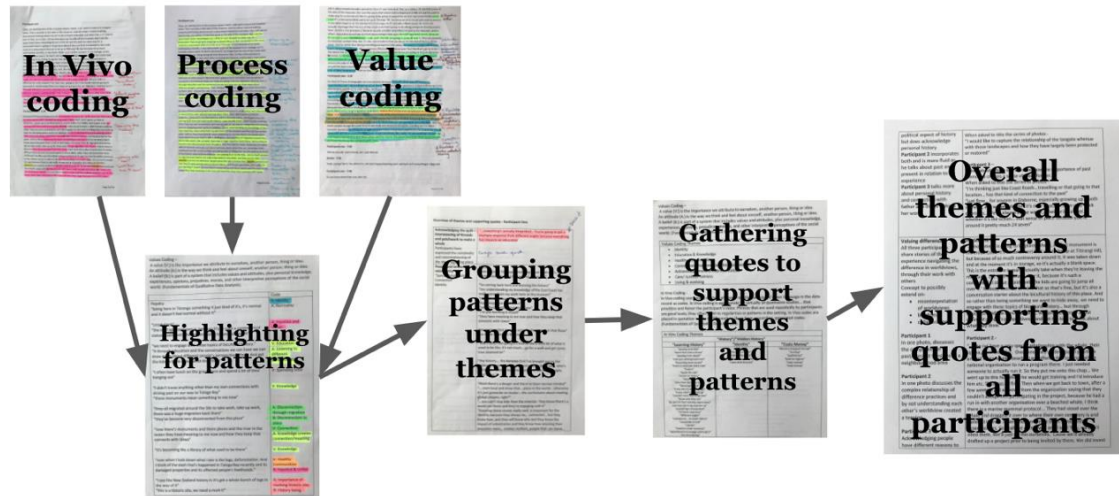
The semi-structured interviews were recorded using two devices in case of technology failure with either device. One device was the recording application Voice Recorder Lite: Record HD downloaded to my iPhone. The other device was my MacBook, using the audio record function on the application QuickTime Player. The devices were set up in front of the participants to observe the procedure and for them to contribute to the testing, ensuring their voices were audible for recording. On completion of the interview, if the QuickTime Player recording on the MacBook was audible, then the Voice Recorder Lite recording was deleted. In one interview the microphone was covered by paper for a short duration, requiring the use of the second recording.

The participants' individual recording and photographs were uploaded to separate pen-drives and these were given to a transcriber, who had signed a confidentiality agreement. Once completing the participant's interview transcription, the transcriber emailed each transcript to my university email address for me to review and then returned the pen-drive to me. I emailed each participant with their interview transcript offering them the opportunity to check and approve the transcript. The option to adapt the transcript was given (one participant chose to adapt their transcript). Later, once the data had been analysed, the participants were given a summary of the findings with the option to discuss these findings in more detail (one participant requested this option).

The transcripts were reviewed using thematic analysis and visual narrative analysis. The analysis was a thorough process where I generated theoretical constructs from the participants' experiences to form new knowledge. The analysis began with the first cycle of coding involving:

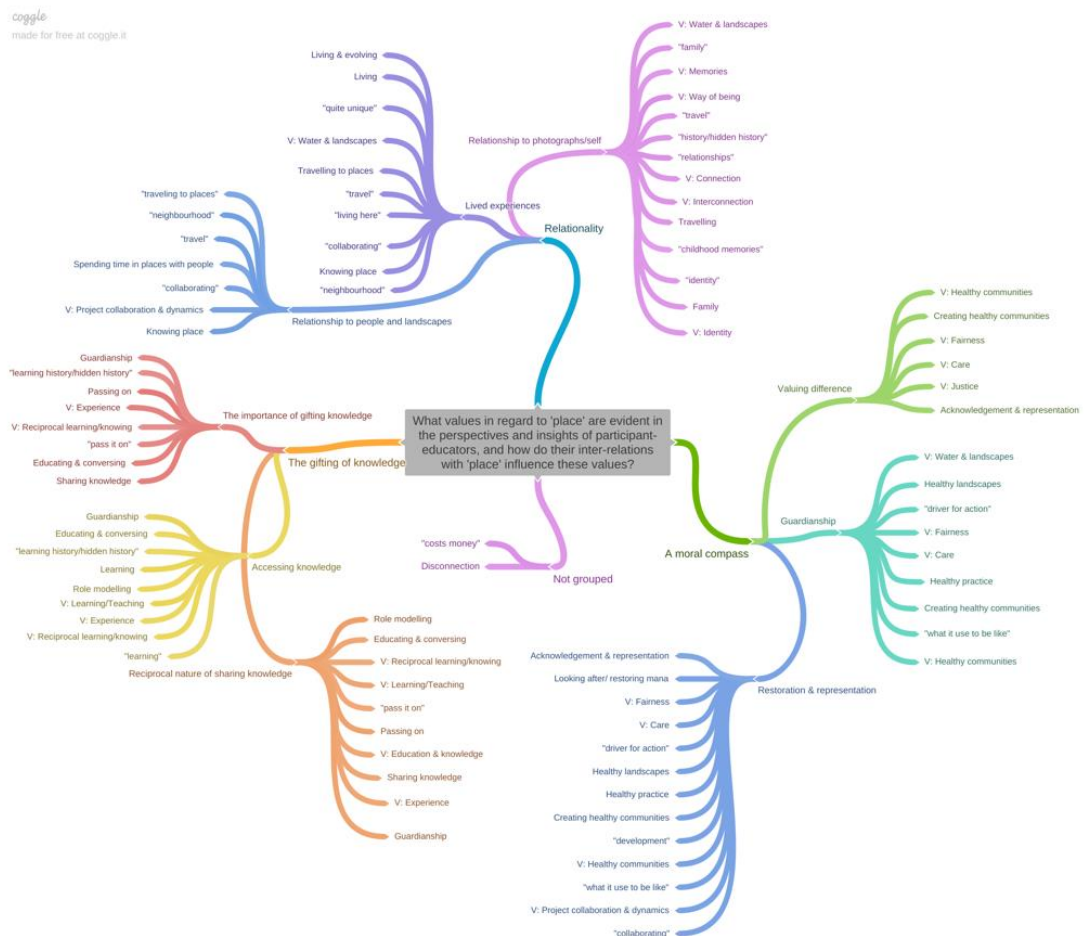
- In Vivo coding using “words or short phrases from the participant’s own language” as codes, prioritising and honouring participant voice (Miles et al., 2014, p. 74).
- Process coding extracting “participant action/interaction and consequences” and using “gerunds (“ing” words) exclusively to connote observable and conceptual action” in the data (Miles et al., 2014, p. 75).
- Value coding reflecting “a participant’s values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldview” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 75).

Figure 2 The thematic analysis process



Note. Image create by author in Google Slides

Figure 3 A visual representation of the emerging themes



Note. Image create by author in Coggle

The first cycle of coding was applied to the transcripts with the codes being attached to particular parts of the data, representing each type of coding (see Figure 2). These codes formed relationship threads through commonalities in the coding and became the second cycle of analysis called Pattern coding (Miles et al., 2014). Pattern coding used information from the first cycle of coding to form smaller theoretical constructs creating a type of meta-code (Miles et al., 2014). Figure 3 visually represents the codes intertwining and interconnecting to form the meta-codes. The most promising meta-codes were used to create the themed narratives to write the findings for the study, incorporating the pattern codes, first cycle coding and field notes (Miles et al., 2014).

A visual narrative analysis approach was used to ensure the participants' individual voices were explicit and not lost when blended through the thematic analysis process. It was achieved by incorporating the participants' photographs into the analysis to depict their individual notions of place. Prior to this decision the photographs were part of the participant-driven photographic elicitation process used to support a semi-structured interview. The focus of visual narrative analysis is the images themselves, and the different ways of interpreting the images (Bryda, 2020). The key element of the approach is the statement found in the fieldwork (Bryda, 2020), which the photographs in the study provided, representing each individual participant's story. During the semi-structured interviews (in the field), the participants shared the narratives relating to their photographs, I asked them to title their photographs or photographic series. The participants analysed their photographs and created the titles. These titles were the statements found in the fieldwork, and the indicators of different narratives being the basis for the interweaving storylines (Freistein & Gadinger, 2020). The participants' individual photographs, photographic titles, and narratives associated with the photographs and titles, were woven through one of the themes analysed using thematic analysis. This process ensured the participants' individual voices were heard and aligned with the study's theoretical underpinnings of ecofeminism.

Ethical considerations

The ethical guidelines and procedures (Auckland University of Technology, n.d.) were adhered to throughout the study, involving informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and minimisation of risk (refer to Appendices: Appendix A: Ethical Approval letters). A reflexive analysis was used to consider further ethical concerns involving researcher self-critique, power relations between the researcher and the participants, and the quality and integrity of the research study.

Researcher self-critique

Reflexive self-criticism is constructive and enhances the quality of knowledge production, should it survive such criticism (Lynch, 2000). The research study constantly generated minor epistemological challenges in relation to self-criticism. As a researcher, I chose to persist and overcome these challenges "because absence is not the solution to problematic presence"

(Stewart, 2018, p. 422). I overcame the challenges by continually reviewing my ethical praxis, acknowledging how I was situated in the research experience, how my conceptual understandings played a role in the process of new knowledge and what the ramifications were for the methodology (Day, 2012; Stewart, 2018). While questioning my involvement in the research, I placed equal importance on the participants' experiences and ways of knowing. This meant recognising my commitment to the methodological approach and how this lens imposed interpretations of and on the participants' experiences, and whether this lens related to each individual participant's epistemology or ontology (Day, 2012). When considering the participants' voices, I was conscious to ensure I understood and communicated their voices and narrative, while at the same time being aware of my own voice and narrative as the researcher. At all times I used a reflexive and ethical praxis to knowledge production, which involved addressing specifically situated occurrences of knowledge-making and to continually question the means and processes involved in the study's methodology (Day, 2012).

Power relations between the researcher and the participants

A central concern for this research study, underpinned by ecofeminism, was the concept of power, the complexity around the concept, and how it was enacted during the study. Throughout this research study, power shifted back and forth between the participants and myself, as the researcher, forming a dynamic. As the power shifted between the participants and myself, it alternated continually through power differentials created by task engagements, asking and answering questions, and sharing individual analysis of data with the participants. Another layer of complexity, as part of the dynamic, involved how the participants and myself were situated within a diversity of power relations outside of our immediate relationship, and the implications on the research study (Day, 2012). I did not seek to equalise power between the participants and myself, but rather used "strategies to mediate power dilemmas" (Day, 2012, p. 70). These strategies largely involved an ethic of care. Barnes (2012) explains care cannot be actioned using a standard approach. "One of the fundamental insights of an ethic of care is the need to reflect and deliberate on the particular contexts and dynamics of a situation before concluding how to care" (Barnes, 2012, p. 180). For this research study, an ethic of care was actioned by way of: a conversation with each individual participant sharing information about the research study with them, their potential involvement in the study and any potential risks; respecting and keeping confidential and anonymous the identity of participants; and reporting and making transparent through an ethics committee my prior relationships and experiences with participants in an educational context (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018).

Quality and integrity of the research study

Reliability was invariably present throughout the study as a recurring and repetitive process. Credibility and trustworthiness were part of this research process, ensuring the elements and

details, for example methods, interconnected and informed the process as a whole (Marx & Treharne, 2018), making the study fit for purpose. Initially I was going to use aspects of the grounded theory approach for the study's data analysis. Due to theoretical saturation being associated with grounded theory (Bloor & Wood, 2006), it became apparent that this approach to data analysis did not fit because of the small size and scale of the study, and changes were made to incorporate thematic analysis instead. Using a reflexive lens during the research process supported me to see what was framing my seeing (Marx & Treharne, 2018), and where my own bias could be impacting the study. An example being when I felt that the thematic analysis was marginalising the participants' individual narratives through the blending of the data. I introduced aspects of visual narrative analysis to ensure the participants' individual stories were explicit and their voices were heard. The "diligent and ongoing application of researcher reflexivity... [shows] honest communication between the researcher and the audience" (Johnson et al., 2020, p. 145), ensuring trustworthiness and credibility. The research study incorporated an ecofeminist ethic of care, creating additional reflexive awareness. The awareness connected "narrative reconstruction" of the participants' "lives, experiences and explanations to the broader socio-cultural context" and strengthened the ethical integrity of the study (Day, 2012, p. 80).

The research study was underpinned by ecofeminism, drawing on the concepts of critical theory and a praxis of empathy and eco-caring to reimagine current relationships with ourselves, each other, the earth's inhabitants and its systems. The participant criteria for the study involved gathering and attending to the voices of educators situated in the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region, who are funded through the Ministry of Education LEOTC curriculum support project. The study design incorporated the methods photo-elicitation and semi-structured interviews empowering the participants to lead the discussion. Transcripts of the semi-structured interviews were compiled and reviewed using thematic analysis and visual narrative analysis to generate new knowledge. The study encompasses a holistic framework and acknowledges a reflexive awareness when considering the ethical concerns of the study, adhering to AUT ethical guidelines and procedures (Auckland University of Technology, n.d.).

Chapter Four: Findings

This research study explored what place means to participant LEOTC educators and how their perspectives and insights could inform school curriculum design. The study was located in Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region of Aotearoa New Zealand, and involved three participant-volunteers, educators funded through the Ministry of Education Learning Experience Outside The Classroom support project. Data was collected using photo-elicitation and semi-structured interviews and analysed using thematic analysis and visual narrative analysis, through an ecofeminist lens. Three themes emerged from the data, relationality, a moral compass, and the gifting of knowledge.

Relationality

‘Relationality’ is a pattern that emerged from the participants’ interviews regarding the various interconnections with place. The pattern was formed when I identified three threads, which are addressed below. One thread explains the connections the participants made to places through the photographs, and is named ‘Exploring connections with the photographs’. These connections revealed a strong relationship between people and landscapes involving the past, and is named ‘The relationship between people and place’. The third thread, ‘Encompassing lived-experience’, involves the lived experiences of the participants. These lived-experiences encompass concepts, values, people, events and practices, which intertwined and formed a complex entanglement with time-space.

Exploring connections with the photographs

All three participants were asked to title their series of photographs. The participants’ title statements gave an overview of their reasons for selecting the places in the photographs, and provided insight into their values regarding place.

Educator 1’s reason was “the history...the korero¹ that I’ve brought out is the hidden history...what these monuments don’t say...who’s not there...the hidden histories, but these are in plain sight”. This participant appeared to value knowledge and the sharing of multiple perspectives on events to ensure one voice did not dominate and become the main historical narrative of a place.

¹ Talk (Moorfield, 2003-2020).

Figure 4 The history and the hidden history (Educator 1 title)



In contrast, the series of photographs provided by Educator 2 captured “the relationship of the tangata whenua² with those landscapes that have been restored.” This participant placed value on having an intuitive relationship with the land, where people are integrated and co-habiting with the biological diversity of the area.

Figure 5 Relationship of the tangata-whenua with the landscapes that have been restored (Educator 2 title)



²Local people, hosts, Indigenous people - people born of the land (Moorfield, 2013-2020).

Educator 3 provided two photographs, individually titled, as ‘Coast Roads’ and ‘Flow’. ‘Coast Roads’ was so titled because of a travelling event in the life of the participant, which turned the stops along the journey “up the coast” into sets of places. It is important to note, Educator 3’s placenta was buried on the hill range, which contributes to their connection with the landscape. Educator 3 explained ‘Flow’ as “the river or ocean on your back doorstep...provid[ing] that sense of place because you're around it 24/7.” Both photographs show a body of water and are snapshots of places Educator 3 associated with memories from childhood. Both examples displayed the emotional connection of Educator 3 with place, particularly associated with the placenta burial.

Figure 6 Coast Roads and Flow (Educator 3 titles)



The relationship between people and place

The participants displayed strong connections between people and place. One connection was with areas relatively undisturbed by human development. Each participant spent personal time engaging in such places, whether that was “going for a walk to get some tree cleansed air” (Educator 1), “going diving by myself and hunting” (Educator 2), or to going “there [to] swim and walk up the track to the waterfalls” (Educator 3). The participants valued being in environments as part of the earth’s systems, and indicated how they would like to see places reminiscent of a gentler past. Educators 1 and 2 made comparisons to Māori historical traditions and practices, which preserved mana whenua³, with Educator 1 stating “... the nature that is around us, we need not sustain what’s there, but build on what’s there, so we can take the clock backwards.” This participant’s discussion referred to human practice which maintained the integrity of the ‘whole’ regarding biological diversity.

Collectively, the participants’ narratives displayed indirect and relational interconnections. These connections took the form of ancestral relationships to the past. In the image, ‘Flow’, Educator 3 made reference to Te Ao Māori⁴ stating “they’ve got their own river...and those get

³ Put simply it is the power and prestige held by local people with ancestral relationships to an area of land, but the concept has meaning that is rich and more in-depth than stated (Māori ki Otago, n.d.).

⁴ The Māori World. A simple definition, but has meaning that is rich and vast in depth and breadth (Māori ki Otago, n.d.).

passed down to each generation and you're guardian of that river." Educator 1 extended on the relational interconnections referring to "a kaitiaki⁵ who lives in there...that's a guardian to make sure that people look after the health of the river." Educator 2 made relational interconnections associated with feelings and/or with other bodily senses, perhaps as a mystical way of knowing: "our ancestors must be smiling down on us because everything we do has a follow through, a sequence of events." The participants displayed a relational depth, which was intuitively interconnected with people and place.

Encompassing lived-experience

The lived experiences of the participants, interwoven with family relationships, created an entanglement with the people and place connections. 'Coast Roads' (Educator 3) represented time spent with family, suggested by Educator 3 as an intergenerational connection to places passed on through stories told by 'dad': "those memories [mean that although] I didn't live there, I've still got a connection with it." This familial relationship influenced Educator 3's perspective of place, providing an indirect connection to the coast by way of another person's past experiences. This participant's childhood family experiences around water activities grew into a desire to pass on water knowledge to students, to ensure they have "the skills, the knowledge, and the confidence in those spaces". Educator 3 hoped "they will go off and then go snorkelling and collect food with their family", displaying a reciprocal aspect to lived-experience.

The lived experiences of Educator 1 were different to Educator 3, but the narratives appeared similar in their desire to gift knowledge. Educator 1 had returned to the region as an adult after leaving for Wellington decades earlier, a migration that had resulted in a disconnection in the family. When Educator 1 wanted to engage in the geo-political history of the region, their family was only interested in hearing aspects of the history which related to personal memories. It empowered Educator 1 to gift "it onto the kids, not so much for people my age because they're not really interested in education, but they are for their tamariki⁶." Returning to the region had encouraged Educator 1 to learn the history of the area and was able to relate it to their past lived-experiences connecting with concepts of identity. The participant acknowledged that events and practices were significant, such as marking commemorations to represent the hidden and unseen history of a place. Educator 1 acknowledged that knowing the geo-political history can support people's understanding of the reasons for events that had created disenfranchisement and inequality among people. The participant was then able to relate this place knowledge to global contexts.

⁵ Guardian, caregiver, steward (Moorfield, 2013-2020).

⁶ Children (Moorfield, 2013-2020).

Educator 2, originally a “city kid”, moved to the region as an adult. Educator 2 displayed similarities to Educator 1, as living in the region became “a place that really sparked off my knowledge of the ocean and our family’s relationship with the area.” The participant had learned traditional Māori fishing methods and gardening, providing this participant with both a cultural and scientific lens on place. For instance, by working on a project to remove mortuary waste out of the wastewater system, Educator 2 learned about Māori tikanga⁷. Collaboration and a willingness to engage and learn from people involved in the projects gave Educator 2 a sense of care for relationships. This willingness involved finding out about processes that affect local waterways and landscapes, and working with local people to find solutions to support the health of these areas. The insights gained from these lived-experiences enabled Educator 2 to actively hear a range of voices regarding place. Educator 2’s lived-experiences helped to create “a long standing relationship with the areas and the people”. The participant valued both people and landscapes, making it difficult to “extricate one from the other”, which indicated that the participant found it difficult to fragment people and place from one another.

The photographs the participants provided were a gateway into their lived-experiences of place. The participants’ narratives displayed an overlapping and messy entanglement of the different ways they connect and make meaning of place. Their notion of place included concepts involving memories, knowledge, identity, and an understanding of different worldviews, which flowed between the past and present. Essential to the participants’ concepts associated with a notion of place was a strong relationship with people and landscapes, interconnected through a relational universalism. The people and landscapes relationship was reinforced with concepts, events, and practices, creating the participants’ lived-experiences. Adding to this complexity was the fluidity of time-space, which created discussion around the potential of future-becoming through the gifting of knowledge. These ideas are interwoven with the following themes.

A moral compass

The theme ‘a moral compass’ is composed of three threads forming the pattern, namely, the valuing of different worldviews, based on the participants’ interactions with people in their line of work, the participants’ attitudes towards guardianship and how the participants actioned the values of care, respect and responsibility. I intertwined these first two threads as one focusing on healthy communities. Through this thread I discuss the healing of people and places through restoration.

⁷ The customary system of values and practices that have been developed over time and are deeply embedded in a social context (Moorfield, 2013-2020).

Valuing different worldviews

In consideration of collaborative situations, the participants discussed interacting with people who displayed different worldviews. They acknowledged the tensions involved with these engagements, and were conscious of embracing different perspectives and practices of other people, and honouring the knowledge and relationships people they encountered were willing to share. Educator 3 shared the importance of understanding other people's 'notion of place', saying "[I] can relate to why that area is a place of significance. It [then] makes the job easier to be able to relate to their reasoning behind whatever they're doing". Educator 3 emphasised a willingness to embrace people's different worldviews and perceived this willingness as easier than resisting perspectives different from their own.

Similarly, Educator 2 described the importance of valuing difference in relation to a conflict. The participant was offered a contract by a national organisation to run an education programme, and enlisted the help of a local Māori person to help run the programme. After attending a training together, however, Educator 2 was informed by the organisation that it could not be involved, as the participant's colleague had previously been involved in an altercation with another organisation over practices regarding a beached whale. Undeterred, Educator 2 set up the programme with their iwi colleague. Several years later, the national organisation renewed its invitation. This time the collaboration became a "phenomenal success." Educator 2 in this example displayed a value for people and places characterised by care, and demonstrated this value by prioritising existing relationships and worldviews.

Educator 1 discussed the importance of valuing worldviews with regard to an array of historical contexts and the education of students. The participant stated "it's a conversation starter about the bicultural history of this place... Rather than being something we want to hide away, we need to engage with these topics...through education and the conversations...we can draw more from different people's perspectives..." Educator 1 shared a perspective where the diversity of voices should be heard involving events, which can provide students with the opportunity to think critically about these past events and how they can impact present and future events. By providing educational opportunities of this nature, educators can support the development of students' critical and connected thinking skills, thereby further extending the ability to honour the different knowledge and relationships people are willing to share, and embracing difference when involved in collaborations.

Guardianship

When the participants shared their experiences involving place, the values of care, respect, and responsibility were evident and appeared to be drivers for the participants' actions. The participants expressed these values as being innate or part of who they are, leading them to

“protect those areas or look after them” (Educator 3). Educator 2 shared an example of working with a student on a project involving a stream which “had been really, really damaged...” On reflection, the participant admitted that “the connection to place is so strong sometimes that it’s not whether it’s restored or not, but whether you would want it to be restored, so it’s a driver for action, rather than an outcome of action.” This example demonstrated how care was a motivator for Educator 2. Likewise, care was a motivator for Educator 1, who discussed the importance of sharing history as a moral responsibility, stating that it is:

the role of people who have access to history and photographs to show kids and teach kids that they need to keep learning [that] it wasn’t always like this [environmental degradation]. Otherwise, they’ll accept it, and the future might be even more bleak.

The participants thus all shared an obligation to look after places, which came from their deep sense of care, and was a reason for the type of work they undertook as educators.

Healthy communities

The participants shared aspects of mana whenua, incorporating ideas of valuing different worldviews and actioning guardianship, to then explore the notion of establishing healthy communities. The participants discussed the reciprocity of people and places, where, by restoring one, the other is restored in the process. In order to achieve such restoration Educator 1 discussed restoring mana⁸ to people, saying that to be healthy, people need to:

know who they are [their whakapapa⁹], and to know who they are they have to grow up knowing that, and that has to be part of their learning experiences [regarding] the impact of colonisation...and how amazing their ancestors were.

This participant placed emphasis on people knowing and understanding the multiple perspectives on history associated with concepts of land, people and power differentials. This understanding could lead to developing insight and a sense of identity, strengthening a student’s self-confidence and self-belief, improving their health and contributing to the health of the community.

Educator 2 referred to place as having mana and “the power to restore too.” The participant explained how places, which have not been exploited by humans, have a different type of mana

⁸ A supernatural force in a person, place, or object. Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power (Moorfield, 2013-2020).

⁹ Genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent, connection to place (Moorfield, 2013-2020).

and provide “richness”, whether it be a “sense of liberation” for people, or as a source of food for the biological diversity of the area. Educators 2 and 3 shared experiences regarding places being transformative, recounting times when they worked with students considered “high risk” (Educator 3). Once engaging with these places, Educator 3 stated “they [the students] are completely different...the whole new experience in a whole new place...completely transforms them.” Educator 3 explained the students’ “focused and enthusiastic” response was due to the places potentially being “out...in the open” with “fresh air” and are “free for all...not in a confined classroom or space.” The discussion which came from these two participants indicated the restorative benefits for people when engaging in outdoor activities.

The three participants displayed a strong moral compass, which contributed to their efforts in the restoration and representation of people and places in support of healthy communities. The communal values they shared were care, respect and responsibility, which they displayed by being confident in their own worldviews, that they shared a willingness to embrace the worldviews of other people in order to collaborate. These values extended to their actions as guardians of place, displaying care, respect and responsibility for the earth’s inhabitants and its systems.

The gifting of knowledge

The final theme ‘the gifting of knowledge’ has been present through the previous themes, but the pattern has not been explicitly recognised. When the participants discussed their lived-experiences, this pattern emerged, which I interpreted as the value the participants place on knowledge. This value is conveyed through the multiple ways they accessed knowledge, including the ways it was gifted to them. Extending on their access to knowledge, I show the reciprocal ways this knowledge was shared to explain how knowledge was exchanged by the participants. Finally, I describe the value the participants placed on the importance of gifting place knowledge.

Accessing knowledge

When accessing place knowledge, the participants focused on the significance of engaging with people and landscapes in order to acquire this knowledge. Educator 3 grew up in the region and accessed knowledge mostly through their father. “He wasn’t pushing it [knowledge] on us. The way he thought and acted, we picked up on it regardless if he was actually telling us or not.” Educator 1 and 2 reflected on their experiences of moving to the region as adults to live. Educator 1 had ancestral connections with a township northeast of the main city, while Educator 2 had moved from a large city with no apparent connections to family in the region. Both participants discussed how coming to the region and accessing knowledge provided meaning and understanding for them, helping them to establish a connection to the region. The way the

participants acquired knowledge about place can be summed up by Educator 1 who said, “I couldn’t learn about it not living here...that knowledge... I wouldn’t have known about it if I didn’t live here.” The participants’ collective discussion displayed the recognition that knowing a place, required living in that place.

The reciprocal nature of shared knowledge

The reciprocal nature of knowledge transfer occurred in a multitude of ways for the participants. The descriptions provided by Educator 1 and 3 can be imagined as having a ripple effect from knowledge acquisition to knowledge transfer. Educator 1 achieved this through teaching. For this participant, the hidden history was especially significant and gifting this knowledge ensured it would be widely amalgamated and thus normalised, supporting the development of multiple perspectives on place. Educator 3 felt morally obliged to “pass it along” by “talking to anyone”. Educator 3’s father has been a significant role model. Educator 2 displayed reciprocity by assisting to re-establish the health of a lake. A kaumātua¹⁰ had employed the participant to do “a range of feasibility studies” and said to the participant “we get to learn a lot from you, and you are going to learn a lot from us.” The participants each demonstrated that the reciprocal nature of knowledge-sharing was fluid, dynamic, and could be connected to concepts discussed previously, regarding interwoven relationships through lived-experience.

The importance of gifting knowledge

The participants shared different reasons regarding their values involving the importance of gifting place knowledge. These reasons were closely aligned to the titles the participants gave as an overview of their photographs. Educator 1 had titled their series of photographs as “the history ... the hidden history” and discussed the importance of gifting this knowledge so people could have an understanding of how and why certain events had occurred and the impact of the events. The awareness from this knowledge could create a resilience in people and a sense of identity where they “can stand on their tūrangawaewae¹¹...” Knowing the stories about a place meant people were not standing alone, but that “they’ll always be connected” to “the iwi, their ancestors, and everything else”, which can create “courage, mana and boldness” with an understanding that “it’s not just them” when facing challenges.

Educator 2 and 3 shared common ground regarding the importance of gifting knowledge by role-modelling when providing learning experiences in places. Their reasoning was connected back to the titles of their photographic series, with Educator 2 originally discussing the restoration and protection of places, and Educator 3 highlighting the importance of past memories in specific

¹⁰ An older person of status within the whanau/family (Moorfield, 2013-2020).

¹¹ A place to stand, foundation, a place in the world, a home (Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, 2007).

places. Educator 2 described how the knowledge shared through the programmes they provided was being replicated by different kura/schools and education providers: "...what we've seen now is that there are others that have spawned up around it...more sort of ad hoc, but they're involved in some interesting stuff..." Educator 3 was engaged in a collaborative approach with school teachers to deliver programmes, providing more "hands-on work in the spaces rather than the classroom or at the school." The participant supported school teachers to ensure places were accessible for students to have "more memorable" experiences.

The way the participants acquired knowledge and gifted it forward displayed a reciprocal approach, which was fluid and dynamic, and had a ripple effect. The participants' reasons for gifting knowledge related to the titles of their photographic series regarding a notion of place, and involved the history and hidden history, the relationship between tangata whenua/landscapes and restoration, and family memories. 'The gifting of knowledge' as a theme extended on the first theme of 'relationality' to further emphasise the complex and messy entanglement of the participants' lived-experiences in place.

The analysis of data from the participant-educators' transcripts revealed three themes. 'Relationality' referred to the connections the participants made to place through their photographs. The connections displayed the relationship between people and landscapes, encompassed the participants' lived-experiences, and interwove their relationship with time-space. Threads from this theme weaved through the remaining two themes, 'a moral compass', and 'the gifting of knowledge'. 'A moral compass' emphasised the ways the participants' lived-experiences affected their values and perspectives. These collective values of care, respect, and responsibility formed threads involving the valuing of different worldviews and guardianship, these threads intertwined making a third thread focusing on healthy communities. 'The gifting of knowledge' formed the third theme to recognise a pattern involving the participants' access to knowledge, the reciprocal nature of shared knowledge and the importance of gifting knowledge. In the next chapter, I will reflect on these findings and suggest how the participant-educators' perspectives and insights could inform school curriculum design.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

The research study has the intention of finding out what place means to LEOTC-funded educators and how their perspectives and insights could inform school curriculum design. The previous chapter presented findings arising from an exploration of the participant-educators' narratives and perspectives and insights on a notion of place, including the visible history and hidden history; the relationship between tangata whenua and restoration; and family memories. The narratives were analysed thematically, and three themes emerged, namely relationality, a moral compass, and the gifting of knowledge. The literature review considered a concept of place, explored place theory, a critical pedagogy of place, and suggested how a critical pedagogy of place relates to school curriculum. The following discussion weaves the findings and past literature together explaining how the educators' perspectives and insights could inform school curriculum design. First, by explaining place-meaning and its relevance to school curriculum design, continuing with the values apparent in the educators' perspectives and insights on place, and concluding with the relevance of the school curriculum to the educators' insights and perspectives.

Place-meaning and its relevance to school curriculum design

Place can be seen through a multitude of lenses, and different theories lead academics to see different facets and features of places in the world (Cresswell, 2015). Place-theorising is not exclusive to academics, the participant-educators being an example. Through the process of photo-elicitation and semi-structured interviews, these participants shared their perspectives and insights on the notion of place. It was evident through the participants' perspectives that space becomes place when meaning is attached and aspects of a place come to matter to people. The meaning is associated with "making sense of the world, of knowing, understanding, experiencing and valuing the world" (Nomikos, 2018, p. 454). The way place mattered to the participants became apparent when they titled their photographic series forming themes for their individual narratives. When the participants' individual narratives were collectively woven together using thematic analysis, a strong relationship with people and landscapes became fundamental to the 'notion of place' concept. Insights from the participants displayed indirect and mystical connections in the form of ancestral relationships in relation to this concept, allowing the theme of 'relationality' to emerge. The participants' narratives revealed two more themes, 'a moral compass' and 'the gifting of knowledge'. Collectively, these themes displayed patterns involving guardianship, an understanding of difference in worldviews, healthy communities, and the importance of accessing and sharing knowledge, incorporating reciprocity.

The process and the findings displayed post-structural concepts with the notion of 'place-becoming', involving an unfinished and messy entanglement (Anderson & Harrison, 2010). It shared similarities with Edward Soja's (1999) work regarding Thirdspace, acknowledging the

lived-space as a way of perceiving and comprehending the world (Soja, 1999). A Thirdspace consciousness, using conceived space and perceived space as “both-and-also”, provided the study with a heuristic to gain insight beyond what was directly known (Soja, 1999, p. 268). The Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region represented the conceptualised space, as its settlement symbolises a particular mentality and set of attitudes. The participants perceived responses to the region may differ from the conceived view, perhaps recognising its longer human history and its association with the local environment. Soja’s (1999) ‘Thirdspace consciousness’ influenced my exploration of the participants’ narratives and contrast of the similarities and differences of their lived-experiences in a place. It provided a path which led me to develop new insight and knowledge. This new knowledge arose from the participants’ collective lived-experiences and how their interrelationships with place influenced their values and perspectives on place. The new knowledge provided a lens for me to then view school curriculum with, address inconsistencies, and inform curriculum design.

The participants’ collective experiences offered insight into a messy entanglement when living in a place. The complexity of their lived-experiences involved concepts, values, people, events and practices. The study’s heuristic using Thirdspace consciousness (Soja, 1999) could be applied to a school context. It could expose a similar complexity involving the relationship of people and place as provided by the participants’ insights and perspectives on place. The lived-experiences of people in a school community could replicate the concepts, values, events and practices. The lived space (Soja, 1999) of a school community is in a constant process of ‘becoming’, and consequently the expansion of new knowledge will continue to occur within it. It is this ‘on-going’ process of knowledge production that is of importance to informing school curriculum, especially the current focus on local curriculum design (Ministry of Education, 2019).

Local curriculum design is a focus of the Leading Local Curriculum guide series (Ministry of Education, 2020). The Leading Local Curriculum guide (Ministry of Education, 2019) provides ‘the local’ with a form of agency, and appears to recognise the importance of developing a local-global consciousness. This curriculum guide acknowledges that designing curriculum is an ‘ongoing process’, with an understanding that this process is “a journey” which “continues to challenge and evaluate... ideas, systems, and processes” (Ministry of Education, 2019, What is a local curriculum? section, para. 4). This ongoing process (Ministry of Education, 2019) aligns with Thirdspace consciousness and the expansion of knowledge production (Soja, 1999). The participants’ insights and perspectives regarding a notion of place offers an awareness and serves as a continuation of this knowledge production. The participants’ perspectives and insights are amalgamated with critical pedagogy of place theory. Their narratives, a combination of perceived and lived space, focus on the lived-experiences of a place, and how these experiences connect to a local-global dynamic involving a dialectical fluidity. The combination of the

participants' narratives and critical pedagogy of place supports a local-global consciousness when living in a place and is explained through the values apparent in the participants' perspectives and insights.

The values apparent in the educators' perspectives and insights on place

The findings from the participants' narratives relate to the work of Jickling et al. (2018) and Morse et al. (2018), the latter advocating for "a deeper understanding of relationship – remarkably different from the colonially infused concept", and discuss the practice of "wildness and *self-will*" (Morse et al., 2018, p. 245). The participants practise the concept of wildness and self-will in a place as an innate form of well-being. It involves reflecting on the inclinations within themselves, with other people, communities and society, and the places they choose to dwell, (re)adjusting the ways they might live to be inclusive of the multi-species world (Jickling et al., 2018; Morse et al., 2018).

The practice of 'wildness and self-will' by the participants in relation to well-being revealed insights into the participants' awareness of two worldviews, whether they were conscious of these viewpoints or not. Narvaez et al. (2019) explains these worldviews as an indigenous perspective and a western perspective. An indigenous perspective considers the universe as moral, sacred, and in unison, interconnected with particular landscapes, where a western perspective emphasises fragmentation, disenchantment and amorality of the cosmos (Narvaez., 2019). The participants moved between these two worldviews, either valuing both lenses, or, at the very least, valuing an interconnected lens over a fragmented one. They displayed an ability to navigate these socially constructed worlds simultaneously through their work. The tensions involving the differences in worldviews relate to critical pedagogy of place theory. The participants actioned aspects of the theory as they engaged in experiential practice in local places, valuing the restoration and representation of people and place, and modelled ways to live holistically in the entirety of their environments as Gruenewald (2008) suggests.

The values shown by the participants regarding the restoration and representation of people and place was emphasised by Educator 1 who discussed the hidden history of the Tairāwhiti region. This participant highlighted the importance of sharing a multitude of perspectives, providing opportunities for people to gain an understanding of how and why certain events occurred and the impacts of these events. The findings echo Halbert and Salter's (2019) work, discussing the "spatial dimension of situationality" and concerns the privileging of knowledge and its selection (p. 19). These insights show the inequalities which can be unconsciously present when some people's stories, and consequently worldviews, are silenced by others. It was important for the participants to share the stories from the people whose knowledge had been unfairly marginalised, involving the history of a place. It could further support an understanding as to why this

privileging of certain stories had occurred. With these insights, it could build resilience and strengthen a sense of identity and self-worth in people, and foster empathy for everyone involved regarding the injustices of the past, such as colonisation.

The participants were confident in their own worldview associated with people and place, giving them a sense of identity and self-worth. They shared the communal values of care, respect, and responsibility, displaying a willingness to respect and embrace the worldviews of others. These worldviews involved indigenous and western perspectives, with insight into past and present oppressions of the indigenous peoples' worldview. The participants valued these differences as fundamental to successful collaboration, while acknowledging the tensions in different collaborations. An example being that of Educator 2 who maintained a moral position during a conflict of interest episode, which eventually resolved with a harmonious result. This participant's prioritisation of existing relationships in a power relationship reflected aspects of critical pedagogy by transforming an oppressive condition. The findings align with Freire's (1970/2017) notions of situationality and conscientisation. It is this dialectic of people and place which supports a valuing of the contrasts between indigenous and western epistemologies and associated concepts of space and place.

When interacting in places relatively undisturbed by human development, the participants discussed a relational depth with a place. The relationship was intuitively interconnected through indirect and mystical connections, taking the form of ancestral relationships, and involving concepts of guardianship. It was a deep sense of care and moral obligation which contributed to the participants' efforts and practice in the restoration and representation of people and place. A number of authors acknowledge the importance of this ontological approach, recognising humans as part of ecosystems and having similar dependencies on the living world as the diverse multi-species members (Gruenewald, 2008; Halbert & Salter, 2019; Jickling et al., 2018; Morse et al., 2018). This interconnected way of thinking involves a relational shift where human beings behave in intelligent and caring ways towards themselves, each other, the earth's inhabitants and its systems (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). These approaches can contribute to individual and collective well-being and support the health of a community (Gruenewald, 2008), and was a priority for the participants. Their values and interactions were made apparent by Educator 2 and Educator 3 stating the experiences they had, engaging students considered "high risk" with a place, completely transforming them (Educator 3). These experiences indicate the restorative benefits when engaging in outdoor environments, and how the participants passed on knowledge through the experiences to develop empathetic connections with a place, potentially guiding the restoration of people's well-being.

Discussion with the participants involved the concept of kaitiaki, whether it was being a kaitiaki/guardian and looking after a place, being guided by kaitiaki/ancestors on the ways to tiaki¹² place, or a place having kaitiaki/mystical guardians in the form of animals or taniwha¹³. The participants' discussions were evidence of their intuitive interconnections and relational depth, with an acknowledgement that a place "has *agency*... or *voice*" (Jickling et al., 2008, p. 37). It showed the participants understood the world to be a communicator, and that there are different ways for people to interpret what they see and hear (Jickling et al., 2008). The participants valued the opportunity to explore and be curious about a place, gaining an understanding of the other ways places can be inhabited which "go beyond western conceptualisation of spatial practices" (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 19). The exploration contributed to thinking which recognises the world as being multispecies and multicentric drawing attention to indigenous epistemologies and language which is holistic, situated and inter-relational with place.

The participants also shared the importance of knowing a geo-political history of a place providing insights regarding situations at a global level, and worked with policy and practice involving 'the global' concept with an incorporation of western worldviews. Their insights touch on the local-global dynamic Massey (1994) discusses regarding space and place interconnecting and the continuous flow through the dynamics of social relations. Through their work, the participants focused on place-based practice involving a local consciousness, but acknowledged curriculum as fostering global citizens. They used local place narratives to connect with global themes, ideas, and challenges, collaborating with school educators to design curricula. It supported students to gain credentials and instil the skills of life-long learning for a prevailing society.

The relevance of school curriculum to the educators' insights and perspectives

New knowledge involving the concept of place was gained through the participants' insights and perspectives. The participants' discussion displayed examples of place-based experiences supporting the well-being of people and place to create healthy communities and a valuing of the differences between indigenous and western worldviews. The insights and perspectives from the participants contributed to critical pedagogy of place theory, and by weaving the findings and theory together emphasised the relevance of school curriculum design to a reinhabitation and decolonisation approach (Gruenewald, 2008). The approach focuses on two concepts, reinhabiting and decolonising, which are interrelated, with the intention to connect school and place-based experiences with the politics of culture and ecology (Gruenewald, 2008).

¹² To look after, care, to guard (Moorfield, 2003-2020).

¹³ Water spirit, power creature (Moorfield, 2003-2020).

The participants' discussion placed importance on multi-perspectives of events which occur in a place, and this discussion is relevant to a reinhabiting and decolonising approach (Gruenewald, 2008). An aspect of the approach concerns the privileging of knowledge and its selection in curriculum, with Halbert and Salter (2019) suggesting a critical review of what and whose knowledge has been organised and conceived in the curriculum. Combining Freire's work (1970/2017) involving situationality and conscientisation in such a review could further support recognising the aspects of curriculum which continue to support dominant western worldviews. The approach could provide schools with a critical consciousness and an awareness of the contrasts between indigenous and western epistemologies, the relationship towards homogeneous and heterogeneous ways of thinking, and the associated concepts of the space and place dynamic with a local-global consciousness. It could lead to ways which support the complementarity of different worldviews and further challenge school communities to think about the ways to prioritise and promote the well-being of its people and places for the future (Gruenewald, 2008).

The participants' discussion revealed a relational depth with a place, which contributed to a sense of care and moral obligation to look after a place. By providing experiences in a place, the participants gifted knowledge, developing students' empathetic connections with a place. School curriculum that is designed towards exploring places could develop similar interconnections, supporting students' engagement through a "multidisciplinary, experiential, and intergenerational" approach to learning (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 315). Such an approach is relevant as it introduces people to thinking critically about their world (Freire, 1970/2017) supporting reinhabitation. To achieve a reinhabiting approach requires the expansion of learning possibilities, which mirror the range of a student's significant world, to their neighbourhood, community, region and beyond (Gruenewald, 2008). School curriculum which prioritises such approaches could contribute to individual and collective well-being, developing concepts of guardianship, and encouraging the health of a community.

There was recognition by the participants of a multi-species world and the different ways it is in communication with people throughout their discussion. It draws attention to the type of language framing indigenous and western epistemologies. Plumwood (2002) explains the conceptual framework associated with Anthropocentrism, with viewpoints universalised as the "master perspective" by western culture, becoming "part of the framework of cultural reality" (p.96). Anthropocentrism values "hierarchical thinking" encouraging "oppositional value dualisms" (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010, p. 124), like "nature and culture or civilisation and wilderness" (Jickling et al., 2018, p. 35). School curriculum underpinned by the language of western epistemologies does marginalise other ways of knowing (Halbert & Salter, 2019). Jickling et al. (2018) suggest "shifting language and challenging human dominion... to disrupt taken for granted patterns of usage" (p 36). The authors discuss how non-indigenous cultures could engage in ways

where words like “all our relations” could be genuine and not homogenised (Jickling et al., 2018, p. 36). Designing school curriculum which explores place history associated with “how environments are shaping and being shaped by the lives of all inhabitants” (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 19) could support a constant process of ‘becoming’ and shift language’ (Jickling et al., 2018). The ‘becoming’, involving Thirdspace consciousness (Soja, 1999), is an expansion of knowledge production and could contribute to valorising other ways of knowing, bringing harmony to school curriculum by acknowledging the difference in the language of these epistemologies.

Educator 1 acknowledged the importance of focusing on localised concepts and showing a place’s relevance in a globalised world to reduce insular ways of thinking. The discussion touches on a local-global consciousness and its importance to school curriculum design. While developing global citizens is essential for society, further connections which traverse “spatial identities” (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 20) could occur providing additional support for a reinhabiting and decolonising approach to school curriculum. Such connections would require acknowledging a local-global consciousness and how ‘the local’ is fundamental in contributing to the processes of globalisation or globalisations (Halbert & Salter, 2019; Perkins & Thorns, 2012). To provide such an understanding of the complex local-global dynamic involving societal issues means contextualising these issues and giving ‘the local’ agency to challenge ‘the global’ in school curriculum design. It is through ‘the local’ challenging ‘the global’ that a consciousness can be raised regarding the “spatial orientation to global, national and local markers”, and how these ‘markers’ create a centring of some places, with particular emphasis on western European worldviews (Halbert & Salter, 2019, p. 20). By addressing the centric nature of western European epistemologies as ‘the global’ or ‘the national’ markers and their underpinning in school curriculum, a responsiveness to local places and knowledges can occur and support the growing health of a community.

The Leading Local Curriculum Guide series (Ministry of Education, 2020), previously mentioned, along with aspects of the Local Curriculum guide (Ministry of Education, 2019), do provide ‘the local’, as in school community members, with a form of agency. The Local Curriculum guide (Ministry of Education, 2019) shows an awareness of a local-global consciousness by weaving elements of the national New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) with teaching and learning that is meaningful for students, whānau, iwi, and the local community (Ministry of Education, 2020). The Local Curriculum Guide series ensures schools have the opportunity to express what is important to them and their community by recognising what is distinctive to the people and their location (Ministry of Education, 2020). Such a local curriculum guide can support and address many aspects of a reinhabiting and decolonising approach, engaging the insights and perspectives from the participants on ways to

reimagine healthy communities. Yet, there are areas which could be made more explicit. One of these areas involves the inseparability of people and place through an indigenous worldview.

While local curriculum may display reinhabiting and decolonising practice by prioritising the social and cultural aspects of place, there may yet remain limitations involving the ecological aspects of place. This exclusion of the ecological aspects of a place shows local curriculum favouring a western worldview involving fragmentation where people and culture are separate from an ecological consciousness. It is the underrepresentation of an ecological consciousness in local curriculum which raises the question regarding the valuing and embracing of indigenous epistemologies, with particular reference to Penetito's discussion of a pedagogy being "consistent with indigenous assumptions", thus formalising "the relationship between [indigenous people] and their environment as co-habitors" (p. 20), and thus challenging the social and conceptual structures which continue to privilege western epistemologies. This subtle (and not-so-subtle) privileging first communicated through the national curriculum document (Ministry of Education, 2007) and the abstract and fragmented language it uses which continues to perpetuate what Harvester & Blenkinsop (2010) and Herles (2018) refer to as an anthropocentric 'logic of domination'. The subtle privileging then filters through the curriculum and is passed on as hidden messaging in the school's cultural system and internal structures. It is through these structures that guidelines and foundations are established supporting people in the ways to function in society (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010) continuing to privilege some people while marginalising others.

The participants' insights and perspectives regarding place and their subsequent interactions with a place revealed an ecological consciousness in harmony with a social and cultural consciousness. This consciousness relates to indigenous and western notions of well-being, with the participants mediating and bridging these two socially constructed worldviews in an attempt to restore a balance of power (where some groups have undermined the power of others). The participants design curricula favouring the exploration of local places, fostering empathy, and restoring the well-being of people and place by providing opportunities for people to interact in a place and practise self-will (Morse et al., 2018). It is through such experiences that people can gain insights supporting the expansion of knowledge formation creating an openness that goes beyond the bounds of present knowledge (Soja, 1999). As 'the local', it is the participants' place knowledge and the ways they support people to obtain their own place knowledge which models a form of agency and is a way of informing local curriculum. This modelling can filter through to national curriculum and contribute to informing how school curriculum is designed and valued at 'the global' level.

When people go about their daily tasks, activities and routines producing lived-experiences, a messy entanglement can ensue where people's ideas about place overlap with others. It creates lived-space (Soja, 1999) which is in a constant process of 'becoming' and can support the expansion of knowledge production. The participant-educators are an example, attributing meaning to a people and place relationship, showing that place-based experiences support the restoration and representation of people and place. Two worldviews, indigenous and western epistemologies, were revealed when comparing the participants' discussion to critical pedagogy of place theory, with a reinhabiting and decolonising approach (Gruenewald, 2008) informing school curriculum design. Through this approach, limitations involving the underrepresentation of an ecological consciousness in relation to local curriculum design were revealed. The limitations raise questions regarding "the current epidemic of separation" (Young, 2019, p. 221), and how these concepts filter through curriculum documents, with further thinking requiring the exploration of what Young (2019) calls "cultural repair" and "connection-based knowledge" (Young, 2019, p. 221).

Chapter Six: Conclusion

When humans attach meaning to a space, that space transforms into a site of significance and becomes a place (Cresswell, 2015; Nomikos, 2018). Through this study, I gained an understanding of the significance of place from educators funded through the Ministry of Education LEOTC support project (n.d.). The study explored the concept of place and its relevance to school curriculum design, discovering the ‘notion of place’ held by participant-educators through their insights and perspectives. How these insights and perspectives on place could inform school curriculum design was central to the study. The discursive nature of the study involved a struggle with communication, methodology and an insight into the barriers when actioning the new knowledge and understanding gained from the study. These new insights inform the direction for further research.

The educators’ ‘notion of place’ and how it informs school curriculum design

When exploring the place concept, it became apparent that the idea of space being attributed with meaning by humans, made it into a place (Jarratt et al., 2019). The exploration uncovered multiple overlapping theoretical perspectives forming a messy entanglement. Cresswell (2015) outlines these theoretical perspectives into three levels. First, a descriptive perspective of place as singular entities, with unique qualities and social processes (Cresswell, 2015); second, expanding on places as singular entities by applying these ideas to “wider processes of construction” e.g. post-colonialism, using a social constructionist approach (Cresswell, 2015, p. 56); third, using a phenomenological approach to place, exploring the essence of being human in a place through concepts of dwelling (Cresswell, 2015). When forming an understanding of place, these approaches intertwined creating entanglements, which contributed to a broader understanding of place and simultaneously created more complexity. This understanding of place-meaning gave me insight into the complexity of the research question, and I required a post-structuralist process in order to answer it.

Soja’s (1999) work regarding Thirdspace and the concept of lived-space aided my developing understanding of the participants’ perspectives on a ‘notion of place’, and my articulation of the complexity involved. A Thirdspace consciousness (Soja, 1999) provided the study with a heuristic to perceive and comprehend beyond what was directly known, expanding and creating new knowledge. Thirdspace (Soja, 1999) enabled me to acquire new knowledge from the participants which created a lens for me to then contribute to informing school curriculum design, a task encouraged by the Leading Local Curriculum guide (Ministry of Education, 2020). The same Thirdspace (Soja, 1999) process can also be applied to a school community, as a means of acquiring new knowledge to help inform a local school curriculum and its ‘ongoing’ process.

A synthesis of the findings and critical place theory created new knowledge relating to the participants' insights and perspectives on place. In the findings, I discussed three themes emerging from the data collection. 'Relationality' referred to the pattern exposing the connections the participants made to place through the photographs they each contributed to the research. It involved the connections they made between people and landscapes, broadening to incorporate the lived-experiences of the participants, followed by the complexity of the time-space entanglement. 'Relationality' was a core theme which weaved its way through the remaining two themes. 'A moral compass' addressed the collective values of the participants, involving care, respect, and responsibility. These values were displayed through the participants' interrelationship with place, showing how they valued different worldviews and concepts of guardianship. These values then intertwined to display an understanding of how to repair and heal a community. 'The gifting of knowledge' explicitly addressed a pattern apparent in the first two themes. It involved the participants' access to place knowledge, aspects of reciprocity when sharing place knowledge, and the importance the participants placed on gifting knowledge.

When comparing the themes, 'relationality', 'a moral compass, and 'the gifting of knowledge', with critical place theory, using a Thirdspace consciousness (Soja, 1999), it became apparent that the concept of the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region as a settlement represented the conceived space, while the participants' narratives represented the perceived and lived spaces. The perceived and lived spaces revealed two worldviews in contention - that of an indigenous worldview and a western worldview. An indigenous worldview involves recognising the universe as being in unison and connecting to the ways of living with a particular landscape (Narvaez et al., 2019). Whereas, a western worldview emphasises a fragmented, disenchanted, and amoral perspective on the world (Narvaez et al., 2019). The participants displayed an ability to navigate these two socially constructed worlds simultaneously through their line of work, which Penetito (2009) states "is imperative but not unproblematic" (p. 21). Being able to negotiate a relationship between the two worldviews (Penetito, 2009) relates to critical pedagogy of place theory. By engaging in experiential practice in local places, the participants showed their values regarding the restoration and representation of people and place, and role modelled the ways to live in harmony where both worldviews could work dialectically.

The perspectives and insights of the participants emphasised the relevance of a reinhabitation and decolonisation approach (Gruenewald, 2008) to inform school curriculum design. In discussion, the participants shared the importance of having multi-perspectives on the events occurring in a place and the need to develop empathetic connections with a place. The discussion highlighted the dominant western narratives and the marginalisation of indigenous narratives. As part of a reinhabiting and decolonising approach, the participants' discussion emphasised the importance of a critical review relating to whose knowledge has been organised and conceived in the

curriculum (Halbert & Salter, 2019). Such a review could echo Paulo Freire's (1970/2017) notions of situationality and conscientisation. Such notions support the critique of those aspects of curriculum which currently exclude the ecological elements of place, favouring instead a western worldview involving fragmentation where people and culture are separate from an ecological consciousness. The review could provide an awareness of the contrast between indigenous and western epistemologies, the association with homogenous and heterogenous ways of thinking, and the concepts involving a space and place dynamic regarding a local-global consciousness.

A local-global consciousness is important to school curriculum design. It supports an insight into 'the local' having a fundamental contribution to the processes of globalisation or globalisations (Halbert & Salter, 2019; Perkins & Thorns, 2012). Understanding the complexity of a local-global dynamic involving societal issues means contextualising these issues and giving 'the local' agency to challenge 'the global' in school curriculum design. A local curriculum can support and address a reinhabiting and decolonising approach, drawing on the insights and perspectives from the participants for ways to reimagine healthy communities. A way the participants contribute to creating healthy communities is by designing curricula favouring the exploration of places. It is through such experiences that students acquire the multi-perspectives regarding place knowledge, which supports 'the local' (as in a school community) with a form of agency to inform local curriculum. Local curriculum knowledge can then filter through to national curriculum and contribute to informing how school curriculum is designed and valued at 'the global' level.

Place is the idea of space being attributed with meaning by humans (Jarratt et al., 2019). Understanding the difference in meaning that people attribute to place can support a school to acquire new knowledge relating to the school community which can help inform school curriculum. The LEOTC-funded educators engage students in local experiences involving aspects of critical pedagogy of place theory through their work, and are members of the school community. The values evident in their insights and perspectives involve care, respect and responsibility, created by an intertwining with place and form a deeply embedded interrelationship which influences these values. This interrelationship can show an understanding of the ways to repair and heal community through restoration and representation of people and place where differences in worldviews are seen as a dialectical relationship. The LEOTC-funded educators' perspectives and insights are relevant because they align with a reinhabitation and decolonisation approach to informing school curriculum design. It is this approach which recognises the current exclusion of an ecological consciousness with place from curriculum. It is through such experiences which LEOTC-funded educators provide where students are informed of the multi-perspectives regarding place knowledge and understanding. This local knowledge provides a school community with a form of agency to inform local curriculum which can create

a fluidity with national curriculum. It can lead to informing the ways curriculum is designed at a global level and can place value on a local-global consciousness when designing school curriculum.

The limitations and the struggle of the research study

Reflexive analysis was applied throughout the research process, ensuring the quality and integrity of the study. The reflexive process did involve a struggle, and reflecting on the struggle has established the limitations ‘of’ and ‘on’ the study. Through this struggle I discovered new knowledge for myself and developed confidence and resilience from wrestling with these concepts, overcoming the challenges to gain new insight and understanding. These challenges involved communication, methodology, limitations of the study, and insight, questioning the readiness and capacity for some school leaders and teachers to grasp the concepts mentioned in the research study.

At the outset of the study, the language available to me which I could use to articulate with, came from my experience. This language lacked the academic rigour that would add credibility to my thoughts. This lack of credibility was initially a barrier when trying to convey my thinking, and for those listening to understand. Only through the continued exploration of scholarly research throughout this study did I discover the necessary language to communicate my thoughts to others. This academic vocabulary, coupled with the findings emerging from the data, provided me with evidence and support to explain the concept of two worldviews existing: that of an indigenous worldview and a western worldview.

When I analysed the data, it became apparent the methodology required reviewing. I was using a thematic analysis to analyse the data, and while it was providing information to support answering the research questions, it was potentially placing a homogenised lens over the data by blending the participants’ narratives. Thematic analysis was an important and necessary analysis for answering the research questions, but it was at odds with the theoretical underpinnings of ecofeminism, potentially marginalising the individual voices of the participants. The photo elicitation technique associated with the semi-structured interviews provided photographs, with one of the interview questions asking the participants to title their photographs/photographic series. Using aspects of visual narrative analysis supported the explicit differentiation of the participants’ narratives, and added a heterogenous lens to balance what could be a homogenous lens imposed by thematic analysis. The photographs and titles were incorporated into the first theme ‘relationality’ introducing the participants’ individual narratives before interweaving their storylines using thematic analysis. Using both forms of analysis meant the participants’ voices were honoured and brought harmony and balance to the findings, ensuring the methodology was fit for purpose.

When I reflected on the limitations of the study, Soja's Thirdspace consciousness (1999), with a focus on spatiality, provided post-structural concepts associated with the notion of 'place-becoming', that supported my ability to answer the complexity of the research question. In an attempt to understand the 'unfinished and messy' aspects of 'place-becoming', I turned to Seamon's (2018) work on "relationships, resolutions and processes" (p. 66). Seamon's (2018) approach to understanding place considers "the various processes, happenings, and relationships by which a place and its people survive and prosper, on one hand, or degenerate and flounder, on the other" (p. 66). The idea of focusing on the processes happening in a place relates to the research question regarding the educators interrelations with 'place' influencing their values and different information could have been gained through this avenue, rather than with Soja's 'Thirdspace' (1999) approach. Seamon's (2018) approach relating to relationships, resolutions and processes could be incorporated into further research.

Another limitation relating to the study was the photo-elicitation method. It is important to note how time consuming it was for the volunteer participants. In addition to a one hour semi-structured interview, the participants were asked to take or gather photographs of a place prior to the interview. For time strapped educators, this was a demanding task, which was stated by one of the participants. I was fortunate to have three educators willing to volunteer their time for the study. I did not state the number of photographs required and each participant took it upon themselves to decide how many photographs they would share. As seen in the findings, the number of photographs varied between each participant, which also added to the varying levels of information. The use of photographs did tend to direct participants to discuss the past. Concepts involving the past thus dominated research study, and I question if this would have been the case if alternative methods were used. Overall, however, the benefits of photo-elicitation as a method outweighed the disadvantages, and would be a technique and resource I would use again in future studies.

In the process of research study, during which I consolidated my understanding from research, and gained the academic vocabulary to articulate the new knowledge, I discovered barriers exist when actioning the new knowledge and understanding. Mainstream schooling can be seen as creating a narrow lens for teachers working in the schooling space, supported by the concepts and language of a dominant western European worldview. Whenever engaging in conversation with school teachers about the study, what I have learned regarding the 'notion of place' from the participant-educators, and how it could inform school curriculum design, I have found the concepts from the study are too far removed for some teachers to grasp due to effects on them of the conditioning of the schooling lens. It is understandable as 'if you cannot see it, then you cannot be it'. Yet, the participant-educators have gifted me with these insights and the potential, not only

to change, but to reimagine school curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand, if the constraints of the schooling lens are challenged. It is this area that further research could focus on such a divide involving the philosophical nature of school curriculum and provide practical support to address curriculum redesign.

Further study

The understanding gained from the research study, its limitations, and the struggle experienced as part of the research process, developed the academic insight and skills necessary to approach further study, including the ability to persevere. My research will continue to focus on place theory and practice with theoretical underpinnings in ecofeminism, an ethic of care, and ecofeminist pedagogy. Through this study, the exploration has provided me further interest in the contrasts between an indigenous worldview and a western worldview, with Penetito (2009) voicing the importance of a “negotiated relationship” (p. 221) between the two epistemologies, the effects on a ‘notion of place’, and the implications for school educators wanting to mediate and bridge these two worldviews for collaborative partnership.

The participant-educators’ narratives displayed examples of how place-based experiences support the well-being of people and place, contribute to developing healthy communities, and develop a critical and sensitive understanding of the difference between indigenous and western worldviews. The participants displayed empathy and connected consciousness which share a relationship with Jon Young’s (2019) work. Young (2019) explains that human beings are facing “a great connection challenge” due to prevailing worldviews perpetuating a “current epidemic of separation” (pp. 220-221). He proposes transforming this separation through the process of reconnecting, suggesting a model based on an “intergenerational transfer of skills and connection-based knowledge” (Young, 2019, p. 221). This model could support the repairing of culture, and aid “in the reestablishment of a thriving, regenerative culture for future generations” (Young, 2019, p. 221). Local curriculum design could be the means to support the navigation of such an exploration with discussion around the ‘reimagining’ of a healthy community. A local-global consciousness could contribute to informing local curriculum design, using insights from Seamon (2018) to support a ‘reimagining’ through “relationships, resolutions, and processes” (p. 66). The people collaborating in such a study could explore the ways mutual understanding is achieved to forge partnerships which support connection-based knowledge (Young, 2019). It could mean establishing relationships with local community members who hold place-based knowledge to find ways to reimagine healthy, holistic communities and ecosystems together.

Final Words

The research study shows there is a call for a relational shift to school curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand due to the narrow lens created by the concepts and language of a dominant western

European worldview on schooling. It is a shift in thinking requiring human beings to behave in intelligent and caring ways towards themselves, each other, the earth's inhabitants and its systems (Harvester & Blenkinsop, 2010). It means recognising and valuing an indigenous worldview in partnership with a western worldview to support living in harmony with a place by encouraging a critical and connected consciousness. Applying a reinhabitation and decolonisation approach (Gruenewald, 2008) can support this process when critically and connectedly re-evaluating school pedagogy. Discussions involving a relational shift are happening, helping to heal communities and ecosystems through restoration and representation. Including school teachers in these discussions can develop partnerships and encourage global flourishing.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics approval



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology
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E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

15 May 2020

Leon Benade
Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Leon

Re Ethics Application: **20/107 Place, people, and perspectives: Informing school curriculum design through the insights of LEOTC- funded educators**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 14 May 2023.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEC in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard and that all the dates on the documents are updated.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz. The forms mentioned above are available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: eemmcadyen@gmail.com



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

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AUT

TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

24 April 2020

Leon Benade
Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Leon

Ethics Application: 20/107 Place, people, and perspectives: Informing school curriculum design through the insights of LEOTC- funded educators

Thank you for submitting your application for ethical review. We are pleased to advise that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) approved your ethics application at their meeting on 20 April 2020, subject to the following conditions:

1. Provision of an assurance that prospective participants will not be contacted directly, and that recruitment will occur as outlined on pages 12 and 13 of the EA1;
2. Update the Consent Forms and emails to include reference to the interview taking place via Zoom;
3. Clarification of the inclusion of both a Consent Form and a Consent and Release Form.

Please provide us with a response to the points raised in these conditions, indicating either how you have satisfied these points or proposing an alternative approach. AUTEC also requires copies of any altered documents, such as Information Sheets, surveys etc. You are not required to resubmit the application form again. Any changes to responses in the form required by the committee in their conditions may be included in a supporting memorandum.

Please note that the Committee is always willing to discuss with applicants the points that have been made. There may be information that has not been made available to the Committee, or aspects of the research may not have been fully understood.

Once your response is received and confirmed as satisfying the Committee's points, you will be notified of the full approval of your ethics application. Full approval is not effective until all the conditions have been met. Data collection may not commence until full approval has been confirmed. If these conditions are not met within six months, your application may be closed and a new application will be required if you wish to continue with this research.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, we ask that you use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at ethics@aut.ac.nz.

We look forward to hearing from you,

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: cvf8306@unitec.ac.nz

Appendix B: Resources and techniques

Protocols for Photo-elicitation and Semi-structured Interviews

The research instruments used to gather the data involves:

- Photo-elicitation
- Semi-structured interviews

Photo-elicitation

Photo-elicitation is a process involving research participants taking photographs of a certain subject and then discussing their photographic decision-making through semi-structured interviews (Briggs, Stedman, & Krasny, 2014). Participants will take photographs relating to their 'notion of place' preferably attached to their line of work, but not a requirement.

Consent will need to be obtained from the participants for the use of their photographs in the study.

Participants are advised not to photograph people in their selection of a place. If people appear in the photographs with obvious facial recognition, then their permission should be acquired for use of the photograph. However, digital editing can be used to obscure faces.

If photographs have been taken of private land and dwellings, the permission should be acquired from the land and dwelling owners as copyright laws can apply.

Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interviews will be arranged and conducted with individual participants focusing on their photographic choices in relation to the overarching research questions/aims.

The indicative questions for the semi-structured interview are as follows:

Concepts

Tell me about the photograph/s you have chosen to take of a place.

Further prompts

- Where is/are the photograph/s taken and can you describe the place to me?
- What happens in this place and how is it meaningful to you?
- Are there other aspects which make this place important?
- If you were to title or caption this photograph what would it be?
Why did you choose this title, or caption?
- How do you understand place?

Values

How would you say that you understand place? What defines it for you?

Does this understanding of place influence your values or mindset/ the work you do?

How?

OR

What are your values or mindset regarding place? How have they been influenced?

Does your perspective on place influence your work?

OR

What influences the work you do?

Relevance to school curriculum design

Through the perspective that you have shared? Do you see them in the school curriculum?

Do you think this perspective is expressed in school curriculum? Where? Could it be improved?

OR

Do you think this perspective is relevant to school curriculum? Why?

Consent will be required from the participants to be interviewed and information from the interview is to be recorded for use in the study.

Recording devices will be used for the interviews. This involves two devices in case of a technology failure. One device will be my phone and will use the recording application, Voice Recorder Lite: Record HD. The other device will be my laptop, which will use the audio record function on the application QuickTime Player. If the QuickTime Player recording is audible, then the Voice Recorder Lite interview recording will be deleted immediately.

References

Briggs, L. P., Stedman, R. C., & Krasny, M. E. (2014). Photo-elicitation in studies of children's sense of place. *Children, Youth and Environments* 24(3), 153-172.
<https://doi.org/10.7721/chilyoutenvi.24.3.0153>



Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

17 March 2020

Project Title

Place, people, and perspectives: Informing school curriculum design through the insights of LEOTC-funded educators

An Invitation

I am Emma McFadyen. I am studying a Master of Education part-time at Auckland University of Technology. This year I am undertaking a research project towards completing a dissertation. I would like to invite you to participate and be part of this research project.

What is the purpose of this research?

The research project explores what a 'notion of place' means to a specific group of educators, including yourself, and how your perspective and insight could inform school curriculum design. It is the inherent insights you have of the local region, derived from your interactions and experiences with people and place, which are valuable. The new knowledge will support building of theory on a concept of place, while the insights gained from you will support a critical analysis of local curriculum resources. Taken together, the theory and critique will contribute to recommendations for a place-based approach to school curriculum design. The findings of this research will support the completion of a Master of Education, and may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

Educators have been recruited based on their suitability for the research project. You have received this information sheet because you are regarded as someone who fits the inclusion criteria for this research project.

The inclusion criteria for the research project includes: A specific group of education partners, which work with schools, and aim to deliver learning experiences that promote understanding of the uniqueness in the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region, with links to the New Zealand curriculum. These education partners are employed by organisations who receive funding from a Ministry of Education curriculum support project called Learning Experience Outside the Classroom (LETOC).

How do I agree to participate in this research?

To agree to participate in this study, you will be required to complete two consent forms, which will either be given to you in digital form through email, or at an initial meeting. One consent form is to grant permission for photographs, taken by you, to be used in the project. Another consent form regards your permission to be interviewed and information from the interview to be used in the project. You will be required to sign two copies of each form. I will require a copy to send and store at AUT, while another copy will be for you to keep.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible. If you would like to participate in this research project, please email me at the contact details provided at the end of this information sheet.

What will happen in this research?

The research project's methods involve a tool called photo-elicitation, using semi-structured interviews, and secondary data. Photo-elicitation is a process where a person takes photographs of a certain subject and then discusses their photographic decision-making through an interview. You will be offered a loan of a camera, but may wish to take photographs on your own device, and then send these to my university email address. A suitable timeframe will be negotiated with you to take photographs that relate to a notion of place, preferably attached to your line of work, but not a requirement. I will negotiate a time to interview you on your photographic choices and in relation to the purpose of the project. Once the transcript of the interview have been compiled, you will be

invited to check the transcript. The transcript will then be analysed and you will be able to review this analysis. You can see if both the transcript and analysis does justice to your interview and interprets information from you precisely and authentically, and can be adapted at your request.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There is expected to be very little risk to you since the research topics under discussion are unlikely to be personally intrusive. However, if you find interview questions are too personal, please express your discomfort and I will move on from them. When taking photographs there is no expectation for you to risk yourself to get a good photograph. Safety is paramount.

You may find taking part in the research enjoyable.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

It is unlikely you will experience any discomfort, but if any question makes you feel uncomfortable, you do not have to answer it. You can stop the interview at any time.

What are the benefits?

The benefits of the research is an opportunity for you to offer and add your voice to building theory on a concept of place, and to be part of a discussion regarding local curriculum. These insights could inform schools and the community looking to re-evaluate their local curriculum. Through this experience, I will gain valuable insight into the research process, which will go towards achieving a Master of Education.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your right to privacy and confidentiality will be treated with dignity and respect throughout the project, with assurance you can remove yourself from the study at any point.

Your level of confidentiality may be limited as your education leader has likely sent the email to you. Again, this level of confidentiality could be compromised when deciding on a mutually convenient place to meet. As the researcher, I will do my utmost to minimise the level of exposure.

The photographs you take will be for academic purposes only and will not be published in any form outside this project. For the privacy of others, it is recommended that you take photographs without people in them.

A pseudonym will be given to you when I refer to the photographs or interview information in the project.

A transcriber will be employed to transcribe the interviews and they will sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure your privacy is protected.

It is likely the use of the photographs and data from the interview will be used in publications and presentations.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The cost is your time and effort. The interview is expected to take one hour, and the time you take to photograph a place in the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region and read the transcript and transcript analysis is up to your discretion, but should be no more than one hour. Your time and effort to participate in the project will be greatly appreciated.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have one month to consider the email invitation, with an email reminder after two weeks (14 days).

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

As a respect and courtesy, you will receive a summary of findings from the research for your involvement in the study and willingness to participate. This summary can be emailed to you. If you would like to discuss these findings in more detail, I will be happy to arrange a meeting.

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,
Leon Benade
leon.w.benade@aut.ac.nz
T: + 64 9 921 9999 ext: 7931

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC,
ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Forms for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Emma McFadyen
cvf8306@unitec.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Leon Benade
leon.w.benade@aut.ac.nz
T: + 64 9 921 9999 ext: 7931

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 15 May 2020, AUTEK Reference number 20/107.



Consent Form

For use when interviews are involved.

Project title: *Place, people and perspectives: Informing school curriculum design through the insights of LEOTC-funded educators*

Project Supervisor: *Leon Benade*

Researcher: *Emma McFadyen*

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 17 March 2020.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

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Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 15 May 2020, AUTEC Reference number 20/107

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.



Consent and Release Form

For use when photographs, videos or other image recording is being used

Project title: *Place, people and perspectives: Informing school curriculum design through the insights of LEOTC-funded educators*

Project Supervisor: *Leon Benade*

Researcher: *Emma McFadyen*

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 17 March 2020.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I understand that the photographs will be used for academic purposes only and will not be published in any form outside of this project without my written permission.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

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Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 15 May 2020, AUTEK Reference number 20/107

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix C: Additional documents



Confidentiality Agreement

For someone transcribing data, e.g. audio-tapes of interviews.

Project title: Place, people, and perspectives: Informing school curriculum design through the insights of LETOC educators

Project Supervisor: Leon Benade

Researcher: Emma McFadyen

- ☐ I understand that all the material I will be asked to transcribe is confidential.
- ☐ I understand that the contents of the tapes or recordings can only be discussed with the researchers.
- ☐ I will not keep any copies of the transcripts nor allow third parties access to them.

Transcriber's signature:

Transcriber's name:

Transcriber's Contact Details (if appropriate):

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Date:

Project Supervisor's Contact Details (if appropriate):

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Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 15 May 2020 AUTEK Reference number 20/107

Note: The Transcriber should retain a copy of this form.

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