



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Research Commons

<http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/>

Research Commons at the University of Waikato

Copyright Statement:

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

The thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognise the author's right to be identified as the author of the thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from the thesis.

**Exploring teachers' knowledge and practice of multiliteracies pedagogy:
A narrative inquiry**

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy in Education
at
The University of Waikato
by
JIA RONG YAP



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

2023

Abstract

Multiliteracies encapsulates literacy that is understood as deictic and plural. Furthermore, advances in digital technologies and digital spaces are encouraging the emergence of new literacy practices and new texts. This phenomenon presents teachers with the need to develop a repertoire of literacy pedagogical approaches that meets these demands. Against this background, this doctoral study sought to gain insights into the understanding, experiences and practices of teachers in their literacy teaching and learning. Underpinned by the theoretical frameworks of multiliteracies pedagogy and personal practical knowledge, this thesis provides an exploration of five teachers' knowledge and conceptions of multiliteracies, and how they enact multiliteracies pedagogy in Aotearoa New Zealand intermediate classrooms. The participants varied in their backgrounds and years of teaching – ranging from three to ten years. By engaging a narrative inquiry methodology, qualitative data were collected over a period of six months, using narrative semi-structured interviews, whole-day classroom observations, post-observation conversations, and perusal of teaching artefacts. Participants shared their personal teaching philosophies, past and present literacy learning and teaching experiences, and their literacy teaching practices. Within this, they narrated the mentoring support and professional development they received within their schools, student cultural, linguistic and learning diversity, and the integration of digital technologies.

Engaging with narrative inquiry has allowed for in-depth insights into teachers' lived experiences and uncovered the nuances of their literacy knowledge and teaching practices. Based on data analysis which involved a co-construction of the teachers' narratives and my researcher interpretation, it can be concluded that teachers understand and practise multiliteracies pedagogy instinctively. This includes having an understanding of the broad nature of literacy and texts, and their efforts in attending to student diversity and literacy learning needs. Findings also reveal that the teachers' literacy teaching practices are guided by the components of their personal practical knowledge such as knowledge of curriculum and students, and through the use of digital technologies. The results suggest favourable opportunities for an explicit practice of multiliteracies pedagogy that will accommodate the growing range of literacy, literacy practices, and new texts. On this basis, recommendations for teachers' professional development providers, teacher education designers, and researchers are suggested. Primarily, this study recommends adopting a constructivist approach to support teachers toward a purposeful and conscious teaching of synaesthesia or the manipulation of

modes, and the semiotic functions of texts. Additionally, future research may consider: i) engaging longitudinal narrative research to examine teachers' understanding of students' understanding of literacy and out-of-school literacy practices; and ii) examine ways to support teachers' use of digital technologies in a way that encourage explicit multiliteracies teaching and learning. Attending to these aspects may help complement present literacy teaching and learning and prepare students for the multiliterate demands of personal lives, workplaces and societies.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to the individuals and organisations that have made this journey possible. I am incredibly thankful for the guidance, patience, and feedback from my supervisors, Dr Laura Gurney and Dr Philippa Hunter, who have been an invaluable source of support throughout the entire process.

My heartfelt thanks also go out to the research proposal defence committee for their invaluable knowledge and expertise. The University of Waikato, with its generous award of the University of Waikato Doctoral Scholarship, played a crucial role in financing my research and I am grateful for their support.

Thanks to the School Chair and postgraduate committee for their encouraging words in every research progress report. Thanks also to the School of Graduate Research for their prompt assistance that helped ensure a smooth candidature.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the panel of examiners, Professor Gary Barkhuizen and Professor Kathy Mills, for their thoughtful comments and feedback. The oral defence has provided me with a unique opportunity to reflect and improve upon my research.

I am indebted to the school principals and teachers who committed themselves to my research. I am grateful for their readiness to accommodate my research needs, the warm welcome to their schools and classrooms, and the time they generously spent on interviews and conversations. Thanks should also go to Chin Lee Lee for her moral support, encouragement, and feedback.

Lastly, I cannot express enough gratitude to my family, who have been a source of love and support throughout my doctoral studies. Their unwavering belief in me kept my spirits high and motivated me to keep going. And last but not least, my two beautiful nieces, who brought joy and laughter to my life during this challenging but rewarding journey.

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart. Your contributions will always be cherished and remembered.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Figures and Tables.....	xi
List of Acronyms.....	xii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Prologue.....	1
1.2 Personal and Professional Backgrounds.....	1
1.2.1 Of Being Multicultural and Multilingual.....	1
1.2.2 Engaging, Purposeful, and Meaningful Language Learning.....	2
1.2.3 Access to Teachers’ Stories and Perspectives.....	4
1.3 Multiliteracies Pedagogy and Aotearoa New Zealand.....	5
1.3.1 Why Multiliteracies Pedagogy?.....	5
1.3.2 Why MLP in Aotearoa New Zealand?.....	7
1.3.3 Literacy Teaching and Learning in Aotearoa New Zealand.....	10
1.4 Reflexivity and Researcher Positionality: An edgewalker.....	11
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	14
1.6 Overview of Chapters.....	16
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	18
2.1 Introduction.....	18
2.2 Part I: (Re)conceptualising Literacy.....	19
2.2.1 The Functions and Uses of Literacy.....	19
2.2.2 Early Definitions of Literacy: A Focus on the “Old Basics”.....	21
2.2.3 Moving from Literacy to Literacies.....	22
2.2.4 The Shift from Literacies to Multiliteracies.....	27
2.2.5 Normalising Multiliteracies.....	28
2.3 Part II: Multiliteracies Pedagogy.....	30
2.3.1 The ‘What’ of MLP: The Notion and Elements of Design.....	31
2.3.2 The ‘How’ of MLP: A Reflexive Approach to Literacy Teaching Practices.....	34
2.3.3 The Benefits and Issues with MLP.....	35
2.3.4 Toward a different approach to MLP research?.....	38
2.4 Part III: Teacher Knowledge.....	40
2.4.1 What Has Been Said about Teacher Knowledge?.....	41

2.4.2 Personal Practical Knowledge	43
2.4.3 PPK: Working with Narrative	48
2.5 Part IV: The Aotearoa New Zealand Context	49
2.5.1 The New Zealand Curriculum	49
2.5.2 New Zealand Literacy Policy	51
2.5.3 Teaching and Teacher Agency in New Zealand.....	53
2.5.4 Literacy Projects and Research in New Zealand	55
2.6 Research Questions and Chapter Conclusion	57
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	59
3.1 Introduction	59
3.2 A Narrative Paradigm	59
3.3 Narrative Research and Narrative Inquiry	62
3.3.1 Conceptual Framework of Narrative Inquiry	65
3.3.2 Narrative Inquiry in LTL.....	65
3.4 Data Collection.....	68
3.4.1 Recruitment of Research Participants	68
3.4.2 Methods and Instruments	72
3.4.3 Data Collection Procedure	76
3.5 Data Analysis.....	80
3.5.1 Data Organisation	82
3.5.2 Strategies and Steps.....	83
3.6 Ethical Considerations and Challenges	85
3.6.1 Engaging Narrative Inquiry.....	86
3.6.2 Conducting Interviews and Conversations	87
3.6.3 Conducting Classroom Observations	88
3.7 Chapter Conclusion	89
CHAPTER IV: SPRINGVILLE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	90
4.1 School's Background	90
4.2 School's Focus	91
4.3 School's Curriculum and Literacy Programme	92
4.3.1 IB's Approaches to Learning.....	94
4.3.2 Literacy Programme	95
<i>PETUNIA</i>.....	96
Prologue	96

Part I: Introducing Petunia	96
Rural Background and Experience	96
Struggles in Early Literacy Learning	97
Becoming a Teacher: Finding Meaning in Teaching	98
Influential Figures Informing her Teacher Identity and Teaching.....	100
Being a Teacher: “Creative, Caring, Respectful and Relatable”	101
Interweaving Personal and School Philosophy	101
Part II: Petunia’s LTL Acts	103
Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience	103
Act 2: Experiencing Petunia’s Classroom: LTL Practices	108
Part III: Petunia’s Vision of Successes and Challenges.....	116
Finding Joy in Students’ Engagement	116
“Trying to Get the Work-Life Balance”	117
Epilogue.....	118
<i>magnolia</i>	120
Prologue	120
Part I: Introducing Magnolia	121
A Symbiotic Teacher Identity: Of being a Mum and a Teacher	121
Gentle and Empathetic: Making Students Feel They Belong.....	122
Expectations for Students: Have Resilience, Be Resilient	123
Teaching as a Voyage: Experiences Guiding the Course.....	124
Part II: Magnolia’s LTL Acts	126
Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience	127
Act 2: Experiencing Magnolia’s classroom: LTL practices	134
Part III: Magnolia’s Vision of Successes and Challenges	142
“More Time Would be Nice”	142
Growing Confidence and Success for All.....	143
Epilogue.....	144
<i>Lily</i>	145
Prologue	145
Part I: Introducing Lily	146
Teaching: Life’s Calling and Devotion	146
Setting Up and Out: Gaining Teaching Experiences.....	147

Connecting Personal to Professional: Fondness for Her Workplace	148
Teaching and Learning: Explore, Inquire, and Learn from Mistakes	149
Advancing Students: Seeing Them as Unique and Significant Individuals.....	150
Part II: Lily’s LTL Acts	151
Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience	152
Act 2: Experiencing Lily’s classroom: LTL practices.....	156
Part III: Lily’s Vision of Successes and Challenges.....	164
Catering to Student Diversity.....	164
Finding Joy in Every Progress	165
Epilogue.....	166
CHAPTER V: SUMMERVILLE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL.....	167
5.1 School’s Background	167
5.2 School’s Focus	168
5.3 School’s Curriculum and Literacy Programme.....	169
5.3.1 A Curriculum based on the NZC.....	169
5.3.2 Literacy Programme	171
<i>HELENA</i>	174
Prologue	174
Part I: Introducing Helena	175
Brilliant with a Passion for Learning	175
Becoming a Teacher: “For Stability and for Family”	176
Changes and Continuities: The Make of an Experienced Teacher.....	177
Being a Teacher: Academic-Oriented but Caring and Empathetic	178
Heart-warming “Really Deep Relationships” with the Students	180
Part II: Helena’s LTL Acts	181
Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience	181
Act 2: Experiencing Helena’s Classroom: LTL Practices	186
Part III: Helena’s Vision of Successes and Challenges.....	195
Being Challenged and Challenging Students: “Bring It On”	195
From “Zero to Hero”: Helping Students Find the Love for Literacy.....	196
Epilogue.....	197
<i>RUBY</i>	199
Prologue	199
Part I: Introducing Ruby	200

Unwavering Passion for Subjects Turned into Teaching.....	200
Life Made Different and Making a Difference in One’s Life.....	201
Learning from Doing: Shifting Values Following Students’ Needs.....	202
Part II: Ruby’s LTL Acts	204
Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience	205
Act 2: Experiencing Ruby’s classroom: LTL practices	210
Part III: Ruby’s Vision of Successes and Challenges	216
Epilogue.....	217
CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION	218
6.1 Introduction	218
Part I: Discussion and Implications of Findings	220
6.2 Encouraging Signs of Multiliteracies Pedagogy	220
6.2.1 Teachers’ Conceptions of Literacy and Beliefs.....	222
6.2.2 Addressing Diversity and Equity through Literacy Pedagogy	225
6.2.3 New Texts, New Literacy Practices and Multimodality.....	227
6.2.4 The Various Interpretations of Critical Literacy	230
6.2.5 Reflexive Pedagogy: A Repertoire of Literacy Pedagogical Approaches.....	231
6.3 Contextually-Situated Literacy Teaching Practices	232
6.3.1 New Zealand Curriculum vs IB’s Primary Year Programme	233
6.3.2 Professional Learning and Development	236
6.3.3 The Infiltration of Digital Technologies.....	238
6.4 The Interplay between Teacher Knowledge and Teacher Agency.....	240
Part II: Recommendations.....	242
6.5 Toward an Explicit Practice of Multiliteracies Pedagogy	243
6.5.1 A Purposeful and Conscious Teaching of Synaesthesia	244
6.5.2 Critical Literacy: Interrogating the Semiotic Functions of Texts	246
6.6 Multiliteracies Pedagogy for Critical Multiliteracies: A Constructivist Approach.....	247
6.7 Chapter Conclusion	250
CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION	251
7.1 Coming Back and Together	251
7.1.1 Reflection on this Narrative Research	251
7.1.2 Reflection on the Research Process.....	252
7.2 Further Consideration and Future Research.....	253
7.2.1 “Traditional” and Contemporary Notions of Literacy	253

7.2.2 Students' Understanding of Literacy and Literacy Practices	254
7.2.3 Critical Multiliteracies and Transpositional Grammar	255
7.2.4 Narrative Inquiry in Literacy Teaching and Learning Research.....	256
7.3 Departing Thoughts	257
References.....	260
Appendices.....	273
Appendix A: Letter of approval from the ethics committee.....	273
Appendix B: Letter to school principal.....	274
Appendix C: Participant information sheet for school principals	275
Appendix D: Consent form for school principals	278
Appendix E: Invitation letter to teachers.....	279
Appendix F: Participant information sheet for teachers	280
Appendix G: Consent form for teachers	283
Appendix H: Introductory interview (Interview 1).....	284
Appendix I: Post-observation conversations (Interview 2).....	285
Appendix J: Documentation Sheet.....	286
Appendix K: Observation schedule	287
Appendix L: Student/parent information sheet	289

List of Figures and Tables

Table 1 A Brief Overview of the Participants' Background.....	70
Table 2 Summary of Data Collection Methods and Instruments	76
Table 3 Theoretical/Conceptual Frameworks Underpinning Data Analysis	81
Table 4 Narrative Structure and Content	84
Table 5 Sample Weekly Literacy Planning for Level 4/5 Students.....	170
Table 6 Sample Differentiated Goals, Activities and Instructions	171
Figure 1	245

List of Acronyms

DET	Deliberate extra teaching
ELP	Effective Literacy Practices handbook
ERO	Education Review Office
IBO	International Baccalaureate Office
LLP	Literacy Learning Progressions
LTL	Literacy teaching and learning
MLP	Multiliteracies pedagogy
MOE	New Zealand Ministry of Education
NZC	New Zealand Curriculum
PPK	Personal Practical Knowledge
UOI	Unit of Inquiry

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Prologue

Books on research methodology and methods advise selecting an approach that fits best with research purpose and intended types of data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Flick, 2018; Leavy, 2020). In researching multiliteracies and multiliteracies pedagogy, taking a ‘conventional’ qualitative approach (that is, a thesis that follows an established reporting format) would potentially have simplified this doctoral journey. Choosing a paradigm and method that I am already familiar with – quantitative and experimental – would have spared me the anxiety of going through a personally unfamiliar territory – *narrative inquiry*. My professional background in teaching and teacher-training means that I am familiar with the work that teachers do. My academic background of pursuing a Master’s degree by dissertation means I have some knowledge of the technicalities of research, such as designing, collecting data, and reporting findings. My interest in the field of language and literacy teaching and learning provides some background knowledge in relation to theories and pedagogical approaches. Therefore, my decision to engage *narrative inquiry* with teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand for this literacy research might just have presented more challenges – as well as benefits – than I anticipated.

In Section 1.2, I first illustrate how my personal and professional experiences guided my choice of research topic. This leads to Section 1.3, where I relate my background to my reasons for adopting the multiliteracies pedagogy framework, with a focus on teachers’ perspectives in Aotearoa New Zealand. Within this, I describe what *multiliteracies* means in this study, and where it sits within the New Zealand Curriculum for years 1 – 13 (Ministry of Education, 2007). In Section 1.4, I discuss my positionality – where and how I located myself in relation to the research context and the teachers when co-constructing the narratives which are presented as the findings of this thesis. Section 1.5 states the significance of this study. This chapter concludes with an overview of the rest of the chapters in this thesis.

1.2 Personal and Professional Backgrounds

1.2.1 Of Being Multicultural and Multilingual

I am a Malaysian. Malaysia is a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual country. Being a Malaysian seems to involve its own special creative process with respect to how I incorporate

different languages into my forms of communication. It is part of the Malaysian sensibility to use several languages in the same sentence. Using one of the most common conversation starter topics among Malaysians as an illustration:

You *makan* (eaten) already? I'm going to *tapao* (takeaway) *nasi lemak* (coconut milk rice). You want?

This seemingly simple question-statement embeds three languages – English (or more appropriately, Malaysian English), Malay (*makan, nasi lemak*), and Cantonese (*tapao*) – a dialect originated from Southeastern China, with syntactic structures in Mandarin and the English language. It demonstrates a culture – food is a topic that connects people. The example is also a snapshot of my language acquisition and learning experiences. I grew up in a Mandarin-speaking (this includes its variety of dialects – *Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese*) family, and I attended Malay-medium national schools with a predominantly English-speaking circle of friends. My father emphasised the preservation of our mother tongue, my mother instilled in me the importance of acquiring English, while schools I went to stressed a good command of Malay. Although I grew up learning multiple languages, I often felt like I was a master of none. Therefore, to be specialising in language education – English Language Teaching (ELT) – was and still is surreal to me. This may explain why my family, culture, language learning background, teacher education and the national curriculum documents underpinned much of my initial teaching beliefs and practices.

1.2.2 Engaging, Purposeful, and Meaningful Language Learning

With a centralised education system and standardised curriculum, the Malaysian English language syllabus strongly emphasises the *communicative* component of language teaching and learning. The suggested pedagogical approaches revolve around this notion, further strengthened by both the teacher-education and professional development programmes. Consequently, I carried this notion with me as I started teaching in an indigenous community (*Iban* or *Sea Dayak*) setting. I promoted the importance of learning and *speaking* English, despite it being linguistically and culturally challenging to the students. My beliefs, however, conflicted with the school leaders' beliefs:

It was in my first year of teaching that I first encountered a tension between my teaching beliefs and the school administrative expectations. I was assigned Year 6 English Language, a high-stakes examination class in which students' performance directly determined the school's academic standing and reputation in the district. Unconcerned, I was oblivious to that implication. I saw myself as an aspiring language teacher whose responsibility was to get students to acquire and use English communicatively by raising their interest through engaging activities. My deliberate practices largely avoided the school's expected strategies: grammar-drilling, memorisation of sentence stems, and exam-based worksheets. I taught the way I was trained in the teacher college – to plan for purposeful and meaningful learning through approaches such as Desuggestopedia, Total Physical Response, and Communicative Language Learning. Everything went as I intended them to be, and the students appeared to enjoy the lessons. However, one day, I was summoned by the school administrator to their office. The head teacher voiced their concerns that the trial exam results for English were really “alarming”.

A couple of years later, in an international ELT conference I attended, an established applied linguistics professor expressed, “Who would the learners communicate in the target language with, in the absence of such an environment? What purpose then, would communicative language teaching and learning serve?” In another session, another prominent figure in the field of ELT suggested that “it's not just practice, but *good* practice that makes perfect”. Along with my experience, these seemingly contrasting views – of ‘to do’, ‘not to do’ and ‘what to do’ – incited deep reflections on my teaching beliefs and practices. It also marked the onset of my realisation of the importance of being culturally and linguistically aware in my language teaching practices. I found it to be an irony given the multilingual and multicultural background I pride myself on.

Accordingly, I remained steadfast in my belief that learning needs to be engaging, purposeful and meaningful to the students' context. My teacher-training college had actually trained us to localise, contextualise, and scaffold students' learning, following Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist framework. Recollecting this learning theory, I began experimenting with various pedagogical approaches. I drew inspiration from my language learning experiences, professional development courses, and internet sources. I integrated digital technologies with internet connectivity as one of the learning and teaching tools in my classrooms. As my

students gained proficiency and demonstrated good performance in the national examinations in the target language, I sensed something amiss. I began to wonder if there was more to teaching for communicative purposes, for second language acquisition. I felt the subtle tension in mediating between the culture encoded in the target language, students' native language and culture, and my personal mother tongue and culture. For example, Kramersch (2014) highlights that while learners can be taught to say "thank you for your time" and "I want to respect your privacy", they may have a different view of *time* and *privacy* from the "native English speakers" (p. 33). This brought on a new realisation that language and literacy teaching and learning are multifaceted and complex.

1.2.3 Access to Teachers' Stories and Perspectives

The telling and living of my stories compelled me to reflect on my beliefs and knowledge that have informed my practices as a teacher. Perusing the literature relevant to my research area, I have come to know better my personal philosophy or beliefs and values that have been enriched by working experiences in teaching, and acquired the term 'multiliteracies' that summarises my language teaching practices. I noticed that besides the formally learnt knowledge, I also relied on my personal learning, technological, and practical knowledge – to adopt and adapt different strategies to accommodate the diversity in students' learning needs. So I wondered – *what about other fellow teachers?*

In addition to teaching, another aspect of my professional background involved conducting periodic professional development courses for teachers of English. This provided me with access to (and the privilege of hearing) teachers' stories and perspectives on ELT, which they normally shared through informal conversations. In other words, the teachers were not under any pressure or expectations to voice their thoughts. Importantly, within the teachers' narratives, they illustrated, among many other things, their teaching philosophy, their responses to the increasing demands of teaching and students' learning needs, and how the school administrators supported or discouraged their teaching approaches. On this basis, I developed an early disposition towards narrative research which emphasises a collaborative dialogic relationship between the participants and the researcher. Within the context of language and literacy teaching and learning, I believe the approach allows for a rich description of the teachers' lived experiences and showcase to readers of this thesis – *what teachers actually do.*

1.3 Multiliteracies Pedagogy and Aotearoa New Zealand

Despite presenting the *multiliteracies* framework more than two decades ago, the seminal publication of the New London Group [NLG] (2000) continues to underpin much of today's literacy research (Kulju et al., 2018; Serafini & Gee, 2017). While the concept of multiliteracies has progressively been broadened to, for example, critical multiliteracies (Mirra et al., 2018) and transpositional grammar (Kalantzis & Cope, 2020), its foundational tenets remain, if not, “even more relevant today” (Bull & Anstey, 2019, p. 17). To understand the reasons behind its phenomenal influence on literacy research and instructions, it is important to be acquainted with *the three changes* that propelled the introduction of the framework. For this reason, this section provides a brief introduction to the *why* of multiliteracies pedagogy (MLP). Within this, the reasons for adopting the MLP framework to investigate literacy teaching and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand are discussed. The *what* and the *how* of MLP are discussed in the next chapter of this thesis – literature review.

1.3.1 Why Multiliteracies Pedagogy?

Pedagogy, according to the NLG (2000), is “a teaching and learning relationship that creates the potential for building learning conditions leading to full and equitable social participation” (p. 9). Literacy pedagogy, specifically, plays an essential role in achieving this educational mission. In 1996, the NLG coined the term ‘multiliteracies’ to highlight the need to reconsider literacy learning and teaching that would prepare students for the languages and skills they need to make meaning in their changing working lives, public lives, and personal lives (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). The NLG attributed the radical changes to these two principal aspects: multiculturalism, and the advancement of information and communication technologies.

Berry and Ward (2016) argue that at a rudimentary level, multiculturalism rests on a combination of cultural diversity, a recognition and appreciation of this diversity in the population, and policies that accommodate it. Multiculturalism can thus be referred to as an ideology where different cultural groups “are encouraged to maintain their distinctiveness, and to participate in the daily life of the larger society” (Berry & Sam, 2016, p. 20). Culture, as Nieto and Bode (2018) explain, refers to “the ever changing values, traditions, social and

political relationships, and worldview created, shared and transformed by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class and religion” (p. 139). Due to the phenomena of globalisation and migration, the NLG (2000) and Cope and Kalantzis (2000) point out that the diversity in populations is growing at the local and global levels. They argue that this growth results in a range of literacy and literacy practices being used in all aspects of life. Literacy practices, following Bull and Anstey’s (2019) description, are “the ways in which literacies are used in a particular social or cultural group, and that includes the purposes of using literacy, the ways of using literacy, and the context in which literacy is used” (p. 5). Hence, the “previous conceptions of literacy as monolingual, monocultural and monomodal – one language, culture and mode – have been transformed for the new times as multiliteracies” (Mills, 2011, p. 124).

The second aspect concerns the rapid advancement of information and communication technologies (hereon referred to as digital technologies) that has been a catalyst for the changes taking place in educational contexts and settings (Grand-Clement, 2017). Huang and Yang (2016) argue that teachers of this era deal with students who are surrounded by technologies and grow up using digital tools that are usually connected to internet. Consequently, the students are constantly engaged in a growing variety of new texts when interacting with information, receiving and creating knowledge, and sharing their results with real audiences. The increasing multimodality of these new texts means students need to make or analyse meaning through the different semiotic modes – linguistic, visual, auditory, spatial, and gestural (Anstey & Bull, 2018). When this phenomenon is coupled with the infiltration of digital technologies into classroom settings, there are great implications for literacy learning and teaching activities. For instance, when students are used to having information and sharing platforms readily available at their fingertips, they may expect learning experiences that are relevant, engaging, and interactive in schools (Schrum et al., 2016). On top of that, Darling-Hammond (2016) opines that changing workplace characteristics necessitate the development of teachers’ capacity to teach the skills students need for their future.

Echoing Darling-Hammond’s (2016) proposition, Bull and Anstey (2019) express that literacy learning and teaching in this digital era means a teacher’s job has transcended the traditional paradigm of ‘knowledge provider’ to ‘skills facilitator’. Therefore, they recommend that teachers develop pedagogies that assist students toward becoming multiliterate individuals. According to Anstey and Bull (2006, as cited in Bull & Anstey, 2019), a multiliterate person

“is flexible; has a repertoire of literate knowledge and practices; understands how social and cultural diversity affects literacy practices; understands and is able to use traditional and new communications technologies; and is critically literate” (p. 7). Essentially, these are the ‘new basics’ or pedagogical objectives advocated in the multiliteracies framework, which emphasise language learners’ ability to become effective communicators in diverse settings. Cope and Kalantzis (2000, 2009, 2010, 2015) argue that the ‘old’ literacy learning (knowledge of grammatical conventions) created learners who were disciplined but passive regurgitators of superficial knowledge, whereas the new basics account for the modern world of diversity and new texts. Nonetheless, the authors also note that these approaches are not meant to replace the ‘old’ learning, but to supplement the current literacy pedagogies.

1.3.2 Why MLP in Aotearoa New Zealand?

There are two key reasons for choosing to explore MLP in Aotearoa New Zealand. The first is my personal background and affinity with multiculturalism, which I have outlined in Section 1.2. The second is the allusions to the foundational tenets of MLP in the New Zealand Curriculum [NZC] (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2007) and educational goals. As this section will detail, the allusions were analysed and identified through New Zealand’s: (i) bicultural foundations with a multicultural population, (ii) strong emphasis on addressing diversity and equity in the national curricula, and (iii) advocacy on integrating digital technologies in classrooms to support teaching and learning.

In the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, the bicultural perspective (Māori¹ and Pākehā²) was founded on the principles of the *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* Treaty of Waitangi. It signals the nation’s commitment to recognise and value the languages, cultures and traditions of both Māori and Pākehā (MOE, 2007). Linguistically, this presents a unique scene where some Te Reo Māori (Māori language) is assimilated into everyday spoken English. When given choices of two variants, using *kia ora* instead of *hello*, *whānau* instead of *family*, and *ākonga* instead of *learners* are some common examples in both spoken and written New Zealand English (de Bres, 2010). As this nation experiences globalisation and net migration, the diversity of its population and spoken languages has increased (Statistics New Zealand, 2021). This has

¹ The indigenous people of New Zealand

² A Māori word referring to New Zealanders of European descent

resulted in a multicultural society that is reflected in schools around the nation, where students in the classrooms are represented by various races, ethnicities, cultures, and they speak many different home languages (Education Review Office [ERO], 2018).

In acknowledging multiculturalism, the NZC (MOE, 2007) “ensures that students’ identities, languages, abilities, and talents are recognised and affirmed” (p. 9). It also specifies “diversity – as found in our different cultures, languages, and heritages” and “equity” as two of its eight values that are to be “encouraged, modelled, and explored” (p. 10) in schools and classrooms. According to Henderson and Woods (2012), one of the ways to demonstrate these values is through the practice of culturally and linguistically responsive (CLR) teaching. CLR practice involves teachers acknowledging, responding to, and valuing student diversity and providing equitable access to learning for all students. In this context, student diversity refers to individual styles of learning and thinking, and differences in cultural expectations and styles that include attitudes and beliefs alongside different ways of using languages. For example, eye contact, social distance, wait time, and questions may differ by culture (Seifert & Sutton, 2019). Thus, recognising that students bring to school a variety of literacy practices, capabilities and skills, experiences and prior knowledge, and practising CLR may provide opportunities for schools and teachers to “transform the current dominant thinking” and to “resist the privileging of attaining academic achievement” (Berryman et al., 2018, p. 8). These include having different expectations of students’ abilities based on ethnicity or race, which may influence students’ performance in the classroom. Moreover, CLR practice ostensibly allows teachers to develop positive relationships with their students, which is an important factor in assisting students to realise their full potential (ERO, 2018).

The MOE encourages schools and educators to engage in CLR practice through affirming culturally responsive pedagogical initiatives (Lynch & Rata, 2018). Strategies and policies such as *Tātaiako: Cultural competencies for teachers of Māori learners* (MOE, 2011), *Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia: The Māori Education Strategy* (MOE, 2021), *Tapasā: Cultural competencies framework for teachers of Pacific learners* (MOE, 2018), and *Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020–2030* (MOE, 2020) have been developed to support these aims. In *tātaiako*, five competencies are presented to support teachers’ understanding of Māori values and worldview to successfully teach Māori learners: *Wānanga* – communication, problem solving, innovation; *Whanaungatanga* – relationships with high expectations; *Manākitanga* – values; *Tangata Whenuatanga* – socio-cultural awareness and knowledge; and *Ako* – practice in the classroom

and beyond (MOE, 2011, p. 3). *Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia* provides the guiding principles and approach across the education system to further support the attainment of “Māori achieving education success as Māori” (MOE, 2018, p. 1). These include placing learners at the centre of education, ensuring barrier-free access, and that learning is relevant to learners’ lives. A similar focus on developing teachers’ cultural competencies of Pacific learners is presented in *Tāpasa*, aimed at providing a Pacific lens to support their educational success. This includes recognising and integrating their understandings, values, and knowledge. However, Berryman et al. (2018) stress that while cultural responsiveness has been “all about relationships”, leaders and teachers need to think of “effective ways of initiating and developing *meaningful* cultural relationships” (p. 9, emphasis added).

The importance of digital technologies is also emphasised in the NZC through the Key Competencies which are the capabilities people have, and to be developed for current and future living and lifelong learning. The NZC identifies five key competencies: thinking; relating to others; using language, symbols, and texts; managing self; and, participating and contributing (MOE, 2007, p. 12). Lourie (2020) argues that the term *competencies* in the current NZC underscores the twenty-first century learning concept in which “higher order thinking skills, abilities and dispositions [are] necessary for success in an increasingly fast-paced, digitally connected, globalised world” (p. 119). *Using language, symbols and texts* supports students to “confidently use ICT to access and provide information and to communicate with others” (MOE, 2007, p. 12). Correspondingly, schools in New Zealand are integrating conscious and purposeful use of digital technologies in classrooms for teaching and learning. In a survey commissioned by the New Zealand Council of Educational Research (NZCER), Bolstad (2017) reports that students are primarily using digital technologies to practise subject-specific skills, research using the internet, and create documents or slideshow presentations (p. 2). As for teachers, they are using digital tools to find resources and teaching materials, and to collaborate with colleagues within their schools. Some the most useful online resource sites include “Te Kete Ipurangi³(TKI) or the NZC online, overseas resource sites, and subject-specific online networks” (Bolstad, 2017, p. 7). Fletcher et al. (2020) also observe that teachers are engaging with online approaches to communication, particularly in collaborative planning and writing of reports.

³ Te Kete Ipurangi or the NZC online is a website giving teachers and principals access to teaching, education information, and communication with colleagues. The website contains teaching and learning ideas and resources for all learning areas (Ham & Wenmoth, 2002).

Against this background, I present the context of this study – literacy teaching and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand, in the upcoming section. A more in-depth discussion of its educational context, national and literacy-related curricula, and teacher professionalism is presented in Chapter 2.

1.3.3 Literacy Teaching and Learning in Aotearoa New Zealand

Intermediate, or middle, schools in Aotearoa New Zealand operate on a classroom-based model in which a teacher is attached to a class of students and they teach across a wide range of subjects or learning areas (MOE, 2007). Literacy teaching and learning (LTL), which includes literacy knowledge and skills, is expected to take place across the curriculum (MOE, 2010). Thus, for the purpose of this research, LTL refers to teachers' conceptualisations and practices in classrooms in equipping their students with literacy skills in English for a wide range of purposes and within learning contexts across the curriculum. This notion of LTL also entails a multiliteracies perspective on literacy practices and literacy instruction, which will be detailed in the next chapter (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5). This section outlines the scope of LTL explored in this study, with reference to the literature and New Zealand curriculum documents.

At a glance, the Aotearoa New Zealand educational context assumes a multifaceted understanding of literacy. The handbook for teachers, *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5–8* (MOE, 2006), projects literacy as a sociocultural practice, describing it as “the ability to understand, respond to, and use those forms of language that are required by society and valued by individuals and communities” (p. 12). Also recognising that literacy is beyond languages and could take other forms, the NZC (MOE, 2007) incorporates *using language, symbols and texts* as one of its key competencies:

... it is about *working with and making meaning of the codes* in which knowledge is expressed. Languages and symbols are *systems for representing and communicating* information, experiences, and ideas. People use languages and symbols to produce *texts of all kinds*: written, oral/aural, and visual. Students who are competent users of language, symbols, and texts... recognise how choices of language, symbol, or text affect people's understanding and the ways in which they respond to communications. (p. 12, emphasis added)

Further to this, this study recognises that multiliteracies could also be conceived as multiple *content area literacies*, which focuses on the “study skills that can be used to help students learn from subject-matter specific texts” (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2012, p. 8). Within this understanding, LTL emphasise developing students’ “ability to use reading and writing to learn subject matter in a given discipline” (Vacca & Vacca, 2002, p. 15). Accordingly, the NZC encompasses eight learning areas – English, the arts, health and physical education, learning languages, mathematics and statistics, science, social sciences, and technology – and highlights that:

For each area, students need specific help from their teachers as they learn:

- the specialist vocabulary associated with that area;
- how to read and understand its texts;
- how to communicate knowledge and ideas in appropriate ways;
- how to listen and read critically, assessing the value of what they hear and read. (MOE, 2007, p. 16)

These descriptions highlight the inherently complex nature of LTL. Importantly, they indicate that teachers are working with learners who need to become literate across a range of learning areas and with a range of texts, including those that are multimodal, digital, traditional print, oral and visual. My research sought to explore and illuminate teachers’ literacy beliefs and teaching practices across curriculum areas through the lens of MLP. To clarify, although there are eight learning areas in the NZC, this study was concerned with “the ways of representing knowing (literacies)” or making and creating meaning rather than “its own set of knowing (content knowledge)” within each learning area (Henderson & Exley, 2019, p. 21). This also included looking at how teachers taught their students to use the available *semiotic resources*, or, “the linguistic and non-linguistic resources such as prosodic, interactional, and nonverbal, graphic, auditory, artefactual” (De Costa et al., 2017, p. 524).

1.4 Reflexivity and Researcher Positionality: An edgewalker

The interpretative nature of this qualitative inquiry necessitates paying closer attention to my worldviews and how I position myself within the research area and subject – an activity involving *reflexivity*. This is important as I was aware that my positionality had significant influence on the research process and findings. Considered as an integral aspect of qualitative

research, reflexivity has been described as “the researcher’s process of reflecting on their role in the social, cultural, and relational research context by problematising their assumptions, preconceptions, selection of participants and research setting, and framing of questions” (De Costa et al., 2017, p. 523). Acknowledging and addressing reflexivity involves “appreciating our own researcher positionality” in relation to our epistemological and ontological assumptions (Corlett & Mavin, 2018, p. 378). In other words, it involved me in examining my worldviews that are coloured by my beliefs and values (Holmes, 2020; Savin-Bader & Major, 2013). However, instead of the outsider–insider dichotomy, Lu and Hodge (2019) argue that researcher positionality is better represented as “multi-dimensional and developmental” as it holds “threads of intersectionality as well as inter- and intra-personal dynamics (p. 225). Accordingly, I signal my positionality as an “edgewalker” (Reynolds, 2019), an active practitioner in the field of language and literacy education who engages in research outside of my own cultural and geographic contexts. Walking on this insider-outsider positionality requires constant reflexivity to navigate spaces and tensions that were seen both by others as well as myself.

Having had an established career in teaching, and knowledge of the education system and curriculum in Malaysia, I bring substantial professional experience and theoretical knowledge to this research. I am familiar with the teaching profession, and the responsibilities and accountabilities of being a teacher. I am aware of theories of pedagogy that inform teaching approaches and strategies. I have experience of workplace dynamics, and I have had extensive interactions with and within the school community with leaders, students, parents, and colleagues. Chavez (2008) suggests that this ‘insider-ness’ is advantageous in understanding the “cognitive, emotional, and/or psychological precepts of participants as well as ... the historical and practical happenings of the field” (p. 481). It enables an establishment of a level footing between researcher and participant, the building of rapid rapport, and arguably more nuanced interpretation. My practitioner experience hence accorded me immediate legitimacy, with the participants assured that I understood the nature of their work and the intricacies of teaching and working with students.

However, this doctoral research also marks a shift from my previous roles as an experienced teacher and facilitator of professional development to a novice researcher of LTL in Aotearoa New Zealand intermediate schools. Being an international student-researcher, I was also fully aware that I was an ‘outsider’ to the local cultural and educational contexts. I was unfamiliar

with the NZC, the intermediate school system, how LTL took place in schools, the role of a homeroom teacher, and the teacher education programmes the participants undertook. This lack of conceptual and practical understanding of New Zealand contexts added a layer of complexity for me. The complexities led to anxiety over how I could gain access to research sites, and sufficiently equip myself with the required knowledge to maximise my understanding of the contexts of the participants' lived experiences and stories. They were also imperative in the way not to break the flow of conversations to ask or make a note to ask, for instance, what *DBE* (deliberate acts of teaching) or *LSM* (limited statutory management) were. Hence, I felt tremendous pressure to develop connections, and to gain a thorough knowledge and understanding of the areas highlighted above prior to researching with the teachers.

Nevertheless, as Lu and Hodge (2019) suggest, it was these “intersectionality of professional status and culture” and insider-outsider positionalities that created “different opportunities and challenges” for me while obtaining access to and building research relationships with the teacher participants (p. 232). Earlier, I referred to employing the narrative inquiry approach – one that emphasises on the concept of *relational* (relational ontology, methodology, and ethics) – in this study, which further helped me navigate these multiple positionalities. As Clandinin et al. (2018) describe:

A relational ontology requires that we undertake research with an understanding of relational ethics that call us to larger questions of who we are in relation with participants. This relational ontology, interwoven necessarily with relational ethics, calls us to consider mutuality, respect, and reciprocity. (p. 20)

Having gravitated toward researching *with* teachers, I entered the research relationship with the participants fully aware that my “relational responsibilities are first to participants, (and) also to our relationships with participants” (Clandinin, 2020, p. 271). To this end, I emphasised to the teachers the collaborative nature of this study – one where I intended to fully respect their narrative authority (further elaborated in Chapter 3). Further to this, the teachers were informed from the start that the findings would be one of a co-constructed narrative – both a representation and my interpretation of their beliefs and literacy teaching practices. It was a research process that involved, as Clandinin (2020) describes, “looking backward and forward, inward and outward” (p. 273). Within this, I found myself reflecting and addressing my assumptions and preconceptions, and confronting the tensions and challenges arising from

conducting this study as an edgewalker. This was a step seen to both add validity to the research and to support the data collection, analysis and presentation.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Building on the sections above, this narrative research aimed to systematically gather, analyse and represent teachers' stories in their multifaceted professional landscape. Specifically, the purpose was to gain insights into the understanding, experiences and practices of teachers in their Years 7–8 LTL. This, in turn, allowed me to explore the teachers' knowledge and conceptions of MLP, and how they enacted the pedagogy in actual classrooms. The following research questions framed my inquiry:

1. What literacy teaching practices do teachers of intermediate-year learners engage with in their classrooms in relation to their beliefs of LTL?
2. How do the teachers' literacy teaching practices reflect the three main principles of the MLP framework?

Three sub-questions were formulated from the overarching research questions:

1. How do teachers make sense of and apply their understandings and experiences of multiliteracies in Years 7–8 LTL?
2. What are teachers' understandings and experiences of multiliteracies pedagogy in Years 7–8 LTL?
3. How do teachers describe the influences and the processes that shaped their conceptions and practices of multiliteracies pedagogy in Years 7–8 LTL?

Through this, this thesis hopes to contribute in three ways – practically, theoretically, and methodologically.

In relation to a practical contribution, my literature search on *multiliteracies* and *MLP* revealed a plethora of empirical studies on these subjects with wide focus. Nonetheless, the studies reviewed predominantly investigated the challenges and benefits of implementing MLP in classrooms. They included exploring the effects of MLP on students of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the affordances and influences of digital technologies

on students' literacy practices. Another group of studies, mostly by teacher educators, examined student-teachers or beginning teachers' conceptions of MLP and argued for the need to include them in initial teacher education programmes. Despite the breadth and width of studies on multiliteracies and MLP, my review of literature found a scarcity of work that captures teachers' narratives through the lens of their personal practical knowledge (PPK). Studying teachers' PPK, or knowledge-in-action (Golombek, 1998), afforded me an opportunity to understand teachers' multiliteracies practices in LTL. As affirmed by Borg (2003), "more research into the less immediate factors behind language teachers' decisions is required. Such work, drawing on notions such as personal practical knowledge, would contribute to a more holistic understanding of language teachers' practices and cognitions" (p. 98). Likewise, for the teachers, this research presented them a space to reflect on their literacy teaching beliefs and practices through the MLP framework (Golombek & Johnson, 2017).

On theoretical contribution and in relation to the above, my view resonates with Kiss and Mizusawa (2018) who argue that despite the influence of the NLG's (2000) work in academia, its application in classrooms is less profound and known. For example, my own language teaching practices attended to multimodal meaning-making and representation of meaning, and involved a repertoire of pedagogical approaches. However, it was not until I researched for a topic area for my doctoral study proposal that I learnt of MLP. Retrospectively, an introductory or in-depth knowledge of the framework during my practising years would have helped orient my conscious teaching in these areas through, for example: i) mediating students' cultural and linguistic knowledge with those in the English language; ii) introducing the various Design elements and their functions (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1) and; iii) encouraging students to be active meaning-makers by interrogating the texts they come across. Adopting such a move might have potentially provided more meaningful learning experiences for the students, and balanced their roles as active consumers and producers of new texts. This study consequently hopes to contribute to the literary knowledge about multiliteracies practice by contextualising and looking at the juncture of theory and practice. Furthermore, as this study was conducted in New Zealand, it also hopes to address the paucity of research into multiliteracies in this nation, as highlighted by Sandretto and Tilson (2013, 2016, 2017).

Finally, in terms of a methodological contribution, I considered that the use of narrative inquiry to gain insights into teachers' literacy beliefs and teaching practices, and the presentation of findings in narratives will be of interest to academics, teacher educators and teachers alike.

Accordingly, this study sought to provide a systematic platform to investigate, capture and document teachers' narratives about their knowledge, conceptions and practices of MLP. It did so by using a carefully planned methodology. This is presented in detail in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

1.6 Overview of Chapters

This thesis consists of seven chapters, presented through a mix of *conventional* and *narrative* styles. It signifies a middle-path approach to narrative research, which itself is a developing method and methodology to qualitative research (Barkhuizen et al., 2014; Chase, 2018). I have followed Barkhuizen and Consoli's (2021) suggestion to 'experiment' and present one way a narrative thesis could be reported. In adopting this approach to thesis presentation, I also hope to achieve a balance between my 'voice', the 'voices' of the established researchers, as well as the 'voices' of the teacher participants.

This initial chapter began with a prologue which helped set the scene. A presentation of my backgrounds and epistemological and ontological commitments that shaped this narrative study ensued. It then introduced the topic of the research and the context within which the research was set. My interest in the topic and the rationale for the study were detailed here, along with a discussion of my positionality through a reflexive process.

Chapter Two establishes the theoretical foundations for this research and introduces the two theoretical frameworks underpinning it. It first examines the various and shifting notions of literacy and argues for a (re)conceptualisation of literacy as *multiliteracies*. This chapter then highlights the difference between *multiliteracies* and the *pedagogy of multiliteracies* through exploring and defining *what* the term entails and *how* the MLP framework works. Imperative to understanding teachers' teaching practices, the section on personal practical knowledge ensues. With these broader theoretical understandings, the focus of the chapter shifts to offering an interpretation of MLP and LTL in Aotearoa New Zealand context.

Chapter Three explains the research methodology and research design. It outlines the various ways narrative research is conceived and conducted, and presents the conceptual framework of narrative inquiry this study hinges on. Following that, it describes access to research sites and

the way the participants were selected. Methods used for data collection – introductory meetings, narrative semi-structured interviews, whole-day classroom observations and post-observation conversations – are explained and justified. Methods used for data management and analysis are also detailed, along with challenges and ethical considerations.

Chapters Four and Five draw on a narrative analysis approach to present the findings. All fragmented data from the introductory meetings, narrative semi-structured interviews, field notes from whole-day classroom observations, post-observation conversations and teaching artefacts were collated and co-constructed by the researcher and the participants as *narratives*. Each of the two chapters begins with an introduction to the school context the participants were located in, that is, Chapter Four – Springville Intermediate School and Chapter Five – Summerville Intermediate School. The narratives of the individual participants are presented within these school contexts.

Chapter Six draws together the key findings and addresses the main research questions and the three sub-questions in relation to the research literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Alongside this, the chapter highlights the implications of the findings, and also considers the contribution of this narrative study to research related to LTL, and teacher knowledge. Following this, I put forward some practical recommendations.

Chapter Seven presents my reflective and reflexive accounts of engaging narrative inquiry and the research process, which includes acknowledging the limitations of this study. It then presents several areas for further considerations and directions for future research. The chapter concludes with my departing thoughts.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a synthesis of literature pertinent to the overarching research question – *What literacy teaching practices do teachers of intermediate-year learners engage with in their classrooms in relation to their beliefs of LTL?* The research then asks *How do the teachers’ literacy teaching practices reflect the three main principles of the MLP framework?* The sparsity of extended first-hand accounts of teachers’ literacy practices informed by their personal practical knowledge (personal aspects, formal knowledge and experiential knowledge) means that teachers’ voices could be restricted to episodic illustrative snapshots (e.g., DeLuca et al., 2017; Pyle et al., 2018). Therefore, an examination of the wider teacher knowledge literature is necessary in addition to literacy and multiliteracies, with a view to extrapolating key ideas surrounding the concept of literacy, and the process and implementation of literacy teaching practices in diverse classroom settings.

This chapter is organised into four parts in recognition of the complexity involved in operationalising the three interrelated key ideas pertinent to this study. These are literacy and multiliteracies, multiliteracies pedagogy, and personal practical knowledge, which are subsequently discussed in relevance to the New Zealand context. The first part (Section 2.2) addresses the notions of literacy, literacies, and multiliteracies, and how a shift in the concept directly impacts literacy education and pedagogy. Here, I trace the emergence, development and critique of literacy from these two dimensions – *traditional literacy* and *contemporary literacy*. I use the terms *traditional* and *contemporary* in their broadest sense, to both encapsulate their essences and highlight the multiplicity of terminologies associated with contemporary literacy. Further to this, I wish to emphasise the complementary and reciprocal nature of traditional literacy and contemporary literacy, that both skillsets are equally important in this changing lifeworlds. I present the rationale for reconceptualising literacy as multiliteracies – and why the term ought to be normalised in both concept and practice. In the next two parts (Sections 2.3 and 2.4), in steering the direction towards literacy education and classroom implications, I explore in detail the principles of MLP (including what constitutes pedagogy) and how teachers’ personal practical knowledge informs their teaching practices. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the relevance to LTL in New Zealand context through the national curriculum and literacy-related documents.

2.2 Part I: (Re)conceptualising Literacy

2.2.1 The Functions and Uses of Literacy

International organisations (e.g.: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO]; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]) and literacy researchers (e.g.: Bull & Anstey, 2019; Kalantzis et al, 2016; Luke, 2012; The NLG, 2000) have over time broadened the conceptualisation of literacy and what it encompasses. However, according to Heath (1980), definitions of literacy often carry implicit but generally unrecognised views of the functions and uses of literacy. To put it in perspective, she describes *functions* as “what literacy can do for individuals” and *uses* as “what individuals can do with literacy skills” (p. 123). Furthermore, in tracing the development of the definition of literacy, Heath (1980) argues that components of literacy have transformed and expanded with time. Nonetheless, she contends that literacy enables one’s participation in their community, social, and economic activities. This view suggests a continued attention on both the functions and uses of literacy. It also demonstrates a shift according to time periods and contexts. Consequently, the literacy skills, knowledge and understandings deemed important – or identified as necessary for one to participate effectively in society – are to be emphasised and taught in schools.

Correspondingly, the following summary of the functions of language first proposed by Halliday (1973) and expanded by Smith (1983) provide a helpful general understanding of how literacy is used to achieve one’s purposes:

- (i) instrumental – language is used to express what one wants or to satisfy material needs;
- (ii) regulatory – to control the behaviour, feelings or attitudes of others;
- (iii) interactional – getting along with others, and to establish relative status or separateness;
- (iv) personal – expressing individuality, awareness of self and pride;
- (v) heuristic – seeking and testing knowledge;
- (vi) imaginative – creating new worlds, making up stories and poems;
- (vii) representational – communicating information, descriptions, expressing propositions;
- (viii) diversionary – puns, jokes and riddles;

- (ix) authoritative or contractual – statutes, laws, regulations, agreements and contracts and;
- (x) perpetuating – records, histories, diaries, notes and scores.

(Bull & Anstey, 2004, p. 24)

Heath's (1983, 1986) seminal work of two communities in the American South uncovered somewhat similar functions and uses of language within reading and writing, supporting Halliday's (1973) and Smith's (1983) proposition. More importantly, through a longitudinal study, she demonstrated that "the various approaches of these communities to acquiring, using and valuing language are the products of their history and current situations" (Heath, 1983, p. 10). She also observed that many of the literacy genres taught in schools were specialised for school culture and not used in daily community life by adults and children. As Gee et al. (1996) affirmed, "literacies are bound up with social, institutional and cultural relationships, and can only be understood when are situated within their contexts" (p. xii). Consequently, Heath (1986) critiqued the "standard linguistic norm – or the language form identified with the state's internal administration and communications" (p. 209) that was promoted through institutions of formal schooling, and heralded a change in what constituted literacy. To elaborate briefly, what was previously constructed as a set of language skills and knowledge, was also about *how language was used* in social practice.

Contrasting views of literacy subsequently emerged. These cast literacy as a psychological process or cognitive skill, and literacy as social practices. Researchers termed these as *old basics* (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Kalantzis et al., 2016) and *new basics* (Kalantzis et al., 2003) respectively. The new basics are further extended to accommodate the changing working, personal and social lives, as well as *new texts* and *literacy practices* afforded by the advances in digital technologies at the turn of the 21st century (Bull & Anstey, 2019; Kalantzis & Cope, 2020). Within the new basics, new uses and functions of literacy have garnered much interest. Nevertheless, one may argue that in this increasingly globalised and multicultural world, the functions and uses of literacy have evolved with both old and new basics being equally important – as espoused in the MLP framework, which will be reviewed later in this chapter. However, in order to understand and appreciate the development of literacy, multiliteracies, and literacy practices, it is useful to begin with the early definitions of literacy.

2.2.2 Early Definitions of Literacy: A Focus on the “Old Basics”

Remnants of traditional literacy – viewed as a set of skills and knowledge – persist to the present time, and perhaps most synonymous with it is the acronym 3Rs – Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic. Beginning with UNESCO's early definitions of literacy as an example, its 1958 document states that literacy constitutes the ability to “read and write, with understanding, a short simple statement about one’s everyday life” (UNESCO, 2013, p. 20). Then, in 1978, it added that:

[...] a person who is functionally literate can engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his [or her] group and community and also for enabling him [or her] to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his or her own and the community’s development. (UNESCO, 2013, p. 20)

These definitions provide insight into the literacy skills perceived as important at the time, but they leave much room for interpretation and questioning. For example, the 1958 document did not specify what is meant by “a short simple statement” and “everyday life”. Similarly, the 1978 definition was met with heavy criticism as its notion of “functional literacy was biased towards economic activity” (UNESCO, 2013, p. 20), leaving out other important aspects such as the social and cultural. Furthermore, these statements do not suggest what skills, knowledge and practices constitute literacy (Anstey & Bull, 2018).

Nevertheless, within this perspective is the evident belief that the key to literacy is reading development – a progression of behaviours, skills, and information processing – which aims to develop individuals’ ability to make sense of the written language (Luke, 1992; Yap & Chin, 2020). In other words, reading was perceived as behavioural skills, as deep linguistic processing and a psycholinguistic guessing game, and as vocational competence (Hall, 1994; Yap, 2014). From a literacy education perspective, teaching and learning would focus heavily on mental processes such as word decoding and recognition skills, and reading comprehension or making meaning of texts. These activities required the processing and retention of information – words and their meaning – of written texts. Content and language norms, such as spelling, grammar, and text conventions, took precedence in writing. These conventional assumptions of literacy contended that “the teaching of literacy must be systematic and sequential in operation”, and “proficiency in the ‘basic’ skills has to be acquired before one

can act in a literate way” (Hall, 1994, p. 16). But perhaps more importantly, what this means is that traditional literacy learning and teaching were treated as acquisition of skills, a carefully restricted project. As Bull and Anstey (2019) argue:

At this time the goal of education generally was to pass on and maintain one’s heritage and the literacy skills needed to maintain it. Literacy was language dominant, as language was the most powerful tool for use with the available communication technology (paper and phone). Therefore, the teaching practices or pedagogy of this period were content and rule based (grammar, phonics, punctuation and spelling), test oriented (to check mastery), and encouraged passive learning where the teacher was the holder of all knowledge. (p. 14)

Within this traditional paradigm, pedagogical approaches were often aimed at enabling students to achieve automatic word recognition and comprehension in reading, and using correct sentence structures, punctuation, and grammar in writing – often in the standard national forms of the language (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). Clear criticisms of this unidimensional definition of literacy – which was described as monocultural, monolingual and monomodal – have come from a number of writers and researchers (see for example Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Gee, 2015; Street, 1984, 1997, 2017). These scholars were referred to as working within the fields of *New Literacy Studies* or *Literacy as Social Practice*. Fundamentally, they argued that the conventional assumptions had disregarded that becoming literate might be a social process, that children might actually have some knowledge of literacy, and that children need to engage in literate acts (Hall, 1994). This engendered a turn to critical and social perspectives on the nature of literacy.

2.2.3 Moving from Literacy to Literacies

Problematising the universalist or autonomous notion of literacy, scholars working within the field of Literacy Studies (Heath, 1980, 1983, 1986), New Literacy Studies (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Street, 1984, 1997, 2017), critical literacies (Luke, 2012; Muspratt et al., 1997), and New Literacies (Knobel & Lankshear, 2014; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003) have reframed literacy as a set of socially and culturally constituted practices that take place across and within social and institutional contexts. Barton and Hamilton (2000) express that “practices in different cultures and languages can be regarded as different literacies” (p. 10). These scholars’ concern with

situated accounts of literacies essentially foregrounded literacy as plural – thus, *literacies* (Collins, 1995). Furthermore, research in these domains has revealed a disparity between the literacy practices valued in schools and those used in wider society, highlighting in particular that multilingual and multicultural groups’ literacy practices have been undervalued and marginalised. Each of these fields is briefly discussed as follows.

2.2.3.1 New Literacy Studies, or Literacy as Social Practices

According to Street (2017), *New Literacy Studies* refers to a body of work that arose in the 1980s and 1990s, and which approaches literacy from the context of social practices instead of as a unit of measurement of skills. Hence, another term that better captures this perspective is “Literacy as Social Practices” (Street, 2017, p. 4). As one of the notable researchers that challenged the traditional notion of literacy, Street (1984, 1997) postulated the autonomous and ideological models of literacy. The autonomous model, which is notable in historical studies of literacy, characterises literacy as a cognitive or psychological skill detached from social contexts. The alternative, the ideological model, emerged from anthropological and sociolinguistic research (see Barton & Hamilton 2000; Collins 1995; Gee 2015; Heath 1983; Street 2017), is concerned with raising awareness of the diversity of literacy. The model sees individuals as embedded in varying social and cultural contexts, and so literacy is primarily a social activity with specific goals and outcomes.

Another influential body of work within this paradigm is that of Barton and Hamilton (2000), who differentiated between *literacy events* and *literacy practices*. Drawing upon Heath’s (1983) seminal work, Barton and Hamilton (2000) assert that “literacy is best understood as a set of social practices that can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts” (p. 8). Within this understanding, literacy events are observable activities that usually involve written texts which are central to the activity. In contrast, literacy practices are “what people do *with* literacy”, and “are more usefully understood as existing in the relationships between people, within groups and communities” (Barton & Hamilton, 2000, p. 8). Literacy practices are therefore also dynamic, as new ones are frequently acquired through processes of informal learning and sense making. Perry’s (2008, 2009) work provides a useful example in illustrating the difference between literacy events and literacy practices. Her studies involved a group of Sudanese refugees who came from an Arabic Muslim-majority community that privileged the reading of the Quran. However, in the United States, they frequently participated in literacy

events such as church services, Bible study classes, and personal prayer that involved reading the Bible. These events included literacy practices that were done purposefully, as the refugees chose to engage with the mainstream culture that was dominated by Judeo-Christian practices of reading the Bible (Perry, 2012, p. 54).

Further to this, literacy as social practices also entails the recognition of multiple literacies that vary according to time and space (Street, 2017). Intending for schools to go beyond the traditional boundaries of disciplinary-specific or content area literacy, Gallego and Hollingsworth (1992) advance the framework of multiple literacies that constitutes school literacy, community literacy and personal literacy. They describe *school literacy* as the literacy students required “to adapt socially to school settings, to maintain a good sense of self, and to gain a conceptual understanding of school subjects” (p. 207). *Community literacy* involves literacy practices that are constructed following the traditions and culture of a community, and thus integrates “individual ways of knowing, believing, and communicating” (p. 207). *Personal literacy* refers to “personal communication norms” as constructed through one’s history, experience or backgrounds (Gallego & Hollingsworth, 1992, p. 207). In a similar manner that encapsulates multiple literacies, Barton and Hamilton (2000) characterise them as the “different literacies associated with different domains of life” (p. 11).

Importantly, Gallego and Hollingsworth’s (1992) work challenged the controversial deficiency hypothesis which positioned students’ success in schools as determined by their family background, and therefore families, not schools, were responsible for a child’s success (Bernstein, 1971, as cited in Bull & Anstey, 2019). Instead, they supported the difference hypothesis and cautioned that students’ poor academic performances in school could be attributed to the unmatched school literacy and the students’ community and personal literacies. Within this, considerations for the type of literacy events and practices school children are bringing into the classrooms with them, and the subsequent implications on LTL, become crucial.

2.2.3.2 Critical Literacy

Critical literacy, in a broad sense, entails the practice of interrogating and understanding cultural and ideological representations, alongside the reader’s positioning, in texts. The root of critical literacy is associated with Freire, who, together with Macedo, popularised the

concept of critical reading. The act of reading, for them, involves both reading the world *and* the word, whereby “reading the world always precedes reading the word, and reading the word implies continually reading the world” (Freire & Macedo, 1987, p. 23). What this underscores is the dynamic interconnection between language and reality; that reading consists of ‘decodifying’ that leads to an understanding of the relationship between the text and context. In this regard, engaging in critical literacy means developing the awareness that our reading of any text is mediated through our social positioning, day-to-day experience and the places, spaces, and languages that we encounter, use, and occupy. This critical reading can lead to disrupting and “unpacking myths and distortions and building new ways of knowing and acting upon the world” (Luke, 2012, p. 5).

Critical literacy holds deep implications for educational contexts. Luke (1991) draws attention to the “selective traditions of literacy” that “entails selection of texts and methods, selection and valorisation of particular literacies, attitudes towards texts, degrees and kinds of social competence” (pp. 134-135). Within this, Luke (1991) highlights the non-neutrality of texts. He argues that texts are created as a result of the choices the creator makes, and these choices can be influenced by a range of factors. These include, first, the *situational context* in which the text is created and used, including its intended purpose, subject matter, and roles of and relationship between text creator and the audience. Second, the *sociocultural context* includes the text creator and user’s backgrounds and views of the world, society and culture, and the language choices of the creator to meet their intended purpose when creating a text. The third is the *multiple contexts* (e.g. cultural, political, and economic) in which the texts are created and embedded. Following this view, critical literacy has “an explicit aim of the critique and transformation of dominant ideologies, cultures and economies, institutions and political systems” (Luke, 2012, p. 5). Integrating critical literacy in literacy education involves teaching students to explore, think about, respond to, analyse, question and challenge written and visual texts, and to understand that there are many factors that impact on the choices the text creator makes.

Building on the above, Freebody and Luke’s (1990) and Luke and Freebody’s (1999) *four-resource model* is a framework that teachers can adopt as part of their literacy instruction. Like its name suggests, the framework consists of four parts: (i) “code breaker (coding competence or ‘how do I crack this?’); (ii) text participant (semantic competence or ‘what does this mean?’); (iii) text user (pragmatic competence or ‘what do I do within this, here and now?’) and; (iv)

text analyst (critical competence or ‘what does all this do to me?’)” (Freebody & Luke, 1990, p. 7). Notably, although the framework was originally intended for written-linguistic texts, their principles could be extended into the reading and creation of visual and multimodal texts. For example, students – with teachers’ guidance – could think critically of the creator’s positioning such as beliefs, values, assumptions and/or biases, representations, intended audiences, and purposes or the main messages and ideas. With time, the ultimate goal is to have students independently and automatically questioning texts that they read, as well as understanding their own choices as they create texts.

2.2.3.3 New Literacies

The study of new literacies extends on the critical and sociocultural foundations outlined above, but pays particular attention to new ways of practicing literacy, including those facilitated by technological developments. Lankshear and Knobel (2003) point out that New Literacy Studies had not been particularly interested in what they regarded as very important and influential *new literacies*: those associated with new information and communication technologies, and those that are “comparatively new in chronological terms” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003, p. 24). Leu et al. (2017) concur that societies continuously invent new technologies, and living with rapidly changing technologies means being presented with and requiring new literacies. However, Lankshear and Knobel (2003) observe that although new technology-mediated literacy events and practices are taking place in classrooms, there is a tendency to “perpetuate the old, rather than to engage with and refine or reinvent the new” (p. 29). They suggest two reasons for this: (i) teachers’ competence (which includes their knowledge), and (ii) curricula founded on texts as information sources. Nonetheless, Lankshear and Knobel (2003) conclude that the new literacies and practices associated with new technologies would gradually become embedded in everyday social practice, and raised the question as to how that would play out in school settings.

However, the deictic nature of new literacies makes it hard to conclusively determine its characteristics. What this means is that the meanings of new literacies change rapidly in tandem with the changing contexts. Thus, scholars researching new literacies attempt to “anticipate beyond the present and envisage how best to educate now in order to enhance learners’ capacities for effective meaning-making and communication in the foreseeable future” (Knobel & Lankshear, 2014, p. 97). Nonetheless, Leu et al. (2017) suggest that “new literacies are

multiple, multimodal, and multifaceted; critical literacies are central to new literacies; new forms of knowledge are required with new literacies; and teachers are becoming more important within new literacy classrooms” (p. 5). Complementing these understandings is Knobel and Lankshear’s (2014) discussion on the increasing consumption and production of digital texts. Characteristically, these digital texts are often *hypertextual* – meaning that they are linked to other information and/or references which readers can immediately access by clicking on the highlighted word or image; *hypermedia* – incorporating images, videos, and other non-textual features; and *hyperlinked* to other websites. These rising digital practices are profoundly changing the way we engage with texts. This phenomenon in turn necessitates the need for a variety of new meaning-making systems.

2.2.4 The Shift from Literacies to Multiliteracies

As demonstrated above, while previously understood as “the ability to read and to write” (UNESCO, 2013, p. 20), conceptualisations of literacy have been redefined and expanded over time and contexts. Due to “social, cultural and technological developments [that] continue to give rise to changing literate practices around texts and communication” (Anstey & Bull, 2018, p. 2), literacy is now regarded as “multifaceted, far-reaching, complex and in flux” (Dobinson & Dunworth, 2019, p. 2), and “deictic” (Lue et al, 2017, p. 2). However, although the concept of literacy has evolved, no global consensus on the definition has emerged. Dobinson and Dunworth (2019) suggest that “as communities, beliefs, attitudes and practices change, the term itself shifts to accommodate the environment within which it is being discussed” (p. 1).

In this regard, the broad definition of literacy as promoted by UNESCO may be useful. Its 2004 (p. 13) and 2017 (p. 5) documents state that:

Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.

More recently, on its official website, UNESCO added “in an increasingly digital, text-mediated, information-rich and fast-changing world” (2021, para. 2) to its understanding of

literacy. Taken together, this description demonstrates an acknowledgment of the plurality of literacy, literacy events, literacy practices, and the advancement of digital technologies and communications. For example, “various contexts” could be interpreted as different literacy practices in different social, linguistic and cultural contexts; the addition of “digital, text-mediated and information-rich” signals recognition of new literacies and the production and consumption of multimodal texts. Montoya (2018, p. 5) affirms that UNESCO (2004, 2017) has indeed highlighted three key features in its definition of literacy:

- (i) literacy is about the uses people make of it as a means of communication and expression, through a variety of media;
- (ii) literacy is plural, being practiced in particular contexts for particular purposes and using specific languages and;
- (iii) literacy involves a continuum of learning measured at different proficiency levels.

Against this background, literacy and literacy education continue to emphasise enabling individuals to achieve equity in social participation (Hoffman et al., 2020; Kalantzis & Cope, 2015; The NLG, 2000), be it in the local contexts or the wider world. Positioning this in respect to classroom LTL, this means recognising that students need to be able to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct texts using new technologies that are increasingly part of everyday life. In other words, the goal of literacy pedagogy ought to be directed at developing multiliterate individuals who possess the means to “understand, use and critically evaluate multimodal texts that are constantly developing and evolving because of cultural and societal changes and the use of new information and communications technologies” (Bull & Anstey, 2019, p. 4). Literacy is a psychological process *and* a social practice that “requires the acquisition and use of a variety of literacies and the associated behaviours, to be used in a range of social and cultural settings” (Bull & Anstey, 2019, p. 6). A (re)conceptualisation of literacy as multiliteracies is therefore imperative to inform literacy curricula, education and pedagogical approaches.

2.2.5 Normalising Multiliteracies

The advancement of information and communication technologies, and the changing working life, public life and personal life necessitate a new understanding of literacy as multiliteracies. According to Stornaiuolo et al. (2009), a multiliteracies perspective embraces “literacy as a negotiation of multiple linguistic and cultural differences through the *design* and *redesign*

processes” (p. 382, emphasis added). Healy (2008) describes it as multiple kinds of literacies (written, visual, technological) which are used to effectively communicate within diverse cultural and social settings. The NLG (2000) elaborates on the many types of literacy variation, including:

- school literacy versus home or community literacy
- formal language versus informal, colloquial, vernacular, and conversational language
- written communication versus graphic, projected, spoken, or enacted communication
- official national languages versus regional, immigrant, and foreign languages

All these perspectives essentially entail multiple literacies and multiple literacy practices. Correspondingly, the NLG’s (2000) MLP framework addresses “how teachers can create learning opportunities using multiple modes of meaning making to guide students toward the design of social futures with a diverse globalised society” (Jacobs, 2013, p. 101). Within this, the NLG advocates for students and teachers having access to an expanding, and ever-changing, variety of texts at school and in other sociocultural contexts as afforded by digital technologies and growing diversity of populations. This proliferation of texts can potentially engage students and teachers in new and interesting ways of LTL.

Importantly, MLP does not replace prior models of literacy. Instead, it compels us to reconsider our conceptualisations of texts, literacy practices across social and cultural contexts (including the digital space) and subsequently, how literacy pedagogy could enable the development of multiliterate individuals (Thibaut & Curwood, 2018). As Cope and Kalantzis (2009) assert, MLP seeks to supplement rather than replace “old” learning. It addresses the question of what constitutes appropriate literacy pedagogy for our times by focusing on the relationship between pedagogy and learning to create “the potential for building learning conditions leading to full and equitable social participation” (The NLG, 2000, p. 9). Following this, the next section of this chapter illustrates how the concepts of multiple literacies, literacy as social practices, critical literacy, and new literacies may potentially serve as the foundations of multiliteracies. These are discussed alongside the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of the MLP framework.

2.3 Part II: Multiliteracies Pedagogy

Like many other literacy scholars (Bull & Anstey, 2019; Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Leu et al., 2017; Luke, 2013), I wish to reaffirm reading and writing as valuable skill sets. At the same time, proponents of New Literacy Studies or Literacy as social practices (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Heath, 1983; Street, 1984, 2017) and new literacies (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003; Knobel & Lankshear, 2014) have brought greater awareness of the sociocultural perspective of literacy and contemporary changes brought about by the growth of information and communications technologies. The work of these scholars has had considerable impacts on multiliteracies – with its interest in new literacies (and its associated practices) and its aim to develop theory that is “of direct use in educational practice” (The NLG, 2000, p. 33).

In this regard, MLP could potentially act as a bridge to mediate between literacy as psycholinguistic and cognitive processes and literacy as social practices (Khadka, 2019; Rowsell et al., 2008). Its advocacy for a balanced literacy programme calls for teaching and learning practices in which: i) teacher instruction is balanced by student initiative, ii) students’ ideas and knowledge are engaged through dialogues and discussions, and (iii) school literacy is challenged by students’ home and personal experiences and needs.

The MLP framework is instructive in its in-depth descriptions and theorising of the instructional modes and processes of productive literacy learning. As Cope and Kalantzis (2015) explain, the multiliteracies argument has three components: the ‘what’, the ‘why’, and the ‘how’. The ‘why’ of multiliteracies concerns “the dramatic changes occurring in everyday life in the realms of work, citizenship, and identity that render old practices of literacy pedagogy increasingly anachronistic” (p. 3). The ‘what’ of multiliteracies includes its broad conception of literacy and recognition of two ‘multis’: cultural and linguistic diversity, and the rise of new texts and multimodality due to advances in digital technologies. The ‘how’ signals a reflexive literacy pedagogy through the four recommended pedagogical moves.

Building on these premises, this part of the chapter discusses the key elements of MLP, concentrating mainly on the writings of the NLG (2000), Cope and Kalantzis (2000, 2009, 2010, 2015, 2020) and Kalantzis and Cope (2015) – who convened the NLG and have worked extensively on expanding the framework since its inception. The following components are

highlighted: (i) MLP's notion and elements of Design; (ii) the four pedagogical moves or knowledge processes that are reflective of a constructivist, dialogical approach to LTL, and (iii) studies that had been conducted on MLP.

2.3.1 The 'What' of MLP: The Notion and Elements of Design

Digital technologies are contributing to an exponential growth of multimodal texts, generally designed as integrated meaning-making systems. These texts combine *multiple modes*, defined as “a socially and culturally organised set of semiotic resources” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020, p. 79), to represent and communicate meaning. These different modes, or elements of Designs, consist of linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial. Each mode or Design carries a shifting value that is dependent on text purpose, intended audience, and societal value (Kress, 2010). For example, corporation and learning institution webpages commonly feature sophisticated layout (spatial), typography and colour illustrations (visual), alongside writing (linguistic), to communicate with their site visitors.

The first notable dimension of the MLP framework is *Design* (written with an uppercase 'D'). Cope and Kalantzis (2015) define Design as the grammar of meaning making, or the grammar of multimodality. As a background, the origin of multimodality can be traced back to Halliday's (1978) social semiotic theory of communication which emphasises the social purpose of semiotic tools in creating meaning, and posits that the meaning a resource can convey is contingent upon the context in which it is used (Flewitt et al., 2019). Design is “the patterns of meaning and action that constitute representation, communication and interpretation” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015, p. 22). It focuses on “an individual's realisation of their interests in their world” (Kress, 2010, p. 6). Under these notions, meaning making is a dynamic process where every individual comes in with different resources and correspondingly a different orientation in which they want to express themselves. The multiliteracies view of Design states that, as active and dynamic meaning-makers, we take the “the Available Designs” around us, and perform the act of reading using our knowledge, experiences and background, or doing “the Designing”. The result is a newly created meaning, or “the Redesigned”. In so doing, we essentially perform an act of agency – in which we are the agents doing the meaning-making activities – whether to communicate to others and/or to interpret communicated meaning.

2.3.3.1 Interrogating the Semiotic Functions of Texts

Multimodality underlines the need for a metalanguage that describes and explains patterns of meaning so that meaning-makers can navigate through “the complexity and interrelationships of different modes of meaning” (The NLG, 2000, p. 25). As digital technologies intensify the multimodality in our contemporary media for representation and communication, we see ourselves increasingly immersed in ‘reading’ and ‘writing’ texts that combine words, still images, moving images, and sound – all within a given space. Hence, throughout the process of making and creating meaning across the different elements of Design, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) suggest that readers engage in these questions:

- (i) representational – What do the meanings refer to?
- (ii) social – How do the meanings connect the persons they involve?
- (iii) organisational – How do the meanings hang together?
- (iv) contextual – How do the meanings fit into the larger world of meaning?
- (v) ideological – Whose interests are the meanings skewed to serve? (pp. 176)

Kalantzis and Cope (2015) argue that meaning-making, across all modes, operates at “five levels with five purposes” – refer, dialogue, structure, situate, and intend (p. 19). A grammar of multimodality would help to expand the focus of traditional literacy learning to encompass multimodal meaning-making. Just as the grammar of a language describes the structures and functions of language, the grammar of multimodality provides conceptual frameworks for analysing visual meaning. This follows Kress and van Leeuwen (2020), who explain that a multimodal text is consciously composed through the criteria of information value, salience and framing to achieve its ‘maximum potential’. Information value refers to the placement of elements in semiotic space. This placement in different ‘zones’ (top, bottom, left, right, centre, margin) endows elements with specific informational values. Salience is when certain elements are given importance and made to attract the viewers’ attention to different degrees. Framing is the absence or presence of framing devices, acts to either connect or disconnect elements of the image, signifying they belong or do not belong together in some sense (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020).

2.3.3.2 *Synaesthesia: Shifting between Modes*

Building on the above, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) draw out *representational parallelism* between the linguistic and visual modes, which allows “the same thing to be depicted in different modes” (p. 179), to advance the idea of *synaesthesia*. Synaesthesia is the process of “shifting between modes and re-representing the same thing from one mode to another” (p. 179). The following examples by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, as cited in Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 179) illustrate how representational parallelism can be achieved:

- the action expressed by verbs in sentences may be expressed by vectors in images;
- the locative prepositions in language are like foregrounding or backgrounding in images;
- the comparatives in language are like sizing and placement in images;
- the given and the new of English clause structures are like left and right placement in images (in the cultures of left to right, viewing);
- and the real or ideal in language is like top or down placement in images.

Cope and Kalantzis (2009) suggest that in contemporary LTL, teachers can teach students to use, or to shift between the various Design elements to represent their created-meaning (the Redesigned). Such a move expands on the learning potentials inherent in synaesthesia, largely unrecognised in the traditional literacy approaches. As Yelland (2018) aptly puts it:

[...] the main difference about learning in the 21st century is that it is multimodal, and being able to select the most effective modalities to represent your idea or communicate your findings is an essential component of being multiliterate in contemporary times. (p. 856)

However, Kress (2010) suggests that caution be exercised when applying synaesthesia, as each mode has its own function where it “does a specific thing” (p. 2). For instance, although it is possible to re-create a signboard that was originally composed of words, image, and colours with just linguistic Design or words only, it will have a different outcome. The text may be too complex to read, and thus may be less effective in attracting potential customers to the company’s products or services. Cope and Kalantzis (2009) identify this as the *incommensurability of modes*, or that “meaning expressed in one mode cannot be *directly and completely* translated into another” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 180). They argue that this

“paradoxical mix of parallelism and incommensurability between modalities is what makes addressing multimodality integral to the pedagogy of multiliteracies” (p. 180). This ushers in the ‘how’ of MLP that calls for a reflexive approach to literacy teaching practices.

2.3.2 The ‘How’ of MLP: A Reflexive Approach to Literacy Teaching Practices

Pedagogy, as the NLG (2000) defines it, is “a teaching and learning relationship that creates the potential for building learning conditions leading to full and equitable social participation” (p. 9). Cope and Kalantzis (2015) add that pedagogy is “a range of different things you do to know, a repertoire of learning activity types and, the design of learning activity sequences” (p. 14). Literacy pedagogy – recast as *multiliteracies pedagogy* – plays an essential role in achieving this educational mission. MLP develops learners’ strategies for reading the new and unfamiliar, in whatever forms – particularly on the everchanging literacy landscape and literacy practices.

Learning and teaching integrate four pedagogical moves (The NLG, 2000). The first, *Situated Practice*, focuses on authenticity and immersion in experience by positioning students as the providers of knowledge where meaning-making is unique to their contexts. School learning could weave in learners’ out-of-school experiences, as well as between familiar and unfamiliar experiences and texts. The classroom environment becomes a collaborative learning community in which learners engage in authentic literacy practices. The second component, *Overt Instruction*, is where learners explicitly learn metalanguage, or the elements of Design. Learners are “active conceptualisers” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015, p. 4), identifying and analysing the tools (e.g., presentation slides, articles, modes) they are using to design meanings and to what contexts. In *Critical Framing*, learners relate their acquired practices (from Situated Practice) and understandings (from Overt Instructions) to their social contexts and purposes. They analyse the functions, purposes and/or interests of texts by asking representational, social, organisational, context and ideational questions. The goal is a *Transformed Practice* in which students transfer and re-create Designs of meaning from one context to another (The NLG, 2000, p. 31), or making texts and putting them to use in communicative action.

According to Cope and Kalantzis (2015), the MLP framework synthesises current pedagogical traditions into a *reflexive approach* to literacy teaching practices – one that balances *didactic pedagogy* with *authentic pedagogy*. *Didactic pedagogy* refers to the “transmission of

knowledge from the knowing expert to the as-yet-unknowing novice” (p. 7). It has been critiqued as positioning learners as passive recipients of knowledge and compliant objects of authority. Cope and Kalantzis (2017) caution that digital technologies can also reproduce didactic pedagogies in which learning is cognitive-based (memory and logical reasoning), individualised and isolated. For example, learning through recorded video lectures and computerised quizzes to check memory replicates a transmissive kind of teaching and learning, as information flows from the top down, and favours uniformity in answers rather than multiple interpretations. On the other hand, *authentic* or *constructivist pedagogy* is learner-centered and focuses on immersion in experiences. The approach engages learners’ interest and motivation to promote problem-based and inquiry-based learning. However, critiques raise concerns that such an approach may favour learners who come to school with ‘capital’ compared to those who do not; students coming from a higher socioeconomic backgrounds may have more access to resources like educational materials and programmes that develop their experiences (Alanazi, 2016; Zajda, 2018). This potentially presents inequity in learning. *Reflexive pedagogy*, through integrating both traditions, moves between the four different pedagogical approaches and helps to maximise student agency by providing both important knowledge and opportunities for learners to be active meaning makers (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015).

Following criticisms that the original orientations were too technical and therefore too theoretical for classroom practices, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) reframed the four original components into “more recognisable pedagogical acts”: *experiencing*, *conceptualising*, *analysing* and *applying* (p. 184). None of these works in isolation, as “learning is essentially a process of weaving backwards and forwards, across and between different pedagogical moves” (Luke et al., 2004, in Cope & Kalantzis, 2015, p. 4). It is through these pedagogical moves that learners become active designers of their social futures, “infusing resilient agency into learning, such that learners are meaning makers not just meaning receivers, knowledge producers and not just knowledge consumers” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015, p. 22). To encapsulate, the MLP framework puts together multiple pedagogical approaches to make a case for repertoires in recognition of student diversity, student agency, and the phenomenon of multimodality.

2.3.3 The Benefits and Issues with MLP

Following this theoretical background of the MLP framework, a review of literature conducted on MLP yielded three main themes: i) MLP for multimodal literacy teaching and learning; ii)

teachers' knowledge and implementation of MLP; and iii) MLP for culturally and linguistically diverse students and curricula. They are each discussed below.

2.3.3.1 MLP for Multimodal LTL

Research supports the efficacy of the MLP framework in LTL. A review of the literature across a range of educational contexts – early childhood education to tertiary institutions, and English as first language or second/foreign language – revealed the frequent integration of two key components as MLP was adopted and implemented in classrooms by both practising teachers and teacher educators (e.g.: Burke & Hardware, 2015; Cordero et al., 2018; Drewry et al., 2019; Healey, 2016; Reyes-Torres & Raga, 2020; Warren & Ward, 2019; Yelland, 2018). These components are the 'utilisation of digital technologies' and 'multimodality'. Existing in reciprocal relationships, common technology-mediated activities included using multimodal texts such as showing and deconstructing videos related to topics of study, digital storytelling, engaging in new literacy practices such as researching online and assessing hyperlinked, intertextual and interactive websites, as well as producing multimedia presentation slides, videos and autobiographical graphic novels using pre-programmed software. Across these studies, the researchers demonstrated weaving through the purposefully-planned MLP's pedagogical moves of situated practice, overt instruction, critical learning with transformed practice as the learning outcome. Collectively, they reported that the MLP framework helps to develop student agency, enhance collaboration among students, provide authentic learning experiences, increase the diversity of texts, and foster culturally and linguistically responsive teaching practices. These were made possible through collaborative and project-based learning. Hence, they unanimously advocated for the implementation of multiliteracies pedagogy in classrooms to meet the demands of 21st century learners and literacy practices.

2.3.3.2 Teachers' Knowledge and Implementation of MLP

Studies conducted by teacher educators working with beginning and pre-service teachers (e.g.: Ajayi, 2010; Boche, 2014; Holloway, 2021; Mizusawa & Kiss, 2020; Rowsell et al., 2008; Sefton et al., 2020; Seglem & Garcia, 2018; Shoffner et al., 2010) indicated similar concerns and trends. In addition to acknowledging the linguistic-cultural plurality of student populations, the beginning and pre-service teachers recognised the broadened concept of literacy and the changing nature of literacy practices in relation to the utilisation of digital technologies. Ajayi (2010) highlighted that her participants – using their own life experiences – were aware of the

literacy skills needed to access and read information from multimedia technologies that were part of day-to-day life activities, particularly to explore diverse modes for reading and composing. Boche (2014) pointed out that the first-year participant teachers in their study thought that using the tools students interact with on a daily basis could effectively boost student engagement and promote a multiliterate point of view. With technologies, students had the opportunity to take ownership of their learning in authentic contexts. Such opportunities were presented through working on topics that interested them.

While these studies revealed significant movement in a multiliteracies direction, Ajayi (2010), Boche (2014) and Rowsell et al. (2008) also noted several shortcomings. These include (i) lack of clarity about the nature of the approach, (ii) too narrow a range of literacy forms being fostered and, (iii) insufficient focus on the individual lifeworlds of students due to insufficient training during initial teacher education. For example, Mizusawa and Kiss (2020) and Shoffner et al. (2010) discovered that although their participants engaged technology and media in their classroom, it was just to diversify text-types and not to support multiliteracies as they focused on students' learning with traditional print literacy. Furthermore, while beginning teachers agreed on the importance of producing multiliterate students, they experienced tensions between meeting the reading and writing standards expected of the students (school policy) and implementing MLP. Consequently, Ajayi (2010), Boche (2014), Holloway (2021), Rowsell et al. (2008), Seglem and Garcia (2018), and Shoffner et al. (2010) recommend improvements to teacher education, particularly in recognising the shifting nature of literacy practices and culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms to design curriculum that corresponds to those needs. Further, they suggest that more support could be provided for student-teachers in their conception and enactments of MLP – such as learning from the more experienced practising teachers during their school-visits or practicum periods.

Complementing the work of other teacher educators, Skerrett (2011) – a teacher educator herself – examined her own implementation of MLP to foster pre-service teachers' knowledge and dispositions to enact MLP. She found that emphasising situated learning and critical framing bridged the teachers' own in and out-of-school literacies and lifeworlds. Skerrett (2011) proposes that such a move could promote the pre-service teachers' productive negotiations of the conflicts they experience in developing dispositions towards MLP.

2.3.3.3 MLP for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners and Curriculum

Studies focussing on ‘situated practice’ with experienced teachers (e.g.: Giampapa, 2010; Kim et al., 2021) have identified another dimension of the MLP framework and its pedagogical practices – a greater emphasis on promoting culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and curriculum. Giampapa (2010) conducted an ethnographic study through collaborating closely with a Grade 4 teacher whom she called Perminder. Her study foregrounded how teachers’ experiential knowledge informed and guided their teaching practices, as in how Perminder drew on her own experiences and identity to attend to her culturally and linguistically diverse students. Perhaps more importantly, Giampapa’s (2010) study showed that ‘situated practice’ is not simply about acknowledging students’ languages and cultures to activate prior knowledge. Rather, it ought to be fused with a “pedagogy of respect” (Cummins et al., 2005, p. 42) where teachers actively honour and value their students’ multicultural and multilingual backgrounds. Similarly, Kim et al. (2021) discovered that their teacher participant – in responding to a culturally responsive curriculum and learners – implemented technology-enhanced multiliteracies teaching in her efforts to engage students’ perspectives and voices, to build learning communities, and to promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills. They concluded their study by specifying two key implications: MLP motivates teachers to value culturally and linguistically diverse students’ backgrounds and, technology-mediated lessons enable seamless integration of MLP.

2.3.4 Toward a different approach to MLP research?

Taken together, the majority of research into multiliteracies and MLP could be categorised into two major paradigms – (i) investigating the effectiveness of MLP and, (ii) exploring teachers’ understandings and practices with the aim of better supporting their MLP implementation. On the former, MLP has also been proven to promote culturally and linguistically diverse curriculum and awareness among teachers. However, these ‘top-down approach’ or researcher-focused studies were more interested in introducing the MLP framework and its pedagogical moves to teachers, with the expectation that they saw the framework’s importance and effectiveness. They often involved a small group of teachers – selected based on pre-established relationships (the researchers’ former students and their colleagues) – with the researchers introducing them to the framework and teaching them how best to implement it.

While the studies reviewed above have been valuable in supporting the need for a curriculum integrating MLP, further professional learning and development on MLP and multiliteracies, this present study argued that one crucial element might have been neglected – participants’ knowledge of themselves, their students, curriculum, instructional strategies, and school context. How does MLP fit into their existing knowledge to ensure its sustainability over time? In other words, there is scant literature on studies that adopts a teacher-focused stance to explore teachers’ knowledge, experiences and practices in their existing literacy teaching practices, through the lens of MLP. Such research may offer an alternative perspective on LTL in the present time.

Additionally, Kiss and Mizusawa (2018) argue that “despite the New London Group’s influence in academic circles, it seems that their work has not had a significant impact on actual classroom practice” (p. 59). The multiliteracies projects reported in research, in spite of their success stories, were undertaken either under the supervision of academics in the field of literacy or teacher education, or in situations where the researchers had learned of MLP through postgraduate studies. Moreover, studies investigating teachers’ knowledge and practices of MLP have suggested that even teachers with knowledge of the framework require support and training to integrate it into their classrooms (Boche, 2014; Carss, 2019; Holloway & Gouthro, 2020). Therefore, while research confirms the effectiveness of MLP in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy and developing multiliterate individuals, its implementation with teachers who have not been explicitly introduced to the framework remains to be explored. This is especially apt in the New Zealand context, where the approach is yet to be adopted in national literacy curriculum and teaching strategies.

Further to this, studies on teachers (by teacher educators) have tended to focus on one or two aspects of their literacy teaching practices – such as personal experiences with literacy practices and implementing MLP knowledge gained from ITE programmes – and the issues and tensions they faced. They have ranged from case studies to ethnographic and narrative studies. However, little or none has delved into the teachers’ past, present and future knowledge and practices, and the connections between them. Taken together, with little evidence in the literature suggesting that any countries have actually adopted a multiliteracies approach, despite the updated notion of literacy by UNESCO, it stands to reason that teachers’ practices are predominantly guided by their formal and practical knowledge. The same applies for Aotearoa

New Zealand, which Sandretto and Tilson (2013, 2016) have expressed as a “missed opportunity” to adopt a multiliteracies view.

To address this gap, this present study adopted an exploratory stance to gain insights into teachers' literacy beliefs and teaching practices in their classroom and school settings. This allowed for the complexities and the factors that inform teachers' literacy teaching practices to be captured. The findings were subsequently analysed through the lens of MLP, alongside the notion of teachers' personal practical knowledge. Adopting a narrative inquiry methodology – as per Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) framework – entailed inquiring into the teachers' past, present and future that presented with a narrative unity (elaborated in Chapter 3, Section 3.2). Against this background, the next part of this chapter explores the topic of teachers' personal practical knowledge before contextualising them to the Aotearoa New Zealand context.

2.4 Part III: Teacher Knowledge

This study was aimed at exploring teachers' histories, teaching acts, and personal and professional experiences in intermediate-year LTL through the lens of MLP. Several questions arose out of this aim: What do teachers know and how do teachers teach? How do teachers know what they know, and on what basis do they make their decisions in practice? This is compounded with the intricacies in classroom and institutional settings such as student diversity and school cultures. To respond to these questions entails engagement with the theoretical concept of teacher knowledge, which comprises multiple dimensions such as personal aspects (e.g.: beliefs, perceptions, and values), practical (acquired from experiences), and formal (gained from schooling and teacher education) (Borg, 2003; Clandinin, 2020; Meijer et al., 1999). Equally important is how these aspects of knowledge play out in classroom practices – an area that looks deeper into the construct of teacher agency. On these bases, this section first explores the notion of teacher knowledge from several perspectives. Then, it presents the concept and the content of personal practical knowledge, and two salient themes that have emerged from the literature in this area. This part of the chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings and methodological gaps in the studies into teacher knowledge.

2.4.1 What Has Been Said about Teacher Knowledge?

Much has been theorised about teacher knowledge, and the way it is characterised has been significantly broadened over time (Ben-Peretz, 2011). Across the multiplicity of terminology in the study of teacher knowledge (e.g.: teacher cognition, professional knowledge, teacher beliefs), the work of prominent researchers (e.g: Borg, 2003, 2015, 2019; Clandinin, 1985, 2020; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Elbaz, 1983; Shulman, 1986, 1987; Shulman & Shulman, 2004) hold one common *notion* – that teaching is a complex act that sees teachers drawing from an elaborate knowledge base in performing their work. The complexities of teaching include but are not limited to promoting (new and enhanced) comprehension among students, the management of ideas and students in classrooms, and decision-making prior, during and after lessons. Hence, Shulman (1987), whose work has had profound influence in the literature of teacher knowledge, analogises teachers to “a symphony conductor – who can not only conduct their orchestra from the podium, but (also) sit back and watch it play with virtuosity by itself” (p. 2).

Effective teaching involves a whole range of different types of knowledge and expertise (Eraut, 1994). Shulman (1987) proposes seven knowledge bases – content, general pedagogical, curriculum, pedagogical content, learners and their characteristics, educational contexts, and educational ends – which permit teachers to teach as they do. Further to this, Shulman (1987) elaborates on four major sources of knowledge, that is, “the domains of scholarship and experience from which teachers may draw understanding” (p. 5). They are the scholarship in content disciplines, educational materials and structures, formal educational scholarship, and wisdom of practice. *Scholarship in content disciplines* refers to the teachers’ knowledge, understanding and skill in the content to be learned by school children. *Educational materials and structures* are the curricula, assessment materials, and the institutional and larger bodies’ implicit and explicit rules and systems. *Formal educational scholarship* concerns the processes of schooling, teaching, and learning. *Wisdom of practice* is the maxims that guide or provide reflective rationalisation for the practices of teachers (Shulman, 1987, pp. 8–12).

However, there are various other frames for teacher knowledge in addition to the seven knowledge bases that Shulman (1987) proposes. Working within the context of language teaching and learning, Borg (2003) introduces the term *teacher cognition*, defining it as “the *unobservable* cognitive dimension of teaching – what teachers know, believe, and think” (p.

81, emphasis added). Under this perspective, the scope of teacher knowledge is expanded to include not only professional knowledge, but also the personal aspects of beliefs, feelings, perceptions, thoughts, and attitudes (Borg, 2019). Borg (2003, 2019) also highlights the mutually informing relationships between these mental constructs and teachers' practices, both of which are constantly growing and evolving with a complex range of influences, including schools, professional learning, classroom teaching practices and other contextual factors.

Examining how teachers gain, hold, and use knowledge, Elbaz (1983) argues that teachers possess *practical knowledge* that "encompasses first-hand experience of students' learning styles, interests, needs, strengths and difficulties, and a repertoire of instructional techniques and classroom management skills" (p. 5). Elbaz (1983) adds that this form of knowledge is derived from three aspects – practical, personal, and interactions. *Practical* refers to the knowledge that teachers gain from practice, such as instructional routines and attending to student diversity. *Personal* can be described as teachers' knowledge of self and of personally meaningful goals in teaching. *Interactions* refer to knowledge shaped by interactions with students, colleagues and their environment. Building on these observations, Elbaz (1983) posits five categories of practical knowledge: knowledge of self; knowledge of milieu; knowledge of subject-matter; knowledge of instruction; and knowledge of curriculum.

Knowledge of self refers to the images, or identities, that teachers refer to as they construct and reconstruct their experience through their teaching practices and relationships with others. The ways teachers see themselves are shaped by their personal values and purposes. For example, a teacher may hold images of themselves as an individual, teacher and professional, which influence the kinds of authority and responsibility they assume (Elbaz, 1983, p. 46). *Knowledge of milieu* – or *knowledge of educational contexts* (Shulman, 1987) – is the teacher's knowledge of the context of learning and teaching. It includes the social, political and institutional settings, as well as the individuals within the settings. Borg (2003) points out that these contextual factors play an important role in determining the extent to which teachers are able to implement instruction congruent with their cognition. *Knowledge of subject matter* – or *knowledge of content and pedagogical content* (Shulman, 1987) – refers to the disciplinary knowledge that a teacher uses in the classroom. The input may come from various sources such as educational literature, own repertoire of successful techniques, and techniques acquired from colleagues (Golombek, 1998). Timperley and Parr (2009) suggest that:

greater content knowledge enabled both greater depth and breadth in practice; depth in the form of more deliberate acts of teaching and breadth in terms of considering literacy as social practice with socially defined purposes, not a decontextualised set of skills. (p. 143)

Knowledge of instruction represents the pedagogical knowledge, that is, the teachers' understanding of the processes and practices or methods of learning and teaching. Teachers draw upon this knowledge to create effective learning environment for students and to make sense of their teaching (Guerriero, 2014). Shulman (1987) identifies this as *general pedagogical knowledge*. *Knowledge of curriculum* is the teacher's knowledge of the curricular framework, materials and programmes that inform learning and teaching.

Given this multifaceted knowledge of teachers, Fenstermacher's (1994) distinction of teacher knowledge into two major categories – formal knowledge and practical knowledge – is helpful. She identifies *formal knowledge* or *knowledge-for-teachers* as produced by researchers to conceptualise the type of knowledge teachers needed for effective teaching. *Practical knowledge* or *knowledge-of-teachers* is generated by teachers themselves as a result of their experiences and reflections on these experiences. Following Fenstermacher's two major types of knowledge, it can be said that teachers' formal knowledge may develop from content disciplines, educational materials and structures, and formal education (Shulman, 1987), as well as from schooling and teacher education (Borg, 2003). On the other hand, practical knowledge may be usefully conceived as experiential knowledge that is constructed by teachers in the context of their work (Van Driel et al., 2001). Such a distinction could be potentially useful when conducting research on or with teachers, allowing researchers to identify the type of knowledge teachers draw on. Nonetheless, despite the distinction, studies have shown that teachers simultaneously draw on both types of knowledge in planning for teaching and enacting their plans. This view, together with personal aspects of teaching highlighted within teacher cognition, leads to a discussion of the concept of *personal practical knowledge*.

2.4.2 Personal Practical Knowledge

Teachers often make professional decisions that have profound impacts on students' learning and achievement (Siuty et al., 2018; Starkey, 2012). As discussed above, these decisions are underpinned by teacher knowledge composed of personal aspects such as beliefs and

perceptions, formal knowledge, and practical knowledge. Consequently, studies into teacher knowledge have largely aimed at characterising how teachers know what they know, what teachers do with what they know, and why teachers do what they do (Baurain, 2012). Importantly, these studies have worked under the assumptions that “teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalised, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs” (Borg, 2003, p. 81). However, teachers may not always be aware of the reasons for these choices. Clandinin (1985) argues that “a teacher’s world is essentially one of action” and that they hardly need to “verbally explain themselves” (p. 382). Therefore, Clandinin (1985, 2020) asserts that teacher experiences ought to be also regarded as a form of teacher knowledge – which, although they may inform decisions, may not be well articulated.

Clandinin (1985), Clandinin and Connelly (1986) and Connelly et al. (1997) pursue the study of teacher knowledge under the heading of personal practical knowledge (PPK) to foreground the personal and experiential dimensions of teacher knowledge. Building on Elbaz’s (1983) work, Clandinin (1985) describes PPK as “knowledge which is imbued with all the experiences that make up a person's being. Its meaning is derived from, and understood in terms of, a person's experiential history, both professional and personal” (p. 362). PPK is therefore found in teacher’s practice, which can be represented by their image, cycles and rhythm, practical principles and personal philosophy (Clandinin, 1985; Clandinin, 1986; Connelly et al., 1997). Clandinin (1989) describes *image* as the “meaningful nexus of past and present experience focused on the immediate situation that called it forth” (p. 140). It is the glue that melds together a person's diverse experiences, entailing moral and emotional dimensions that engender enactments or actions. *Cycles and rhythm* refer to the “periodic cyclical temporal order” exhibited in schooling. As teachers experience the rhythmic and cyclic repetition of school life, they come to “know their classrooms” and “cope with the variations appropriate to the situations they confront” (Clandinin, 1989, p. 122).

When the various elements of teacher’s practices are put together or (re)constructed into a story, they lead to a “narrative unity” or “threads in people’s lives that help account for the stories that people live both in their personal lives and in their teaching” (Connelly et al., 1997, p. 671). For example, Clandinin’s (1985) study highlights how the teacher’s image of classroom as home subsumed various content of PPK – knowledge of herself as a teacher and person, instructional process, and subject-matter appropriate for primary school. Guided by her

personal interests, the teacher had planned for activities such as teaching the science behind planting, and planning a Halloween celebration that included baking pumpkin seeds. Using these as illustrations, Clandinin (1985) establishes the link between the teacher's educational and personal private life, and how the image is embodied in a person and connected with the individual's past, present and future. The teacher had said planning teaching activities and working in the classroom was something like "running a house" (p. 368) following "my idea of how a home should be" (p. 372). Essentially, this accentuates the importance of working closely with teachers in their classroom reality.

Subsequently, Connelly et al. (1997) argue that a teacher's professional landscape extends beyond the classroom to include out-of-classroom and personal lives. On this basis, they employed (and advocated) a variety of methods to study teachers' PPK such as observations and fieldnotes, research interviews and conversations, journals, and teacher stories (p. 667). Then, using the data collected, Connelly et al. (1997) constructed a story that illustrates the narrative process and aspects of the teacher's PPK. These were represented in the forms of "image; rules, principles and personal philosophy; cycles and rhythms; and narrative unity" (pp. 670 – 671). In other words, they presented the teacher's knowledge of self, beliefs of teaching and education, and how their teaching was connected to personal life and routines through the constructed story. They demonstrated, through narrative unity, that the teacher's PPK entails "personal educational, parenting, teaching, social, and cultural" components that develops over time (Connelly et al., 1997, p. 671). Importantly, they raised the concern that those working to improve education must consider not just what they want to happen in learning, but also the knowledge of teachers and the professional knowledge landscapes in which they operate.

Whereas Clandinin (1985) and Clandinin et al. (1997) highlight working collaboratively with teachers, other studies on PPK underscore the relationship with experiences. For instance, Golombek (1998) found that teachers' PPK informed their practice by filtering experience so that they could reconstruct practice and react to the demands of a teaching situation. Experienced teachers are highly advanced in their professional knowledge and skills. Borg (2003) and Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) concur that experiences have a powerful impact on teacher knowledge, which are exhibited through practices of teaching and learning. Their review articles found that experienced teachers are able to dedicate more time to teaching (delivering content) while beginning teachers may struggle with classroom management or

student behaviour. Further, Tsang (2004) concluded that teachers employ their PPK to make both during and after-teaching decisions, such as departing from lesson plans where deemed necessary. These findings illuminate classrooms can look and feel very different from one another, even when teachers receive similar education and work in the same context.

2.4.2.1 The Growth of Teachers' PPK

Teachers' PPK is based on their past experiences and future expectations to meet the demands of present situations, and thus continuously develops from their daily professional practices (Connelly et al., 1997). To appreciate this, there is a need to consider how Dewey's (1938) concept of the continuity of experience informed the construct of PPK (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, 1990; Ross & Chan, 2016). Under this notion, knowledge is believed to have been constructed and reconstructed, personally and socially, through field experiences, defined as experiences that are gained from trials and errors and corrected throughout teachers' practices (Tang, 2003). I draw emphasis to the word 'corrected' here – because there could be an entanglement between personal philosophy where one's beliefs and values (that guide their practices) may or may not be aligned to their institution's. Consequently, this may potentially influence what counts as needing correction.

Research literature suggests that there is a strong causal relationship between institutional setting (climate, curriculum, direction, management) and teachers' professional practices (Boche, 2014; Connelly et al., 1997; Ross & Chan, 2016). A supportive environment that agrees with a teacher's personal philosophy may result in more favourable practices for the teacher. The same applies to the reverse. In light of this, the continuous development of teachers' PPK can therefore be located within the situated cognition theories, which state that “the processes of learning are socially negotiated, constructed through experiences in and with the social practices associated with particular activities” (Johnson & Golombek, 2002, p. 2). This also affirms the view that teacher knowledge entails lived practices and not just accumulated information, and highlights how teachers continuously construct knowledge in their personal and professional realms. As Shulman (1986, 1987) and Shulman and Shulman (2004) assert, teaching demands extraordinary performance of teachers. The performance of teachers, in turn, is determined by their ability or inability to implement their beliefs and teaching practices – or the enabling or constraining of their agency (Biesta et al., 2017). Against this background, it would therefore be helpful to discuss teacher agency.

2.4.2.2 PPK and Teacher Agency

Hitlin and Elder (2007) mention that the concept of agency differs according to the “epistemological roots and goals of scholars who employ it” (p. 170). They conceptualise agency from the social behaviourist approach and argue that agency is linked to reflexivity and self, and that of its role in shaping and determining one’s social action (even if the action is passive). On the other hand, Biesta et al. (2015) highlight that while “agency per se has been extensively theorised, *teacher agency* – agency that is specifically theorised in respect of the activities of teachers in school – has been subject to little explicit research or theory development” (p. 625). Consequently and guided by Emirbayer and Mische’s (1998) work, they went on to develop an ecological model of teacher agency, which they explained is rooted in “action-theoretical approaches” where “agency is concerned with the way actors critically shape their responses to problematic situations” (Biesta et al., 2015, p. 626). Their model proposes two important aspects of teacher agency. First, they argue that agency is not concerned with something that people can have, but it is something that they do, or more precisely, achieve – agency is teachers actively contributing to the shaping of their work and its conditions. Second, agency is temporal, and therefore should be understood as “a configuration of influences from the *past*, orientations towards the *future* and engagement with the *present*” (Biesta et al., 2015, p. 626, emphasis added). Following this, they conceive that teacher agency could be achieved or not – depending on whether it is supported and/or constrained through the interplay of teacher capacity that includes their past experiences such as personal and professional biographies and school conditions.

Drawing on these arguments, Robinson (2012) states that teacher agency “seems to be about internalising choices, about analysing and reflecting, based on past experiences and future trajectories” (p. 233). Within the context of this study, this understanding of teacher agency could be taken as teachers’ educational views, beliefs and knowledge about teaching, and strategic compliance with national and school policies that impact their choice of pedagogical approaches and expansion of teaching repertoires (Priestley et al., 2016; Tao & Gao, 2021).

Against this background, what Biesta et al. (2015), Priestley et al. (2016), Robinson (2012), and Tao and Gao (2021) have essentially highlighted are how teacher agency may potentially overlap with the components of teachers’ PPK – personal aspects (e.g.: beliefs, feelings, and values), formal knowledge and practical knowledge. They describe how – across different

locations and sectors of education – teachers demonstrated similarity in their individual beliefs relating to children or young people, about educational purpose, and the role of a teacher, which in turn guided their practice. For example, their teacher participants all conveyed a strong sense of responsibility to and developed good relationships with their students, and believed that teachers are both deliverers of knowledge as well as facilitators of learning, and education was about the development of key skills or competencies. Further to this, Robinson (2012) found that despite facing constraints from national policy texts that mandated teachers to write reports on students' academic performance, they negotiated these texts within the school ethos of “child-centered pedagogy and learning through a safe but stimulating environment” (p. 243). This is significant as Robinson (2012) illustrates how the alignment of teachers' beliefs and values with those of the school helped to enable and sustain their agency. Reciprocally, as Tao and Gao (2021) suggested, enhancing teacher agency can result in a growth in teachers' beliefs and knowledge, and a strong sense of agency can play a crucial role in advancing teachers' professional growth and development.

2.4.3 PPK: Working with Narrative

The previous part of the chapter has presented multiple perspectives and characteristics of teacher knowledge, the notion of PPK and the elements within this construct – personal aspects, practical or experiential knowledge, and formal knowledge. A review of literature on studies into PPK illustrates that teachers continuously construct and reconstruct knowledge through practices, experiences, and reflections on these experiences. Studies also draw attention to the importance of experiences and practical knowledge (e.g.: Borg, 2003, 2019; Clandinin & Connelly, 1990, 2000; Elbaz, 1983, 1991; Elbaz, 1983, 1991; Johnson & Golombek, 2002; Ross & Chan, 2016).

On the basis of this literature, I argue that foregrounding the perspectives of practising teachers is necessary to provide more insights into teacher's construction and use of knowledge concerning MLP. This notion assumes a narrative approach which is discussed in the next chapter – methodology. Prior to that, Section 2.5 discusses literacy, multiliteracies and teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand – the context in which this thesis was situated.

2.5 Part IV: The Aotearoa New Zealand Context

Education in Aotearoa New Zealand aims to equip all New Zealanders with the knowledge, skills and values to be successful citizens of the twenty-first century (MOE, 2007). This vision is clearly stipulated in *Te Whāriki – Early Childhood Curriculum* (MOE, 2017), the *New Zealand Curriculum for English-medium teaching and learning in Years 1–13* (MOE, 2007) and in *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* (MOE, 2008) for Māori-medium schools. Given the context of this study, it is essential to unpack New Zealand educational goals and literacy policy in relation to the principles of MLP.

As this study worked specifically with intermediate-years (7–8) teachers who were practising in English-medium state schools, this section makes reference to the *New Zealand Curriculum (NZC)*. It begins with a brief overview of the NZC in Section 2.5.1. Next, Section 2.5.2 looks specifically at New Zealand’s literacy policy that entails a review of, in the chronology of the publication year, the *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4 [ELP 1–4]* (MOE, 2003), *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5 to 8 [ELP 5–8]* (MOE, 2006), the *Literacy Learning Progressions* (MOE, 2010), and *Literacy & Communication and Maths Strategy* (MOE, 2022). These documents are deemed essentials as they serve as resources to support schools’ literacy curricula and programmes, teachers’ literacy teaching practices, and professional development (Carss, 2019; Timperley & Parr, 2009). A short discussion of teacher professionalism and agency in New Zealand follows in Section 2.5.3. Section 2.5.4 concludes this part of the chapter with a review of literature on literacy studies and projects that have been conducted in New Zealand in the past ten years.

2.5.1 The New Zealand Curriculum

Aotearoa New Zealand is a bicultural nation with a diversity of ethnicities that make up its increasingly multicultural population (Education Council, 2017; Simon-Kumar, 2020). Like many other nations around the world, net migration of people has given rise to increasing cultural and linguistic diversity. As such, visually, the initial impression of the NZC promotes Aotearoa’s uniqueness and cultures through the three salient themes of; (i) New Zealand sceneries (Lake Rotoiti, p. 5; Rangitoto, p. 19), (ii) Māori cultural designs (the *kōwhaiwhai* on the front cover, *tohu* designs associated with each learning area), and (iii) culturally-diverse

children or learners (Bonnar, 2017). Collectively, they project a commitment to inclusion, equality and equity in education. This is then articulated in the principles of “cultural diversity, inclusion, and Treaty of Waitangi” (p. 9) and the values of “diversity and equity” (p. 10). To elaborate, Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi) expresses the Crown’s obligations and duties to Māori, and is presently interpreted as a partnership between Māori as tangata whenua or indigenous people and non-Māori (Bell, 2011). The strategy of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia (The Māori Education Strategy), “to ensure Māori students are enjoying and achieving educational success as Māori” (MOE, 2021, p. 5), reaffirms the commitment. The accompanying document Tātaiako lays out the cultural competencies required of teachers of Māori learners to realise the visions under the Ka Hikitia strategy (Education Council, 2011). Similar emphases are given to Pasifika learners under the ‘Pasifika Education Plan’ and the guiding framework for teachers of Pacific learners – Tapasā (MOE, 2018). On the wider multicultural front, the NZC’s statement of inclusivity is that “the curriculum ensures that students’ identities, languages, abilities, and talents are recognised and affirmed” (p. 9). Underpinned by the principles, the vision and values are to be integrated alongside the development of the five key competencies, realised across the eight learning areas.

Taken together, the values and principles that the NZC embodies are consistent with one of the “whys” of MLP – diversity. Under this concept, students’ variability and agency are recognised through an awareness of their unique background and experiences – and in the context of this study, refer particularly to their cultures, languages and literacy practices. The future-focused NZC also reflects the other element of the ‘why’ of MLP, which is the changing worlds (personal, work and social) due to technological advancement. By citing the changing workplaces and lifeworlds afforded by technologies, the then-Secretary of Education expressed in the foreword (p. 4) that the NZC is an outcome-based curriculum that must respond to the increasing diversity in New Zealand’s population, sophistication of technologies, and complexity of workplace.

The NZC, which “sets directions for student learning and provides guidance for schools as they design their curriculum” (MOE, 2007, p. 6), is central to the discussion on literacy. Given its principal function, it is notable that the definition of literacy is absent from the policy document. The closest description to the term is found in the learning area of English that states “literacy in English gives students access to the understanding, knowledge, and skills they need to participate fully in the social, cultural, political, and economic life of New Zealand and the

wider world” (p. 18). This quote indicates a view of literacy as a social practice, and it echoes the educational mission of MLP, which is to “ensure that all students benefit from learning in ways that allow them to participate fully in public, community and economic life” (The NLG, 2000, p. 9). Furthermore, the NZC signals the need to become critically literate through the statement “students learn to deconstruct and critically interrogate texts in order to understand the power of language” (p. 18). This once again reflects what the MLP advocates, in that students are encouraged to analyse texts and the elements of Designs critically, a pedagogical objective where “students evaluate their own and other people’s perspectives, interests and motives” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 184).

Within the learning area of English, the NZC also presents two interconnected strands of literacy that encompass the oral, written, and visual forms of the language. The two aspects are: i) “making meaning of ideas or information received through listening, reading, and viewing” and; ii) “creating meaning for themselves or others through speaking, writing, and presenting” (p. 18). The NZC adds that these literacy practices are “for a range of purposes and audiences and in a variety of text forms” (p. 18). When viewed alongside the key competency of “using language, symbols and texts” (p. 12), McDowall (2015) opines that the NZC does represent literacy as multimodal, as students can be expected to “interpret and use language in *all* its forms” (p. 8, emphasis added).

Nevertheless, although the NZC does present a more progressive view than those found in earlier literacy handbooks, such as ELP 1–4 (MOE, 2003), it does not go as far as the multimodality described in the MLP. Further, the conceptualisation of “a variety of appropriate text forms” (p. 14) is contestable because no further definition is provided, and it shows little acknowledgement of the characteristics of contemporary texts as discussed in the MLP. Against this background, the following subsection explores New Zealand’s literacy policy that has profound impact on the design of school curricula and literacy programmes that encompass schools’ LTL focus, assessment and literacy teaching strategies.

2.5.2 New Zealand Literacy Policy

New Zealand’s literacy policy shows a disposition towards the traditional conceptions of literacy and literacy pedagogy (Bonnar, 2017; Carss, 2019; Sandretto & Tilson, 2013, 2016, 2017). Policy, in this context, refers to “a number of instruments, such as documents and

assessment systems, each of which represents the policy” (Spillane, 2004, as cited in Timperley & Parr, 2009, p. 136). This *traditional* notion of literacy can be seen through the ways literacy is conceptualised in the teachers’ literacy handbooks and teaching resources.

The earliest key publication reviewed in this study, ELP 1–4 (MOE, 2003), defines literacy as “the ability to understand, respond to, and use those forms of written language that are required by society and valued by individuals and communities” (p. 13). This narrow view, that privileges written linguistic mode over other modes of communication (audio, visual, spatial, gestural), “neglects the broad multimodal nature of literacy” (Carss, 2019, p. 66) and has led to “literacy instructions which frequently resemble the traditional approaches used by generations of New Zealand teachers” (Sandretto & Tilson, 2013, p. 3). Although the subsequent ELP 5–8 (MOE, 2006) states that “it is useful for teachers to think in terms of multiliteracies – a dynamic, shifting set of literacy practices that shape learners as social, thinking and creative beings” (p. 18), Carss (2019) concedes that these acknowledgements are superficial, as beyond the texts, teachers received little support in working around the new concepts of literacy. Furthermore, Bonnar (2017) points out that the traditional notion of literacy underpinning the ELP 1–4 (2003) continues to serve as the theoretical basis for teachers’ literacy handbooks. To illustrate this point, despite a seven-year gap in publication and burgeoning evidence in literature that supports the case for MLP, the Literacy Learning Progressions (MOE, 2010) reinstates the emphasis on written-linguistic system by stating “literacy learners need to learn the code of written language” (p. 4). The reference to ‘texts’ emphasises print-materials (the ‘Ready-to-Read’ book series) as “the core instructional reading series” (p. 10) and that writing is an attempt for students “to record their ideas and experiences in print” (p. 11).

However, there has been development in New Zealand’s curriculum conceptualisation of literacy and its corresponding strategy. The most significant updates can be found in its recently published document – Literacy & Communication and Maths Strategy [LCMS] (MOE, 2022). There appears to be a shift (or a desire for one) in New Zealand’s literacy perspective and strategy towards providing learners with “the critical and creative literacy and communication skills they need going forward into adulthood” (MOE, 2022, p. 16). This includes a wider view of literacy, which sees the LCMS recognising not only those strands mentioned in the NZC but also *digital literacy* that refers to:

[...] the ability to effectively and critically interpret, manage, and create meaning through a range of evolving digital communication channels. This includes the operational skills to retrieve and understand information on the internet, and create and share quality content online. These skills are essential for children and young people to act as critically engaged citizens, as they continue to transition along the pathway. (MOE, 2022, p. 15)

This renewed focus on the critical and creative aspects of literacy alongside the addition of digital literacy shows a response to the MLP's calls for literacy pedagogy that prepares students with the literacy they need in this diverse, globalised and digitalised society. The LCMS further signals a commitment to (re)strategise LTL in New Zealand through “refreshing literacy learning in the NZC” and “replacing the Literacy Learning Progressions” (p. 18). Despite this, the LCMS makes no explicit mention of multiliteracies, new texts or multimodality, and presently, is only in its inception stage. Ample room is left for interpretation as to what literacy strategies would be presented to schools and teachers, particularly when existing policy highlights the traditional concept of literacy such as linguistic-based reading instruction, writing instruction, and reading comprehension (Caygill et al., 2021). Having discussed the conceptual aspects of literacy in New Zealand, the next section turns its focus to the implementors of these documents and strategies – the teachers.

2.5.3 Teaching and Teacher Agency in New Zealand

The Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand is the professional body for New Zealand teaching profession that supports teachers in their practices. While the council holds multiple functions, chief to this thesis' interest is the setting of expectations of teacher practice and behaviour, which is detailed in the published document of ‘Our Code, Our Standards Ngā Tikanga Matatika Ngā Paerewa’ (Education Council, 2017). This bilingual document (English and Te Reo Māori) stipulates the professional responsibility, that is the ethics and standards for high-quality effective teaching, of teachers wishing to practise in New Zealand. Underpinned by values that stress on *whakamana* empowering learners, *manākitanga* respect and dignity, *pono* integrity, and *whanaungatanga* positive and collaborative relationships, the Code and the Standards “define, inspire and guide teachers” in Aotearoa New Zealand (Education Council, 2017, p. 1). The values are complemented by the six standards of “Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership, professional learning, professional relationships, learning-focused culture, design

for learning, and teaching” (Education Council, 2017, p. 16). Collectively, it is a set of aspirations aimed at promoting effective teaching practices so as to meet every child’s learning success to the vision enshrined in the NZC.

Our Code, Our Standards’ advocacy of effective teaching practices aligns with the NZC’s component of *effective pedagogy* that provides teachers with guidance for teaching. *Pedagogy*, in Aotearoa New Zealand’s context, has been characterised as “teaching approaches that have a positive impact on student learning” (MOE, 2007, p. 34) and “teacher actions that promote student learning” (MOE, 2015, p. 32). Within this description, teachers are encouraged to “create a supportive learning environment, enhance the relevance of new learning, provide sufficient opportunities to learn and, inquire into the teaching-learning relationship” (MOE, 2015, p. 32). This understanding of pedagogy aligns with the NLG (2000) and Cope and Kalantzis’ (2015) definitions of pedagogy presented in Section 2.3.2. Taken together, *pedagogy* in the MLP framework and the New Zealand context can be understood as teachers’ practices that influence learning in learners that includes the instructional techniques and strategies that allow learning to take place.

However, Timperley and Parr (2009) point out that there exist “complex mediation processes between policy with its accompanying implementation messages and the existing norms and belief systems of practitioners that lead them to overlay their own meanings on policy messages as they attempt to make sense of them” (p. 138). As an example, in the process of daily teaching and learning, teachers may make references to the school curriculum and their PPK to design their class curriculum through a yearly scheme-of-work and daily lesson plans. Then, these plans are carried out in their classrooms, and sometimes improvisations happen depending on situational contexts. In this regard, teachers are guided by policy documents but also act as the catalytic agents in the implementation of the curriculum. In addition to teachers’ individual beliefs and values, Biesta et al. (2015) contend that institutional discourses and cultures also play a significant role in the promotion of teacher agency. Based on these premises, the next section explores the idealisation and the enactment of the professional standards of teacher agency in LTL through the collaborative projects between school teachers and researchers that have been conducted in New Zealand.

2.5.4 Literacy Projects and Research in New Zealand

McDowall (2015) identifies three contextual factors which are likely to have influenced the nature of literacy projects in New Zealand – “the NZC statements, findings from national and international assessments and, policy initiatives” (p. 7). She further streams these projects into two categories: ways of improving and addressing inequities in reading and writing achievement, and curriculum literacies or literacies that are associated with particular learning areas. On the latter, McDowell (2015) explains that they were concerned with teaching students how to “access and produce content in different learning areas” (p. 11). This literacy research trend continues into the present day (see for example Parr & Gadd, 2018; Wilson & Meiklejohn-Whiu, 2022). Following this, I have identified several ‘Teaching & Learning Research Initiative’ (TLRI) longitudinal projects that focused on school sectors for further discussion.

The first, Parr et al.’s (2007) literacy professional development project, attended to the issue of sustainable professional learning for teacher, arguing that initiatives were often superficial and contributed little to change in teacher practices. The researchers posited that for professional learning to have positive impacts on students’ achievement, the key processes of “examining teacher beliefs on which practice is based, making decisions on the basis of evidence of student needs, and promoting student learning through improved knowledge” must be promoted (p. 1).

Lai et al.’s (2010) project aimed to develop sustainable, effective teaching and school practices to enhance literacy achievements. The participating schools were of those in decile 1⁴ with mainly Māori and Pasifika students who often represented the lower achievement groups. Literacy achievement was referred to as successful reading comprehension. From this project, Lai et al. (2010) called schools to engage in an “ongoing inquiry and knowledge building” (p. 3); that is, to use students’ achievement data and tailoring teaching and learning practices to students’ needs.

The third, McDowall and Core Education Team’s (2010) two-part project, involved teachers (known as e-fellows) designing and implementing classroom-based inquiries into LTL in an e-

⁴ School deciles indicate the extent the school draws their students from low socio-economic communities. MOE uses deciles, numbered 1 to 10, to target funding. Lower decile schools receive more funding than higher decile schools (MOE, 2022).

learning context. The e-fellows then presented their findings as e-portfolios. The project bore resemblance to the Critical Literacy project (Sandretto & The Critical Literacy Team, 2008), using Luke and Freebody's (1999, in Sandretto & Tilson, 2013) four-resource model of code breaking, meaning making, using texts, and analysing texts. The researchers conducted a meta-analysis of the e-fellows' e-portfolios, and included other data sources such as interviews, field notes and documents collected from the e-fellows' classrooms. The project had two significant findings. First, they found that prior to taking part in the project, the teachers had been conducting informal inquiries into e-learning, some for many years. Second, the use of digital technologies afforded students increased experience with a range of modes and multimodal texts, and so their levels of engagement and achievement in reading and writing improved. In sum, McDowall and Core Education Team's (2010) project strengthens the need to promote lessons that are aligned to the principles of MLP, which they undertook further with a critical literacy project using games in classrooms (McDowall, 2015).

However, it should also be cautioned that the effectiveness of the literacy teaching practices that are measured through students' performance in the international (e.g.: Programme for International Student Assessment, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) and National Certificate Educational Achievement (e.g.: Parr et al., 2007; Lai et al., 2010) may only be partial in meeting the demands of literacies in this age of digital technologies. The researchers might have based students' reading and writing proficiency on what Cope and Kalantzis (2009, 2015) refer to as the standardised form of the language. This raises the questions of how often these tests measure learners' social and critical literacy skills, and how indicative they are of literacies beyond the classroom (Bull & Anstey, 2019). Considering the amount of digital multimodal texts students are immersed in, Bull and Anstey (2019) concede that the acts of reading and writing can be more usefully known as 'consumption' and 'production' of text.

Against this background, there has been repeated advocacy for the recognition and implementation of MLP in Aotearoa New Zealand (Sandretto & Tilson, 2017). This is consistent with the aim of the NZC (MOE, 2007) to have a future-focused curriculum that will equip "young New Zealanders with the knowledge, competencies, and values they will need to be successful citizens in the twenty-first century" (p. 4). To date, several multiliteracies projects had been undertaken in New Zealand to address the demands for a broader focus on literacy in policy documents and resources. The 'Multiliteracies Working Group', established by the

MOE to consider the influence of information and communication technology on literacy, developed a framework that provided a multiliteracies lens to Freebody and Luke's (1990) and Luke and Freebody's (1999) four-resource model (Jones, 2009; Moje et al., 2004; as cited in Sandretto & Tilson, 2013). However, the working group's findings and signal for the need to reshape current literacy practice and policy have not been taken up by the MOE. This has been "a missed opportunity for New Zealand literacy policy" to adopt a more relevant understanding of what literacy is for the 21st century (Sandretto & Tilson, 2013, p. 4). As a measure to honour the working group's findings, Sandretto and Tilson (2013) developed the 'Critical Multiliteracies for New Times' which was built on the successful design of two previous TLRI projects into critical literacy (Sandretto & Critical literacy Research Team, 2008; Sandretto et al., 2006, as cited in Sandretto & Tilson, 2013). There are two important takeaways from this project. First, they emphasised the need to bridge the gap between students' home literacy (what MLP deems as lifeworlds) and school literacy. Second, they highlighted the paucity of research on multiliteracies in New Zealand, and called teachers to reconceptualise their notions of literacy and literacy practices to keep up with the changing times (Sandretto & Tilson, 2016).

2.6 Research Questions and Chapter Conclusion

Literacy projects and studies in New Zealand have largely been concerned with finding out teachers' existing practices and strategies, or implementing specially designed interventions to gauge the effectiveness of a particular literacy strategy. A general identifiable pattern across these studies can be traced to the recommendations advanced by the researchers. They propose that professional learning and development for teachers look at developing teachers' pedagogical content knowledge of literacy (reading and writing). Fenstermacher (1994) refers this to as 'knowledge-for-teachers'. This is true across all educational levels – early childhood, primary, and high-school settings, and teachers – student teachers, beginning teachers, and experienced practising teachers. However, Timperley and Parr (2009) remind researchers to pay attention to the relationship between policy intent and teachers' belief systems. Successful interpretation and implementation of initiatives outlined in policy depend on what teachers believe, value, already know and do.

Given the emphasis on developing teacher knowledge of literacy and literacy strategy in Aotearoa New Zealand, what can be further pursued is an exploration of teachers' stories of

their understandings, experiences and practices in their LTL. Embracing the notions of “teachers as knowing and knowledgeable individuals” (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 438) and that “knowing is practical, grounded in experience” (Ross & Chan, 2016, p. 4), this study captures teachers’ experiences of LTL through the lens of MLP. This was as the use of digital technologies become more prevalent in classrooms, and there was an emphasis on developing students’ 21st century learning skills of communication, collaboration, creative and critical thinking. In addition to asking ‘what’ teachers do, I also sought the ‘whys’ and ‘hows’, with the intention to capture, connect and describe the multiple focal points of knowledge-of-teachers, and assist in furthering our knowledge about teachers’ literacy teaching practices in the classrooms. The following research questions were formulated to guide this aim:

Overarching research questions:

1. What literacy teaching practices do teachers of intermediate-year learners engage with in their classrooms in relation to their beliefs of LTL?
2. How do the teachers’ literacy teaching practices reflect the three main principles of the MLP framework?

Three sub-questions were generated from the main questions:

- a) How do teachers make sense of and apply their understandings and experiences of multiliteracies in Years 7–8 LTL?
- b) What are teachers’ understandings and experiences of MLP in Years 7–8 LTL?
- c) How do teachers describe the influences and the processes that shaped their conceptions and practices of MLP in Years 7–8 LTL?

The next chapter is concerned with the methodology employed for this study.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this study, I use teacher narratives to illuminate the literacy teaching beliefs and practices of intermediate-year teachers working in English-medium state schools in Aotearoa New Zealand, where digital technologies are encouraged for teaching and learning. I contend that narrative inquiry, which is part of life-history or lived experiences research, offers unique and rich opportunities to understand teachers' practices in their particular contexts and perspectives. The narrative inquiry framework employed in this study enquires into teachers' PPK as detailed in Chapter 2. The framework also informed the construction of interview protocols and observation schedule, allowing me to work within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of "interaction, continuity, and place" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50).

In this chapter, I present the decisions behind selecting the methodology and method for this study, and the procedures for conducting the narrative research. This includes the means of gathering stories of and from teachers, and engaging in "narrative analysis" (Polkinghorne, 1995) through co-constructing narratives *with* the teachers. The first part of this chapter – Section 3.2 – discusses this study's paradigm, including its ontological and epistemological considerations. Section 3.3 explores narrative inquiry and narrative research, with the central aim of defining its conceptual framework, and elaborating on the key ideas and terminologies employed in this study. This section then narrows down narrative inquiry in educational research to LTL research. Section 3.4 Data Collection explains the recruitment of participants, how data were collected and the instruments involved. Section 3.5 details the means by which the data were analysed. The rigour and trustworthiness of data and data analysis are discussed. Section 3.6 lays out the challenges and ethical considerations in conducting this research. This chapter concludes with an overall chapter conclusion.

3.2 A Narrative Paradigm

In establishing the research design, it is essential to choose and justify a design compatible with the purposes of the study, to enable the research questions to be addressed (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Design planning also needs to be practical, feasible and adaptable, taking into account potential modifications "in response to new developments or changes in some other component"

(Maxwell, 2013, p. 2). In the previous chapter, teachers' professional knowledge was framed as personal and subjective, and their experiences as made meaningful or understood through storying and re-storying. This perspective is commensurate with a *narrative paradigm* which shares underlying assumptions with the *interpretivist* epistemology and *constructivist* ontology, and employs a *narrative* methodology (Spector-Mersel, 2010). Paradigm, in its simplest form, is described as “a basic set of beliefs that guides actions” (Guba, 1990, p. 17). A narrative paradigm “constitutes a broad – yet distinct – framework within which various approaches, theoretical orientations and analysis practices coexist” (Spector-Mersel, 2010, p. 206). It may also be considered as the essence of narrative research or narrative inquiry. In the subsequent paragraphs and Section 3.3, I use Denzin and Lincoln's (2018) proposition of *ontology*, *epistemology* and *methodology* to elaborate my commitments on these key aspects. My intention is to elucidate the nature of *reality* embraced in this study, which underpinned my considerations and rationales for engaging narrative inquiry. My ontological, epistemological, and methodological commitments also influenced the research methods, procedures and techniques relating to collection and analysis of data pertinent to answering my research questions and meeting the research aim.

1. Ontology: What is the nature of reality and the nature of the human being in the world?
2. Epistemology: How do I know the world? What is the relationship between the inquirer and the known?
3. Methodology: What is the best means for gaining knowledge about the world?
(Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 97)

Ontology focuses on the nature of reality, and, therefore, has implications for what can be known about it. The narrative paradigm draws on constructivism to frame “social reality as constructed, fluid, and multifaceted” while emphasising the “central place of stories in our existence” (Spector-Mersel, 2010, p. 211). Additionally, Lincoln et al. (2018) describe constructivists as principally interested in meaning-making and sense-making activities because they are the very activities that bring about action or inaction. These positions frame the relationship between the researcher and the reality (the researched), as well as the manner in which reality can be captured. I recognise that in narrating or sharing stories of their practice and experiences, the participants' processes of meaning-making are shaped by their social worlds. These social worlds are constructed in and through social interactions with family,

childhood friends and teachers, present-day colleagues, students and parents. Indeed, as Schwandt (1998) notes, “particular actors, in particular places, at particular times, fashion meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction involving history, language, and action” (pp. 221–222). What this suggests is that to understand this world of meaning, both the participants *and* I must interpret it. This brings in epistemology.

Epistemology is concerned with the relationship between the researcher and what can be known or researched. Following my ontological stance, I adopt an interpretivist epistemology that views social reality as *subjective*, where one’s perceptions, feelings, and experiences may influence how they see and feel reality. A researcher’s task is to understand and interpret the participants’ actions and what is meaningful for them from their point of view (Bryman, 2012; Ryan, 2018). Collectively, taking a constructivist–interpretivist stance assumes a process where “the knower (or the researcher) and respondent co-create understandings” that are subjective and culturally rooted (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 19). The narrative paradigm shares the constructivist perspective, but posits that the interpretation of reality is done through stories or narratives (Spector-Mersel, 2010). Narrative, as Polkinghorne (1995) defines it, “is a type of discourse composition that draws together diverse events, happenings, and actions of human lives into thematically unified goal-directed processes” (p. 5). Chase (2018) expands the definition of narrative to include “a way of *understanding* one’s own and other’s actions... of *connecting* and seeing the consequences of actions and events *over time*” (p. 547, emphasis added). These views align with Bruner (1986), who proposes this form of knowing or construction of knowing as the narrative mode of thought – one that “establishes *not* truth but truth-likeness or verisimilitude” (p. 11, emphasis in original).

Collectively, these ontological and epistemological commitments comprise multiple stages of interpretation. As Bruner (2004) remarks, “a life as led is inseparable from a life as told... a life is not ‘how it was’ but how it is interpreted and reinterpreted, told and retold” (p. 708). I exercised “double interpretation” in this study, whereby I provided “an interpretation of others’ (the respondents’) interpretations” (Bryman, 2012, p. 31). This occurred as the participants constructed their understandings (or interpretation) of their experiences and shared them during interviews and post-observation conversations, and I made sense of them. Then, another layer of interpretation took place in ‘narrative analysis’, where I interpreted in terms of the concepts and theories and theoretical frameworks underpinning this research, and relevant literature. In

this stage of the research, I reorganised the fragments of data into a coherent story – a form of representation of the participants’ beliefs, knowledge and literacy teaching practices (details in Section 3.5). My concern was not to search for an “absolute, objective truth”, but rather, to better understand what the experiences meant to the teachers – and for me, what this means to the study of LTL. The next section turns to the third element of the narrative paradigm, which is its methodological commitment.

3.3 Narrative Research and Narrative Inquiry

My engagement with narrative research was one I would describe as *incidental* and *intentional*. I encountered an article by Boche (2014) that explored beginner teachers’ perception of MLP using narrative inquiry in my search for a research topic in the field of language and literacy education. My immediate interest in the “method and methodology” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 11) had initially been instinctive, with it eventually befitting my research purpose and focus. I wanted a methodology that allowed insight into teachers’ *intrapersonal* (beliefs, knowledge, experiences) and *interpersonal* (interactions with school community and also parents) processes in their literacy teaching practices. I sought to gather teachers’ stories and write findings that could retain the storied nature of data – a *relational* analysis of their experiences that embody temporality, social condition and place. I envisioned a collaborative research journey with teachers, an engagement alongside and within the contexts in which they practised (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This derived from my background as a language teacher and professional development course trainer, where I met teachers who narrated their tales from and beyond classrooms. In exploring teachers’ beliefs, experiences and practices of literacy through the lens of MLP, I aimed to illuminate how:

- teachers’ teaching practices are informed or influenced by their past teaching and learning experiences
- teachers continuously engage in professional learning to meet and elevate their students’ learning needs and experiences
- digital technologies and teachers’ reasons for using them impact their literacy instructions and activities

In engaging narrative inquiry, it is essential to understand *what* it is, and *why* or *how* it is suited for the focus of this research. Literature on narrative research and narrative inquiry yields a multitude of ways and disciplines in which they have been conceived and conducted. Squire et

al. (2014), Chase (2018), and Creswell and Poth (2018) highlight a great diversity of agendas, directions, and approaches in narrative studies. Clandinin (2020) highlights how *narrative* has “come to refer to almost anything that uses, for example, stories as data, narrative or story as representational form, narrative as content analysis, and narrative as structure” (p. 213). Barkhuizen and Consoli (2021) add to this concern, noting that “researchers don’t explain what they mean by narrative and/or do not adequately frame their research within a narrative epistemology” (p. 2). Collectively, they raise the imperative for researchers working under the umbrella terms of narrative research and narrative inquiry to explicitly state their epistemological commitment, concept of narrative, and methodological commitment.

Building on the above, I note my use of the terms *narrative research* and *narrative inquiry* interchangeably in this present study, as per the research literature (Barkhuizen et al., 2014; Clandinin, 2020). Nonetheless, nested within the narrative paradigm, considerations included being attuned to its philosophical underpinnings, key elements, and the various forms it has taken (and could take) in qualitative studies. As Barkhuizen et al. (2014) suggest, “there is no single way of carrying out a narrative inquiry study and, indeed, it seems that each new study brings with it a new approach” (p. xiii). Acting on this advice, I proceed with a methodological framework that is based upon the work of several renowned narrative researchers, particularly those working in the educational and language and literacy disciplines.

Despite using the terms narrative inquiry and narrative research interchangeably, a distinction between the two can be made. According to Gudmundsdottir (2001, as cited in Moen, 2006), *narrative research* can be taken as “the study of how human beings experience the world, and narrative researchers collect these stories and write narratives of experience” (p. 56). It is predicated on humans understanding and giving meaning or significance to their lives through the stories they tell (McMullen & Braithwaite, 2013; Ntinda, 2019; Squire et al., 2013). In other words, people utilise narratives to compose and organise their life experiences. Researching within this understanding of narrative research requires attending to how *experience* is conceived and entailed. Clandinin and Rosiek (2007), following a Deweyan-based view, posit that experience is “a changing stream that is characterised by continuous interaction of human thought with our personal, social, and material environment” (p. 39). This understanding provided the philosophical underpinning of the narrative inquiry framework engaged in this study. Against this backdrop, *narrative inquiry* can be understood as:

a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in the same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that made up people's lives, both individual and social. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20)

This study is rooted in both narrative research and narrative inquiry traditions. Furthermore, my embrace of the terms 'inquiry' and 'inquirer' within narrative inquiry implies "an open-endedness, uncertainty, ambiguity and praxis" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 11). Researching *with* the participants to collect stories of their experiences entails the prospect of coming up with surprising findings (Bryman, 2012).

In this view, and building on the definitions of narrative presented earlier, narratives or stories within the context of narrative inquiry can be taken as representations of:

the meanings storytellers make of their experiences. In telling stories people make sense of the events in the lives they have lived or they imagine living. In the re-telling they shape and re-shape those experiences. Narrative inquiry as an approach to research aims to understand these experiences from the perspective of those who experience them. (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 1)

Narrative inquiry or narrative research is a means by which we systematically gather, analyse, and represent people's stories as told by them, from their perspectives (Barkhuizen & Consoli, 2021; Clandinin, 2020). Narrators organise information as they tell their stories, in accordance with how they interpret the events in their lives, with their beliefs and values guiding those interpretations – and then what their intentions and plans are for the future. Researching within this narrative paradigm allows me to 'know' how the teachers constructed meaning from within their systems of beliefs, attitudes, values and ideas that shaped not only their teaching practices, but also their teacher identity. This narrative construction of reality (Bruner, 1986), or knowledge constructed through stories of lived experiences, helps make sense of the nuances and complexity of teachers' literacy experiences, knowledge and practices.

3.3.1 Conceptual Framework of Narrative Inquiry

This section turns to the focus and the fundamentals of narrative inquiry, which ground my work as a narrative inquirer. According to Moen (2006), a researcher needs to be mindful of three basic claims about narrative research during the entire process. The first is that human beings make sense of our lives and experiences through narratives. The second is that the stories individuals tell are dependent on their backgrounds, including knowledge, past and present experiences, values, and feelings. The third is that narratives connect the storytellers to their social contexts (pp. 60 – 61).

This study embraces Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) conceptual framework of narrative inquiry, which encompasses the "*three-dimensional narrative inquiry space*, and the four directions the framework allows our inquiries to travel – *inward, outward, forward, backward*" (p. 49, emphasis added). The metaphorical three-dimensional space is inspired by Dewey's (1938) concept of experience that stresses on continuity, interaction, and situation (Clandinin, 2020). According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), "*continuity* refers to the past, present and future, or temporality; *interaction* is the personal and social space of inquiry; and *situation* takes into account the notion of place" (p. 50). Therefore, during the research process, a narrative inquirer would be moving *inward*, which is toward the participants' "internal conditions such as feelings, hopes, aesthetic, reactions and moral dispositions" (p. 50). Then, it is equally important to move *outward* to understand their "existential conditions, that is, the environment", and *backward* and *forward* to address the temporal matters (p. 50). In this study, I attended to these elements in my development of research instruments (interview protocol and observation schedule) for data collection. This transpired into a data analysis in the form of co-constructed narratives that carefully considered how the representation of the teachers' experiences could not be made independent of the knower. Rather, the narratives are *lived* and thus relational. They show a relationship between the participants and their environment – workplace, colleagues, students, parents (Clandinin, 2020).

3.3.2 Narrative Inquiry in LTL

Narrative inquiry as both a method and methodology for educational research is well-established globally and locally (Barkhuizen & Consoli, 2021; Clandinin, 2020; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Studies focusing on teachers have investigated, for example, teacher identity

(Kayi-Aydar, 2019; Taylor, 2017), professional learning and development (Golombek & Johnson, 2017; Kohli, 2019), and language teaching and learning (Mendieta & Barkhuizen, 2020). These studies share a common theme of supporting teachers to become reflective thinkers and practitioners. This culminates to “*narrative knowledging*”, or what Barkhuizen (2011) defines as “the meaning making, learning, or knowledge construction that takes place during the narrative research activities of (co)constructing narratives, analysing narratives, reporting the findings, and reading research reports” (p. 395). I aimed for this to be one of my research outcomes, an interrelated part of my three-fold reasons for engaging narrative inquiry.

The first reason, as discussed in the previous two sections, was how my narrative research methodological commitment was aligned with my beliefs as well as its suitability for my research purpose. The second, following my literature (re)search, unveiled a scarcity of studies that engaged narrative inquiry in LTL research in Aotearoa New Zealand. Qualitative approaches such as case studies and grounded theory were more commonly adopted, with interests in advancing key issues or challenges and theory respectively (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These studies (e.g., Carss, 2019; McDowall, 2015; Sandretto & Tilson, 2013, 2016) have contributed to our knowledge of LTL and an understanding of local perspectives. However, their explicit recommendations of what teachers *should* do to improve their pedagogical approaches may have perpetuated Clandinin’s (2020) argument of researchers viewing teachers as passive recipients of knowledge. For example, Sandretto and Tilson (2016) first developed teachers’ understandings of MLP, and then suggested that they conduct in-depth practitioner inquiry or action research into the multiliteracies practices of their students. In this regard, narrative inquiry presents opportunities to honour teachers’ experiences – constituted, shaped, expressed and enacted within their social, cultural and institutional contexts – as a source of important knowledge and understanding (Clandinin, 2020). Through the power of narratives – or stories of their professional lives – a study such as this may illuminate the “neglected details of meaning” and offer “multiple perspectives on various aspects of learning and teaching multifarious literacies” (Schaafsma & Vinz, 2011, p. IX). Finally, the third reason entails the three aspects of why to be a narrative inquirer as proposed by Clandinin and Huber (2010) – personal justification; practical justification; and social justification.

Personal justification corresponds with my professional background, as “narrative inquirers begin with their own life experiences, tensions and personal inquiry puzzles” (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 438). I had an established career as a language teacher prior to pursuing my

doctoral study full-time. My teaching background includes being a teacher-trainer for teacher professional development courses. These courses acted as great platforms for professional dialogue with my colleagues, and course participants engaged enthusiastically on matters pertaining to language teaching. The topics of conversation ranged from instructional strategies and activities to the dilemmas they faced in attempting to cater to student diversity. In retrospect, I realised that we were storytelling our lived-experiences with our students. The teachers' tales of how they tailored teaching and learning content, and handled the exigencies of situations in their classrooms with students of various backgrounds, characters and learning preferences made for inspiring talks. In this regard, the two main characteristics of narrative inquiry that recognise: (i) human beings as storytellers who have lived storied lives, and (ii) the collaboration process between the researcher and the participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) offer a perfect fit to my desire of 'researching *with* teachers' instead of 'researching *on* teachers'. In this manner also, the approach allowed me to develop a collaborative dialogic relationship with the teacher participants, and thus gain microanalytic pictures of their personal accounts of factors that informed, influenced, and shaped their LTL beliefs and practices.

Practical justification is consistent with Barkhuizen's (2011) notion of *narrative knowledging*, in which "researchers attend to the importance of considering the possibility of shifting or changing practice" (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 438). Sandstrom and Tonkin (1994, as cited in Henderson, 2012) point out that teachers always bring a range of experiences, background knowledge about the school, its community and the children, along with theoretical and practical knowledge about teaching to their lesson planning and teaching practices. In their studies, Johnson and Golombek (2002) argue that teachers' storytelling will enable them to "reflect on their perspectives, understandings and experiences that guide their conceptions of teaching and their practice" (p. 7). It also facilitates teachers to "connect distinct activities and moments in time, re-story the past, and imagine the future" (Golombek & Johnson, 2017, p. 26).

Next, under the theme of social justification, I am committed to narrative inquiry to make visible the notion of "teachers as knowing and knowledgeable" (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 438). This inspiration was drawn from Clandinin (1985, 1989) and Clandinin and Connelly's (1986) studies on teachers' PPK. Clandinin (1985, 1989) explored the connections between the personal and professional knowledge of teachers and concluded that they possess a body of knowledge that transcends subject-matter. Further, Olson (1995) asserts that "focusing on

personal practical knowledge provides a holistic way of understanding teachers as persons who embody personally and socially constructed images of practice” (p. 120). Other narrative studies on teachers’ knowledge have shared the same view. For example, Golombek (1998) collected teachers’ stories of their experiences as teachers and learners, and discovered that teachers’ PPK guides their decision-making in classrooms. Additionally, the teachers’ PPK is continuously shaped in response to different contexts; thus demonstrating that it is a “teachers’ knowledge-in-action” (p. 459). Meijer et al.’s (1999) study found patterns that indicate teachers’ practical knowledge is dependent on their background which includes “their formal and in-service teacher training, the degree of consultation with colleagues, the nature of their reflection on their practice, and the number of years of teaching experience” (p. 71). They opine that studies into teachers’ practical knowledge will provide deep insights into what teachers know and how they deal with the complexity of their work. As affirmed by Borg (2003), “more research into the less immediate factors behind language teachers’ decisions – e.g., prior learning and professional experience – is required. Such work, drawing on notions such as PPK, would contribute to a more holistic understanding of language teachers’ practices and cognitions” (p. 98). Taken together, they lined up well with my intention to systematically gather, analyse and represent teachers’ stories in LTL in their multifaceted professional landscape.

3.4 Data Collection

3.4.1 Recruitment of Research Participants

The recruitment of participants followed the principles of generic purposive sampling, which is commonly used in qualitative research for the selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest (Bryman, 2012). Following Morse’s (1998, p. 73, as cited in Flick, 2018) definition of “good informant”, the criteria that were considered in the selection of the participants for this study included teachers who had: (i) the knowledge and experience of LTL at their disposal to answer the interview questions; (ii) the capability to reflect on and articulate their LTL stories or experiences; (iii) the time for interviews and post-observation conversations; and (iv) the willingness and readiness to participate in the study.

However, determining the number of participants was not a straightforward process as there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry (Patton, 2015). Butina (2015) affirms that

sample size is ambiguous, as it depends on the nature of a study, such as the type of data to be collected and the answers being sought. Therefore, Guetterman (2015) recommends that researchers address two concerns – relevance and extensiveness – as part of their sample size considerations. On relevance, the purpose of this study was to explore, describe and interpret in depth stories, or experiential knowledge, of teachers’ multiliteracies practices with emergent adolescent learners. On extensiveness, the inquiring process required an extensive collaboration between the participants and me in order to gain information richness. However, this would mean potentially voluminous data generation and together with the constructivist-interpretivist stance adopted in this study, raises important practical considerations.

Consequently, I decided that the participant group would consist of five Years 7–8 teachers who were practising in English-medium programmes in New Zealand intermediate state schools. The motivation for selecting Years 7–8 LTL was twofold. First, as emphasised in the NZC, “literacy in English gives students access to the understanding, knowledge, and skills they need to participate fully in the social, cultural, political, and economic life of New Zealand and the wider world” (MOE, 2007, p. 18). As discussed in the first two chapters of this thesis, the shifting nature of LTL as afforded by digital technologies and classroom diversity – and therefore literacy knowledge and skills students need – make for a “hot research topic” (Cassidy et al., 2021). Second, Henderson (2012) highlights that Years 7–8 students or emergent adolescents have to cope with increasingly complex literacy learning and diversity of texts as they make the transition from primary to middle-year education, with the shift from “learning-to-read” to “reading-to-learn” being the most obvious (p. 4). Thus, in enabling students to use their literacy skills to meet specific learning purposes across the curriculum, the Literacy Learning Progressions (MOE, 2010) indicates that from middle years onwards, teachers need to “systematically identify opportunities to strengthen students’ literacy expertise within a wide variety of curriculum learning activities” (p. 3). In practical terms, this means teachers are continuously confronted with the need to consider and integrate a wide range of pedagogical moves that meet the demands of the curriculum as well as the students.

Following the plan, five teachers who through their supportive principals graciously agreed to take part in this study. Table 1 presents an overview of the participants’ background, which are further elaborated on in their individual narratives in Chapters 4 and 5.

Table 1*A Brief Overview of the Participants' Background*

	Springville Intermediate School			Summerville Intermediate School	
	Petunia	Magnolia	Lily	Ruby	Helena
Place of birth	Rural Bay of Plenty	Rural Waikato	Urban Waikato	Rural Waikato	England; family migrated to Waikato when she was six
Previous work experience	Dairy farming; receptionist	Chef	Relief teacher in England	Came straight into teaching from the university	Worked with her husband in aluminium works
Teaching certification	Postgraduate Diploma	Postgraduate Diploma	Bachelor, majoring in Teaching, with honours	Bachelor, majoring in Teaching, English and History	Postgraduate Diploma
Teaching experience	Three years (two years as a *BT in her hometown; her first year in Springville)	Four years (started off teaching in Springville as a BT)	Five years in England, and five years in Springville	Three years (started off teaching in Summerville as a BT)	Eight years (started off teaching in Summerville)
Role(s) in school	Homeroom teacher	Homeroom teacher	Homeroom teacher; team leader	Homeroom teacher; team leader	Homeroom teacher; Head of mathematics

Note. BT stands for beginning or provisional teacher who holds a provisional teaching certificate. A BT is given the guidance of a mentor teacher in their first two years, in which they journey to full certification (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2022).

3.4.1.1 Access, Ethics and Informed Consent

The participant-recruitment procedure began after having obtained approval from the School of Education's Ethics Committee (Appendix A). I visited the target schools (School A and School B) and delivered the invitation letters, participant information sheet, and consent form for both school principals and teachers (Appendices B – G). These schools were selected based on their proximity to the University of Waikato, in consideration of the frequent commute for interviews and observations. In this initial visit, I met with the principal of School B and expressed my intention to conduct literacy research with their teachers. At School A, I handed those documents to the administrator as the principal was unavailable. Nonetheless, I had included my request for an appointment to collect the completed principal's consent form and to discuss or answer any questions that the school principals or teachers-in-charge assigned by the principal might have. I anticipated that the principals or teachers-in-charge would share the

attached documents which contained information about my project with teachers who might be interested.

Several days later, the curriculum coach of School A, Springville Intermediate School (pseudonym), emailed me and communicated their principal's full support for my research. They also provided the contact details of three teachers who had expressed their interest to participate in the study. Subsequently, upon meeting and gaining the principal's signed consent, I contacted the three teachers from Springville Intermediate to introduce myself and to set up a meeting. All three teachers – whom I refer to as Petunia, Magnolia and Lily – agreed to meet in-person. During the introductory meeting at their respective classrooms, I briefed them on what their participation would entail (interviews, four full-day observations and post-observation conversations) and answered questions that they had. Then, I walked them through the items in the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix F). In particular, I highlighted how the information collected would be used, explained their rights as participants, and sought their consent to have all interviews and conversations audio recorded, and to check through and verify the transcripts shared with them. The teachers completed and signed the consent forms. Petunia, Magnolia and Lily also promptly scheduled four full-day classroom observations. They picked days where they had planned for literacy lessons (reading and writing) to take place.

The principal of School B, on the other hand, politely declined participation. On my supervisors' advice, I decided to focus on working with the teachers from Springville before recruiting teachers from another school. Upon completing my data collection with Petunia, Magnolia and Lily, I engaged the help of Springville Intermediate School's curriculum coach, who connected me with the principal from School C – Summerville Intermediate School (pseudonym). The principal and I corresponded via email in the initial stage before setting an appointment to meet. During the meeting, I briefed the principal on the nature of my research project and the teachers' participation. They expressed their full support and similarly recommended two teachers – Helena and Ruby to participate in my research. After obtaining the teachers' work email addresses, I initiated contact with them, set up appointments, and repeated all the steps I had taken with teachers from Springville Intermediate School. All signed consent forms were duplicated, with the principals and the teacher participants receiving a copy each.

3.4.2 Methods and Instruments

Polkinghorne (2005) and Clandinin (2020) contend that a multi-method approach helps to capture the participants' diverse perspectives and experiences, besides enhancing the relationships between the researcher and the participants. Clandinin (2013) states that "as we engage in narrative inquiry with our participants, we need to inquire into all these kinds of stories (e.g., institutional, personal) that have become interwoven into who we are, and are becoming" (p. 22). Barkhuizen (2014) attests that the design of narrative research should "embed contextual cues to enrich spatiotemporal dimensions of the narrative" as much as possible (p. 1). This study thus employed narrative semi-structured interviews as its principal method, supplemented with classroom observations and post-observation conversations to collect data. Interview protocols and an observation schedule were prepared to guide the data collection. Overall, the data collection took place over the course of two school terms across the two intermediate schools. This took six months.

3.4.2.1 Narrative Semi-Structured Interviews

Qualitative interviewing, historically refined from "knowledge-producing conversations", is a central component of qualitative research (Brinkmann, 2020, p. 424). Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) define it as "an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life of the world of the interviewees in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 6). Interviewing is thus a powerful way to understand human beings as both the interviewers and interviewees converse about a theme of mutual interest and engage in an interchange of views (Brinkmann, 2020; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Furthermore, a study positioned in a narrative paradigm may integrate narrative interviewing, a method that encourages and invites stories rather than interpreting them as "digressions" (Riessman, 2011, p. 315). Narrative interviewing shifts the "emphasis on a question-answer format" to provide "an opportunity for participants to narrate their experiences" (Kartch, 2017, p. 1073). This receptive stance to conducting interviews essentially parallels the views described above – of conceiving them as conversations.

Within the context of this study, the *purpose*, *descriptions*, *phenomena* and *mutual interest* refer to obtaining the teachers' beliefs and practices of LTL, and how a digital technology-mediated environment is fast reshaping our literate practices and skills teachers and students

need. The interview and post-observation questions reflected these themes accordingly. Therefore, more specifically, I opted to engage semi-structured or open-ended interviews in which “researchers have (already) identified topics about which they want to ask questions of individual participants” (Roulston & Choi, 2018, p. 233). Furthermore, this selection allowed for flexibility and further probing, whereby the (re)organisation of topics and the (re)sequencing and formulation of questions could be done in relation to what the participants had to say (Roulston & Choi, 2018). This proved instrumental during data collection with the teachers in this present study, alongside the strategy of narrative interviewing that provided them with the space to develop their stories or narratives.

The preparation for interviews began with the design of two two-part interview protocols – one for each of the main interviews – which comprised open-ended questions. The questions were piloted with two experienced language teachers to determine the answerability, conducted over two sessions that lasted a minimum of 45 minutes each. Alongside this, I gathered their views on my interviewing skills such as my demonstration of respect for them, attentiveness and listening skills gauged through the questions probed relative to their responses, as well as having equal opportunities to participate in the conversations (Roulston & Choi, 2018). The feedback and comments received were then used to fine-tune the questions and interviewing techniques. Also in each of the interview guides, the purpose and structure of the interview, which stated the measures to safeguard the participants’ identity and rights to withdraw participation, were included. These were explained to the participants prior to the start of the introductory interview. As well as this, I reminded them of their rights to withdraw parts of the recording (data) they did not wish them to be published when the transcripts were shared with them.

Scheduled to be conducted after the first meeting, the aim of the introductory interview (Interview 1 – Appendix H) was to gain an understanding of the participants’ background. Therefore, it contained questions about the participants’ process to becoming a teacher, their teaching experiences (or stories) throughout the years of practising and personal philosophy (beliefs and values) in teaching. The questions in Interview 1 did not concern literacy specifically.

Interview 2 (see Appendix I), originally scheduled approximately a week after Interview 1, was later modified and conducted over three post-observation conversations. Interview 2 explored

the participants' personal history, prior and current understandings, experiences and practices of LTL. Here, the influences and processes that shaped their conceptions and practices of LTL were also pursued. In designing this interview, the questions were formulated to explore the teachers' knowledge and practices of MLP, which may have been tacit, implicit or explicit. On this basis, the questions were constructed with reference to the MLP's foundational tenets of diversity, multimodality, and pedagogical approaches, and the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of temporality, interaction and situation. Following the components of teachers' PPK that entails self, subject-matter, curriculum, instruction, and milieu, this interview was organised into three sections: (i) LTL beliefs, notions and perspectives; (ii) classroom literacy practices and student-learning; and (iii) major influences to their LTL beliefs and practices. Overall, inspiration for this interview protocol was drawn from several sources which included my personal philosophy in teaching, my language and literacy teaching experiences, the multiliteracies framework, and other relevant past studies (Boche, 2014; Carss, 2019; Johnson & Golombek, 2002; Martinie et al., 2016; Meijer et al., 1999; Rowsell et al., 2008).

Following Flick's (2018) recommendation, I complemented the interviews with a documentation sheet (Appendix J). The purpose was to immediately summarise my impressions, thoughts, feelings and experiences of the interview sessions with each participant. The documentation sheet also served as my personal reflection and a record of the moments of my inquiry journey.

3.4.2.2 Classroom Observations and Post-Observation Conversations

As expressed by Czarniawska (1998), "I do interviews to elicit standard accounts of a practice of interest to me. I do observations to contrast these accounts with nonstandard ones (novel readings) and to use the gap between the two as a source of knowledge" (p. 30). The keyword to be highlighted here is *observations*, a method that enables researchers to systematically observe and record people's behaviour, actions, and interactions (Hennink et al., 2020). The act of observing involves conducting the multiple tasks of "watching, listening, questioning, and recording people's behaviours, expressions and interactions as well as noting the social setting, location or context in which the people are situated" (Hennink et al., 2020, p. 170).

Stepping into the participants' bustling classrooms would offer me the opportunity to better understand the environments and contexts in which the teachers practice, besides

complementing their stories from the interviews (Hennink et al., 2020). Within this view, I deliberately decided on non-participant, closed-observations. What this means is that I did not participate in the teachers' teaching and learning activities (Hennink et al., 2020), and the observations involved the use of observation schedules with predefined categories (De Costa et al., 2017). The approach of observing without participation enabled me to conduct the multitasks of *watching*, *listening* and *recording* field notes freely and attentively.

The teachers' LTL practices in their classrooms constituted the focus of the observations, with my field notes recording the participants' instructions to and interactions with the students, learning and teaching activities and materials, classroom layout and design, and other relevant classroom practices (see Appendix K for the observation schedule). Classroom observations serve as a means for researchers to appreciate the teachers' experience, particularly how they deal with the exigencies of learning and teaching and situations in classrooms (Golombek, 1998). The teachers also generously shared their teaching artefacts, which were then taken as another data source (De Costa et al., 2017). The artefacts encompassed resources that supported teaching and learning such as the school's literacy programme handbooks, teaching materials, and students' products (workbooks, multimodal slides). They helped with my understanding of the literacy skills and topics being taught at that period.

A post-observation conversation with the teachers took place during or after each observation, as a way of filling in my understandings, interpretations, or wonders about their day's classroom practices. The conversations were guided by the field notes and questions that were written during observations. The conversations simultaneously acted as a reflective space for the teachers to look back on their day's LTL (Johnson & Golombek, 2002).

Overall, in consideration that LTL occurred across the curriculum, I conducted four full-day observations and a corresponding number of post-observation conversations with Petunia, Lily, Magnolia and Helena, and three with Ruby. These multiple observations and conversations revealed variability and consistency in the teachers' literacy teaching practices, and thus granted me access to more nuanced information than could have been obtained from a single interview (De Costa et al., 2017). Table 2 provides a summary of the data collection methods and instruments.

Table 2*Summary of Data Collection Methods and Instruments*

Method & Instrument	Content
Interview 1 (Introductory Interview) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview protocol • Documentation sheet 	Participants' background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course to becoming a teacher • Teaching experiences • Personal philosophy in teaching
Interview 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview protocol • Documentation sheet 	Participants' personal history; prior and current understandings, experiences and practices of LTL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1 <i>LTL beliefs, notions and perspectives</i> • Section 2 <i>Classroom literacy practices and student-learning</i> • Section 3 <i>Major influences on their LTL beliefs and practices</i>
Classroom observations and conversations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation schedules 	Questions formulated during observation relative to teachers': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 1 <i>literacy understandings and experiences</i> • Observation 2 <i>literacy teaching practices</i> • Observations 3/4 <i>Questions formulated during observation, and from checking through the previous notes and transcripts</i>

Note: Interview 2 was conducted over three post-observation conversations

3.4.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection procedure is detailed in this section, following the key considerations in conducting interviews and classroom observations. My initial plan was to organise an introductory meeting, and from there, to conduct two standalone interviews – one introductory and one focussing on the research questions. However, some modifications were made after the introductory interview, as explained below.

3.4.3.1 Introductory Meeting

In anticipation of the teachers' busy workloads and limited availability during schooling hours, a maximum 30-minute appointment was made with the participants before the start of the data collection. This was done after the initial correspondence via emails. I met with Petunia,

Magnolia and Lily (Springville Intermediate School) individually after school hours in their respective classrooms, while Helena and Ruby (Summerville Intermediate School) opted to meet together at the school library in the morning before school started. In these face-to-face introductory meetings, I adopted a conversational tone to approach the following matters (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Firstly, the participants were introduced to the purpose of the study and the extent of their involvement in the study, following the specifics found in the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix F). This included the planned interviews, classroom observations, post-observation conversations and checking of transcripts. Their role as collaborators where their narrative authority would be honoured was emphasised. Participants were seen as the holders of the “authoritative source of their experience” and the knowers of their knowledge (Olson, 1995, pp. 122–123). Within this view, I assured them that the study was in no way evaluative of their teaching. In this regard, I communicated my non-judgmental stance and my response as a researcher was to recognise and fully accept the teachers’ narrative authority throughout the study.

Upon giving their agreement to the planned research activities, we scheduled the first interview and classroom observations, taking into account their availability for post-observation conversations either in-between lessons or after school. A copy of the observation schedule was shared with the teachers to provide them with the specifics and focus of observations. Although they were intended to be non-participant observations, I expressed my willingness to participate in their learning-and-teaching activities if and when they required it. This deliberate move was to help “situate myself in their setting” and “build rapport” with the teachers and the students so that any possible disruptions to the classes’ “normal activities” could be mitigated (Hennink et al., 2020, pp. 185–186).

At the end of this introductory meeting, the Springville Intermediate School teachers chose a fixed day of the week (for example, every Tuesday for four consecutive weeks) for the classroom visits. The Summerville Intermediate School teachers picked days where they had students in class for the entire day and literacy lessons were to be conducted. Therefore, the observations took place fortnightly over the course of two months. After the meeting, a summary of the discussion with the classroom visit dates was prepared and shared with the

school principals and teachers. This worked both as a reference as well as a reminder of my visits. We also agreed that I would give them a quick notification email a day prior to coming.

3.4.3.2 Interview 1: Introductory Interview

Interview 1 was conducted soon after the introductory meeting. Considering that the nature of narrative study requires researchers to actively work on establishing research relationships with the participants (Clandinin, 2020), this one-on-one interview was preferred over group interview as “it often makes it easier for the interviewer to create an atmosphere of trust and discretion” (Brinkmann, 2020, p. 441). Furthermore, gaining some background knowledge about the teachers before inquiring into the research interests and entering their classrooms for observations helped with establishing commonality with them and enhancing rapport (Roulston & Choi, 2018).

The interviews with Petunia and Lily were conducted the day after the first meeting, in their respective classrooms after schooling hours. Magnolia requested that this be done concurrently with the first classroom observation over lunch at the school’s resource room. Ruby similarly suggested having it during her lunch break in her classroom. Finally, the interview with Helena took place at a local cafe on a weekend. Overall, all five teachers were very responsive to the questions and exhibited generosity in sharing stories of their journey into teaching and their teaching philosophy. Each of the interview sessions lasted up to 60 minutes, with slight variations in accordance with the participants’ stories. However, noteworthy too was how Petunia and Lily expressed some of the questions were tricky. We discussed ways to ease their subsequent interviewing experiences and they suggested sharing with them the questions before the interview so that they would know what to expect. Following this helpful feedback, a copy of the interview questions was emailed to all teachers before the sessions, which aided with their preparation.

I transcribed the recorded audios following this first interview with each teacher. This was completed relatively soon after to “guarantee better recollection of the body language, the atmosphere, and other non-transcribable features of the interactions” (Brinkmann, 2020, p. 442). I made notes of these elements in the documentation sheet. My reflection and this interviewing experience demonstrated that subsequent conversations would be more effectively carried out in context or situated. Quoting examples of the teachers’ teaching

practices and interactions with students in the classrooms as prompts and references encouraged them to talk more freely. Additionally, realising the teachers' work commitment (hours after teaching were spent either attending meetings or coaching students in sports), the initially planned standalone Interview 2 was modified and combined with the post-observation conversations. This resulted in the three sections of the Interview 2 being conducted over three conversations, in conjunction with the questions formulated during observations (see Table 2, p.76 and Appendix I). Due to the decision being made at the outset, near consistency in interviewing and classroom observations were achieved across two different schools.

3.4.3.3 Classroom Observations

Data collection continued with four full-day observations with Petunia, Lily, Magnolia and Helena, and three with Ruby. Spending an entire school day with the teachers also meant moving between places such as the classrooms, science laboratory, computer room and school hall, depending on the learning block. The teachers introduced me to their students on my first visit, during which I distributed the Student Information Sheet (Appendix L) and explained my purpose there. Literacy lessons – designated as 'Reading' and 'Writing' – often took place in the second block for Springville Intermediate School during the data collection period. It was similar with Summerville Intermediate School, as Ruby and Helena had arranged for classroom visits on days where they would begin with Reading and Writing.

Intending on embarking on non-participant observations, measures such as staying in a designated spot were taken to keep the observations as unobtrusive as possible (Hennink et al., 2020). Nonetheless, my participation in the classroom and learning and teaching activities was negotiated with the teachers during the introductory meeting. On occasions where the students engaged in group activities and required assistance, I gladly contributed with the respective teacher's permission. These instances happened frequently, as the students grew accustomed to my presence and began telling me or asking some questions about their work, on their teachers' advice. Together, they provided the opportunities to collect more information about the context for the planned narratives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Nonetheless, the majority of the time was dedicated to actively taking field notes of the teachers' literacy activities, instructions, pedagogical moves, and interactions with students when the teachers were conducting the lessons. This included formulating questions pertaining to their literacy

teaching practices and noting down areas of interest requiring elaboration, which were discussed with the teachers during the post-observation conversations.

3.4.3.4 Post-Observation Conversations

Each post-observation conversation lasted between 20 minutes to an hour. The preparation for post-observation conversations included going through the field notes (over lunch and mini breaks) and transcripts, and examining closely the teachers' literacy activities and practices where clarifications or further information needed to be obtained. These conversations took place immediately after school hours with Petunia, Lily and Magnolia. As for Helena and Ruby, they broke the sessions down into multiple brief ones, conducted in between their lessons such as during lunch breaks or when the students were engaged in their independent group work. Despite the improvisation, the planned topics for all conversations were successfully discussed with the increased frequencies of conversations.

In accordance with one of my justifications for engaging in narrative inquiry, I had the opportunity to briefly introduce and explain the concepts and tenets of multiliteracies pedagogy to the teachers. As the teachers appeared to be practising some components of MLP in their classrooms, the brief explanation on MLP helped make the research topic more relatable to the participants as they signalled their understanding.

3.5 Data Analysis

The preparatory work of surveying the literature and gaining an impression of the study's potential data analytic strategy helped to inform the types of data needed and how they were to be collected. As Saldaña (2020) argues, "data analysis, in a way, begins even before you collect data" (p. 878). Thus, following the characteristics of this narrative research as outlined in Sections 3.2 and 3.3, the decision to analyse using Polkinghorne's (1995) narrative analysis method was made at the outset. The method involved synthesising and reconstructing the *fragmented data* into a coherent story (narrative), presented as findings (Chapters 4 and 5). The fragmented data comprised the transcriptions of the introductory interview and post-observation conversations, and the field notes from classroom observations.

I engaged Bochner and Rigg’s (2014) conceptualisation of stories or narratives, which refers to the “representations of experiences” which contain the elements of “characters, place, epiphany or dramatic tension, and a point that gives meaning and value to the experience(s) depicted” (p. 202). This was achieved through data analysis that was centred on the content of teachers’ knowledge (Elbaz, 1983) and the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of interaction, continuity and situation (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000) – with reference to categories of LTL established by Boche (2014) as initial guide. This framework served as the principle guide in the (co)construction of the teachers’ narratives of their understandings, experiences and enactments of MLP in LTL (see Table 3). Taken together, this entailed a process Polkinghorne (1995) refers to as *narrative configuration*:

Narrative configuration is a process by which happenings are drawn together and integrated into a temporally organised whole. The configurative process employs a *thematic thread* to lay out happenings as parts of an unfolding movement that culminates in an outcome. The thematic thread is called the *plot*, and the plot’s integrating operation is called *emplotment*. When happenings are configured or emplotted, they take on narrative meaning. (p. 5, emphasis added)

Barkhuizen et al. (2014) argue that attending to *rigour* and *trustworthiness* of findings can ensure a well-crafted and ethical data analysis. They describe rigour as “the degree to which an analysis is systematic with regard to both the coverage of data and the application of analytical procedures” (p. 89). Trustworthiness concerns the risk that the participants’ or the narrators’ intentions and meanings “being distorted in the re-telling for the purposes of research” (Barkhuizen et al., 2014, p. 91). I dealt with these important aspects through making explicit and detailed account of the data analysis procedures, and involving participants at several stages of the research (more details in Section 3.5.2).

Table 3

Theoretical/Conceptual Frameworks Underpinning Data Analysis

PPK	3-D NI space	LTL
Knowledge of self Knowledge of subject-matter Knowledge of instruction	Interaction	Understanding and notion of LTL Challenges in learning and teaching Student learning
	Continuity	Past learning and teaching

		Present learning and teaching Future learning and teaching
Knowledge of context	Situation	School context's influence on literacy teaching practices

Other considerations included taking the standpoint of the storyteller to make sense of and to represent the teachers' stories, in accordance with Riessman's (2005, 2008) principles of narrative-under-analysis. Bochner and Riggs (2014) describe this storyteller-stance as an "ethical and relational" one (p. 205). In the context of this study, it was ethical because as Clandinin and Huber (2010) suggest, the analysis engaged "strategies such as fictionalising and blurring identities and places" (p. 440) to ensure the participants' anonymity and confidentiality were safeguarded. This is imperative as the complexity of the participants' lives were made visible in the findings chapters. Next, it was relational because the analysis of the participants' narratives of their experiences were situated within the three places where their lives unfold – social, cultural, and institutional (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin, 2020).

3.5.1 Data Organisation

By the end of the data collection and the completion of transcription of all interviews and post-observations' conversations, I had gathered a voluminous amount of data. This is consistent with Patton (2015) who states that "the data generated by qualitative methods are voluminous. Sitting down to make sense out of pages of interviews and whole files of field notes can be overwhelming" (p. 297). Specifically, there were roughly twenty pages of single-spaced interview and post-observation transcripts, and ten to fifteen pages of field notes which included my reflections for each of the participants. This raised the need to carefully organise the data, or "to maintain an orderly repository of data for easy access and analysis" (Saldaña, 2020, p. 880).

The steps taken to organise data in this study were inspired from Saldaña (2020). With the exception of the completed consent forms from the school principals and teacher participants, all files and folders were stored in digital format. I created a master folder labelled *Data Collection* alongside the development of invitation letter and consent form for principals, and invitation letter, participant information sheet and consent form for teachers. These documents were then stored in a sub-folder named *Participant Recruitment*. Then, once I had successfully

recruited participants, I created subfolders named Petunia, Lily, Magnolia, Helena and Ruby. I saved word documents such as the interview and conversation transcripts, documentation sheet and classroom observation field notes, and pictures of their teaching artefacts in these individually-named subfolders. The documents were named after the title of each of the data collection activities, together with the date and the teacher's initial. For example, *P_Introductory Meeting_03062020* and *P_Observation 1_04062020* with *P* being the initial for Petunia and the digits at the end indicating the date 3 June 2020. This master folder was stored securely in my password and biometric-protected laptop, and a copy was automatically uploaded onto *OneDrive* whenever there were new changes.

3.5.2 Strategies and Steps

Creswell and Poth (2018) suggest that general analysis procedures in qualitative research consist of “preparing and organising the data for analysis; reducing the data into themes; and representing the data” to finally produce an account of findings (p. 183). After preparing and organising the data into virtual folders, the next step entailed carefully determining what to include (and exclude) through careful “reading and memoing of emergent ideas” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 187). This process was guided by this study's purpose – to make sense of the nuances and complexity of the teachers' literacy experiences, knowledge and practices.

Within this view, the narratives of the teachers needed to weave in their background, teaching philosophy and future expectations. This involved an iterative process of repeated readings that helped me to familiarise myself with their content. Following this, I read through the transcripts and field notes for each of the participants at least three times and progressively added notes each time. These activities culminated in the development of codes, and codes into themes. Codes, according to Bryman (2012), are “shorthand devices to *label, separate, compile* and *organise* data (p. 568, emphasis in original). Themes build on the “codes identified in the transcripts and field notes”, and provide “the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of their data” that can be related to research focus and research questions (Bryman, 2012, p. 580). Then, using the interview protocols framework in Table 2 as guide, an emergent structure of the narrative that encompassed two major parts and their corresponding sections was formed: Part 1: Participant's background, teaching philosophy, influences; and Part 2: Section 1 – Participant's literacy knowledge and beliefs, Section 2 – participant's literacy teaching practices.

The preliminary structure allowed for the transition into the subsequent activity, “visualising and representing the data” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 187). The (co)construction of the teachers’ narratives began in the order the introductory interview and classroom observations took place – Petunia, Lily, Magnolia, Ruby and Helena. Besides my narrations and descriptions, I also included excerpts of the interviews into the narratives for three reasons: first, to support my *interpretation*; second, to balance my voice and the participant’s voice; and third, to induct the readers into *knowing* the teachers (Bochner & Hermann, 2020).

Upon the completion of the first draft of all the participants, I moved onto the next stage of re-reading and re-crafting. In this stage, as I read, I looked for *thematic threads*, where I could better organise the *happenings* for coherence – to illustrate temporality as well as relativity. Following this reorganisation and another round re-reading, headings that were reflective of the content of each section were identified and subsequently designated. This subsequently led to another reorganisation of content and sections, and inclusion of additional information for better clarity and representation. Upon this, the finalised narrative structure and content (Table 4) were formed:

Table 4

Narrative Structure and Content

Part and Section	Content
Prologue	Setting the scene A description of the beginning of my research collaboration with the participant
Part 1 – Introducing the participant	Themes/headings were developed following the content, unique to each teacher Include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brief background - Journey into teaching - Teaching philosophy (beliefs and values) - Their inspirations/ aspirations
Part 2 – The participant’s LTL acts (organised into two acts)	<i>Act 1 – Literacy belief, knowledge and experience</i> This section explores the participant’s belief, knowledge and past literacy learning experiences, awareness of students’ literacy practices and learning needs, and how these factors influence/inform their present literacy teaching practices. It includes the school curriculum and professional development programmes.

Act 2 – LTL practices

This section brings readers into the participant’s classroom, illustrating some of the participant’s LTL practices. It contains descriptions of their instructional activities and materials.

Part 3 – Participant’s vision of successes and challenges

This section briefly presents challenges faced by the participant in practising their desired literacy lessons, as well as some success stories they had in their literacy teaching.

Epilogue

This section acts as the “closure” to the participant’s narrative, but not an ‘ending’ – signalling continuity

As these findings were representations of the participants’ storied lives, the narratives composed were shared and negotiated with the teachers (Bochner & Hermann, 2020; Clandinin, 2020). This was done through email attachments, alongside a summary that provided the gist, or key ideas, of the researcher’s composed narratives. The main objective was for the participants to review, to provide additional information, and then to confirm and/or correct my interpretations. Therefore, in the email, the participants were asked to verify if it was an accurate account, and to provide comments. They were given the option to respond via email or to meet up to discuss the narratives further. In the end, three teachers – Lily, Helena, and Ruby – opted for online correspondence, whereas I met with Magnolia and Petunia in-person.

3.6 Ethical Considerations and Challenges

Resnik (2020) describes *ethics* in research as the “norms for conduct or a perspective for deciding how to act and for analysing issues” (para. 5). I adhered to two aspects of ethics in this research.

The first was the “legalistic and rights” oriented ethics (Clandinin, 2013, p. 197). This ethical perspective entailed minimising potential harms and risks to participants, respecting the participants’ rights, and balancing the researcher-participant power relations (Brooks et al., 2014; Resnik, 2020). The mitigative steps taken included meeting with the school principals and teachers to explain the nature of this study, what their participation would involve, and assuring them of their confidentiality and anonymity. For example, I informed the principals and teachers that pseudonyms would be used to ensure that the schools’ and the participants’ identities remain confidential and anonymous. Their names and any potentially identifying

information were omitted from this thesis as further means to safeguard their identities. I also acknowledged the power-relations that might exist in this study, where I might be perceived as the source of authority and/or knowledge (Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009). Following Taylor and Rupp (2005), I shared with the participants some of my stories and experiences to reduce the hierarchical relationship between the participants and me. During interviews and observations, I (re)highlighted the purpose of the study, informed them that this study was in no way evaluative of their literacy teaching practices, and upheld their narrative authority. I obtained the principals and teachers' permissions and written informed consent once they confirmed that they understood their participation and rights.

The second aspect refers to *relational ethics*, which is “an ethical understanding informed by responsibilities of researchers with participants” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 198). These ethical considerations and responsibilities pervade the whole of narrative inquiry and “they are never far from the heart of our inquiries no matter where we are in the inquiry process” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 170). Sections 3.6.1, 3.6.2, and 3.6.3 discuss these considerations, and the challenges in engaging narrative inquiry, conducting interviews and conversations, and classroom observations. I interweaved this discussion with my positionality in this research that was presented in Chapter 1. The aim is to highlight the steps taken to mitigate the challenges that occurred and the ethical considerations when collaborating with the participants to collect their stories of literacy knowledge, experiences and teaching practices.

3.6.1 Engaging Narrative Inquiry

There are several challenges and ethical considerations associated with engaging narrative inquiry. First, the procedures and characteristics of narrative inquiry require researchers to collect extensive information and have a clear understanding of the context of the individual's life (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In preparation for this, I had planned for and carried out an individual face-to-face interview, four whole-day classroom observations and post-observation conversations, in addition to gaining the teachers' permission to peruse their teaching artefacts. As these activities may seem demanding of the teachers' time, I was mindful to schedule them following the teachers' convenience and availability, and opened to possible change in dates and time.

Second, as Moen (2006) stresses, it is essential to develop a situation in which both the researcher and the participants feel comfortable, and there should be a sense of equality. Similarly, our fieldwork involves the need to “negotiate relationships, purposes, transitions, and ways to be useful” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 63). Therefore, multiple steps were taken before, during and after the research project to develop and maintain my research relationships with the participants. These included taking a stepped approach in getting to know them (from virtual correspondence to face-to-face meet-ups); clarifying their rights as participants such as the ability to withdraw participation and/or some or all of their data; and offering my assistance in their classrooms during group activities.

Next, I acknowledged that I brought “philosophical assumptions” or my “own worldviews and sets of beliefs into the research project to inform my conduct and writing of the study” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 15). My professional background as a language teacher and professional development programmes instructor meant I had developed my own understanding and expectations on how language and LTL should look. I also had expectations of how participants would respond to my questions. In other words, there was a possibility that I would be “present” in the narratives of the teachers I constructed, “influencing the findings and analyses” (De Costa et al., 2017, p. 545). To mitigate this, I first defamiliarised myself with those literacy teaching routines I was accustomed to. In place, I adopted a fresh perspective of viewing the teachers’ LTL as their unique, personalised practices that reflected their teaching beliefs and knowledge. This process was eased by the fact that all of the participants in the study and the institutions in which they practised were unknown to me prior to the study. However, following Mills (2011), I also used my experiential knowledge to help me understand some of the teachers’ literacy practices and activities. Then, I learnt to appreciate the teachers making the time to be interviewed, and perhaps more importantly, their willingness to articulate their thoughts in ways that were “rich and quotable” (Roulston & Choi, 2018, p. 240). Collectively, they had made the co-construction of narratives as findings possible.

3.6.2 Conducting Interviews and Conversations

I now turn to the challenges and ethical considerations in conducting interviews and post-observation conversations, accounting for both the planned and the unexpected. In planning and preparing for the interviews and conversations, I resonated with the three challenges highlighted by Roulston and Choi (2018): (i) the possibility of “failing to generate information

anticipated from interviewees; (ii) reliability of interview data and; (iii) developing interviewer-interviewee relationships” (pp. 241–242).

To address the first challenge, I went through two rounds of revisions of my interview questions. I formulated and revised my questions after sharing them with my supervisors and receiving their feedback. Then, I conducted a pilot interview with two experienced teachers (see Section 3.4.2.1: Narrative semi-structured interviews) using the revised questions. Their comments during and after the interviews were noted and employed in the second revision of the questions. As for the second challenge, the use of multiple methods to elicit data helped support the reliability of the interview data. The classroom observations and their ensuing post-observation conversations – with their teaching artefacts as references – allowed for checking with participants about any unclear or missing details. The third challenge, however, constituted my biggest concern. As aforementioned, narrative inquiry requires active collaboration with the participants and actively involves them in the research process (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). To facilitate this, I took a gradual approach to establish the research relationship with the teachers. I began by corresponding with them online, then meeting them in-person to get to know each other, conducting the introductory interview to learn more of their background, before entering their space for classroom observations. These steps helped ease them into the research project, and orientated the post-observation conversations toward the desired data. As an interviewer’s nonverbal communication will affect the ways participants respond and give narrations (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008), I was also mindful of my body language such as maintaining good eye contact and using appropriate hand gestures throughout the interviews and conversations.

3.6.3 Conducting Classroom Observations

Finally, I discuss the likelihood of my presence and/or actions in the teachers’ classroom during observations influencing their literacy teaching practices – a phenomenon known as the *Hawthorne Effect* (Cook, 1962; Merrett, 2006). Researchers in non-participant observations are often understood to be observing from a distance and “blending into the background” (Hennink et al., 2020, p. 185). However, the reality was that being in an enclosed space (the classroom) and seated among the students when the teachers were teaching, my presence hardly went unnoticed. I was also cognizant of the teachers’ potential anxiety – particularly those in the beginning of their teaching career – of being closely ‘monitored’ and judged. Fortunately,

these occurrences only happened at the early stage of the observations. The teachers and their students grew accustomed to my visits and became aware of my intention soon after the first observation and post-observation conversation. As preparation for the observations, in our introductory meeting, I assured the teachers that this study was never intended to be an evaluation of their teaching. I also reiterated my role as a “story collector”, of my interests in gathering stories of their experiences and beliefs in LTL. In other words, I positioned the teachers as the holders of their knowledge and the experts on their own teaching. Further, to alleviate their potential anxiety and to establish some commonality, I engaged in self-disclosure and shared some experiences of my own where applicable (Taylor & Rupp, 2005).

3.7 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter began by introducing the narrative paradigm that describes my ontological and epistemological commitments. Then, I discussed the characteristics and fundamentals of narrative research and narrative inquiry, and what it entails as a research methodology. Within this, I clarified the key terms engaged – experience, narrative, and stories. This chapter also presented that my embracing of narrative inquiry as a framework meant inquiring within the three-dimensional space of continuity, interaction, and space; and moving in four directions – inward, outward, forward and backward. This subsequently informed the selection of data collection methods and design of research instruments. Next, I justified my decision to engage narrative inquiry for this LTL research from the personal, practical and social aspects. After presenting the methodological commitments, data collection was detailed. This section laid out the criteria and procedures I established in relation to recruiting participants, methods and instruments, and data collection procedure. The section on data analysis came next, which explained how Polkinghorne’s (1995) narrative analysis method and Creswell and Poth’s (2018) data analysis strategies were employed to help put together all the data into a coherent narrative. Finally, I addressed the challenges in engaging narrative inquiry and the chosen data collection methods. Within this, the steps and ethical considerations taken to mitigate these challenges were highlighted. The next two chapters present the school contexts and the narratives (findings) of this study.

CHAPTER IV: SPRINGVILLE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

4.1 School's Background

Springville Intermediate School is a state, co-educational composite school located in the suburbs of Kirikiriroa Hamilton. It caters for Years 7 to 9 learners, aged between 10 and 14. As of 1 July 2020 where data collection commenced, there were approximately 800 students attending Springville Intermediate (Education Counts, 2021). Each homeroom (or classroom) housed an average of 30 to 35 students. Classes were composite consisting of both Year 7 and Year 8 students. One homeroom was dedicated for Year 9 students. The school had a student population that comprised various ethnic groups. The homeroom student population was representative of this cultural and linguistic diversity.

The school encouraged students to embrace challenges and apply self-directed learning and thinking skills. Alongside this was the school's vision that emphasised growing students who were resourceful in the face of adversity, life-long learners that were capable of participating effectively in a global community, and being connected to the people, land and environment. These vision and mission were largely reflective of the aspects of the NZC, which Springville Intermediate delivered through the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB programme). As an accredited provider of the IB programme, Springville aimed to develop learners who were "inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers (courageous), balanced and reflective" – also collectively known as the "IB learner profile" (Lily, interview data). According to the school's curriculum coach, beginning teachers or new teachers in Springville were inducted into the IB curriculum and school's philosophy through mentorship programmes.

In terms of student placement and subject management, Springville Intermediate did not offer accelerated learning classes. The students were placed into homeroom classes, balancing the number of Year 7 and Year 8 learners. The homeroom teachers were responsible for teaching the core curriculum, with literacy and numeracy as a focus. Notably, literacy lessons – termed as either reading or writing – were designed to synchronise with the content of "Unit of Inquiry" (UOI) that ran on themes under the IB programme. This is further elaborated in Section 4.3 School's Curriculum and Literacy Programme.

Another notable practice of Springville was the teaming-system, where teachers from four homerooms conferred and planned their lessons collaboratively. Within this, their students engaged in ‘teaming activities’ — taking turns to attend digital technology (DigiTech), physical education (sport), and additional language classes. These 20-minute sessions were handled by the homeroom teachers in the team, with each assigned to the teaching role based on their interests and expertise at the beginning of the year by the school’s senior leadership team. On this note, Springville operated on a six-day, four 55-minute to 85-minute learning blocks per day timetable. A short break – with the exception of lunch which was 55-minutes long – preceded each learning block and signalled a transition from one learning area to another. Literacy lessons (either reading or writing or both) took place daily, in any of the four learning blocks, following the teachers’ and the teams’ planning.

Technology-wise, Springville Intermediate School was well resourced with digital tools and wireless internet connectivity. Each homeroom was equipped with a 70-inch interactive touch screen display (Active Panel) that was set up to its own Central Processing Unit and streaming devices. These were then connected to the homeroom teacher’s laptop, which was also provided by the school. The preinstalled educational software on the Active Panel worked in combination with the Google for Education suite (cloud computing), allowing for complete interconnectivity and interactivity. Students were equally welcome to bring their personal devices under the ‘Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)’ agreement, which were fully integrated into the class programmes. For those without a device, each homeroom had a sufficient number of laptops for them to work on.

4.2 School’s Focus

Springville Intermediate School consistently received glowing reviews from the Education Review Office Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga (ERO). The most recent ERO report, dated 22 November 2018, states that the school was positively working towards achieving equitable outcomes for all its students and effectively accelerating progress and achievement for Māori and other students who need this (ERO, 2018). The ERO attributed the school’s achievement of equity and excellence to its effective leadership team, professional learning opportunities, and a constructivist learner-focused curriculum. These qualities and characteristics match the strengths promoted by the school. Springville Intermediate stated that its curriculum was

designed following the needs of young adolescents, where teachers' instructional strategies are varied to meet and support student diversity. These included learning styles, learning preferences, and academic ability. As an intermediate school that acted as a transitional platform to high schools, the combination of homeroom and specialist teaching allowed students to be immersed in an 'exploratory programme' and prepared them for high school. According to Lily (one of the team leaders and also the school's middle leader), this provided opportunities for the students to experiment with subjects they might be interested in before picking them up in high school. Principally, the school aimed to encourage their students to gain a wide range of experiences so that "they are in a strong position to pursue pathways of choice in future learning" (Lily, interview data).

4.3 School's Curriculum and Literacy Programme

Springville Intermediate School delivered the NZC through the IB Programme. Adopting an IB curriculum means it had a strong emphasis on integrating *inquiry learning* into the NZC's eight learning areas of English, the arts, health and physical education, learning languages, mathematics and statistics, science, social sciences, and technology. To elaborate, the IB's inquiry learning refers to a constructivist inquiry process represented as asking (inquiry), thinking (reflection), and doing (action), a process that lends itself to open classrooms where different views and perspectives are valued. The IB Programme's teaching and learning module, citing Toshalis and Nakkula (2012), states that in a social-constructivist environment, students co-construct knowledge with peers and teachers, and develop their skills more effectively with guidance and support from teachers and mentors (International Baccalaureate Office [IBO], 2012). In this inquiry model, the teachers are designated as inquiry teachers; in relation to literacy, they are expected to value students as capable inquirers and provide time for learners to wonder, explore, build and revise theories, engage in research and reflect on learning (IBO, 2012). Stemming from these expectations are the valued practices of engaging students' prior knowledge to launch new learning, using real world contexts and primary experiences as significant activators of learning, and engaging their curiosity through meaningful learning engagements to conduct conceptual investigations.

Against this background, Springville's senior leadership team, in collaboration with the specialist teachers, had planned out six units of inquiry – following the structure of six

transdisciplinary themes in the IB module – to be implemented throughout the year. The themes are described as transdisciplinary because they allow students to transfer new knowledge and understandings across all curriculum areas in the NZC. Additionally, as stated in the IB Programme module, these themes are selected “for their personal and social significance and inspire a coherent, balanced and broad educational experience” (IBO, 2012, p. 28). For Years 7 and 8, the six transdisciplinary themes are as follows:

Who we are: An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; and human relationships including cultures.

Sharing the planet: An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and other living things; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

Where we are in place and time: An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind.

How we organise ourselves: An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organisations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment

How the world works: An inquiry into the physical and material worlds; natural and human-made phenomena, the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.

How we express ourselves: An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity.

(IBO, 2012, p. 12)

Each theme is further detailed through its central idea, key concepts and related concepts, and lines of inquiry. Although explored each year, Springville Intermediate had split their programme of inquiry into “even” and “odd” years, keeping the themes but working on a different set of central ideas, key concepts and lines of inquiry to avoid repetition. Thus

throughout the year, learners were engaged in investigations into important ideas, which required a substantial and high level of involvement and thinking. This brings in another essential element of the IB programme, its Approaches to Learning (ATL), as frequently mentioned by the teachers in the post-observation conversations.

4.3.1 IB's Approaches to Learning

The IB's ATL are grounded in the belief that learning how to learn is fundamental to a student's life in and out of school. Through a variety of strategies, teachers collaboratively plan for implicit and explicit opportunities to develop ATL both inside and outside the programme of inquiry. In broad terms, IB programmes support learners of all ages to become self-regulated by developing the following five categories of interrelated skills and associated sub-skills:

Categories	Sub-skills
Thinking skills	Critical-thinking skills (analysing and evaluating issues and ideas) Creative thinking skills (generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives) Transfer skills (using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts)
Research skills	Information-literacy skills (formulating and planning, data gathering and recording, synthesising and interpreting, evaluating and communicating) Media-literacy skills (interacting with media to use and create ideas and information) Ethical use of media/information (understanding and applying social and ethical technology)
Communication skills	Exchanging-information skills (listening, interpreting, speaking) Literacy skills (reading, writing and using language to gather and communicate information) ICT skills (using technology to gather, investigate and communicate information)
Social skills	Developing positive interpersonal relationships and collaboration skills (using self-control, managing setbacks, supporting peers) Developing social-emotional intelligence)
Self-management skills	Organisation skills (managing time and tasks effectively) States of mind (mindfulness, perseverance, emotional management, self-motivation, resilience)

(IB PYP Teaching and Learning Module, IBO, 2012, pp. 21–23)

4.3.2 Literacy Programme

At the time of data collection, the teachers and students had been working for several weeks on the theme of ‘Where We Are in Place and Time’ with the central idea of ‘Exploration Leads to Discovery’. The key concepts included ‘causation and perspective’, under which were the related concepts of ‘curiosity, consequences, motivation and discovery’. Equally important are the lines of inquiry, which were: reasons for exploration (personal and historical); consequences of human exploration; and how exploration takes place. These underpinned all the participating teachers’ literacy and Unit of Inquiry lesson plans and students’ learning activities, executed through the IB’s ATL to develop the above mentioned five skills.

Having said that, NZC documents came in as equally important. According to the school’s curriculum coach, Springville’s literacy programme was designed in coherence with the key competencies in the NZC and the NZC’s Achievement Objectives by Learning Area (English) (MOE, 2007). It included references to the Literacy Learning Progression (MOE, 2010), ELP 4–8 (MOE, 2006) and “other New Zealand research-based strategies” (curriculum coach, interview data). The literacy-related knowledge and skills, processes and strategies, purposes and audiences, ideas, language features and structure outlined in these curriculum documents address the demands of LTL. The curriculum coach added that other core elements embedded in Springville’s literacy programme included approaches to teaching reading, approaches to teaching writing, teaching comprehension, text processing strategies, and deliberate acts of teaching (modelling, demonstrating, prompting, questioning). Also through these guiding documents, the criteria for the school’s Overall Teacher Judgment (OTJ) – a part of the ongoing formative assessment – were set. Students’ performance in literacy was determined following the age-appropriate expected performance to gauge their achievement level. Students who were behind their age-appropriate literacy level were identified as the focus or priority learners, and they received additional guidance from the teacher and teacher-aides, primarily in literacy and numeracy.

This background to Springville’s curriculum and literacy programme provides a basis for making sense of the participating teachers’ PPK – particularly their knowledge of milieu or context, knowledge of curriculum, and knowledge of instruction – which frequently came through in the interviews and post-observation conversations. The remainder of this chapter presents the Springville teachers’ narratives, beginning with Petunia and followed by Magnolia and Lily.

PETUNIA

Prologue

My first encounter with Petunia took place in the school's reception. I had arrived 10 minutes earlier than our scheduled appointment, but there she was, already waiting. I did not immediately recognise her despite having gone through the staff directory on their school's website, nor did it actually occur to me that she *was* Petunia until she greeted me. That was unmistakably embarrassing, but I reassured myself that this was *the* meeting to get acquainted with the teacher behind that email address after all. As Petunia led the way to her classroom and asked about my meeting the other participating teachers, I vividly remember her saying:

So, I'm the last one.

Petunia's simple remark made an impression because it imparted a keenness to participate in my research project. Petunia being the last one for the introductory meeting notwithstanding, she was my first observation, and she was the only participant who inquired further about her participation. Furthermore, those moments in her classroom where she took the time to brief me on her planning and activities, and showing constant awareness to my research area by frequently mentioning what literacy and literate practices were taking place in the lesson have been memorable. This included how a proud, happy smile involuntarily crossed her face when her students achieved her lesson goals. As might be expected, despite the calm and cool demeanour that she projected, it was easy to like Petunia – a relatively new teacher to the profession and to the school.

Part I: Introducing Petunia

Rural Background and Experience

Petunia originally hailed from Te Puke, a town in the Western Bay of Plenty. The youngest of three children in her family, Petunia grew up on a farm alongside her brother and sister. She recounted her memories of growing up and helping out at the family's dairy farm:

Obviously, with growing up on a farm, I do a lot of feeding cows and milking cows growing up. I was quite an outdoorsy person, I guess, as a kid.

Her description, though brief, conjured up images of vast green pastures and communicates hard work, patience and consistent determination. Moreover, the English translation of Te Puke (a Māori term) literally means *The Hill* – in a manner this reflected Petunia, who recalled rather fondly her active involvement in sports and outdoor activities:

I enjoy being outside and playing sports. I did a lot of running growing up. I played a lot of different sports – basketball, netball, soccer, rugby, canoe polo. Yeah, lots of sports, very much every sport. I represented my school in canoe polo, orienteering, and cross-country running. I kind of just went to school to play sports and that was the most enjoyable part of school. Yeah, that was for me the best part.

A sports enthusiast myself, I am accustomed to experiencing the intensity and adrenaline rush, and to seeing the determination and the grit sportspersons frequently display. More importantly, these characteristics came to be synonymous with Petunia and her identity as a teacher. But before going deeper into that, I retrace the reasons behind Petunia's active participation in sports.

Struggles in Early Literacy Learning

Petunia's interest in sports stemmed from her own schooling experiences, about which she reflected the following:

I think I struggled quite a lot as a learner. I didn't think that I was very intelligent, but I'm not really sure why. I guess I just formed this idea that I wasn't very intelligent. I guess I was friends with a lot of kids that were in higher classes than me and often I thought that yeah, I wasn't quite intelligent enough. I guess whenever you're in groups and always being put in the bottom group, you just know when you're in the bottom group and you know, there's this top group, and you feel like... Yeah, obviously you're not in that group for a reason. I guess I always grew up having that perception, that I wasn't very intelligent, like not very good at spelling and I didn't enjoy reading.

Petunia further explained why she did not particularly enjoy literacy learning in school:

I think reading was just too much sitting and I wasn't that kind of person and I guess when it came to books, I hadn't found a book that I enjoyed reading at school. So, I wasn't really into reading. [As for] my experience of writing, I haven't always excelled in writing but I found it okay. I probably struggled a little bit with writing. I just used to find it really confusing, yeah. I think when I was writing, there was no purpose, or audience, or there was no real-life context. I think big words, when I was younger, used to probably scare me and I just didn't enjoy writing. I think because it's [also] sitting down and having to do something. I'd rather be outside doing sport, yeah.

In spite of what preceded, she eventually found books of interest – autobiographies of different runners and celebrities – that helped her pick up and enjoy reading. She related how she formed the idea of becoming a teacher when she was in high school:

I guess growing up, I think teaching might be kind of a cool career. I think from a young age, I've always enjoyed helping people learn. When I was in high school, I would help other students in class to complete things. So, that's where I got the idea of being a teacher from.

For this reason and following her passion for sports, she enrolled herself in and completed a Bachelor of Physical Education, "thinking of being a PE teacher".

Becoming a Teacher: Finding Meaning in Teaching

However, while Petunia completed her degree at a relatively young age, she did not enter the teaching profession until much later. From a farm job to becoming a receptionist, she had been through receiving customers and attending to calls. This became a repetitive cycle in a job she found empty and meaningless. That was when she decided to enter the teaching profession; however, instead of becoming a PE teacher like she had initially planned, she reflected:

I was kind of thinking of being a PE teacher and then when it came down to the decision, I actually decided that I want to teach a range of subjects; I didn't just want to teach PE. Yeah, so I decided to come into primary and intermediate and that way, I could teach more subjects.

Petunia returned to university and obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching. In addition to the variation in subjects, she liked the intermediate school-aged group as she found them “old enough to be independent but are still excited at a lot of things” and thus “easier to motivate and hook in”. Notably, Petunia entered the teaching profession with the intent to do “something that is meaningful, something that makes a difference, and something that challenges her enough”. She elaborated on how she had found all these in teaching:

I guess a meaningful job is one where I am able to help people. Yeah, that's the biggest thing. Helping kids learn, gives you a bit more sense of a purpose, rather than just taking phone calls. And I like that the students challenge me. They make me think and grow as a person. I think that's what makes the job meaningful as well because it helps you grow as a person, like you learn about yourself as you teach. And I think that you're not gonna learn unless you're being challenged.

Petunia's notion of 'challenge' gave another layer of meaning to her teaching. As she related, working in a classroom with real-life students meant she was frequently challenged by them in various ways. I witnessed for myself how different students challenged her during my visits to her classrooms; there were inquisitive students who questioned her questions and the purpose of the lessons, disinterested students whose attention had drifted far off, and talkative ones who were enthusiastically chatting away with their peers. Regardless of the situations, Petunia would take them all in her stride. She welcomed, embraced, and deemed the challenge essential for her growth as a teacher. More than that, she believed that challenges presented her with the opportunities to discover herself, and her beliefs and values as a teacher:

I enjoy the challenge. You learn about your own values, because what you deem as acceptable becomes normal in your class, so you have to really understand yourself and what you believe in so that when you're really confronted by the students with their behaviour and things, then you at least know what you think is right or wrong. That also comes down to your own moral understanding and what your beliefs and your values are. I guess that comes into your teaching as well. So, you really get to know who you are and what you believe in.

Influential Figures Informing her Teacher Identity and Teaching

While the teaching diploma and Bachelor of PE formally inducted Petunia into the world of teaching and its intensity, her mentor-teacher was instrumental in developing her teacher identity and teaching practices:

I learnt a lot [from her] as a student teacher, and she was actually my mentor as a beginning teacher as well. She would show me her planning and then I could model from what she had in her planning, and model what she was teaching, as well the way she was teaching and how she was teaching. So, she used to have a look at all my planning and feedback on them. So, I guess what she taught and how she taught was kinda passed on.

In addition to modelling the mentor's teaching, some of her classroom demeanour had been subconsciously replicated in Petunia's classroom – specifically, in projecting a strict image. Petunia said, "I think it probably comes from my mentor teacher. Yeah, my mentor teacher was really strict; she was really strict. So, I've probably just inherited it as such". This helped with maintaining order in the classroom so that teaching and learning could progress smoothly, but Petunia's students appeared comfortable around her nonetheless. Also, noticing how the majority of her students were often engaged in the independent tasks given, I inquired with Petunia about her strategy:

Oh, it's about the choice! So, in my old school [with the mentor teacher], I've always learnt that if you give them a choice, you get more buy-in because then they feel more ownership towards their learning. And also making sure that these are good activities for them to be following up and not just busy work, it's actually engaging and getting them to be creative. So that's student agency which is a little bit of stuff that I've learnt at the university and here [at Springville].

It must also be noted that Petunia's parents, especially her mum, were equally influential in shaping her practices. She held dear her mum's teaching "to be understanding to people, to be patient, and to acquire those different skills in life that help one get by". So, rather than simply being literate in life, the essence is "how one uses the ability to communicate effectively and to understand the bigger picture". Petunia carried these beliefs and values with her into her role as a teacher and applied them to her teaching.

Being a Teacher: “Creative, Caring, Respectful and Relatable”

Currently into her third year of teaching and prompted by my asking, Petunia reflected deeply on her teaching style and described herself as follows:

I always try to be creative and relatable to the kids, just caring. Yeah, I try to be a really caring teacher so that the kids understand and know that I'll always be there for them. I guess a respectful relationship with the students is really important because it's building that relationship with the kids and knowing that I've got their back, and I'm here to support them and they can learn from me.

Considering Petunia's emphasis on building relationships with her students and making them feel supported, it is therefore understandable that *respect* took the utmost priority among her set of personal values and beliefs. She placed emphasis on building a respectful classroom where students show respect to teachers and to each other, and she to the students:

I value a respectful classroom, making sure the students are being respectful to each other, I think students being able to communicate with each other respectfully is just so important in today's day and age; getting along with each other; knowing how to work together, understanding each other, it's a lot about respect and that comes down to – helping kids understand what respect is. Definitely, definitely value that.

Petunia acknowledged that each student came with their own set of values and interests, and correspondingly, her teaching was about finding ways “to hook them in and really engage them” so that it is meaningful and useful for them. She envisioned the *respect* that she modelled and explicitly taught in the classroom to be a lifelong skill that her students carry into the real world – being respectful in one's behaviour, in group work, and in communications.

Interweaving Personal and School Philosophy

Having worked in different sectors, Petunia expressed that her view of teaching is “perhaps different from others who had come straight into the profession”. She mentioned that the life experience she gained working at the farm and as a receptionist helped her discover herself, and

relate things back to the real world, to what life is really like for her students. With this knowledge, she had “the bigger picture” in sight; teaching “is about preparing students for the future”. She said this with the realisation that:

But the future, I guess that’s the thing that’s unknown. So it’s preparing them [the students] for the unknown in the sense; giving them a toolkit so that they can draw on different things to use when they are learning in the future; trying to develop their understanding of how to learn best, understanding themselves and how they learn; that’s probably a part of it.

I wondered then, given Petunia’s goals for students to understand themselves and how they learn, and to acquire skills that they can use in the future, what her approaches to teaching and learning were. Her response reflected a practice located in the school context:

Through our school approaches to learning. So the kids are learning how to learn, they are learning communication skills, thinking skills, research skills – skills that help them learn, and I think that’s where it comes in. Yeah, sort of like teaching them to be critical thinkers, to critically analyse their research skills, how they find out information and what they’re doing with that information and so on.

Although Petunia’s explanation was brief, it was evident that her teaching philosophy and approaches to learning were informed by and strategically aligned to the school’s IB curriculum. Although just into her third year of practice (and first in Springville Intermediate), Petunia related that:

Obviously my knowledge of the curriculum has developed; so understanding new ways of teaching students; yeah, just learning new ways to teach. All the little tricks and trades that you kinda learn along the way from other teachers and you get supported.

There was significant growth from the time she was just setting out as a beginning teacher. As Petunia worked on equipping her students with various life and learning skills, she was certainly doing it in her own style. Our subsequent post-observation conversations, based on my classroom observations and focusing mainly on Petunia’s LTL practices, exemplified just that.

Part II: Petunia's LTL Acts

Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience

An Elusive Understanding of Literacy

After an exciting morning observing Petunia's literacy lessons and her interactions with the students, we sat down in her office to explore her literacy beliefs. I have deliberately chosen to use the term 'explore' to demonstrate the elusiveness of Petunia's concept of literacy, as she attempted to define it and said "I guess it's mainly reading and writing. That's kind of, yeah. I guess if I were to go into more detail, it would be kind of hard to explain". I drew on some examples from her literacy lessons to inquire further into her understanding of the terms "reading and writing". Because Petunia's lessons had involved students going through her PowerPoint presentation and watching embedded YouTube videos (while she repeatedly paused, narrated and explained certain key concepts alongside them, and unpaused), I asked if she viewed these as components of reading. She answered:

Was that active reading? I guess so, yeah. So, there's reading everywhere. It's on the form, it's in signs, everywhere around us there's information. So, for [the students] to understand information around them, they'll need to be able to read. I guess reading is just understanding information that you can see, in whatever language it is. Does that make sense?

I indicated to Petunia an earnest "yes" and proceeded to ask how she thought this concept of literacy – "reading is understanding information you can see" – had helped her understand how children learn to be literate and subsequently applied it to her teaching. I was pleasantly surprised to learn that Petunia was still pondering the previous question about reading, to which she added:

I think it's from a range of experiences, and I think in the digital world, there's probably more exposure. I think I didn't answer the reading question properly because I guess language is tied into it. So, if you're reading, you're understanding a language and you're understanding how people are communicating and that thing comes into it as well.

For that reason, I sensed that I was close to grasping Petunia's understanding of literacy. But to affirm that, I brought her back to our first interview where she had mentioned that "literacy is not

just about reading and writing, it's about communicating" and asked her how she thought all those components were interrelated. Petunia explained:

Yeah, so obviously when you're writing – writing is a way of communicating how you're feeling or understanding or communicating what you know. You can write to express who you are, your feelings or communicate information – writing is a way of communicating, I guess it's the same with reading. Yeah, it's a way of communicating. It's hard to kind of pinpoint, verbalising it, when you think deeply about it.

Although Petunia initially shared a simple definition of literacy as reading and writing, she subsequently highlighted the intricate connection between literacy, communication, and language – seeing them as being inextricably linked to each other. The act of reading referred to gathering information from a variety of media (written, aural, and visuals) and vice versa, writing was a means to express oneself and to disseminate information. Petunia's concept of literacy perceived language as the system for representing and communicating information, experiences, and ideas, in multiple forms. Therefore, unsurprisingly, nuanced definitions of literacy had come through in her planning and teaching.

Bridging Students' Home, Personal and School Literacies

Extending the notion of 'connections' Petunia had established earlier, I wondered how she connected the literacy practices that students were learning in school (school literacy) to their personal and home literacies. She related that she differentiated them through the levels of formality and complexity:

I guess in terms of the language that they speak, like in a classroom, it's a different setting, it needs to be a lot more professional. Whereas, when they are at home with their families or when talking to their friends, it's probably a lot more relaxed. It's probably less challenged in some cases because I try and make sure they are challenged here, and there is more learning focus here than what there will be in normal (situations) – if you compare their conversations with their friends, they probably are learning in a sense but it's not so much challenging their thoughts in certain directions. I guess there is a big connection but yeah, it's an interesting question.

Indicating communication as the common factor between students' school literacy and their personal literacies, Petunia elaborated that her literacy teaching in classroom aimed to challenge students to help them to communicate and understand new language better:

I guess [literacy learnt in school] is a way of communicating and understanding new language – like how to communicate; understanding how other people communicate to you. So, [there's] different media of language like someone texting you or emailing you, being able to understand what they're saying or what's coming across, understanding that kind of stuff.

Connected, Engaging, Meaningful and Challenging Literacy Learning

Petunia's mention of "new language" and "different media of language" piqued my curiosity. Thus, I prompted further what she meant by them, and how her knowledge of students being in the digital world influenced her literacy teaching practices. Her response drew on another layer of her knowledge and teaching of literacy – the development of critical thinking skills:

I think how they use their digital programme and how they use their social media at home – I think there are other skills that they need to learn alongside reading and writing to be able to regulate what they're saying and understand, like their critical thinking skills. I guess it does come down to, you know, reading is not just reading, you need to have critical thinking skills to understand what you're reading. When you prompt them, they are thinking about things and that kind of helps them to transfer it to other parts of their life.

Following that, Petunia gauged her students' engagement of critical thinking skills while reading through "them voicing their thoughts and the questions they ask". She picked up on them to get a hint into what and where the students' train of thoughts have gone to, what connections they have made to the texts, and whether they are thinking deeper about the piece of information or just lingering on the shallow surface. For example, when reading and conversing about a text on 'animal euthanasia', her students had asked, to Petunia's delight:

Who gets to decide for the animals that they should be euthanised?

How do you make a decision like that?

How do you know how much pain they are in?

How would we know how much they are suffering?

This example substantiated what Petunia had said, that “reading is not just reading” because other skills like students’ prior knowledge and critical thinking should come along with it.

Literacy Knowledge: On-the-Job Learning and Learning On-the-Job

Being relatively new in the teaching profession, Petunia declared that she was continuously acquiring new practices to meet the demands and challenges of her students’ literacy learning needs. Recounting that she had only twelve weeks of exposure to literacy teaching strategies during the postgraduate teaching diploma programme, applying what was learned in her current classroom was “a delicate act”. As she put it:

I would have used some of the knowledge that I have learnt and incorporated them but not hugely. Because a lot of it is when it comes to academic knowledge and information sometimes; it’s what you need to know and not necessarily like a way of teaching. So like, there was more information given than what you need to know before you actually can apply. Like, understanding how students decode and phonological awareness and strategies for teaching writing like language features and all of that kind of stuff but not actually – we didn’t actually do a reading rotation.

Granted that Petunia found the formally acquired knowledge helpful to a certain extent, she also found herself needing something more practical. Hence, during the mentoring programme as a student-teacher and a beginning teacher, Petunia had initially relied on the mentor-teacher to develop her literacy teaching practices. She learned that “it is important to ask for support on how to teach reading and writing”, and “to learn from the mentor’s own experiences”. Presently, as Petunia was new to Springville Intermediate, she received support in literacy teaching from the school’s curriculum coach, who has been given the pseudonym Chanel, to get her inducted into the school’s philosophy – “what works well in Springville and their students”. They often came in the form of ideas, structure, and activities which Petunia adapted and adopted into her planning, showing awareness to the literacy skills that she intended to teach:

Yeah, I’ve been working with Chanel. So, she does a modelling book [showing me her modelling book for reading] – and this is my planning – basically this might be like ‘understanding what these words mean, different word families and synonyms for these words’, and that might be when we’re talking about vocabulary in that lesson. Then this

is where we are scanning and skimming through the text – we are looking at our sub-headings, how it's organised, making connections, what are you noticing about the images, the questioning, the visualising and all the stuff we're doing today. And then the main lesson that we're focusing on or what we're aiming for them to learn would be synthesising information. This was what I did a couple of weeks ago, and looking at the success criteria, this is all kind of follow on on what Chanel does. So, Chanel has this structure, and I kind of make understanding of this, I observe her and then I adapt them into my programme to suit what she's looking for.

In lesson planning, Petunia expressed that not knowing your own students compromised a teacher's ability to know what worked for them and made appropriate adjustments to respond to them. That, she believed, was a way to “shut kids off” which subsequently led to them 'switching off' – a situation she would rather prevent in her classroom. For that reason, and when faced with a class of 33 students with diverse learning needs, she turned to self-learning to seek teaching ideas and strategies that were “more customised, more appropriate and suitable” to her teaching intents. They transpired in a variety of ways:

So, Googling for online resources and different journals and books on teaching. There's Sheena Cameron, she's like a reading and writing (trainer) so there's a heap of different worksheets and activities. Yeah, I quite like her. She puts in things like good ideas to help. And websites – there's The Literacy Shed, Teachers Pay Teachers, and The Resource Cupboard.

To elaborate, The Literacy Shed (literacyshed.com) brands itself as “the home of visual literacy” and provides its users with multimodal resources such as videos for writing prompts, discussion points and writing ideas. Petunia stated that she drew on a lot of quick-writing ideas and topics from this website. But instead of just showing the video, she would “read” it with the students, and then get them to think, make predictions and express their thoughts. As for 'The Resource Cupboard' and 'Teachers Pay Teachers', these websites provide a myriad of post-reading activities that serve as “good follow-up tasks that kind of ties everything into one”.

Multiliteracies Pedagogy? “Not Sure and Not Familiar”

For Petunia, the search for various literacy strategies and activities commanded a significant amount of time and work but it was “totally necessary” to ensure her students were engaged, interested, and able to make connections to what they were reading and writing. Ultimately, she hoped that her literacy teaching practices would “make them literate, build up their knowledge and understanding, have learning strategies to help them read and write”, or generally, “things that would help them in the future, to get through life”. As she divulged:

I think it's really important that everything I do relates to something in the real world so that they can see the purpose behind doing something. Just trying to make sure everything that they're learning is going to be used and meaningful for them in a way. That's the idea.

Interestingly, in spite of Petunia's belief that LTL should be meaningful and useful in the real world – following her concept of “communicating and understanding new language”, recognition of multiple literacies, and engagement in technology that expanded her notion of texts – she had not heard of multiliteracies nor multiliteracies pedagogy:

I guess multiliteracies is like all the disciplines within literacy – you have all the disciplines within literacy? Is that like reading, writing, communicating? Not sure. I'm not really familiar with the term, no.

To elucidate Petunia's subconscious enactment of the principles of multiliteracies pedagogy, I present below a vignette to allow the reader to “experience” Petunia's literacy practices in the classroom through an example of her reading and writing lessons.

Act 2: Experiencing Petunia's Classroom: LTL Practices

It was the familiar classroom bustle in the early morning, with groups of students each immersing in their own activities – chatting, playing, and reading. When the bell rang to signify the beginning of class, the students promptly took their seats. Petunia, who was all geared-up, took her place by the Active Panel with the laptop in her hand. The day had begun like any other day, with an established class routine that worked effectively in getting the students to settle down: roll-calling,

going through the day's agenda and reciting the Karakia⁵ that she prepared on the PowerPoint, and the students taking turns to read out the school's daily notices on the Active Panel. In one of our later conversations about her morning routine, Petunia related that:

I just like it (using PowerPoint) as a visual – it means everything's organised; all the links are there; I can use the Active Panel quite a lot. Yeah, I think it just comes down to personal preference and how much you're willing to use it as a tool, and just trying to incorporate it in a natural way.

Her reason for doing Karakia, demonstrating an awareness to biculturalism as foregrounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi The Treaty of Waitangi, was explained as follows:

I've chosen and done a Te Reo Māori class because I felt like I needed to be confident enough to integrate it in the classroom. And so I think karakia is a nice way to start the day because the students get to reflect on the day we wanna have. [And it's also about] making sure the students are being exposed to Te Reo around school, normalising practices relating to Te Reo Māori that you know, students will feel comfortable [speaking Te Reo] in the class. And I told the students it's just like a blessing in the morning before we start the school day. Yeah, I guess the principle behind it would be the Treaty of Waitangi.

Literacy lessons ensued after DigiTech class, which meant the upcoming 90-minute learning block would be dedicated to reading and writing activities. Though literacy lessons were designated either as 'Reading' or 'Writing', the boundaries between them were, in essence, indeterminate. As Petunia had communicated earlier, it is impossible to have one without the other such as the one exemplified below.

What Boundaries? The Interconnectedness of Literacy Skills

Marked as a 'Reading' lesson, the students were however about to do a 'quick-write' in four minutes that involved viewing and conversing. Petunia displayed the animation entitled 'Dream'

⁵ Karakia are Māori prayers or incantations that are generally used to ensure a favourable outcome for gatherings and important events. They are also considered a formal greeting when beginning a ceremony (Keane, 2011).

she had sourced from The Literacy Shed on the Active Panel and said to the students that “this video is a representation of someone’s dream”. Then, she informed them of their task:

Writing a narrative in either the first or third person perspective. You could write stories with flashbacks, like you waking up and then remembering what you had dreamed about. Perhaps in your first person story, you keep drifting back into the dream and describing what you are seeing.

(Petunia’s instruction adapted from theliteracyshed.com)

While Petunia might have taken the writing ideas off the website, she had meticulously planned her teaching. Prior to starting the video, she ran through the writing convention (having a title, ideas are organised into paragraphs), language features such as punctuation, similes, dialogues, onomatopoeias and speech marks, and the practice of checking if their writing “makes sense” with the students. When she was satisfied that they were aware of the task and expectations, she played the video and acted as the narrator – walking them through the animation. She explained how the multiple changes in scenes and the level of excitement “represent the different things or wants happening in someone else’s life, and are perhaps manifested through dreams”. Then, they briefly engaged in a whole-class conversation – how could they relate to the video – before moving into individual writing. Once again, Petunia reminded the students to “make sure you have a title; if this is some sort of theme, you can use that as your title – try to be creative”.

Once the time was up, the students finished off their last sentence and counted the number of words they had written. Petunia then instructed them to find a partner and share their work with each other, giving three bits of feedback, “something you like, something to improve, one question you have”, while she assumed the role of a facilitator. Curious, I approached several students to listen in on the feedback they were giving each other. I noted how they ranged from encouraging “I like your way of thinking; it is very creative”; to suggestive “perhaps you could use another word to substitute this”; and inquisitive “Why do you like cars so much?”. Pleased with the students’ participation, Petunia concluded the quick-write session by asking a student to read out their writing and modelling good feedback, such as “That was an impressive piece of writing. You could add some adjectives somewhere to make it more exciting”. Post observation, Petunia shared her reasons for doing quick-write:

It's mostly just for their writing mileage. Yeah, and I also have these photo cards; it's from my old school where I first started [teaching] writing, I would always do a quick-write based on the card. It's just an image. It helps them build ideas but it's mostly the mileage; trying to increase that mileage so they're thinking about writing more. That's when they count their words, and then the next day, they try and beat themselves by writing more. It's even interesting. I'm trying to do it everyday for their writing or reading session, because I find a lot of kids – they don't do it every day, they're not practising it and they're not getting into that routine. Whereas, if they practise every day, often they can extend their length of their writing, quite a lot.

Having said that, Petunia was also mindful of “trying to link it to something meaningful for the kids to be able to connect to, and that makes it more exciting for them”. It was a practice that included using videos or images with prompts because she strongly believed that students should be supported in generating ideas when writing:

So I use images because I used to struggle with ideas. It helps you think because a picture has a thousand words. So it gives kids ideas and then they don't just sit there and have nothing to write about. Like, if I just say 'write', they won't know what to write about but if you give them a picture, you give them a prompt – making sure you set it up – then they will have some ideas.

She also noticed that when the students were put under pressure to perform (in timed writing), they could produce more in four minutes than in an hour. Citing the impressive piece on cars that the student had shared as an example, Petunia gushed:

Four minutes! That in four minutes! Some kids, what I found is that if I didn't do that writing mileage, they couldn't even get that out in half an hour because they weren't used to writing often. So, it's just getting [into] the habit of writing often, every day.

The lesson then moved onto “Reading” where Petunia switched from whole-class to group-based teaching using the ‘Teaching Rotation’ system.

Literacy Texts and Activities: Inculcating and Exploiting Variability

With the students grouped according to their level of achievement, the 'Teaching Rotation' system allowed Petunia to plan for several activities for each group, and conversely, for them to take turns to work independently and with her:

I think it (the rotation system) works quite effectively in terms of keeping the kids fresh on a new activity instead of them staying on an activity for the whole block; they kinda move and that gives them a little bit of a break, so it's kinda like that transition time is a little break for them, a little mind break, as they go into the next thing it's like three mini blocks. Yeah, that's kind of why I like it. I got the idea from my previous mentor teacher.

There were three groups altogether and therefore three different tasks were set – “Writing; Researching Your Exploration; Reading/Follow-Up: Journal Contract; and Teacher: Synthesising/Questioning – KWL⁶”. Petunia allocated 20 minutes for each task and following her cue, the students would switch to the next activity. The task “Writing; Researching Your Exploration” entailed students working on their internet-connected devices and putting their research findings on slides, with an ensuing presentation. The students researched on the “open-ended questions” they had previously drafted in their Unit of Inquiry lesson such as “How were the pyramids of Giza built?, Who was Nikola Tesla?; and How was Uranus discovered?” Before they began, Petunia reminded them that:

You could present your findings in slides after you have researched and made notes about it. But there are many ways to present them. Instead of just texts, you gotta use pictures and videos to make them interesting. Be creative but check where the videos come from. Double-check your information – Where did the information come from? Who wrote the information? Can we trust that little bit of information? What makes you think we can trust that information? For example, NASA is funded by the US government; it is controlled by the government. How would that impact the exploration?

Petunia later enlightened me that the research activity was aimed at developing students' research skills and critical thinking skills in which they were to “evaluate information when researching and

⁶ KWL is an acronym for **W**hat I **K**now, **W**hat I **W**onder, and **W**hat I **L**earned.

sort them into relevant bits". They allowed students to be engaged in "self-directed learning" by bringing together and applying skills that they have learned from various learning blocks (example: DigiTech, UOI, and literacy).

Another task involved students following up on their reading texts done in class to complete the 'Journal Contract' from the 'TeacherPaysTeacher' website. The worksheet provided students with a variety of exercises. They included answering comprehension questions, creating questions from the answers given, finding three words they would like to spell, creating true and false questions, or writing about an imagined life. However, they were only required to choose one to work on. As the two groups of students got started on their independent work, Petunia began her teacher-guided session with the following group:

Group's name: Sir Edmund Hillary (Achievement Level 3)

Petunia had selected the text 'The Great Barrier Reef' from the Level 3 School Journal. The text contained definitions of key terms, pictures and illustrations to assist with students' comprehension. Despite that, prior to reading the text with the students, Petunia had searched for a YouTube video about the Great Barrier Reef entitled 'The Coral Gardener' for the students so that "with the video, when you read the text, it will make more sense to you". Playing the video with its English caption turned on, the students noticed and laughed at the misinterpretation of the narration. For example, "coral" has been wrongly interpreted as "Carol". Petunia smiled broadly at her students' amusements.

Petunia paused the video at certain intervals and told the students to pay extra attention to that part of the video, because "you will find important information there". She also encouraged the students to make predictions and constantly elicited answers from them through question-prompts:

"What's gonna happen when a cyclone like that happens?"

Now it's showing you some very vivid images of what was and what is after".

When key terms or "new words" emerged, Petunia would define it for them:

"Propagation means bringing it back to life".

With the video as catalyst, Petunia continued to interact with the students using questions that promoted creative and critical thinking skills; questions that began with “what if, what will happen, and why...”. When students gave different answers and sometimes disagreed with each other, she stepped in and said, “*This is where we will get different opinions on the best strategies*” but “*This is my or your opinion, it’s fine*”.

After viewing the video and moving onto the reading text and accompanied by the ‘Before and After Web’ worksheet, Petunia said to the students:

“What are your new understandings about the reef?”

Write down what you have learnt.

Don’t worry so much about your spelling. That’s for writing, this is reading.

Fill in the outer layer (what they’ve learnt); middle (what they already know) and; inner (what questions do you have, what you want to find out more).

We read to learn; and we read to understand”.

(Field Note, Classroom Observation 2, June 24, 2020)

When Petunia and I sat down during lunch and revisited her literacy lessons – especially the teacher-guided reading activity – she revealed the considerations that went behind her scaffolding:

When I do a text, I would do that text over multiple days. So basically this is the second time they’ve seen the text or the story because we’d have watched the videos and that’s to kind of hook them into the text, hook them into some background knowledge about the reefs. All of these reading strategies that we’ve used within those lessons like predicting and inferencing, but the big key overarching idea I am working towards with those groups is synthesising – so understanding new ideas and new information and taking meaning out of the text. So that’s what I am working towards but it’s about not just going straight into that, but actually giving them an introduction into the text and building that knowledge before we go into that skill.

Petunia’s literacy teaching beliefs – to promote meaningful and engaging learning – were well reflected in her lessons, indicating that she put in a considerable amount of effort into her planning. My thinking was affirmed when she said:

I try to find clips, which for me, give another voice explaining and I think sometimes, like a pre-recorded video, will actually explain it better than I would. And in some cases, it actually gives another set of instruction, another perspective almost, on a way to teach it. So, I find it quite useful for kids that... or maybe just for me, if it's the end of the term and I'm like a little bit tired, it's kinda nice to have, like I'm being backed up by someone else that's not just me, then I'm just listening and I'm not the big person that has all the knowledge. It's actually accessible for them. So yeah, a couple of reasons but I do, everytime I think of a video clip, I spend hours searching because I don't want video clips that kind of go off on a tangent, in the wrong direction, and into trying to just find the best videos. Sometimes, you can't always get the best, but sometimes you get really good videos. Like the one for literacy, that is such a good video because of the music and the way it kind of engages. Yeah, so try and find engaging videos.

Being Culturally Responsive and Aware of Students' Needs

Besides being in tune with her students' learning preferences, Petunia also showed awareness of their diverse range of achievement levels and learning needs. Correspondingly, she practised varying her degree of support and learning strategies to both complement and extend the students' literacy abilities:

You'd noticed that in one group, I did more reading of the text and that was the gold mining one? I actually read aloud a lot more information so that if they didn't understand it by reading it themselves, they heard it aurally and they will learn it through that. And I also told them that 'rereading is a good strategy, sometimes you just miss out on some information. So is visualising. If you've got the image in your head, does it help us understand better?' So, those learning strategies were a lot more Level 2. And Level 3, we did a lot more compare and contrast, and the language we were using was far more sophisticated. So just making sure I am catering to their abilities and also still extending them.

While observing, I took five minutes of concentration off Petunia to touch base with those students on independent work when I spotted something interesting. One student, Jacko, who was working on the 'Journal Contract', had chosen to write a letter to his family members about his "gold-

mining experience” in his first language, Mandarin Chinese. Noticing my interest, he informed me that if he were to write it in English, they would not have understood him. I related that incident to Petunia and she was pleasantly surprised to know that. She thought it was “quite cool” and was happy that her students “could make that connection and actually apply it to the real world”. So when we talked about how she encouraged students to bring their culture into the classroom, she said that:

I am very aware that we need to make sure that we are being responsive to different people’s culture and making sure they can feel like who they are in the class. That we are not trying to shape them in a certain way that doesn’t allow them to be in their culture, and who they are. So, making sure that they can be who they want to be in the class. And in terms of their culture, they are comfortable bringing it into the class.

I would sum up my days in Petunia’s classroom – experiencing her literacy teaching practices and interactions with the students – with a quote from her: “Yeah, kind of the bigger picture, to develop their skills, like being creative and understanding things; but it’s also them reflecting on themselves in their learning”. She humbly added, “Trying to, anyway”.

Part III: Petunia’s Vision of Successes and Challenges

Finding Joy in Students’ Engagement

Petunia entered teaching in her pursuit of a meaningful and challenging career. Reminding me that she was “only very early on in her teaching career and there [was] still so much to learn”, she deemed a successful literacy lesson as one that managed to engage the students. She derived pleasure in seeing her students enjoying their learning, engaging in the lessons she meticulously planned:

I guess engagement is a big one. Yeah, it’s their level of engagement. So you’d know straightaway that you’ve got a group of kids that you’ve hooked in when they want to read more and find out more about the topic. You can tell when you’ve chosen a text they’re not interested in and it’s like ‘I don’t wanna read it’. Their body language, you can tell they’re not interested and then they’re not gonna learn it. Because you just can’t put

the knowledge in their head, they have to be interested in something to really learn. So I think it's really important, and the more interested they are, the more likely they are to learn. And often I find if they're engaged, they're thinking and asking questions, then they're gonna be learning.

Petunia added that that philosophy of being engaged and interested related "back to me and what I've learnt in the past". She beamed:

Those moments where the students are really enjoying their learning, when you have a good lesson; and I have a lot of kids that lack confidence and so turning their confidence around, making them believe in themselves and feeling that they can achieve whatever they set their mind to – it's such a good feeling.

“Trying to Get the Work-Life Balance”

Embarking on a teacher journey, Petunia had discovered that much of the intensity lay in the planning – “what actually goes in behind the teaching”. Demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility, she would ascertain that she understood what she was teaching, remembered it, and taught it as she went. Petunia wanted her lessons to be “effective and engaging enough for the kids to learn”. However, catering to a class of 33 and wanting to give individualised feedback and have one-on-one time with the students, she admitted, could be challenging:

So the workload is challenging. Just finding the time to plan everything on top of the teaching, that's tricky. Because if you want an effective programme, you gotta have the time to teach it and you gotta get your ideas from somewhere; so finding that time to plan effectively as well as teach; I feel like just more time to plan would be nice. Also if you wanna do a good job in teaching, then you gotta put a lot of effort in, and just trying to get the work-life balance, like not putting in too much effort at work and then kinda letting your life-balance get affected; that's been a real challenge.

Petunia divulged that the amount of instant decisions and improvisations she had to make also made teaching challenging. “Because there are so many different things that different students are interested in”, not every child was going to be interested in everything that she planned. She

faced this everyday – as she looked at the students and their disinterested faces – and had “to make the decision as to whether to stick on or change the course”. Sometimes (on good days), she would manage to hook them in through questions but was also aware that interests cannot be forced upon them. Nonetheless, she took comfort in knowing that even though the students might not like the topic of the day, they were “still learning and still engaging”. Perseverance and resilience emanated from her speech when she said:

Yeah, I think the thing is you can only do so much. We aren't miracle workers. Yeah, we can only do so much and kids are only interested in certain things and sometimes I've had a bad day and you just have to go – okay, well it's not your day today and just move on and every day's a new day and you kind of have to approach it like it is. Even if it's a bad day, you just have to kind of approach it.

Epilogue

It is always both heartwarming and amazing to hear stories of growth. Despite Petunia's initial struggles, becoming a teacher had instilled in her the love for reading and writing. More than that, her experiences as a learner and of her father's struggles had been pivotal in informing her beliefs and practices of LTL.

I've learnt a lot since I became a teacher, I've actually learnt a lot about writing that I didn't know when I was a student. So, that's been quite eye-opening. I've learnt to kind of love writing, and I absolutely love writing now. My father is dyslexic, and he can't write, so he doesn't know how to spell words. So yeah, he struggles with that. So I think because of that, I really try to help students that struggle with those things because I know how hard it is. My father is 63 now and he still can't fill out a form or anything. So, knowing that, what he goes through, I try to make sure other kids don't have to go through that as well.

As we engaged in more conversations after each classroom observation, I have come to know Petunia better, both as a teacher and as an individual. I would aptly describe her as committed, passionate and dedicated, but I think it is only justified to have these come through from her:

It's [my interest] probably shifted, so like, I think like, yeah, I think I put a lot into teaching; in the last couple of years into my focus has been a lot around teaching, and I've wanted to do that because I want to succeed as a teacher and I want to feel competent as a teacher and I think to do that, you have to put in a certain amount of time and effort. So yeah, my focus has definitely shifted to become more teaching-focused and less on sports and other things. But, I do, I love teaching and I love learning new ways of teaching kids, new ideas and creative ways to engage everyone; I'm interested in always finding fun activities and changing kids' outlook and motivation on things.

MAGNOLIA

Prologue

Our maiden meeting took place over lunch break in her classroom, with some of the students lingering around, chatting away and playing among themselves. Without much delay, Magnolia and I talked about her participation in the research project whereby she happily agreed to all the research activities. Along with that, she checked through her timetable and picked days where literacy lessons were most likely to take place (on some days, the students were out of the classroom to attend specialist classes). When all was done and Magnolia offered to walk me to the office to sign out, she noticed a girl sitting by the window, alone and looking upset. She excused herself momentarily, walked up to the girl and consoled her. Then as we approached the classroom door and passed by a group of three boys who were engrossed in their card games, she commented endearingly on their excitement.

Those emotional and lighthearted exchanges between Magnolia and her students were noteworthy as they took place soon after Magnolia had lightly touched on the challenges of teaching middle-year learners. She mentioned that students at this age were rather emotional and thus often “require mental and emotional support”. Through this experience, alongside our subsequent conversations and classroom observations, I gathered that Magnolia carried a caring personality and was genuinely concerned for her students. As she said in our first interview:

Being a teacher is never boring, it’s always something different every day. I love the relationships that I form with the students. I like being able to provide them with support. I like to be able to help them. I love it when they achieve something, [when it] clicks for them. Yeah, that’s really cool. And I like the people I work with. Yeah, I think I am really lucky here with who I work with because that helps.

Over the next couple of months, I got to know them better, forming an unforgettable research relationship not only with Magnolia, but also with her students. The latter was not something that I had planned on, but Magnolia's kindness and great relationship with her students had unexpectedly afforded me the experience. For my research, that provided me with the valuable opportunity to know and to understand their literacy practices in and beyond the classroom, and I witnessed how Magnolia weaved her personality, personal teaching philosophy and knowledge of students into her LTL.

Part I: Introducing Magnolia

A Symbiotic Teacher Identity: Of being a Mum and a Teacher

Magnolia loved children. She loved being around children, working with children, and so unsurprisingly had always wanted a career that involved working with children. But instead of pursuing her initial intent of being a teacher in an early childhood centre, she became a chef in restaurants and cafes. However, it was not a case of her giving up on her aspiration. Rather, she had chosen to prioritise her young children then because the “hours were good”, where she could tailor her work schedule to her family commitments. After a decade as a chef, when her youngest daughter was three, Magnolia's unwavering passion for working with children saw her enrolling in a primary-school teaching programme at university. At the time of the research, she was in her fourth year of teaching in Springville Intermediate School.

Magnolia's maternal instinct shaped her teacher identity. A loving mother of three beautiful children (two adolescents and one emerging adolescent), that role had to a great extent helped her understand and embrace teenagers' temperamental behaviours. She spoke sympathetically of how emerging adolescents (11–13 years) are slowly developing their understanding and negotiating the ways of the world and so could be very challenging sometimes. But, rather than “calling them up on their behaviours all the time”, she would approach them gently and respectfully.

She hoped that they would be able to reflect on their mistakes or behaviours, and realise that they were inappropriate and apologise. She was aware that a change in behaviour is a gradual process, but nonetheless hoped that the students could learn to be respectful with time. Drawing from the experience with her own children, Magnolia said tenderly:

I think being a mum supports you as a teacher in terms of how you understand the students' needs. I guess it comes back to that understanding that this time can be difficult for some students – for some emerging adolescents – that you know, they'll come in and they won't be necessarily having a good day, just because things might not be. And that their hormones are changing, and it also changes their behaviour and as long they're able to reflect. I guess that's what I expect from my own kids. If they made a mistake, that they can reflect on what they've done and come back and apologise like 'this is what I should have done'. Yeah, so I guess having that expectation on my own children comes back into the class and vice versa.

Gentle and Empathetic: Making Students Feel They Belong

Although Magnolia had some reservations about being “not strict enough” with her students, what I observed suggested that this worked to her advantage. The students loved being with and around her, and I could see their ease and comfort being themselves in the classroom. Magnolia related this to her personal schooling experience, in which she recalled how the teachers in her primary school were “almost entirely focused on reading, writing and maths”. When that took precedence over forming relationships with the students, Magnolia felt it hindered the building of an inviting environment, and so she “did not enjoy primary school as much”. Fortunately, things changed for the better for her in intermediate school. She appreciated that the teachers there took the time to get to know the students, seeing them beyond academics and for who they were. That made her feel valued as a student. Therefore, Magnolia stressed that “it's important to form

relationships with [my] students” and as such, she recognised her students as individuals. Following that, she believed in every “child-adult having their own strengths and building on them, and not having to fit into a certain box”. Through this, being a teacher for Magnolia meant:

...providing that sort of environment for them where they feel safe and happy to come to school, and giving the students in your class the tools that they need to be successful; and then skills that they can use in adulthood like personal skills, resilience and working with others, and academically – telling them to be the best they can be.

Expectations for Students: Have Resilience, Be Resilient

To grasp how Magnolia came to be the empathetic teacher she was, and as one who gave prominence to having resilience, it is helpful to be acquainted with her background. Magnolia appreciated and felt lucky to grow up in the country, in a small town named Matangi on the eastern border of Hamilton with her parents and three brothers. Growing up, she recounted spending time outdoors or what she termed as “having adventures outside”, and was kept occupied with tending to the family’s farm animals. “Lots to keep us busy”, Magnolia added reflectively. Such experience consequently helped shaped who she was today, to be strong and resilient and in teaching, what she described as:

Showing up and pushing through – even when you don’t feel like it, I think it’s important to show up and sometimes, you have to put things aside and just give your best, work hard. Yeah, definitely.

That premise formed Magnolia’s expectations for her students and what she thought they could achieve – to put in their best effort and to be respectful of others. She highly regarded the importance of them being “open-minded, showing kindness to one another, empathetic of what others are going through, and having the confidence to push through in life”. Nevertheless, she also understood that

there would be times where the students “were just not having a good day”. Facing those moments, Magnolia would encourage them to be resilient and to continue to “give their best shot in their work, to just keep pushing through”. I thought Magnolia herself set a very good example of what it meant to be resilient and respectful, after having spent some time and witnessing how she dealt with challenging and upsetting unforeseen situations in her classroom. Instead of publicly reprimanding students for their misbehaviour, she waited to speak to them in private. She further exemplified her patience and understanding by explaining to me (during our post-observation conversations) that some students behaved the way they did because of their background and/or what they experienced at home.

Teaching as a Voyage: Experiences Guiding the Course

Seeking to understand Magnolia better, I asked her how she saw teaching and herself as a teacher, and learned that she had inevitably experienced the ups and downs:

Yeah, I think I am patient, but then I also think I am quite... I don't know, there are certain behaviours that I can't accept. I think I am caring, understanding. Sometimes I can get quite tired and a little bit over it, and a bit overwhelmed. I think sometimes you can get a bit overwhelmed. Yeah, overall, I think you settle when you get into teaching, like I enjoyed last year and this year, whereas the first two years were quite forlorn. So, I get maybe, even a little bit defensive for the students but also for teachers. I think sometimes that there are certain community members that don't quite realise what teachers put in every day. Yeah, I guess that's what I would say.

Magnolia related that her first two years of teaching were rather forlorn as she “double-guessed myself, of not being sure if I was doing enough as a teacher”. Understandably, it had been quite a journey for her to be confident of herself and

with what she was doing, instead of “just kinda surviving”. It had taken her some time to settle into the rhythm of teaching and to be able to talk to parents and back herself and her decisions.

Four years into the profession now, Magnolia’s confidence had grown. She credited the growth in confidence to the experiences and knowledge she had accumulated over the years. Whilst she said the university’s teacher education programme was helpful in introducing her to the various learning and teaching theories, and students’ behaviour and psychology, she also mentioned that “it’s probably quite hard for the university to teach everything” because schools are “quite different and they use different resources and have different programmes”. Therefore, she appreciated the practical experiences of being in schools as a student-teacher as she gained some valuable knowledge, and continued to pick up more on the job. She learned from other teachers in her team through the get-togethers to discuss ideas and outcomes, received professional development from the school, and built on the experiences within the classroom – “like knowing what works and what does not”. “It’s a collection of ideas and lessons over time”, Magnolia aptly summed it up. She was also appreciative of the supportive school environment, particularly her team leader when she was a beginning teacher, who made themselves available for talks and discussions whenever she needed them.

Wondering how her knowledge and experience of teaching had grown, Magnolia explained:

I think you can make decisions quicker. I think it’s about making decisions and knowing what’s right for the students without having to ask someone else first. For instance, we came across certain behaviours and dealing with them right and then, I think that really helps. And obviously knowing the curriculum and knowing what you’re teaching is massive as well. And not being too hard on yourself on what you can do in your first couple of years. And just showing up and giving your best. I think that as long as you know that you’ve done that; at the end of the day, the students come to us with a

whole background and a whole lifetime and skills that they may or may not have or being provided. And over here, we try our best to do the best we can for them.

Then, Magnolia added lightheartedly, “I think teaching is hard anytime”.

Part II: Magnolia’s LTL Acts

Even though Magnolia was often engaged when I walked into her classroom in the morning, she would warmly receive me. In all observations, she would brief me through the day’s learning blocks (particularly her upcoming activities for literacy lessons) so that I knew what to expect. Alongside that, every visit contributed to my knowledge of the school, particularly how the IB programme was being implemented. These were of significance as Magnolia often made reference to them whenever we talked about her literacy teaching practices during our conversations.

Altogether, I had four classroom observations with Magnolia, each interesting in its own way. I followed Magnolia and her students to the science lab, to the field, to the hall for team hui (assembly) and waiata (singing) practice. I saw her mentoring a student-teacher, and then we discussed briefly how, in the process, she came to realise how much she had grown as a teacher. She spoke lovingly and knowledgeably of her students, singing their praises whenever I approached and asked the students about what they were doing. As I gained first-hand experiences of Magnolia’s literacy lessons as a non-participant observer, I was quietly impressed at the variability of activities and the skills that were being developed in her students. I also enjoyed how she assured her students who were anxious about presenting their UOI work before the class:

I’ll be here to support you. So, please don’t be nervous.

[Public presentation] is a really important skill – it’s something you’re gonna do in your life. You’re in a safe environment, so please don’t be nervous.

(Field note, Classroom observation 2, June 18, 2020)

Against this background, the following sections first present how Magnolia talked about her literacy belief, knowledge and experiences, and then what LTL transpired inside (and sometimes outside) her classroom.

Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience

Literacy Beliefs Informed by Past and Present Experiences

It was very like ‘sit in a circle, read a little bit, move onto the next person’. I think it was like that through my whole primary school. Lots of writing about what we do on the weekend. [It’s] quite dull so we don’t really do any of that here. It’s just not that inspiring, I think. Yeah, I wasn’t inspired.

As Magnolia recounted her personal literacy learning experiences, they reminded me of my own, and I agreed as to how uninspiring those approaches were. Being a teacher now, she had since learnt from those experiences that such reading and writing strategies were inefficient and insufficient in generating interests for literacy learning, much less encouraging critical and creative thinking. She added that they did not fit into the school’s philosophy either. Holding the IB Learning and Teaching handbook that Magnolia had passed to me earlier for reference (following my questions of her teaching approaches), I remarked to her that I noticed the seamless integration of the inquiry model in her classroom. She explained that after having taught in Springville Intermediate and being immersed in their approaches to learning (transdisciplinary and conceptual inquiry), these had become a big part of her literacy teaching practices. She thought it was great because:

It's easier with your writing and your reading and your inquiry, obviously. And I think because we're quite busy in Springville and we spend quite a bit of time in and out of the classroom, it's really important we make use of those blocks [of time in the classroom]. So, having that all intertwined is quite effective. And the inquiry is really great for supporting those students to be self-regulated in their learning.

Magnolia also mentioned that those approaches benefitted "those students that are quite vibrant and hard to settle" as they encouraged students to do their own inquiry and exploring, thus keeping them engaged. Additionally, she was heartened to see students developing their collaborative skills through working together to complete an assignment. Magnolia further opined that such transdisciplinary mode of delivery connected in-classroom learning to real-life contexts, and that literacy took place in various forms and times even though it might not "look like they are doing traditional reading and writing". As Magnolia was the only participant who mentioned "traditional reading and writing", I jumped at it and decided to prompt further what she meant by "traditional":

Like this morning, I would call that traditional writing because it's a guided writing lesson. Not traditional, that might have been a wrong word. But this afternoon, it was more of that writing-to-learn and not learning-to-write. Yeah, like collecting information to learn.

I noted how Magnolia corrected herself, describing 'traditional' as the wrong word, and revised it to writing-to-learn and learning-to-write. That same morning, she had taught students 'character description' using the technique of 'show, don't tell'. The lesson included reading a sample descriptive text aloud by the teacher, class discussion on how to describe a character, followed by individual writing. In the afternoon for UOI, students worked in pairs and on their laptop, watched a 17-minute long video that showed explorations to Mars. They gathered the required information to complete the given worksheet – stating the differences between Earth and Mars. Magnolia said that this was a sample writing-to-learn lesson as

students “watch and read, extract key points and take notes, and organise the important information into the graphic organisers”. More of these examples are presented in Act 2.

An Extended Notion of Literacy: Traditional versus ‘New’

Employing Magnolia’s cited examples as prompts, we further discussed what she thought literacy could look like or how it could be important for the students. Magnolia stated “writing, reading, speaking, viewing, and presenting”, a rather comprehensive range of literacy practices that parallel the NZC’s description of literacy practices.

Magnolia stressed the importance of strengthening students’ basic literacy skills, hence the belief and practices of learning-to-write and learning-to-read, in addition to writing-to-learn and reading-to-learn. She believed that writing was “something that does need to happen every day in the classroom”. The learning-to-write workshops helped students, particularly those on the focus or priority list, to operate at Level 3 and 4. However, she also opined that “sometimes if you do free-write or quick-write, they can go a little bit wrong”. Hence, she tried to keep a balance between the quality and quantity of students’ writing.

In addition to elevating students to a higher NZC achievement level, Magnolia wanted her students to be good writers and to love writing. Therefore, she often assured her students who “get really hung up on their spelling” that generation of ideas and the process of writing should take precedence. She also made it a point to celebrate their written work in the classroom. As Magnolia put it:

The initial set up is mostly about ideas; that’s what really important and the writing process of planning, drafting, editing, recrafting, publishing. So, yeah. So, we’ll go write them up and often I’ll do something like a board, pictures to support their texts, and then put them up – celebrating it and

sharing. We do a lot of sharing of their writing so that's about celebrating their writing.

Speaking of the reciprocal relationship between reading and writing, Magnolia related that children who successfully acquired reading skills in their young age were the ones "that seem to do quite well in writing and speaking" and conversely, those that fell behind in their reading faced a hard time in their learning. For this reason, and informed by her beliefs, knowledge and experiences of literacy, Magnolia continuously explored and expanded her repertoire of pedagogical approaches that would work well with the students. For instance:

Setting them up well at the start and modelling; storytelling with writing really gets them quite inspired. So, I tell quite a few stories about my own childhood and about people that mean a lot to me and I think that really inspires and sparks them, prompts them in their own writing. Having a model of writing – the model is really, really important – and going through the model with them; and then they get the time to go and write; and the peer editing. And then we'll often do workshops. Today's workshop was whole-class because I was seeing from their writing that they could all gain from that but other times it'll just be particular students that I'll have the workshop for and they'll usually be around punctuation, sentence structures, those sort of surface features.

Acknowledging the usefulness of professional development courses she had received, Magnolia relayed that she learnt those strategies from the reading and writing courses organised by the school. She gathered from the instructor that when setting students up for writing, it was very useful to "tell them stories because they love hearing stories about things that are special to teachers, and that inevitably help children make those big connections".

Valuing Students' Culture, Personal Knowledge and Experiences

Magnolia believed that students should feel valued, and know that their personal experiences, opinions and knowledge mattered. In literacy lessons, besides sharing her personal stories, she frequently encouraged the students to talk about theirs, to bring in their knowledge and experiences during conversations and discussion. "I want them to know that people are gonna value what they say and it's really important what they have to say". More specifically, Magnolia explained:

We do lots of prior knowledge, we talk a lot about prior knowledge in reading and in writing, they always bring in their experiences. And I guess lots of conversations and discussions, that's probably when it comes in the most. And inquiry often links itself to them exploring what they want to inquire into because it's an interest of theirs, so they often get to do what they love.

Also, in encouraging students to be proud of their identity, culture and language:

I would often say to them 'Please speak your home language because we would love to hear it. It's really special that you have that'. And we do that unit at the start of the year called 'Who we are?' and that's when a lot of it comes into it. So, I guess they come into the class knowing straightaway that the first unit we cover is about who they are, and what's important to them. And then we'll put our work up and it relates to that – so that they know I value what they value. And I guess you share a bit about yourself throughout the year and then you listen to what they've got to say about their own cultures and backgrounds. And in a lot of our writing, they get to express their own ideas and inquiries are really good where they get to do their own student-led inquiry because often they get to share about their cultures, their values.

More than just recognising student linguistic and cultural diversity, Magnolia also said affirmatively:

I guess that's kind of trying to cater to them all. It'll be interesting to look more into it actually, to do a bit of study around on how you can cater for more. But, yeah, as long as they're feeling valued. Also, that sort of learning around speaking Te Reo that I am learning as well, there'll be experts in the class and we shouldn't make fun of people if they pronounce it wrong but we should spend time learning to pronounce it correctly. And they seem to understand it quite well once you have talked to them about it.

Managing Technology Use to Ensure its Educational Purpose

In our first post-observation conversation where we touched on how technology was reshaping students' learning, Magnolia expressed her cautiousness over the overdependence on devices and her reasons for this:

I try not to use too much [of devices] but I think most of them are just something I do naturally. Like my writing and my maths are device-free. Inquiry I do, not all the time though. We use it probably in the afternoon. I think it's distracting sometimes and I don't think it's always on task.

Despite her saying that, our conversations always took place after school-hours, in the presence of Magnolia's children who kept themselves occupied with devices. Often, they would immediately turn to watching YouTube videos or playing games. Seeing that, I used that opportunity to ask her opinion on how students' literacy experiences and needs were changing with the infiltration of digital technologies into their daily lives. Magnolia thought that her "children didn't do an awful lot of reading online in their own time and it's more to viewing". But she also added that "they pick up certain vocabulary from a range of people and presenters". Hence, she acknowledged that technology use has become a part of the students' world and it was important to "accept that and work with it".

In the classroom, that meant Magnolia allocated device usage with access to the internet to the recrafting and publication of students' writing (students would

draft and craft in their exercise book first) and researching. Magnolia understood that some students preferred watching videos to gain knowledge and to enhance their understanding of concepts, but also opined that “you always have to have a follow-up literacy activity to go with it”. She remarked that “it’s where a lot of their learning comes from, but it’s also making sure what they’re seeing is educational”. This was significant because Magnolia stated that literacy activities done in schools are more in-depth, and also some students have more opportunity to read because they are “surrounded by that environment all the time”, thus allowing them to acquire the essential literacy skills.

Multiliteracies Pedagogy? “Those are Big Words”

Although the IB programme formed a big part of Magnolia’s teaching practices, other documents and resources also helped guide her LTL approaches. They included professional development from the “literacy experts”, observations and constructive feedback from the school’s senior management, and personal learning through reading. She continuously developed her personal practical knowledge through “gathering evidence from programmes in the classroom that worked well with the students, talking to other teachers, watching other teachers teach, and learning from other teachers’ experiences”. In other words, “all of those things kind of combine and find the best fit. Yeah, try to take a little bit from here and there”. I wondered then, about her familiarity with “multiliteracies” and “multiliteracies pedagogy”. Her response was a simple but inquisitive one; “Not really, no. What’s the brief discussion?”. As I gave a simple explanation, Magnolia mentioned how they “talked about that a lot in the university actually” and that “those are big words”. As a teacher, she is more on the practical side of it, practising without the need to give it a name. The reason was simple. As she encountered different types of students with different learning styles, she simply needed to recognise their strengths and interests and take it from there. For instance, guided by the school curriculum and literacy programme, she would include her knowledge of students – their personalities, levels of achievement, learning styles, interests – to plan for teaching and learning activities that suited them. Said Magnolia:

It's attracting different [kinds of learners] – it's thoughts and videos for some; reading for some, and writing for some. Knowing what worked and what did not, and thinking of why it worked and why it did not.

Evidently, building a repertoire of pedagogical moves is a cyclical reflective process that involves knowing the students and tailoring strategies that work for them. With that said, we move into Magnolia's classroom.

Act 2: Experiencing Magnolia's classroom: LTL practices

Oral, Visual and Linguistic: Inculcating Multiple Literacies

Magnolia's LTL in the classroom reflected closely her understanding of literacy, comprising reading, writing, speaking, viewing and presenting activities. They were mostly meticulously planned, but depending on circumstances, Magnolia would sometimes go impromptu. This is not to suggest, however, that the skills were taught separately. Rather, everything was purposefully intertwined; Magnolia believed that these skills could not be compartmentalised. They came through in her reading and writing lessons as well as across other learning areas such as science and maths, but especially salient in UOI. As I sat inconspicuously at the back of the classroom observing, what I saw corroborated with what Magnolia had said about literacy and being literate during our conversations:

[Being literate is] being able to express your ideas and your opinions; that might be written or spoken – being able to read information and there's so much of it. To be literate, it's a very important skill and that's speaking as well, isn't it? That presenting and listening, it's all part of it – skills they need as an adult. And some will use writing more than others, but texting, you know, like putting up social media posts – it's all gonna be regardless, you can't escape it.

The incorporation of various literacy skills was exemplified in the following writing lesson, beginning with the post-lunch routine:

It was Learning Block 3 and the students just had lunch break. Magnolia had informed them earlier of her plan for a writing workshop on paraphrasing. Prior to beginning the lesson, the students gathered on the mat, around Magnolia for the teacher-read session. She presented the book ‘After the War’ by Paul Herr, and instructed them to look carefully at the illustrations as she read, “you need to look at the pictures and the changes”. It started with a picture of a farm – set in the 1960s in New Zealand, then slowly progressed into the 70s and 80s – how it looked different in different seasons. Magnolia briefly described the changes that happened over the decades, such as how in the 1980s, some of the land was sold off to build highways and it was memorable to her because she was born sometime during that period. Students responded to her story by probing further, which set off a lovely discussion.

I asked Magnolia about the teacher-read session after that:

We always have a book to read [after lunch in Learning Block 3], a teacher-read. It often relates to our UOI so it’s getting that more learning about our UOI. Being read to is really effective for their thinking skills as well as leading to discussions, and it does really lead to good discussions. Also the last block is always a little bit unsettled, so it just helps them to resettle. It’s a personal practice but it’s not uncommon at all to have a teacher read. And I wouldn’t be without one. In my first couple of years, I didn’t have it as much – we just didn’t get into this, but now it I’m like, it actually brings them back and keeps them quite calm.

Balancing Learning-to-Write and Writing-to-Learn

Proceeding to the next activity after the teacher-read session, Magnolia told the students to bring their UOI, Writing Books and stationery to the mat. As the students got moving, she accessed the school’s Google Drive – where all the teaching and learning materials were stored – and displayed ‘Paraphrasing’

(prepared using Google Slides) on the Active Panel. On some slides, there was a question (and answers that were shown later) to induct the students into whole-class discussion beginning with:

Slide 1: What is paraphrasing?

The students suggested some answers before Magnolia summed everything up and reinforced its principal purposes; “paraphrasing is rewriting of text in your own words; it is used to clarify meaning, and to shorten a longer statement but keeps the main idea”. She explained to them the rationale for doing a paraphrasing workshop was because when doing their research on a given topic, she noticed that they had the tendency to ‘copy-and-paste’ all the information into their slides. Magnolia added reassuringly:

That’s why we are doing a little workshop about paraphrasing today. This will be very helpful when you are doing your research and you are writing a description about your artefact. Also, it’s a skill that you’ll use for many many years to come.

On this, Magnolia distributed a handout to all the students, and, while they were reading the worksheet given, instructed them to highlight the title on the object label (game-board) and read the description. Using this as an example, she then displayed:

Slide 2: How to paraphrase?

Read the text carefully, and decide the main idea of the passage; and

Slide 3: Paraphrasing example

Draw out main ideas.

Differentiate them using different colours.

Magnolia read the steps aloud and then modelled them to the students. On the enlarged handout (Game Board) shown on the Active Panel, she read the sample text, engaged the students to decide and agree on the main ideas together, and highlighted them using different-coloured highlighters to give it a “colour code”. This helped to “differentiate the various main ideas” that she was going to extract to paraphrase, Magnolia said and proceeded with rewriting the text.

After the teacher-led demonstration, the students practised with another text about kangaroos and penguins (Slide 4). Before they began, Magnolia reminded the students to:

Put the text in your writing book, and put the title ‘Paraphrasing’.

Highlight the main ideas, and you know those words are the ones you need to rewrite as your own. Oh, there’s another tip and/or trick. Read the passage, and think about how you would write it.

Fifteen minutes later, Magnolia invited several students to share their paraphrased work, and commented “very good, quite close to the original ones”. Although the students’ answers were rather similar to the original passage, Magnolia recognised and praised them for their effort. Consequently, the students appeared confident and proud to share their work with their peers by reading it aloud. Magnolia ended the block by sharing her personal answer.

After this teacher-led learning-to-write workshop, the students moved onto writing-to-learn in the next learning block, UOI. In this student-led group activity, they worked with several materials – a YouTube video, a text from School Journal, an enlarged laminated newspaper cutting, and a worksheet entitled “I see, I think, I wonder” – on the topic of the history of moon landing. Their task was to go through the various sources of information and discuss with each other to complete the worksheet. While they were at it, Magnolia reminded them to “look at the graphics, the headings”, and suggested to “put yourselves in the shoes of the astronauts or citizens at the period”. They might question themselves and share

with their group members “How would you feel if you were the astronauts? Would you be proud of the achievement?”, and note in their UOI book “While I’m doing my research, I wonder...”. The chief object was to develop their curiosity (a component of the student learning profile).

Reading-to-Learn: Developing Multiple Skills

I experienced a really hectic but fruitful day in my second observation with Magnolia, in which I paid careful attention to her reading and UOI activities. That evening, Magnolia and I sat down to discuss reading – what literature was suggesting and what they meant by “traditional” – and how literacy classrooms these days have come to be inevitably multimodal. Magnolia pondered over the questions and responded:

Yeah, I agree, definitely. Reading is probably the most traditional one in the classroom, I would suggest, but [the students] are using graphic organisers, they are using communications, research, thinking, and they often work together. The modelling book is really great for [group-based sessions], I write it down and if they need to, they can just write it as well. But yeah, I would suggest that most of that does come out.

Because what I saw was only one small part of her reading lessons, and wanting a more comprehensive picture, I requested that Magnolia elaborate on her everyday reading lessons. Through her account, I identified a range of approaches that included modelling, discussions, collaborative and pair work, individual work, independent learning, and teacher-guide in her classroom:

So, I will – depending on the Unit of Inquiry and the journal article would support the UOI [while walking over to the bookshelf to get the modelling books] – often choose a reading comprehension strategy that works with that journal, and then I plan for, we use one text for one or two weeks, and we end up probably getting about three or four lessons.

Using a reading lesson in the modelling book as an example, Magnolia went on explaining:

So for this particular group, summarising was what they were focusing on. We've spent time unpacking what it means and then ways that it happens and language that they might use when summarising. Here is the text [from the School Journal], and the success criteria, and then often there is some sort of supporting graphic – I guess that's what you call it – then, we will read the text. This group also reads the text with Titan, the learning assistant before I start this so they already have one initial read. Then, we'll play some sort of – not a game but an activity, a prompting sort of activity that they do as a group. They do lots of peer share in that group, and lots of lots of discussion, and then there'll be often this sort of graphic or that lesson stops here, in terms of that is one lesson. Then, we came back today and we read the text again. Then, this is a graphic organiser situation, we did that together and then they did this individually to really help me see whether they've understood the text. So, that was done in two lessons but sometimes I can go on for longer. With this group, I like them to be with me, to help them, and it does seem to really be helping them. And the modelling book helps as well.”

I wondered about the practice of Magnolia drawing pictures in the modelling book, of her using different colours for different headings, and the inclusion of different font sizes, and asked her if she was aware of these practices:

No, I don't actually. I do that so that it stands out for them to spot it, and also for me, if I need to be reminded of things. Yeah, so that they can see it quickly. It just makes it interesting for them to look at, doesn't it? It brings their attention to it. And sometimes I just write myself little notes – some of them are pretty comprehensive. And this modelling book is really, really helpful for that [priority learner group] and I'm pleased with how they are doing.

Moving from Literacy Learning to Literacy Practices

Another component of literacy in Magnolia's class was the UOI presentation by the students, focusing on the skills of researching and communicating. In a manner, this activity signalled a transition from literacy learning (learning-to-read and learning-to-write) to literacy practices (reading-to-learn, group discussions, researching for answers to complete the slides, and presentation skills). The students were understandably nervous, exclaiming that they were "freaking out". The lesson nonetheless proceeded as follows:

Before starting, Magnolia engaged the students in a whole-class discussion of effective presentation skills such as speaking at a moderate tempo and making eye contact. As for being an ethical listener, they were encouraged to pay attention to the speaker, ask good questions, and laugh, clap or respond appropriately so that they would not disrupt the presenter's flow. Following that, Magnolia allocated the next 15 minutes for the students to practice presenting with their Google slides in their respective groups. The presentation templates – each containing different pictures and question-prompts that depicted New Zealand historical events following that term's theme 'Where we are in place and time' – were prepared by Magnolia and her team of teachers. The students' tasks were to discuss with each other, and then to go online and research for answers. Magnolia further explained:

So, we have a series of the photos, or explorer cards, and then they have those guiding questions. So, they were given the photos and guiding questions. But we (the team) did spend quite a lot of time thinking about and identifying in-depth answers, not just "a single word, or one-sentence answers" – like actually you can research this. Sometimes, I find that the students think that they can't research; that they should just know it and it's obviously not like this at all. With research, they can do deeper.

When the presentation was about to take place, Magnolia reminded the class to “be a wonderful audience” by respecting the presenters and giving feedback at the end of their friends’ presentation.

I listened attentively to all of the students’ presentations, and was intrigued with how they were using real-life examples and evidence to support their arguments and opinions. For instance, one group had incorporated the current issue of racism (George Floyd’s case and Black Lives Matter movement). It was also heartwarming to see how the members of a group supported each other. For example, a student patiently guided their peer who struggled to read the slides. The audience members were responsive, excited for the presenters, and gave good feedback that was constructive and encouraging. Magnolia was similarly very pleased at how the presentations had turned out and divulged how some preparatory work was necessary:

Yeah, so they (the students) started it and we (the students and the teacher) spent a block on it, and then we stopped and I gave some examples, and spent quite a bit of time unpacking rather than it just being an inquiry where sometimes you just go over it. Then today they came back and I saw how they’re going and what they needed support with. And it looks like they listened. It wasn’t particularly planned either. The whole process of inquiry is like “off you go and explore” and me walking around seeing where they’re at, talking to them, conferencing and then coming back. Actually, I was quite pleased that they have gone deeper. It was a little bit apprehensive that they would but it was good. So yeah, supporting them with examples.

Evidently, the school’s approaches to learning and the overarching themes in the learner’s profiles largely informed Magnolia’s literacy practices, intertwined with her beliefs as a teacher and what she thought was important for the students. Sometimes, she felt a sense of urgency, feeling that she had to teach the students everything in two years, but she also knew that “they’ve got all these experiences coming in and they’ve still got more learning to happen”. Hence, she emphasised

“doing her best throughout the year”. Against this background, I learnt of Magnolia’s vision of successes and challenges, and her most memorable teaching moments to date.

Part III: Magnolia’s Vision of Successes and Challenges

“More Time Would be Nice”

Magnolia’s empathetic nature meant she genuinely felt for the students, not only in their academics but also personal lives. She was aware that the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown had been tough for some of her students and their families. For these children, school was akin to a “safe haven”, where they could be with their friends and be listened to, particularly by their teachers. For this reason, Magnolia mentioned that it could be “quite forlorn when you’ve got thirty-three of them telling you stories but I think it’s really important to listen to them”. Post-lockdown, she had also noticed the deterioration in a number of her students’ literacy skills, especially those in the focus or priority groups, and was genuinely concerned about that. Seeing the learning gaps and different levels of achievement, she expressed that she wished to spend more time to help them, and that was exactly what she did:

For reading, I have them split up into three groups. That’s our only group-based activity in the classroom and there’s a really strong focus on our target students – the ones sitting at Level 2. [So] I do support this group quite a lot – I do spend quite a bit of time just with this group of learners. We use modelling books so there are all sorts of – we have a journal and we spend a couple of weeks unpacking the journal, and using things like graphic organisers.

Magnolia further related that for these students, “[in writing] even the generation of ideas is hard, and when others have already finished, they haven’t even started writing a sentence yet”. She added that the focused teaching did “seem to really be working, together with the use of modelling books”. However, she did not

always have the time to do so with a class of 33 students, and this priority group was quite a large group too. This was in addition to having to manage students' behaviour – those who were disruptive and treating their classmates unkindly. She found that to be “really, really tough and we just didn't have a connection”. Nonetheless, she did take it in her stride, working through patiently, respectfully and kindly.

Growing Confidence and Success for All

Magnolia's success stories in her LTL came in the form of her students' growing confidence in their literacy skills and literacy practices. She related proudly:

I think lots of success with confidence in their writing. Often when they come in at the start of the year, and we do an initial writing sample and throughout the year, I've seen their growth. You would probably quite safely say that the majority of students show huge improvements, like generating ideas and the words and the language they are using, their punctuation, their grouping of ideas – those are the biggest improvements I've seen so far, and also with the actual amount of writing that they're getting in. As for reading, I've seen a huge improvement with this group and that comes from, I believe, from working – they support each other really well in that group – they're really strong on helping each other and they're actually all really motivated. The majority are quite a motivated group of learners, which is really good and when I get that sorted and they wanna learn, then they'll learn.

She shared her most memorable teaching moments to date. She recalled two students of hers who were reluctant writers. They had written heartfelt descriptions about their parents in one writing lesson – “[an] incredible piece of writing” – that brought tears to their eyes. Importantly, Magnolia stressed that the connections she had with her students and of seeing them shine were “the biggest things” for her:

It's amazing when you're working with the student that doesn't understand something and when they get it, and their eyes go like 'Yeah, I get it!' I was like, 'Yeah, off you go!' I've seen those kids coming to school and being happy and having the connection. At the end of the year when they say goodbye, most of them will explain a little about how they enjoy the year. That feels really good.

Epilogue

Over the years, Magnolia realised that she was spending “less time there at the [teacher's] desk” doing administrative work. On the contrary, she dedicated most of her time now in the homeroom to her students, stating that “I think you're there to teach the kids, aren't you? That's your job?” We discussed the topic briefly, and noted how being a teacher meant executing multiple tasks at once – the planning, the assessment, the administrative work, the behaviour coaching, and obviously, the actual teaching. Further, she commented that “sometimes it feels like you're doing two jobs but you're trying to fit it into one but yeah, it's quite good and it's alright”. Related to this, Magnolia's sense of accomplishment was relatively simple. To her, “a good day” meant having more time with her students in the classroom, where “good learning” took place. She enjoyed the hecticness, the children asking questions whenever she tried to teach. These indicated to her that she had their attention, and they were engaged in their learning. We ended our day's conversation with Magnolia summarising her journey as a teacher:

It's all learning, isn't it? And also that's just experience, isn't it? It's just years of that experience and, not that I've had many years – this is only my fourth year of teaching, but yeah, you just noticed when watching someone that's new teach, how much you've learned over the years.

I totally second that!



Prologue

Small gestures often communicate a heartening message. When physical distancing was the norm and any physical contacts were frowned upon in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, a hand that reached out – offering a simple handshake – spoke volumes. That small gesture, combined with the warm reception and her eagerness to participate in the research project, gave me a quiet confidence. I recall them vividly as that was my maiden meeting with my very first research participant – Lily.

As the initial research relationship was established and along the walk to Lily's classroom, she filled me in on the happenings in the school. We talked briefly about the lockdown and online learning, where Lily repeatedly expressed how "lucky" she was: lucky to be a teacher, lucky to be teaching in Springville Intermediate, and lucky to have the technology to assist teaching and learning. Lily projected an enthusiastic attitude toward her participation in this study. She readily agreed to all the activities listed on the Participant Information Sheet. During the learning blocks where students went off for specialist lessons such as technology art, she kindly agreed to me joining in her team meeting and professional development sessions. Lily also offered to share a copy of her class profile with me prior to the first observation. Then, she quickly added:

I said to my class on Friday that we will have you come in and just observe us and they were quite excited as well. And it's quite interesting to have to break down your practices; makes you notice little things that maybe you just do every day, but you got to explain 'this is why I did this'. These little, tiny things that you'd just do naturally, but [being] questioned makes you think about why you're doing certain things. I think it's a nice refresher sometimes.

By the end of the hour-long introductory interview, three words immediately formed my impression of Lily – appreciative, attentive, and enthusiastic. These characteristics were

expressed through her words and manifested in her practices. This was as she carried the dual roles of an all-rounded homeroom teacher and an inspiring team leader. It was a privilege to be able to share a small part of Lily's lived experiences, which allowed me to appreciate the intensity of her daily work activities. She exemplified how a teacher's responsibility goes beyond teaching to include planning, collaborating, brainstorming, caring, liaising, and most importantly, building relationships. I first obtained a narrated account of her background and work from the interviews, then I witnessed all these taking place first-hand before me throughout our four sessions of classroom observation.

Part I: Introducing Lily

Teaching: Life's Calling and Devotion

A native Hamiltonian, Lily was born, bred and educated in Hamilton – the most populous city of the Waikato region. She attended primary, intermediate, and high school here, and graduated at the tender age of 21 with a Bachelor's degree in education. However, feeling that she was still rather young to start teaching immediately, she stayed on an extra year in the university after completing her three-year degree to do the honours programme. Decisive about what she intended to do, Lily explained:

[Hamilton] is not massive but when I was deciding what I wanted to do, I always kind of knew that I wanna be a teacher when I was growing up. So when I did some research into universities, the university [that I attended] and its education programme just seemed to be the best in New Zealand at that time. So that's why I decided to stay here and not go anywhere else.

Having known that calling in her early part of life, Lily drew inspirations from the "awesome" experiences she had with her own teachers in school to pursue a career in teaching. Compounded by her supportive parents, interests, and finding great pleasure in working with other people, she expressed that:

I've just always enjoyed working with other people, and I had some really awesome teachers when I was in school. So I think I was really lucky in my own schooling and it made me feel like I would love to do that too. Yeah, it's just something that I've always talked about, even when I was really young, my mum said I used to talk about it.

Setting Up and Out: Gaining Teaching Experiences

Upon graduating from the university and relief-teaching for several months, Lily's passion for travelling led her to journeying around Asia for four months with her then-boyfriend (now husband) before settling in Bristol, England. Lily started her full-time teaching journey there, amassing various teaching experiences. In her first two years, she took up day-to-day class relief teaching where schools needing her services would call her up in the morning. This casual working style inculcated flexibility in Lily, as she was required to go to different schools and work with students of different-aged groups and abilities. They ranged from nursery to secondary level, which was both challenging and exciting for Lily as she was primary-trained. In addition to mainstream and all-inclusive schools, Lily had also taught students with special educational needs. England practiced multi-track inclusive education programmes where different kinds of schools were established to cater to students with different learning needs:

I got to learn a lot and worked in quite a few special schools at that time as well where they have specialist classes where they might have a class made up of all children who had autism or down-syndrome or they had special smaller classes and there were specialist schools that were set-up for these students' needs – which is really interesting as well.

However, daily relieving became physically and mentally demanding for Lily as the job required her to travel to different places on an ad hoc basis frequently. So, Lily obtained a full-time position working with the Year 6 and taught in a little primary school in Bristol for three years. It was in early 2016 that Lily and her husband decided to come back to New Zealand. Springville Intermediate School was her first full-time teaching position in New Zealand. She remarked that the teaching experience here was quite different from the ones

in England. Nevertheless, those first-hand experiences of working with children with special learning needs were invaluable to her current teaching practices.

Connecting Personal to Professional: Fondness for Her Workplace

A decade had passed since Lily started teaching. As she continued to grow as a teacher, there were several salient characteristics of hers that I gathered from our conversations and classroom observations. These included an appreciation of her current workplace, a personal teaching philosophy that was aligned to the school's, building relationships with colleagues and students, and developing and setting class culture at the beginning of every year. Lily sang the praises of Springville Intermediate School:

We're so lucky in terms of the resources we have and just the attitudes that the students have and their families, what they do to support you as a teacher is amazing. Yeah, I think I am so lucky to work here in terms of what we get as a school and the support that we have, and the [professional development] that I get in my leadership role is incredible as well. I find it a really nice place to work in and you often feel like it helps you to grow when you've got all these people around you, who are willing to share and help you to learn.

Lily drew inspiration from her conducive work environment, supportive senior leadership team and colleagues to engage in professional learning and development. She recognised that "being a teacher means continuously growing as one". This perspective led to her grow as a teacher and as a team leader. Lily looked for learning opportunities in challenging moments that presented themselves for self-improvement. For instance, new to the role of a team leader, Lily attended the leadership professional development programme organised by her school, and was pursuing a Master's degree in Educational Leadership when data was being collected. Through these learnings, she hoped to contribute to the existing school culture of helping other teachers (particularly beginning teachers) to grow as well.

Teaching and Learning: Explore, Inquire, and Learn from Mistakes

One fine evening after the second observation, Lily and I sat down and started conversing about what it meant to be a teacher. I expressed my beliefs that being a teacher transcends teaching and a focus on students' academic performance. It also includes developing all-rounded individuals. Lily seconded my view and promptly added:

Yeah, I think your idea there really links with our philosophy as a school – just growing these human beings – to be a good person, that's the main thing. And I think if you start with that base, it's amazing what they can do academically when they've got that skill. That overall knowledge of what it means to be a good person, they can go quite far academically because they've got a good base.

Lily's teaching philosophy was similarly aligned to the school's, adding to her fondness for Springville Intermediate. Lily described how the school's curriculum emphasised the culture of "learning through inquiries", where students were encouraged to actively engage in their own learning and to continuously explore, inquire, and learn from their mistakes. She spoke enthusiastically of the learner profile plastered at the back of the classroom wall, of the teaching and learning processes that aimed to create students who were "risk-takers, knowledgeable, inquirers, thinkers, communicators, and reflective". Understanding that making mistakes could be demotivating for students, Lily strongly believed in being there for her students and assuring them that learning meant making mistakes. She often told them that she too made mistakes, but they had helped her grow as a teacher. Modelling then, was an important aspect of her practice:

I believe that we are always learning so I like to keep the culture here quite positive and [if someone makes a mistake] always turn it into something positive, and always showing the students even I myself am always learning and modelling that to them. I am always trying to model those things myself to the students because I believe that if they can see me doing it, that's a good way of supporting them to be what we would like them to end up being.

Advancing Students: Seeing Them as Unique and Significant Individuals

In order to be able to connect with and to support her students in their learning, Lily strove to build good relationships with her students. She believed in having “that personal touch” by taking the time to let them know that they were all significant. This belief was built on her own experience as a student and the relationships she had with her teachers:

I just remember a lot of the teachers just having the time to, I don't know, be there if you've had any questions or taking the time almost over and above what they needed to. Or, it felt like they were putting us... those kinds of inspirations and things, little things that I do that I feel like my teachers had done for me. Just going a little bit over and above what their job requirement was, and taking the time to build those relationships with you, where they got to know you and little things like that.

Lily emulated the concern and kindness she was shown by her teachers in her current practice with a touch of her own. She displayed genuine care and responsibility to her students' academic and personal developments, and was also cognizant of the fact that teachers could be prominent figures in students' lives. So, she normally shared stories about herself with them, and this helped Lily to develop a sound student-teacher relationship:

I find that any storytelling at any time about any part of my life, they are so engaged. It's one of the times where you have their full attention because they are just so interested and they want to get to know you. I think back to my teachers in the past – you are such a prominent person in their life and they want to know a lot about what you're doing; and I remember it being just like that with my teachers, and it was just amazing.

Nonetheless, it was a practice that involved the art of 'balancing': being approachable when the students needed her to be, and yet firm on them meeting the high expectations she set for them. Lily acknowledged that the experiences gained throughout the years of practising helped her to keep that delicate equilibrium and to be tactful when handling the students' different needs. At the beginning of every year, she put a considerable amount of work into

building her “classroom culture”. Her aim was to induct students into knowing the school’s overall values and expectations, and how theirs fit into them. This helped Lily to recognise the range of personalities, characters and learning styles that the students brought into the class. Consequently, Lily expressed that the classroom was a safe space where her students felt they belonged, where their different beliefs and values were welcomed and appreciated. At the same time, she wanted her students to believe in their abilities and to rise to her expectations:

If I say this to the students and get them to meet the expectations, they probably will not like me at that point in time but at the end of the day, it’s better for them in the long run that they are meeting that expectation. So, not being afraid to notice those little things and get them sorted before, because it’s gonna help you in the end to develop that strong relationship with them and set them up on a good path, rather than letting things slide because you think they’ll be happier and they will like you more.

On that account, Lily was content to have her students gain a positive learning experience and a sense of achievement. She understood that while a two-year time frame in an intermediate school was brief, she hoped that they would have developed independence and self-regulation in their academic journey and personal life by the end of their time in Springville. Overall, Lily’s aspirations for her students were for them to be assured that simply doing their best would suffice, and they could be proud and confident in themselves.

Part II: Lily’s LTL Acts

The introduction to Lily’s background provides an understanding to her LTL acts. Lily normally arrived early in school. In the first observation, at a quarter past seven, she entered the classroom carrying a heavy crate of writing books she had brought home to check. As soon as she put the crate down on the mat, she proceeded with displaying the day’s learning and teaching activities and materials on the Active Panel. Acknowledging my presence, Lily turned her attention to me to brief me on the day’s learning blocks and her Google Classroom

page where all information and work were stored. For literacy, reading and writing lessons would be carried out in workshop-style with students grouped according to their achievement levels.

Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience

Transdisciplinary Teaching and Learning: Literacy across the Curriculum

[Being an intermediate-school teacher means] you gotta wear many hats at different times. Because we have limited time with the different blocks [the students] going out to do different things, we also have to make everything quite transdisciplinary. So it goes our inquiry brings into literacy and numeracy so you can almost be teaching not specific blocks in a day, you can be doing many things at once and it just means that it makes it easier for us when everything's connected.

Connected, as Lily mentioned, also assumed another notion as the students were immersed in Springville Intermediate's vision, values and learner profile, alongside their personal values and learning. Upon relating that, Lily logged onto her Google Classroom page and walked me through how everything was purposefully planned out, and the goals she would like her students to achieve from those lessons. Based on the idea of 'connectivity', reading and writing activities provided a prelude to the UOI, where students carried out research work (going online, Googling, identifying reliable information) and did case studies on the theme and topic of the week to develop their learner profile. Lily described this practice as transdisciplinary LTL:

Literacy wouldn't be a specific standalone literacy session. All my literacy at the time of the year brings in all those things that I am looking for – texts, pieces of writing – that will back up those things that we are looking at in the UOI, so everything is kind of linked to that. Looking at different beliefs and values and who we are and how we fit in and things like that.

Literacy, from Lily's perspective, predictably went beyond the traditional notion of reading and writing. Literacy also included "the understanding of texts, of the world around us, and of the things that make the bigger concepts". Compounded by the increasing use of technology in the classroom, she also acknowledged that there were many different forms of literacies. Correspondingly, her LTL consisted of "actual literacy blocks" where students learnt the skills of writing and reading for different purposes, and then applied those literacy skills during UOI activities. This meant students practised, for example, "forming a question to be able to put it into Google", "putting together an email for a job application" and "creating profiles of themselves online and writing descriptions". That also helped to develop students' research skills and ensure they acquired the capability to access the Internet safely and responsibly. Lily elaborated:

Some of the things that we've just done, with the applications and things, we try to set them up for the future, definitely, because that's something they are going to need to be doing in their everyday life. I think off the cuff kind of things come up and you find those teachable moments to do with things, like in terms of the literacy that they would actually need to use in their real life, and it often comes up when they have an authentic purpose in class anyway.

Making Literacy Learning Meaningful and Purposeful for Students

Following her teachers and family's encouragement, Lily grew up enjoying reading and writing. This love for literacy drove her passion for teaching literacy. Drawing from her personal experiences, Lily believed that learning to write and read must be purposeful and meaningful:

There's no point doing them for the sake of doing. I think it's really important for them to have a purpose, particularly when they are writing. I found in the past if they don't have a clear purpose or a purpose that is maybe a bit contrived and they don't associate with, then you're not really going to be successful.

As aforementioned and in line with the transdisciplinary curriculum, for Lily, literacy learning in the classroom was made purposeful by ensuring that the skills students learnt were transferred and applied in UOI, altogether presenting them with the opportunity to engage in real-life contexts. Following the school's suggested literacy teaching approaches, she organised her literacy lessons in workshop-style and worked with students in smaller groups on the focused skills and strategies. Showing me one of her students' reading books, she proceeded with sharing her literacy teaching plans – skimming and scanning as the week's focused processing strategy, but comprehension strategies were simultaneously worked on the majority of the time. Others included making inferences, analysing and synthesising information, evaluating, and making connections to the texts. With that, she reiterated:

So yeah, building up these different strategies, depending on what texts they were reading and often what contexts we are looking at; if it's a more science-y context for our Unit of Inquiry, it often leads itself to more science-y articles obviously so the strategies are different. And I think some of the things we look into here are such big global ideas, that it's preparing them so well for high school and just being those inquisitive thinkers.

Further, Lily perceived purposeful and meaningful literacy activities as students' ability to make connections and engagements with their reading and writing. One of the little things she did to achieve that was to introduce "writing territories" at the start of the year. With this, the students explored things that they cared for and would write about, and noted them in a chart for their reference throughout the year. In this regard, Lily practised the principle of engaging students' knowledge, personal interests, experiences and also cultures:

So, we are really lucky with the UOI topics and the things that we cover, because I think it naturally brings in the students' cultures and their worldview. Sometimes in discussions and in listening to others' perspectives, we need to navigate quite carefully because it can be quite powerful. And writing from certain perspectives is [also] always something that's quite interesting. We've got different concepts for our UOI, so for this one, the main key contexts are the 'causation' and 'perspective', so there's always lots of different perspectives we are looking at. And they often have to

take on their perspectives and then write from another perspective; or when we are reading, think about the perspective of the authors. So, I find their cultures come in strongly when they're sharing their perspectives and they're learning about other people's perspectives in particular.

Formal and Experiential Knowledge Guiding her Practice

Lily's literacy beliefs and knowledge stemmed from her personal literacy learning experiences, gained in her intermediate-schooling years. They were further developed during her teacher education at the university where she was introduced to theoretical and pedagogical knowledge. After a decade in the teaching profession, she opined that she had acquired and improved on her literacy teaching practices on the job, and even "probably a lot more than I think". She expressed her gratitude and appreciation to the professional development she received in Springville Intermediate, and to the school's curriculum coach who would attend every team meeting and share literacy resources, and reading and writing ideas that were linked to different UOI. The accumulated practical experience of being in the classroom had taught Lily to:

...know your students and know how they work – whether they're quite a visual learner and they need to see certain things up there to be able to understand it and get it on paper, or whether they can just be sitting there and listening and not giving so many responses but they're taking it all in by listening. Knowing these different students and whether they need to talk it through you first before they put it on paper is important because there are students who need to sit down with me and explain to me what they are saying before they can clearly put it down themselves. Whereas, others, just listening to the conversations of everyone else can come up with amazing ideas by themselves without even seeing me, paying much attention.

Lily put her knowledge into good use by preparing multimodal teaching materials (YouTube videos, PowerPoint or Google Slides, webpages) and adopting various teaching approaches in her literacy lessons to cater to student diversity and their literacy learning needs. Seeing this, I wondered about her familiarity with 'multiliteracies' and 'multiliteracies pedagogy'.

She divulged that while she remembered hearing it, possibly from the student-teachers from the university, it was not a term commonly used in school. Nevertheless, she believed that multiliteracies was a concept that the school and she herself were indirectly practising, without putting a specific term to it. She noted, *"I don't know what we would call it – just our practice, I think, rather than multiliteracies"* (emphasis added). Her literacy classroom elucidated exactly that, as we would soon come to see.

Act 2: Experiencing Lily's classroom: LTL practices

Korero: Thinking Creatively, Expressing Oneself Confidently

I was greeted with the usual scene as I walked into Lily's classroom for the second observation. The students were chatting with each other, some were finishing up their work from the previous day, while some were copying the agenda displayed on the Active Panel into their notebook. Lily, walking around, was busy gathering the teaching materials for the day's lessons. The bell rang and the day's routine began. Lily took her seat by the Active Panel. The students gathered, but continued to chat, around her. She kept mum, the students immediately noticed and settled down, and then she gently said, *"We'll start with our karakia"*. The roll-call and the reading of the daily notices ensued. Lily finished off the routine with the quote *"Life is not colourful, life is colouring"* from the book '365 Days of Wonder: Mr. Browne's Book of Precepts'. She repeated the quote, instructed the students to talk to their peers on what they thought it meant. That generated a lovely discussion, with students saying, for example, "the world won't be made good for you; you have to make it good" and "you colour your world by learning more things". Lily acknowledged their contributions and concluded by saying, "my interpretation's a little different. I am thinking that I like to spend my money travelling. So instead of buying cars and things, I would go travelling to gain experience."

As the book's title '365 Days of Wonder' suggested, the discussion on quotes took place daily. Lily enjoyed seeing the students coming out with different interpretations and engaging in those meaningful conversations with each other. She also thought the activity helped to develop confidence and promote discussion skills in a more conversational manner that mirrored a real-life setting. It was a deliberate teaching act to build up the communicative

and collaborative culture in the class, congruent with her literacy lessons that involved a good amount of group work and opinion-sharing:

When we are having those hard discussions about our Unit of Inquiry or when we are sitting in our reading group talking about a text, they are more having a conversation and they listen to what the person before them says to them. They've got something to say built on and not necessarily put their hand up as a cue because that's not what real life is like. So yeah, trying to build up those skills a little bit, baby steps at the moment.

Developing Multiple literacies: Traditional Teaching with a Twist?

Schoolwide, there are certain things and certain expectations of things we would cover. For example, the literacy section, we have a point-of-balance that's been put together and a list of different purposes for writing that we should cover throughout the year. But for us, as a team or even as an individual teacher, we work with them but our team sometimes do it differently. So, it's up to us, where we place things and throughout the year, but there is that overall expectation of what we should cover. And we try to tailor it as much as possible to fit in with the Unit of Inquiry, and we're lucky, the UOI that are used in the IB programme allow for you to cover pretty much all the purposes throughout the year and make it really meaningful. There is opportunity to allocate different purposes for writing and reading for different units.

Guided by the school's curricular expectations while also exercising her agency, Lily skilfully planned out and implemented her LTL. This was exemplified through the following writing lesson in which the students had been working on 'character description'. The lesson entailed Lily reading an extract aloud to the students and while they were listening, she encouraged them to share their thoughts in pairs or groups. Lily then took the discussion up a notch by switching to a whole-class mode, asking the students to share more of their personal knowledge and experiences. Upon saying that, the class became lively with students agreeing and/or challenging their peers' opinions. For example, in the excerpt that described a girl's fear toward dogs, the character had reacted by "raising her hand and hitting out. The

dog yelped". A student exclaimed, "That's not the way one should treat dogs. I wouldn't do that!". Lily responded by guiding them to think why different people might react differently to dogs, and what that tells them about the characters. Next, in another extract 'Moses Beech' by Ian Strachan, a boy asked why it was picked, to which Lily replied, "because Ian Strachan is an author who's really good with character description". He answered, "it's not appropriate because it's about smoking and tobacco". Lily, smiling, told the boy, "Wanting a reaction out of you. Got you thinking!". This starter activity was both a build-up and follow-up to the school wide's 10x10 writing model, in which Lily was to carry out a writing assessment. Following this, a description of the formative assessment process (and the classroom scene) is laid out below, imperative in enhancing one's understanding of Lily's literacy teaching practices and goals:

In her customary style of explaining the reasons and teaching goals behind every activity, Lily informed her students that the writing assessment guideline was what the school had prepared to ensure uniformity. The same procedure applied to all teachers, where they had to follow a common guideline given to them. The assessment required students to use the 10x10 model structure: students spent the first 10 minutes for setting-up or planning, followed by 10 minutes of writing, and finally five minutes of recrafting. A model text was distributed in cut-outs to all students, so that they could refer to it as Lily read it aloud. Lily instructed the students to think about what techniques the author had used, and what resonated with them as they were listening so that "you can always borrow and make it yours". As they listened, they also underlined or highlighted the language features. After that, the students conversed with their group members or desk partners, telling each other what in the text appealed to them, what they liked and what they already knew.

In eliciting responses from the students and to encourage the sharing of the outcomes of their group or peer conversations, she prompted them to verbally provide the attributes of the characters that were mentioned in the text. Reinforcing the "show not tell", a focused feature of their writing skill, Lily guided the students toward making connections to their life situations that called for them to take risks.

Then, staying focused on the language features in the text, she reminded the students that:

"Putting some spaces between paragraphs would make it easier for us to read as an audience.

What's in the first paragraph? That's right, physical attributes.

[What about] the next paragraph? [repeating student's answers] Hobbies.

And the next, yes, his relationship with the writer."

What paragraphs would you have? Remember FANBOYS [a mnemonic device that stands for the coordinating conjunctions in English]. Don't write simple sentences, you can add some more ideas together using them.

We haven't described the characters and places. What are some of the language features that you can use to describe? [Students responded: Similes and metaphors] Yes, possibly including some similes and metaphors would be helpful.

And what is the purpose of our writing? Who is our audience?

You may write to explain, entertain, or describe, and your audience are visitors to Springville Intermediate who would be interested to find out more about you.

Also, think about the structure, organisation, think about your punctuation and spelling. These are the assessment points. You may refer to your guideline."

The model used was an anonymous student's first draft, and in getting her students to notice their mistakes in language features, she said:

"When you're reading the sample text, you'll be seeing spelling mistakes, punctuation mistakes. You'll notice that when you're reading. Remember, it's about the quality and not the quantity. I know this is gonna be a bit stressful with the time, but this is something we're gonna look into when we come back next term."

Lily often exhibited kind patience: patience in responding to her students' random questions, patience in explaining the tasks and their learning goals, and the patience in waiting quietly for them to settle down and focus on the lesson(s). Her LTL goals of developing their writing skills, and moving forward in the NZC levels for reading and writing were clear, focused, and

always made known to the students. The assessment described was one way of her gathering evidence of students' progress. Additionally, in her customary way of teaching practices, she would model, share her personal experiences, and then encourage her students to do the same.

Furthermore, reflective of her teaching philosophy of "learning from good examples, modelling and noticing", Lily strongly encouraged her students to "go a little deeper and notice those key things authors are doing really, really well". This was so that they could "put into their own work and improve" during literacy lessons. Like the example above, she would guide her students to deconstruct a piece of text, notice the purpose of each paragraph, and highlight good key sentences that they could use and get started with their own writing. Students applied "noticing" in their reading too, because as they engaged in independent reading, they began telling her "Oh, this author in this book's done this and I would love to try that in my writing". Also, as students worked on recrafting their own written pieces, they would say "Oh, could I change that to make it better?". As noticing and learning from examples became a common practice in the classroom, Lily explained that she was inculcating a "growth mindset of forever improving" among her students.

Technology-Infiltration: Assessing and Using "New Texts" in the Classroom

Sometimes [a literacy lesson] requires them to use their listening skills, because [information and input] can be presented to them using audio type form. And sometimes instead of printed texts, they would be doing viewings. For example, we've been on our new unit where we've been doing a lot of viewing of different videos to do with different types of economies. And then we were really working on note taking, using graphic organisers to note down ideas and things. That's all to do with literacy, that actual viewing of something and being able to put it into a written note form. But the viewing part is named comprehending something and taking it all in so it doesn't necessarily have to be a written text in front of them.

Encouraging students to utilise technology for learning and working with a variety of texts (printed, digital and multimodal) had become a part and parcel of Lily's LTL. As she taught

herself to be competent in technological skills, she had amassed an impressive range of digital teaching materials, all made available to her students on the Google Classroom page she continuously updated. An advocate for PowerPoint and Google slides that incorporate videos and pictures, she found them useful in enhancing students' understanding besides "adding something different" to lessons. Also aware and respectful of her students' diverse interests and knowledge, she made sure they had the opportunity to make decisions for themselves. Furthermore, Lily's frequent use of digital materials and technology had indirectly helped develop multiple literacies and technological skills amongst her students. The following is an illustration of how literacy, following the transdisciplinary mode of teaching and learning, took place across the learning areas (literacy and UOI). Lily recounted them to me in one of our post-observation conversations:

So, I've got... [walked to the shelf to retrieve them] three groups and so three modelling books for reading, and they are in their level groups at the moment. I use modelling books for my planning and that's something that we do schoolwide. Everything that we read got a context to do with our Unit of Inquiry so I try to link whatever texts we are reading to the units. So, what we are reading helps them to understand the central idea, what we are looking into up there [referring to the notice board at the back of the classroom where the theme and learning points are put up]. So, we have a different purpose everytime that we are reading for, and obviously "WALT – what we are learning to do" and our "success criteria" can be quite different each time as well depending on what the purpose for the text is and what I think they need to get out of it. But, they write in here themselves and so it's quite a book that we both own and write in. I meet with one group at a time and sometimes it'll all be one session spent on a text. Sometimes we'll spend more than one session on a text and go deeper into that text; but always linking to the units – it's got a little bit more of a purpose so that they're thinking.

For example, this week we didn't actually read a School Journals text because we've been looking at lots of really science-y articles and journal texts. We actually looked at some examples of artefacts and the object labels from the British Museum, and the purpose was so that they could identify the features in the object label and actually

write their own one. So, they had an activity where they had to match up different object labels with different artefacts in looking very closely. So, it really had a purpose and they were really engaged in it because they know when I'm making my artefact at the moment, I need to be able to write this object label for artefact to go with the team museum, and people are going to come and see this "How do I do that?". So yeah, trying to give them a little bit of a purpose.

And the other day when we did fossil hunting, I talked to them a little bit about Shavers, obviously, one of the first people that discovered these fossils. We talked about what it means to be a modern day scientist versus a scientist in her time, and I talked to them about this place I visited in Bolivia where actual real dinosaur footprints had been found and I had seen thousands of them on the wall. So, they went away and actually did a little bit more research into that themselves and were really interesting. They found their own videos that they could share and it gave them more of an understanding of what the scientists were thinking when they first discovered that versus what we now know about fossils that we were looking at, how we've gained knowledge and things like that. And they are so used to [researching online]. For example, when you were here and we started the expedition applications, the students went away and found a website and just started reading. They are so used to... if they're interested in something and they want to know more, they just go away and use a device to learn themselves. So, I think it's a tool that they know they can use to further their learning if they're really interested in a certain topic, which I think is awesome.

I asked Lily if she thought this was a way of connecting school literacy to students' personal and home literacies and she answered:

I think [searching for information online] is just something that they are so used to doing at home, and especially with lockdown, with so many of them having access to devices, it just seems that's gone even further, the way that they search for things, where they know where to look for information has grown. And I allow them to use devices [in the classroom], I think that helps. But also I feel like you need to guide

them a little bit as to where they go and search for things so, we talk a little bit about different sources; finding three pieces of information that are the same to know – you know, so we talk about what an authentic source would be and things like that. So, it's not just as if they just go off and look for things. There is a little bit of guidance there. We've had those small discussions but it hasn't been something that I've explicitly sat them down and said, "this block, we're doing a whole session on this is how we research". It kind of comes through an authentic purpose – we have to do research to find something, how are we going to go about doing that rather than sitting them down and teaching them these skills.

Also as I wondered if Lily might have directly or indirectly influenced the way her students presented their work with all the slides that she had prepared, she responded enthusiastically:

Yeah, yeah, definitely. So, even when we are doing small little things, they would say, 'Oh, can I use the Google slides for this?', or 'Do I have to present it using this way? Can I use this tool instead?' So, I think with me going out there and finding different ways myself presenting things to them, they're keener to go out there and find different ways of doing things too and ways that they can present things. So, yeah, it's really awesome. For example, with our museum objects, we just decided that this time we will do a virtual museum rather than just having the objects set up in class and doing like a gallery walk, which we would do anyway because they've created them, but we thought it'd be quite cool to create a virtual museum. We can then share them with a wider community of people rather than just sharing with one or two classes. So, it's almost taking it to the next level and the audience grows when they can have access to our device and create something like that.

Lily's adeptness at employing technological tools for teaching and learning grew out of her passion for professional learning and growth. She invested a significant amount of personal time exploring and researching online on how to make a website. She discussed and sought advice from her fellow colleagues who were skilled at that. She would find out what they had done and be keen to learn from their examples. She believed that instead of saying "Well, I've always done it this way on paper and that's how I am going to continue to do it", she

could learn by simply asking “That’s really cool. How did you put that together? Can you show me?”. As she said:

I think you have to be keen to put yourself out there a little bit and take the time to explore. So, it is time out of your personal time outside of school, I think, to explore and put that together. But when you see the benefits of it for the students and how engaged they often are in it; I think it’s worthwhile - especially when I see how well they can use it, and on days when I am away and they still get done what I would have expected.

Part III: Lily’s Vision of Successes and Challenges

Catering to Student Diversity

Catering to a large class of 33 with three different achievement levels in addition to multiple interests and learning preferences proved to be Lily’s biggest challenge in LTL. On working with students of different levels, she would design tasks and tailor levels of guidance that were able to meet students’ capabilities, and simultaneously elevate them to a higher reading and writing level. For example, using a Level 3 text with students in Level 3, she would work with them and steer the discussion to a higher level (Level 4 or Level 5), prompting them on how they could dwell deeper, do their own research, or make their own connections at that higher level. In doing so, the students would be aware of their current level and how to progress to the next.

On meeting students’ different learning interests and styles, she would try to change things up in the different workshops, allowing for certain sessions to be a bit more practical and hands-on. She knew that some of her boys learned well when it was a real life context and enjoyed having hands-on activities. However, Lily also related that it could be hard to get a balance sometimes, and there were even some lessons where that was not possible. She would regret having to come out with something that was not authentic because the students would say, “Why are we doing this? It’s not actually real.” But above all, she thought

meeting everybody's needs, and the inability to sit down one-on-one with the students and to talk to them personally, to be her biggest challenge.

It's just impossible to do that. So, if I had more time to spend individually with students one-on-one, conferencing with them and talking to them, I think that would be amazing. But having a large class and trying to manage how you are going to spend this much time with them one-on-one or in small groups and extend them as much as possible, that's the challenge. It's really really hard.

Finding Joy in Every Progress

Nevertheless, Lily discovered that prompting students to think about their learning and progress had been beneficial. She frequently asked them, "What are your next steps? What are you working on to take this piece of writing from this level to this level? What do you need to do as a reader to get from here to here?". She found encouragement from the students' replies, and joy in seeing them achieving those little successes. She recognised that success manifested in various ways among her students, in correspondence with their capabilities and her expectations or knowledge of what they could achieve. She thought that the writing assessment was successful because every single student managed to write something, particularly those who sometimes struggled to even get anything down on paper. She also thought seeing students working a little bit harder to build up that passion for literacy, to enjoy and to engage with it more often, was a form of success. As she said it:

I enjoy supporting the students, even those students that come and say, 'I don't like writing, I've got nothing to write about'. Helping them find something to write about or a purpose that makes you feel like 'Wow!' and when you see their reactions like 'Oh, I actually do have something to write about!', 'I do know about that and I can do it'. Yeah, it makes you feel awesome!

Epilogue

Small in physique but mighty in will and actions; firm and focused on teaching goals but flexible in approaches; strict in the projected image but genuinely caring and knowing of her students, Lily's passion for the teaching profession was plain to see. Having had the privilege to walk with her while she was on duty, and in listening to her talk about the school's approaches to learning, the trust placed upon students through "the trusted classroom" model, the liaisons with the contributing primary schools, and the focus on elevating students' level of achievement in reading and writing, Lily demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of self, subject-matter, curriculum, students and milieu. More than that, I also experienced Lily's everyday challenges of working with real-life students, to be able to handle their emotions and social issues. That brought back memories of what Lily told me in our first meeting, about being a teacher: "It's really busy, but never boring".

CHAPTER V: SUMMERVILLE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

5.1 School's Background

Summerville Intermediate School, located in a suburban area of Kirikiriroa Hamilton, is a state co-educational composite school that provides education for Years 7 and 8. It takes pride in its cultural diversity with a population of approximately 600 students from various ethnic backgrounds. They include Māori, Pākehā, Asian, Pasifika, and other ethnic groups (Middle Eastern, Latin American, and African) (Education Count, 2021). At the time of data collection, the school's composite homerooms consisted of Year 7 and Year 8 students, and each housed an average of 30 students. Of these classes, two were accelerated learning classes providing extension and enrichment for students with already high academic achievements, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Admission to these classes involved a stringent selection process. Parents first nominated their children, and the students were invited to participate in the accelerate testing organised by Summerville Intermediate to determine their eligibility. The school also expressed its commitment to accelerate the academic progress of all its students.

With the NZC underpinning the school's curriculum, Summerville Intermediate aimed to foster a supportive environment and provide quality learning and teaching programmes for all its students. The students were predominantly based in their homeroom for two years (Years 7 and 8) with one teacher who was responsible for teaching them the core curriculum. On the whole, teaching and learning focused on key competencies outlined in the NZC – thinking; using languages, symbols and texts; managing self; relating to others; and participating and contributing – alongside its core values of love and compassion, relationships, and guardianship. Teachers were expected to encourage, model, and explore these values throughout the year and link them directly to student learning. At the time of data collection, the school was working towards achieving equity in students' learning achievement through recognising various cultural perspectives, particularly Tikanga Māori⁷ and Te Reo Māori. Taken together, Summerville's goal could be seen as reflective of the overarching NZC's vision statement – to create "young people who will be confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners" (MOE, 2007, p. 7).

⁷ Tikanga Māori are "Māori customary values and practices", or "the ethical and common law that underpin the behaviour of members of whanau (extended family), hapū (clan) and iwi (tribe) as they go about their lives" (Mead, 2016, pp. 24 – 25).

Summerville Intermediate School was well resourced, and technology was utilised to facilitate teaching and learning. It was a Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD) school with secured wireless connection in place. Each classroom was also equipped with either a projector or a flat-panel television that acted as the ‘big screen’ during teacher-led sessions. While students were allowed to bring smartphones to school, their usage was prohibited during learning sessions and schooling hours unless permission was obtained. Educational websites that supported the development of literacy skills and Google Applications (Google Drive and Google for Education Suite) were common sights in the classrooms.

5.2 School’s Focus

The 2018 ERO report indicates that Summerville Intermediate School’s programmes were inclusive and responsive to students’ interests. Its conducive classroom environments allowed for positive relationships between the students and teachers to develop. There was also collaboration between teachers in sharing teaching strategies, and a new focus on integrating literacy across the curriculum. However, the report also raised concerns that the school needed to achieve equitable and excellent outcomes for all students, and to raise the achievement of their students in reading, writing, and mathematics to the expected national levels.

Following the outcomes of the 2018 ERO report, Summerville Intermediate had taken immediate measures for improvement and made considerable changes to its curriculum. Its latest curriculum – reviewed and implemented in 2019 – emphasised meeting the needs of students in an authentic, meaningful, and culturally responsive way. Additionally, achievement data for Year 8 students collected by the school leaders in 2019 showed that a proportionate number of their students have made accelerated progress in their literacy and numeracy. As communicated by the research participants, Helena and Ruby, these positive changes could also be attributed to the change in leadership in early 2019. Overall, the school’s annual target remained on elevating the levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy, while maintaining a holistic learning experience through offering specialist classes and extracurricular activities.

5.3 School's Curriculum and Literacy Programme

5.3.1 A Curriculum based on the NZC

During the period of data collection, the school's key professional development was focused on writing (specifically on using 'Write That Essay' programme with students in the classroom), Teaching as Inquiry (collaborative inquiry) and cultural responsiveness. Summerville's senior leadership team mentioned that the aim was to accelerate student progress by working to improve the teachers' pedagogical ability and content knowledge, in addition to exploring the digital curriculum. Taken together, the school had embarked on "developing a curriculum [that was] designed for 21st Century learners with an inquiry focus" (Summerville Intermediate School's Teaching and Learning Guidelines, 2019 – 2021 [the guidelines], 2018, research data). The school's literacy programme was also reflective of the following statements from the Literacy Learning Progressions:

Students read in order to locate, evaluate, and synthesise information and ideas within and across a range of texts as they generate and answer questions to meet specific learning purposes across the curriculum; and students need to confidently and deliberately choosing the most appropriate processes and strategies for writing in different learning areas (MOE, 2010, p. 17).

Imperative to providing the contexts to understand the teachers' narratives, the four key elements from the guidelines that were of relevance to the current research – collaborative planning, minimum requirements for weekly literacy planning, writing expectations, and assessment guidelines – are elaborated in the following paragraphs:

The year 2019 saw a return to comprehensive school-wide collaborative planning of teaching and learning guidelines for Summerville Intermediate School that was to be implemented on a term by term basis. Aimed at increasing collegiality, all teachers were expected to contribute ideas and co-develop the plan to ensure a synchronised quality teaching and learning programme across the school to improve student achievement. The collaborative plan assimilated student learning outcomes or success criteria (SLOs), we are learning to (WALT), key competencies and learner values, teaching sequences, specific assessment details, and

planning for home learning and resourcing. While the plan provided a direction in teaching and learning, each individual teacher would make the necessary modifications to suit the needs of students in their classrooms. Thus, the plan was descriptive rather than prescriptive whereby the teachers or the teams had the capacity to choose resources and learning activities at their own discretion or use the ones suggested. The concentrated focus was on ensuring key competencies and the school values were deliberately and consistently taught across the school. Table 5 shows a sample of a week of literacy planning (WALTs and success criteria or specific reading and writing learning outcomes) intended for Helena’s team and accelerated classes:

Table 5

Sample Weekly Literacy Planning for Level 4/5 Students

Literacy Week 7		
WALT analyse text	WALT craft a well-structured paragraph	WALT plan effectively for a writing task
<p>Success criteria: I will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define analyse as examine or scrutinise • Understand that ‘on the surface’ features is the factual information it contains • Identify the factual information the text contains by listing the 5Ws and H • Understand that the ‘technical’ features relate to the text’s purpose, structure, and language features • Identify the author’s purpose and effect • Identify a range of language features, explain their effect and link these to the author’s purpose • Use the technical features to hypothesise who the intended audience is • Understand that ‘search and think’ relates to making a judgment about the text • Form an opinion about the text with justification by using specific examples from the text 	<p>Success criteria: I will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write a clear topic sentence that states what the paragraph will be about 2. Include key words/phrases from the task in the topic sentence 3. Develop my ideas by explaining my topic sentence in more depth 4. Provide a specific example to support my explaining sentences 5. Use facts, statistics, quotes etc. as supporting evidence 6. Craft a concluding sentence that contains the key words/phrases from the topic sentence 	<p>Success criteria: I will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define TAPES as: T - text type A - audience P - purpose (persuade, inform, entertain, self) E - effect text will have on the reader S - structure (What graphic organiser will I use to organise my ideas?) • Identify TAPES for the writing task • List relevant ideas for the S • Classify notes/ facts/ figures and use these to generate a main idea • Provide a minimum of three pieces of evidence to develop a main idea • Sequence my ideas for the reader in a logical order • Evaluate if the plan helped the content of my writing and if it made the processes of drafting easier.

5.3.2 Literacy Programme

What follows the sample WALTs and success criteria as shown in Table 4 is a breakdown of goals, topics, and activities for individual groups. To understand its implementation, there is a need to turn to the minimum requirements for weekly literacy planning set by the school. First and foremost, it was a school-wide expectation that teachers identified and differentiated students according to their achievement levels. The differentiation should be visible in that “when someone comes in, they can see how your groups have been organised” (Helena, Interview Data). As stated in *The Guidelines* (2018), experienced teachers were given more leeway whereby they might experiment with more fluid grouping, workshopping, and personalised learning approaches. Although no restrictions were placed upon beginning teachers, it was imperative that they had a good understanding of learning at each level first before planning their own. Next is a planned rotation that entailed teacher, follow-up, and practice/independent work. The sessions – which group of students would be working with the teacher and what other students do at the same time – should be clearly indicated and made known to the class. Additionally, the sequence of learning should be evident for each group through the week. Other key elements that were to be included in the plans were text names, WALTs and success criteria, and evidence of planning for deliberate acts of teaching (DATs). For example, teachers should note down what key questions or modelling they are going to use with the students. As a rule, teachers’ planning must correspond to the school-wide planning in terms of the ‘learning and inquiry focus’ as far as possible. Courtesy of Helena, an example that encapsulates the required elements and shows the differentiated activities between two groups of students (Level 4 and Level 5) is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Sample Differentiated Goals, Activities and Instructions

	Group 1 (Level 4)	Group 2 (Level 5)
Goal	Sentence structures and vocabulary	Paragraph styles
Topic	Bugs, rather than meat, should be the only protein we eat.	Gaming has changed our generation forever
1	Note down your initial position on the topic and reasons. <u>Bugbix for Breakfast</u> . Read the text.	Note down your initial position on the topic and reasons. Start to locate and bookmark relevant sites to explore the topic further.
2	In your group, record facts from the text in a shared document.	WALT analyse a text. Text: <u>Video Games</u>
3	WALT analyse a text. Text: <u>Bug Milk</u>	Follow Up: Complete recording relevant facts from the text.

4	Watch: Can eating insects save the world? Take notes to support your position.	Reading for additional information on the topic.
1	Complete watching Can eating insects save the world? Take notes to support your position.	Complete article analysis, specifically considering the main ideas of each paragraph first, will be helpful. If you have time, watch: Glow Kids
2	Independent 1: Using the ' How to craft a speech ' sheet, complete crafting getting out of misdemeanor piece.	Watch: Glow Kids , taking notes of relevant points for essay
3	Independent 2: Outside, peer share, giving feedback and feed forward against the table created about effective communication on Monday.	Independent 1: Using the ' How to craft a speech ' sheet, complete crafting getting out of misdemeanor piece.
Extension: planning for essay		
4	WALT use a range of sentence structures for effect. Context: Em-dash Models Topic: Leaders	Independent 2: Outside, peer share, giving feedback and feed forward against the table created about effective communication on Monday.
5	Follow-up: Consolidate understanding by watching video on WTE module and completing the follow up quiz	Independent 3: Complete planning for essay. Use the WALT plan effectively for a writing task to guide this. See WALT at the top of the document.

Note: The underlined topics indicate hyperlinks. Clicking on them would direct students to the files stored on Google Drive.

As writing was one of Summerville Intermediate’s key achievement focus areas, the expectations on teachers were high. With reference to the weekly literacy planning (Tables 5 and 6), the teaching of writing should be conducted via ‘differentiated writing groups’ where all groups were regularly attended to. Specifically, there should be a minimum of two teacher-guided sessions each week for reading and writing. This meant that the groups must be given differentiated teaching strategies and learning outcomes (measured in WALTs and success criteria), with the activities appropriately linked. Teachers were reminded that groupings needed to be fluid based on student need. Under this, a special mention was made concerning the Ngā Whetū group, or students who are “operating below the expected curriculum level and will require acceleration and strategic support to reach the expected curriculum level” (Research Data, The Guidelines, 2018). For this group, teachers were required to go one step further to plan for, teach, and monitor their progress.

The use of modelling books – whether the black hardcover version or electronic on Google – was expected. The modelling books needed to be made accessible to the students as a resource

and a reference, as they contained the information pertaining to their learning. This included the WALT, success criteria, text name and a copy of the text, record of learning such as discussion points and students' thoughts, graphic organisers, and follow up tasks. Teacher modelling was equally emphasised. These were then used together with student writing books and/or devices. The school required teachers to ascertain the extent to which their students' writing books show "planning, drafting, and editing practices which would include the use of grammatical conventions and spelling, amongst other things" (The Guidelines, 2018, p. 3, research data) and a progression over the year during the various stages of the writing process. Following this, teachers were strongly encouraged to use writing samples, particularly those from *electronic assessment tools for teaching and learning* (e-asTTle). Finally, planning and assessment were expected for this learning area, differentiated following whether the students are 'experienced, developing, or beginning'. An area of importance and hence a key element of its own, the assessment is further explained in the following paragraph.

The purpose of assessment was to inform planning to meet student learning needs and to improve student progress and achievement. Assessments should be integrated within each unit of work taught, which meant the achievement objectives with the related WALT needed to be assessed. Teachers were required to have records of assessments that were well organised, up to date, and accessible to others. A combination and variety of assessment was necessary, appropriate to meet the requirements of what was being assessed (summative and formative). For example, these might include comments related to WALTs, e-asTTle reading used formatively, work samples, pre and post-tests, modelling books, and student workbooks and work on the walls. What and how it was to be assessed were done in conjunction with the planning process. Each student had a Learning Journal and Assessment Folder that provided evidence of their progress and achievement to support the mid-year and end-of-year school reports, in addition to the 'Overall Teacher Judgments' (OTJs). The OTJs involved drawing on and applying the evidence gathered within a period of time in order for teachers to evaluate student's progress and achievement (TKI, 2022). The minimum samples for each half of the year included two reading samples, four writing samples, integrated samples, and students' learning goals and their reflection.

Following this brief school context are the teachers' – Helena and Ruby – narratives.

HELENA

Prologue

A teacher of an accelerated learning class, Helena was herself quick-witted and academically talented. Being the homeroom teacher of 32 bright emerging adolescents who had a knack for asking challenging questions, and giving counter-responses and “opinions about everything”, Helena would have an equally good comeback. Such dynamics contributed to interesting and often hilarious interactions in the classroom. The positive relationships between Helena and her students were apparent:

Oh yes, I’m always challenged. But I have quite a dry sense of humour, which they like. They’ll tell you I’m very sarcastic. Yeah, apparently they think I’m funny. I think my relationships are pretty good with them. So you can, it sounds awful, but you can say something like ‘Oh my god, you’re so annoying’, but they genuinely just think it's funny. They're like, ‘You're so funny when you're frustrated’.

Our introductory interview took place on a chilly Saturday morning in a local cafe but I recall a light, warm and engaging talk with Helena. Helena “forewarned” me of her students’ characters when I mentioned classroom observations, much to my amusement. She said that “they’re very loud, some quite quirky kids, and you’ll see, after four days in my class, you’ll see some quite different characters”. Nonetheless, I had not expected such a pleasant welcome and an inquisitive class, owing to the flattering introduction Helena gave of me. Explaining my presence to the students, she told them who I was and discussed the laborious process of PhD research, as well as the journey to obtaining a doctoral degree. That piqued her students’ interests and led them to ask questions about conducting research. Thereafter, she instructed her students to wave and briefly introduce themselves to me as they answered the roll-call. That marked the beginning to a beautiful start to my research collaboration with Helena. In this regard, it is only fair to return the favour – by introducing Helena and the narrative of her literacy beliefs and teaching practices.

Part I: Introducing Helena

Brilliant with a Passion for Learning

Helena was born in England but emigrated to New Zealand at the tender age of six. Helena's parents – having secured new job offers – had made that decision to escape the 1980s recession in the United Kingdom. Partially for that economic reason too, she grew up as the only child in her family and recounted “doing heaps of stuff together” with her mum. For Helena, that also meant the absence of sibling rivalry and having more opportunities presented to her, such as a private education. She recounted how her parents sent her to a private school in an adjacent town because the only private school in Hamilton catered to boys back then. Because of that, she had to “bus out there every day to that school”, from Year 7 to graduating from high school at Year 13. Her routine entailed “catching the bus at a quarter past seven in the morning, attending classes and after-school sport and cultural activities, and catching the bus again at a quarter past five in the evening – coming home with homework to complete”. Despite the long hours, Helena highly enjoyed her schooling experience and gushed at the activities she had taken part in:

Oh, I loved school. I can't really tell you why I liked school but I did love school. When I went to high school, there were lots of different subjects and lots of different opportunities to do other things like pottery club, lots of arts and then I started rowing as one of my sports. I was terrible at the start, but then I finally got it and then I got better. And then I loved the subjects of senior high school. So, I did like classical studies, history and art. I loved those subjects.

Similar to the students that she taught, Helena was accelerated in her high school English and Mathematics and sat for her first set of NCEA-equivalent (it was known differently back then) exams in Year 10 instead of Year 11. Due to this, she completed high school (Year 13) with seven subjects “instead of the normal five”. However, the pressures of doing well academically left Helena feeling “probably burnt-out a little, like really over it and done”. Hence, she opted for a gap year, went back and worked at a private school in Bristol, England. Helena returned to New Zealand after that brief work stint and resumed her

education journey, undertaking a Bachelor of Social Sciences with a major in psychology and history. Her venture into the teaching profession came years later, after having worked in a different industry upon graduating.

Becoming a Teacher: “For Stability and for Family”

It is interesting to note how one’s childhood experience impacts adulthood, with Helena’s decision to come into teaching being a result of the “massive recession in the UK about 2007 and 2008 that hit [New Zealand] really badly as well”. In England, Helena was working alongside her husband in the aluminium industry when she thought that getting into a different profession, such as teaching, would offer better stability and long-term job security. She also considered the fact that her daughter would be attending school in a couple of years and wanted to be able to still care for her. Helena confided amusingly, “So, that’s the initial really lame reason why I became a teacher. I don’t want my daughter to actually go to holiday programmes, and I didn’t want us to be in a position where [my husband] would lose his job”.

Helena moved back to New Zealand, completed the one-year Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching, and began her journey into teaching. Notably within that one year of training to be a teacher, she had practicum experience in the low-primary, mid-primary and high-primary schools – encountering and learning to teach children of different age-ranges. She experienced her middle practicum in Summerville Intermediate, and officially joined the school’s teaching staff in April 2012. Helena shared that:

Getting a job in New Zealand is about who you know, and so frequently, if you did well in a practicum, it does you quite well to get a job later on. But essentially, at that time, there was a lot of competition for the jobs – it was super competitive. So to be realistic, the first job was basically like whatever job you could actually get to be able to get your registration and get through. And mine happened to be intermediate and I love intermediate, so yeah.

Helena appreciated the opportunity to teach a range of subjects and that “there's always something different in intermediate because we're always trying to integrate the curriculum”. She was able to keep the passion for all subjects as she engaged in various professional learning and development (PLD) programmes to prepare for new teaching and learning practices and materials. In her ninth year of teaching, Helena had settled expertly into the rhythm of teaching and developed her own teaching style, all in her current workplace.

Changes and Continuities: The Make of an Experienced Teacher

I've been given lots of different opportunities, I've had a lot of growth. And that time, and so we've talked about those three principles as well, so it's like three different skills. So I have had a lot of opportunities to do extra skills and stuff.

Throughout her years of teaching, Helena had accumulated a thick portfolio and a wealth of experiences. First and foremost, having worked with three principals, she expressed that it was “quite good because you learn a lot by having different changes in senior leadership”, likening it to acquiring three different skills. During the time of data collection, she was the head of mathematics, coordinator of the school's PLD programme (chiefly the ‘Write That Essay’ website), a member of the student achievement team focusing on numeracy and literacy, and a tutor teacher or mentor to beginning teachers. Besides assuming these roles, Helena was also involved in organising and taking students out for academic competitions such as the maths problem-solving and literature quiz. It was understandable when she said that “I've had a lot of growth” and credited Summerville for the learning opportunities.

Nevertheless, it was a gradual growth with the passage of time, one that started out with Helena's mentor teachers and the “group of the six beginning teachers, where we're all asking each other questions and learning together”. Helena added appreciatively, “I think I was very lucky to come into a school where there were so many very good teachers in my first couple of years”. She was thankful for their support and help whenever she needed them. Having formed a friendship with one of her mentor teachers, Helena related

that although she “initially modelled how she wanted to be in her practice, it has become more mutual now through sharing of ideas”. In keeping up with the demand of daily teaching, she continued to engage in her own professional learning, where she frequently looked for reading materials, “always Googling stuff as well, always looking”. Adding to that was the school’s PLD programmes, such as the recently completed postgraduate certificate in digital learning, The MindLab.

Helena also found her history of travelling extensively in her 20s with her husband, and past working experiences of being immersed in construction that involved a substantial amount of methodical planning and organising, useful in teaching. On the former, Helena cited that her students often showed great interest whenever she related her personal stories such as “Oh, I've been here and I've seen this piece of art. It is massive” and they would respond with “Whoa, where else have you been?”. That helped Helena to bond and build good relationships with her students, an aspect of teaching that she highly regarded. Whereas for the latter, they enabled her to understand different industries and gave her “some kind of empathy for other career paths”. As she explained it:

And you can talk about those to students, they're like, ‘Have you always been a teacher?’ And it's like, ‘No, there's a lot of other ways and you will probably not just be whatever it is. When you leave school, that will not be you forever, you'll find lots of different things’. I think that's helpful.

Being a Teacher: Academic-Oriented but Caring and Empathetic

Helena, as a mother with an intermediate-aged child herself, opined that being a teacher and a mum “kind of both help each other”. Helena gained an understanding of “what are the good skills to help develop out of her and her students” from observing her daughter and her friends. Also describing herself as empathetic and caring, she understood her students’ learning needs, and was able to talk to them about growing up. For example, she felt comfortable raising the topics of experiencing hormonal changes and “the first flush of love” with her students. She could also empathise with some of the students and parents who had a hard time going through the transition from primary to intermediate

school. She would assure them by saying, “I’ve been through with my daughter too, so it’s not just you”. Helena believed that “because you’ve got more life experience and maturity, I think you can probably deal, particularly at intermediate, you can deal with some of the stuff they are going through better”.

As aforementioned, Helena expressed that she worked “very hard on the relationships with the kids”. She thought them all as “lovely, and that’s what I like about them”. However, she also found that it could get emotionally draining when her students experienced many “personal things going on at once”. This was because even though she wanted “to try to help all of them out”, sometimes it could be just beyond her capabilities. And when the students displayed their “sense of humour at inappropriate times” such as “being funny in that reading lesson, that’s not super helpful”, it could be exhausting. Nonetheless, jumping to her students’ defence, Helena quickly added “but deep down, they’re not deliberately malicious, it’s that they just don’t think about the outcome of their behaviour”. Therefore, Helena knew better than to take things personally but kept focused on her students’ academic achievement:

I'm very focused on academic achievement, not to the expense of everything else, but I'm very clear that these are the New Zealand Curriculum goals. And I'm very clear of our goals. If we're already achieving above where the New Zealand Curriculum says, so that's not what we're doing, but we're achieving as much growth in two years.

Besides academic growth, Helena was clear on promoting the students’ growth as individuals:

So we are always talking about the whole person and ‘What else might you know about being a good person?’ and ‘What are those skills or attributes that you can bring in if you're in this situation?’ And about, ‘if I'm good at maths and I'm not good at writing’, for example, ‘then I need to be open to being good at stuff and developing that’. Yeah, all about like, focus. So they're very good at helping each other.

Heart-warming “Really Deep Relationships” with the Students

Many of them will be far cleverer than I am, when they add up, but that doesn't really worry me because, as an adult, you do know more big-picture stuff than they do. It's also kind of a gift because if they can do it so fast, then they can show the other kids how to do it. And it's fun, like, they've got a very good sense of humour and they're all nice kids.

From the friendly and light-hearted interactions Helena had with her students to how she spoke fondly of them, one could gauge her “really deep relationships” with them. Thus unsurprisingly, Helena mentioned her students, “I love the kids; I love that age group”, as one of the best aspects about teaching. It also helped that Summerville Intermediate practised a policy of students staying put under a particular teacher for two years, allowing her the pleasure of seeing them grow and change. “You kind of see through this really cool period of growth and maturity”, and similarly, for “the students to form that really deep relationship with you”, Helena said. But above all, I saw it for myself too and when she repeated herself saying, “Yeah, so the kids, really love the kids”. Essentially, at the end of the two years with her students, her hopes for her students were:

Oh, just to be happy and to do well, to have choices as well. So, we were talking about, ‘If you did well at school, you get more choices about what to do next’. So that's why I'm basically like, if they get into the top classes at high schools in Year 9, often they get looked after really, really well. You know, that kind of good, really good teachers for most parts. So I'm like, ‘you need to be in the top set, because otherwise you'll be bored. And when you're bored, you will all be annoying and then you'll start getting into trouble’.

To sum up, Helena could be blunt and frank with her students, and they would still take her advice and regard her with utmost respect. Vice versa, she embraced their individuality and uniqueness. This led to a classroom dynamic that encompassed fast-paced activities, a balance in teacher-student power, and many light-hearted moments. Those were what I

managed to observe, in my four opportunities of experiencing Helena’s classroom and LTL practices.

Part II: Helena’s LTL Acts

Similar to her students who were “very academically able”, Helena’s academic background together with her quick-mind and teaching experiences formed a good combination in informing her LTL. In dealing with a group of students who could “just produce and write a lot”, she had a few tricks up her sleeve to keep them both in check and elevate them to a higher level. One of the quirks of the class was how the students would sigh and lament when she put a cap on the number of words in writing. As Helena told them, “You cannot write more than 1000 words, because I just can't get through it. I can’t read anymore”. It was definitely “a gift”, Helena affirmed, as the students’ ability to solve complicated problems was turned into helping each other. But as the more experienced and matured adult, she would challenge their thinking:

So that's kind of a bonus, you know, like having these really clever kids. And a lot of it is about challenging their thinking. So you know, they come in with a sort of predisposed idea. And then you're like, ‘Well, you need to prove it to me and so.’

Against this background, to understand how Helena navigated her LTL practices around students that were academically able, the next part begins by illustrating her literacy belief, knowledge and experience.

Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience

Multimodal and Extensive: Literacy from the NZC Documents

As a member of the ‘student achievement team’ who attended regular meetings with the Head of Literacy and the school’s senior leadership team, Helena shared that one of Summerville’s strategic goals was to accelerate the progress of students in writing and so their “curriculum focus and PLD mainly feed into that”. She added that both the NZC and

the Literacy Learning Progressions (LLP) underpinned the school's literacy planning and programme (or the school guidelines). Guided by these curriculum documents and also her perception of what literacy was, the following unequivocally came through in her classroom practices:

Being literate is about being able to understand whatever it is that you're confronted with, to deal with text or visual or media so that being able to understand and process and gaining meaning from them. I think, encompassed under reading and then curriculum documents [NZC and LLP], it also makes connections to also viewing and understanding different media types.

Helena's notion of 'reading' encompassed a recognition of various communication mediums. Accordingly, her practice involved attempting to acquaint students with different media to develop their "understanding skills", or to "help them get through with some kind of basic formulas and access". She believed that when students possessed the necessary literacy skills, they became more confident around a variety of texts. In this regard, Helena also demonstrated an extended notion of texts, both digital and printed. She frequently engaged webpages, videos, articles, School Journals, or other printed materials supplied by the New Zealand Ministry of Education she deemed suitable in her lessons. Her reason for having a myriad of literacy activities and engaging a variety of materials in different mediums was in consideration for her students who were "interested in quite different things". Hence, she needed to "go wider" and "to manipulate online texts into different forms". As Helena explained:

I copy or cut lots of webpages and articles out if I don't want them to view everything on the website. So lots of the articles I was reading, I have literally snipped off a webpage on my screen. For example, I've used a blog from Psychology Today. But I snapped that, put it into Google Slides and added some pictures because it was just going to be too boring for them. Then to contextualise the content, I found images that are related to the content, so they can kind of see. We watch lots of videos, one of them being a BBC documentary about whether we

should be looking at eating bugs, and then a few 60-second documentaries or little videos as well. So lots of them this morning, we're watching different things.

Inculcating Love for Literacy through Enjoyment

Helena thought that students' literacy practices were both taught (on a basic level) and independently learnt or acquired. She explained that her "top readers and writers" were the ones that were "watching, viewing and listening a lot", and credited their literacy capabilities to "a really, really heavy literate home environment". She was also aware that these students were naturally curious and passionate learners, and they frequently engaged in a lot of discussion and asked a lot of questions with their family members. Mindful of the students' background, she would bring those literacy practices into her classroom, and integrate mind-stimulating questions and prompts for discussion. More importantly, she made it a point to connect their learning to the real-world.

Helena related that she would normally work extensively on a piece of reading text with the students to inculcate their love for reading. She believed that "they have to love reading to become good at it", and "a good literacy programme is enjoyment and interesting things". To pique her students' curiosity and hence interest in literacy, she would look for "high interest topics". For example, in my second observation, Helena had picked the text "Should we eat insects?". Following this topic, she thought she would "buy them some chocolate covered crickets and see if I can get them to eat that?" Helena shared that her intention was to contextualise the students' reading – that the texts were not simply words but "something concrete, something applicable, and something challengeable". But most of all, they were to "keep things interesting" because as she put it firmly:

One of my strongest beliefs is that you have to actually enjoy it. And my second belief is if you don't enjoy it, you have to learn – so I aim for enjoyment but at the deep set, there is a set of skills there even if you're not an amazing reader or writer that you can learn to get through. And it's about teaching though, so that even if they're not super passionate writers, they can get through the next stage of school.

Reject, Replicate or Extend: The Nexus between Personal Literacy Experience and Professional Learning

Helena regarded these literacy beliefs as her “self-fulfilling prophecy”, and she gauged the effectiveness of her lessons through the students’ engagement and progress in their literacy learning. Her personal literacy learning experiences could have fed into her current practices, which she said “had certainly been a valuable learning curve”. The strong response I received from asking about her schooling days was “Uhm, I hated writing in school.” She “hated” creative writing in school because of the expectations to generate a piece of story from scratch, because she was never explicitly taught the structure of an essay, and so everything “was kind of a bit of a mess”. On the flip side, she loved reading and it was both an innate and acquired interest, a result of growing up reading a lot with a mum who read “all the time and she still does”.

Unsurprisingly, her literacy practices reflected both a departure from the uninspiring learning experiences and a continuation of her personal interest. Helena emphasised “trying and feeding in lots of visual prompts and cues” and frequent whole-class discussion, conversation and dialogue to generate ideas for writing. Then, she put her love for reading into good use by reading all the new books in the library in order to make suggestions to the students and teachers who often asked her, ‘Well, what do you recommend?’ or ‘What should I read?’. Further to this, being a teacher had helped improve her knowledge of literacy. She exclaimed that “I know I got through three times at university without knowing what a complex sentence was until I became a teacher and read the LLP”. She had to “teach myself first the stuff that you naturally kind of just pick up” because she believed in teaching oneself first before teaching others. Despite that, Helena contended that a number of the school’s PLD initiatives were focused on nonfiction writing (persuasive), which “kind of cuts out some of the whole having to generate super personal ideas because a lot of it which we want to do is reading and using the reading content in our writing”.

Nevertheless, she continued to improve her teaching by reading extensively as part of her professional learning:

I've been reading Sue Dymock, she looks at teaching reading comprehension, nonfiction texts, and also teaching reading vocabulary. And the classroom setup has come through some culturally responsive stuff there. Sometimes I just Google about how to do things, like the PEEL paragraph that's come off the kids' online writing tools. Oh, I don't know, I just read stuff all the time. There's a whole lot of professional publications around there, I usually read those. And secondly, I got professional reading recommendations, I've got a lot of that, like 'Teaching to the North-East (relationship-based learning in practice). So I ask what my other colleagues are reading as well, yeah.

Looking back at her teaching diploma, although the university "had not prepared her very well for teaching in general", Helena nonetheless affirmed that "in hindsight, it actually prepares you for the *actual* teaching of literacy". However, a brief 12-week 'Teaching English' course with reading and writing combined proved insufficient in the face of the broad spectrum between a Year 0 and a Year 8 classroom. Helena added, "I wouldn't have said that I have taken heaps away from the university. Probably just a good kind of basic". Thus, Helena stated that the school where one's teaching career first took hold along with its focus on professional development and "your ability to go and seek your own personal professional learning" were imperative in continuously improving one's knowledge and practices of literacy.

Multiliteracies Pedagogy: "Never Heard of It Until Now"

Like a juggler on a unicycle, Helena had honed her arts of balancing over the years in three prominent ways. First, while teaching the literacy skills, she was mindful of developing students' interest, independence, and agency. Although uncomfortable at first with "letting go", she tried to "give the kids a lot more choice these days" so that they would be working with "stuff that engage and interest them". But she found comfort in knowing that she still held the knowledge – the conventions of writing and reading, the inclusion of critical thinking skills, and the manners of conducting oneself – to facilitate their learning. Next, she alternated between using abstract and concrete concepts following her students' abilities. For example, with her Year 8s, Helena said that "we could actually go

further and talk more about abstract ideas and social issues” whereas Year 7s required “it to be about the world and stuff that’s kind of tangible to them”. Last but not least, she ensured that technology was being utilised beneficially for literacy activities. Acknowledging that the future workplace would most likely be technology-linked, she allowed students the freedom to work on their devices but still regulated them. Within the classroom setting, working online (such as using the Google Document) “helped with generating writing and the recrafting”, and amplified opportunities for collaborative work as the students shared their writing with each other and received instant feedback. Nevertheless, she maintained that “the key skills haven’t changed” and perceived technology as “additional tools that support learning”. For example, her students would “format their work for the best outcome by thinking about their intended audience”, and then publish to share it. Helena added, “they take a lot of pride in those pieces of work that are up there [displayed in the classroom]”. Taken together, with this strong presence of the principles of multiliteracies pedagogy in her classroom, I asked Helena if she had ever heard of it. Her response was notably simple: “Nope, not until you had it on your information sheet”.

Act 2: Experiencing Helena’s Classroom: LTL Practices

“Write That Essay” and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

At the time of the observation, Summerville’s PLD was centered on two components: ‘Write That Essay’ (WTE) and ‘Culturally Responsive Pedagogy’. They were prominent in Ruby and Helena’s practices and discourses as I conducted the observations and conversations. However, despite the same training received, the implementations had been different in each teacher’s classroom – ranging from the organisation of literacy groups to the types of activities. As explained by Helena:

So we should be grouping students by needs, strength and ability. It’s recommended that we have three groups. However, what you might have seen, I’ve done it differently, as I’ve got eight subgroups running in the room. That was in response to a piece of research done by Poutama Pounamu, which is like a

culturally responsive project. And then I'm just trialling in my room this week, so it's kind of new, a bit kind of mucky. At this point in time, they seem to be really enjoying it. So the groups that are arranged are grouped by the writing goal. So some of them are higher level writers than others in the group. So it's not an ability group test but it's done by goal. And then on Monday, I had four writing topics on the board. As a group, they got to pick which topic they were most interested in. And the reading is to support that writing topic.

Helena's brief description of her literacy lessons and practices provides the entry point into narrating her classroom (and sometimes outdoor) teaching and learning.

A Feisty Classroom: Using "Controversial" Questions to Generate Debates

It was my second classroom observation with Helena. I arrived at around a quarter to nine at Helena's classroom to find her engaged in a discussion with a colleague. Placed on the floor were two big bags of teaching materials and references, books that she was reading for her literacy lessons. I sought Helena's permission to browse through and noted some of them: Teaching Reading Comprehension (Dymock & Nicholson, 2012); The Reading Activity Handbook (Cameron, 2009); The Hikairo Schema for Primary: Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning (Ratima et al., 2020); and 10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know (Anderson, 2011). Then, written on the whiteboard was the writing topic from the day before – Schools should be changed – with discussion prompts for students to work on among themselves. They included some thought-generating questions such as “*What is your purpose of learning?; How has our world changed since the 19th century (1800s)?; What skills will you need as you enter the workforce?; and What skills will you learn at school that will help you?*”. Students were also asked to be prepared to give feedback and share their ideas with the class. I chanced upon two samples of students' writing on her desk, and read them with great interest. They were argumentative texts in which students voiced their opinions that were supported by evidence from the literature. Notably, the students had argued for equipping them with the technological skills they would need for their future.

The bell rang and several students rushed off to their orchestra practice (Fridays were extracurricular activities days). While waiting for the class to settle down for the roll-call, Helena – drawing on the upcoming New Zealand general election fever – instructed her students to “Imagine you’ve just been elected the Prime Minister of New Zealand. How would you introduce your first policy?” When the students had momentarily calmed down, Helena began the roll-call saying, “I’m going to call the roll. When I call you, you’re going to tell me what your first sentence is”. The calm spell was immediately broken as their peers’ responses had them fired up again. To this, Helena nonchalantly replied:

Sit down, sit down. You cannot react to a policy.

Oh, feisty!

This is not the real world. It’s a hypothetical Friday morning world.

I subsequently learnt from Helena of her purpose of doing the roll with a question:

I want them to have an opinion. They might have a lot of knowledge or knowledge about the world but it's like, ‘Well, so what's your opinion about this? What do you think about this?’ So throughout the year, several times a week, I used to do it a lot more often when we were less busy. Like always calling the roll with a question. It doesn't matter, it’s like, ‘Would you be a spider or a snake?’ Nobody cares what the actual responses are, but what would you be and so to force a decision about something? ‘What colour are you today?’ You know, like all sorts of common questions.

A Plethora of Literacy Activities: From Persuasive Writing to Presentation

After the hilarious interactions among the students and between Helena and her students, she directed them onto the starter activity – to work on the WTE website in 15 minutes. As they were engaged in their work, Helena busied herself with writing some prompts and sentence stems for students to complete their reflection sheet on the whiteboard: “*This sample shows; There is partial evidence of... because; I have used... Therefore; In places, there are some examples of...*”. When the alarm on her phone sounded to signal the end of 15

minutes, she prompted the students on what they should do after writing: “*Check back your writing goals (sentence structures), check if it makes sense, edit, and revise*”. Noticing my interest, Helena explained to me that the WTE was a:

PLD from the provider on sentence structures, pre-paragraphing, expansion. It’s an online tool and there are also small group coaching sessions which are focused on teacher needs. Prior to lockdown they would come to school and model the skills with classes of students, so you could watch the lesson being taught with your class. I really like it. It has created a common language across the school for both staff and students. Some of it is quite number driven and is evidence based. Kids like it because they can see where it is going in the future. Also the online tool is great because all of the resources are there, including videos and other help tools, and the kids can run fast feedback and get instant feedback on their writing.

Next, the students were to use those sentences on the whiteboard to complete their reflection sheet. It was a means for Helena to keep track of their achievement of writing goals and areas needing support. Helena approached some students to check on their writing although the WTE provided programmed feedback. It was a flurry of fairly quick-paced activities, in a short period of time. Within an hour, they had completed a ‘quick write’, ‘reflection sheet’ and a book review. Helena gave feedback and feedforward on every student’s writing.

The morning became more interesting as Helena and her students went to the tennis court for a speech practice. This activity was a mini presentation of their previously written persuasive piece, ‘*why they shouldn’t be punished for something they did wrong*’. The students worked in a small group of four to five, took turns – by drawing lots – to give their speech before their group members. Their peers would watch and assess their content (purpose is clear, persuasive language features, good reasoning) and delivery (clarity of voice, range of tone, body language). Then, they would decide if the presentation was ‘developing, achieved, or proficient’ in the form given to them by Helena, substantiated by oral feedback. For instance, the students had mentioned “good body language, eye contacts and hand gestures” and “good pace” when commenting on their peers’

presentation. Overall, the students were enthusiastic about the activity, in both presenting and providing constructive feedback to their peers. When Helena gathered them for the post-presentation discussion, the students expressed that the practice had been helpful in making them better presenters. With that, we moved back to the class with an upcoming writing lesson after the morning break.

Writing Lesson: Analysing, Interpreting and Reacting to Multimodal Texts

Helena started with a multi-group (comprising several subgroups) after the break. Meanwhile, students who were on independent tasks resumed updating their writing goals, reflection and evidence of progress in their individual learning journal. On the mat, Helena began the session by playing a short animation ‘For the Birds’ by Pixar on the 50-inch television. The students watched and reacted to the video – commenting that “it’s so sad”, “that’s a fat bird” (referring to one of the birds that appeared different from the flock), “yes, that’s what I wanted to see. Naked birds on wire”. Helena paused it just before the ending to have their prediction of what would eventually happen to “the bullies”. She instructed the students to “turn to the person next to you, come out with five pieces of vocabulary about the video”. As the students engaged in pair-discussion and shared their answers – “embarrassing, exclusion, nudity, pot belly, bullies, quarrelling, wheat field, socially awkward” – she noted them down in the modelling book. Weaving students’ answers and writing conventions, Helena said:

What do you think the moral of the story is? Or the message of the video? Write in a full sentence. If you’ve got the title, use the quotation marks – “The Birds on the Wire”.

Share your answers with each other. If you agree with someone, say ‘Yes, I agree with what they said’. Or, if you don’t, why?

The *viewing* and *analysis* of the short video continued with the following lively discussion – looking for character traits and development – between Helena and her students:

- Helena Look for character traits, a little bit like looking at character development. I'm gonna pause it, we'll do some talking and a lot of writing as well. Look at the facial expressions, tell me about the little birds' facial expressions.
- Student A The one on the left looks annoyed, the other side looks confused, scared.
- Helena And now what are they doing?
- Student B They are annoyed and complaining a lot. The big bird is still oblivious.
- Helena Good word, Student B. Oblivious. The big bird is still oblivious.
- Student C He thinks he's part of the gang. But I don't think he's dumb, he's just a bit naïve – well, everyone's making noise so I'll make noise as well.
- Student D So, they hit him deliberately.
- Helena Deliberate violence, yes. I do feel like sometimes this mimics a bit of our classroom. What's happening now to the collective group?
- Student A There's a sudden realisation that there's a consequence coming.
- Student E But they can fly. They're so dumb.
- Helena So this is about collective thinking, isn't it? Collectively stupid. They could have chosen to get off the wire individually, but they did not. Character development for the big bird – he's still happy, because it doesn't really bother him.

The discussion was aimed at expanding the students' vocabulary and introducing them to the punctuation mark '*em-dash*' to construct complex sentences. It was one of the eight sentence structures that they had been learning for the past two weeks. Following that, Helena distributed a worksheet and asked the students, "What kind of sentences could we write about the subjects?". Reinforcing their answers, she responded with "I quite like 'a flock of birds' – that's precise, and yes, 'perched'". This teacher-led session ended with Helena advising her students to "add three adjectives to describe the character, remember to capitalise your subject because that's the start of a sentence, and to make sure you've got variation."

Helena then moved onto the next multi-group using the same video, but with a different teaching focus. The students were to write a paragraph to "persuade me (Helena) or not why we should or should not be friends with the little birds". Before that, she instructed the students to decide whether they wanted to be friends with "the little birds that were conniving", and to generate five ideas to support their decision. She initiated by modelling and stating her position, "I'm not going to be friends with the little birds". Then while watching the video, she generated five reasons to support her stand – unable to share;

unable to accept differences; mock easily; give people a hard time; bully to get their own way – with some input from the students. Helena believed that this strategy from the *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 4 to 8* illustrated “the thinking process and skills that are in action”, and was useful for the students to learn. This was based on the premise that she had observed the students mirroring what she was doing or thinking, and eventually picked up the skill themselves. Having high expectations on this group of Year 8s, Helena encouraged them to be more critical in their thinking:

You’re being too simplistic right now. Being at Level 4/Level 5, what’s that metaphor? Although it’s fun and funny, what’s the message behind it? Don’t be too simplistic about the situation. Similarities don’t have to be just physical; it can also be the mindset. At Level 4/5, move away from being too literal or simplistic.

Helena’s reminder steered the group discussion towards a higher level of creativity and criticality. Afterward, she directed the students to:

Turn to the friend next to you, and share two of your main ideas. Remember to pick your strongest one. Remember, we will have a bit of disagreement and well, you don’t have to agree. It doesn’t matter what you pick; pick three points from the video that develop your main idea. For example: unfriendly – turned their backs when the big bird said hello.

As she listened in to the students’ conversations, Helena continued to interact with the students by taking their ideas and developing them further. For example, she responded, “That’s a great analysis from you, but did you notice when the big bird came, how the little birds just banded up together when initially they were far from each other?”. The session concluded with the students writing their persuasive paragraph to which Helena reminded, “I want to see a plan that’s a million times better than the one you did yesterday. Use the PEEL strategy – in the end ‘link’ back to the ‘effect’ you want to achieve.”

An Appreciation of the Reciprocal Nature of Reading and Writing

I experienced LTL that transpired across the curriculum – inquiry (social science), mathematics, and writing lessons – throughout the four classroom observations. Naturally, I awaited a dedicated reading lesson (like the other participants I had seen), only to learn that they had been assimilated. I finally understood what Helena had meant by “the reading is to support the writing topic” as she considered the following when selecting reading materials:

Are they engaging? Do they support the idea or topic that the kids are interested in? Are they age-appropriate? I usually pick reading texts to drive the content of the writing task.

Such a practice lent evidence to Helena’s awareness of the reciprocal nature of reading and writing. She would use reading texts as exemplars to develop her students’ understanding of writing for different purposes and audiences. The following provides an illustration of Helena’s reading lesson that was aimed at strengthening the students’ persuasive and argumentative writing skills:

Helena, having checked her students’ work, found that they lacked the persuasiveness that she was expecting them to produce. Furthermore, there had been more explanations than opinions, and the points included were hardly convincing. Consequently, she sought out two Level-5 writing samples from Te Kete Ipurangi, printed and distributed them to the students. The samples were each an explanation ‘Why Cockroaches are Weird’ and a persuasive writing piece ‘Recycling is Essential’. In their respective subgroups, the students were to read and work out together how the samples would be helpful for them. Helena prompted them, “What are you hoping to get out of the samples?” and provided some guidance, “look at the paragraph structures and language structures between persuasive and argument and explanation. How they connect with the reader, and what the effect is”.

Following Helena's instructions, the students began engaging in the reading and collaborative work. I noted with delight how two groups of students were engrossed in the content of the texts and started talking excitedly about the cockroaches: "They've got six jaws!"; "Eeww, the white squishy stuff is its fat!". Helena, sensing that the lesson focus was starting to go sideways, intervened by highlighting the reading skill they should be utilising – analysis of the structure and language features. Alongside this, she directed more questions to the whole-class:

What's the structure like? (accompanied by a picture of a burger)

How effective are they and why?

What's the purpose of the text?

- *To explain (tell, inform, make it clear)*
- *To argue (about convincing to agree with you)*

Is the tone informal or formal?

Who are their targeted audience?

What about the language features? (Helena clarified to the class that this was an important/key ingredient because they help with the tone and purpose).

Once Helena ascertained that the students were back on track, she announced to them that "the takeout is for you to become better writers" and set them off into their group work once again. The students subsequently noted what each paragraph in the text was about and aimed to do, and the differences between the two texts in their book. Ten minutes before lunch break, Helena concluded the lesson by summarising the key learning points. They included the similarities and differences between the structures, the language features of persuasive and argumentative texts, and types of sentences used to express one's messages.

Part III: Helena's Vision of Successes and Challenges

Being Challenged and Challenging Students: "Bring It On"

Challenges, for Helena, could be summarised as manifesting themselves in her classroom in three ways – developmental, intellectual, and diversity. On the first, developmental, Helena related her experience of working with students who were transitioning from primary to intermediate school setting:

If you came in Term 1 into this class, the Year 7s, particularly the boys along this bench, didn't want to speak to me, didn't want to interact with me as a person, wouldn't look me in the eye, couldn't talk to me about their learning, couldn't negotiate deadlines. They were just like – the teacher was a far off removed thing.

Coming into intermediate with a noticeable diffidence, it had taken Helena a considerable amount of effort to achieve the "mindset shift" with the Year 7 students. Through "asking genuine questions and forcing them into making a decision about something", she gradually developed their confidence to engage in classroom conversations and voicing their opinions. The same applied in working with students who were "properly gifted" and possessed "very good and critical thinking skills". Following this, there were always disagreements and feisty discussions among them. However, she affirmed, "that is always interesting and super good for them, but they're going to have to work through the different opinions and beliefs". She shared that the key to achieving these outcomes was by balancing the power between her and the students in the classroom, which included a tactful management of student behaviour:

I don't mind being challenged. Like, I don't mind them challenging. I sometimes manner the way in which they challenge. So, they can challenge me about anything, but it's the form and the delivery of the challenge that I try to teach them, [it] has to be respectful and has to be well-timed. And equally, if you're doing something that's quite a personal challenge to someone, then there's a right way to go about that.

As for the challenge of catering to student diversity, she made sure to honour her students' knowledge and personal experiences by setting up an environment where they could “try for them”. She did so by providing a platform where they could share their ideas, and tailoring lessons to their interests. She was also sensitive to her students' different religious beliefs and backgrounds. Helena concurred that it was a “tricky” but necessary endeavour, which required her careful considerations on how to best go about negotiating the differences.

Finally, speaking specifically on literacy lessons, the finest balance that Helena had had to make was to “try to get the students to develop the [reading and writing] skills without losing interest in it” as these required multiple and repetitive practices. Helena related passionately:

Because it's such a big group, you can't be everything to everyone all the time. You've kind of got to pick which battles are the biggest ones to fight, don't you? You need to try and tailor yourself to do stuff that everyone likes, but you can't do that. So I think that's kind of hard. And you're just trying to re-engage the room, about a few kids are starting to lose, about how to change the program to pull them back in. So they're more into it now. Yeah, it's always like, a lot of it is about reading the room and knowing when to change up something. It's not easy.

From “Zero to Hero”: Helping Students Find the Love for Literacy

Helena represented an example of how successes follow challenges. She found joy in knowing that she had succeeded in “refining the students' literacy skills”, particularly with those students that came in her class as “already good writers”. She recollected her most vivid success stories in her literacy teaching journey:

I've probably got one student, he's a particular success. Somehow in Year 6, his teacher told him that he was a terrible writer. So, he came in really... amazing mathematician, very gifted pianist, but hated writing with a passion. And so he would probably stick in my mind as one of my success stories, because by the time

he left, at the end of Year 8, he produced amazing pieces, like some of them went in the newsletter, and I sent the link to his mum. But when he came back and saw me in Term 1, actually he just finished high school and I said to him, 'How do you feel about writing now?' and his friends went 'Ooh, they're like his passion. He's a really excellent writer'. And so I think that is a success story because he wasn't confident, didn't think he had anything worthy to say.

Another one of my many success stories, brewing at the moment, is *Johnny and *Edith (pseudonyms), not readers. They're on their fourth novel this term. So like, I'm doing like a little jump for joy, but not showing that on my face too much. Because that's massive. And then Johnny's mum said when she came in for interviews about how like his older sister – who I taught last year – was giving him a lot of grief, like teasing him in a nice way. Because he's coming home and he's reading now. And he's got his nose in a book. So that's kind of cool.

Epilogue

Helena had a great relationship with her students which she treasured. Likewise, the students appeared comfortable around her. I would arrive at Helena's class to find her surrounded by her students. They would, as an example, tell her enthusiastically about their process of writing. One student shared how they chose to ignore "perfectionism" to complete their written piece, and another asked excitedly if she had "feedbacked" on their piece. Having had that scene played out before me reminded me of my own teaching journey. So, I asked Helena what she thought inspired her teaching, to which she responded:

You don't sit there and reflect on how much you've grown, and have no time to think who inspired you. But I think it's probably just the kids, like I'll just try my hardest for them because I want them to do well. So yeah, you don't have time to think about 'Wow, this person is super motivating'. And also in my own practice, I really focus on relationships. There are some really good conversations happening in the room, some a little bit feisty but they were good – like the content was

learning, and also placing a lot of minds on relationships, on knowing them and what their interests are, as well and letting them choose their own interests – whether it works or not.

Having the opportunity to gather Helena’s stories of her literacy teaching practices, and to observe her in actions, had been both a privilege and a treat. It was entertaining (and sometimes humorous) to watch the interactions between Helena and her students. Going through those transcripts and field notes brought me back to our very first introductory interview, where Helena had “warned” me:

“[My class is] something like living in a world of eccentric professors, you know, one with stuff everywhere. Yeah. So anyway, you'll find it very interesting.”

Indeed, I did, and not to mention, also a pleasure.

RUBY

Prologue

My teaching has adapted quite a bit this year especially because I have got a lot of challenging kids in my class. I guess yesterday has shaped who I am as a teacher, but now I am also finding my own identity as a teacher. Having to adapt what I do to meet the needs of kids in this class because I have a couple of ADHD kids, a couple of trauma kids – so the way you talk to them is different from the way you talk to someone else.

A ruby is a gemstone that is generally taken to signify an activator of passion, confidence, determination and adventure. After four visits to Ruby's classroom for the introductory interview and three subsequent observations, I believe that these characteristics of the gemstone described the teacher aptly. Handling a diverse class of 32 students – of various characters and personalities – required patience and versatility.

As I entered Ruby's sphere, she informed me that she was still new to the teaching profession and was developing her teacher identity and practices. I thought that reflected my sentiments of being a novice researcher myself. Occasionally, I felt that I was thrown off the equilibrium as I experienced researching with her, with my meticulous plans replaced by unexpected incidences, and spontaneous interviews and conversations. For example, during the introductory interview, the school sounded the emergency signal and went into a lockdown. They had acted on the police's advice due to the presence of a suspicious figure in the school's vicinity. Ruby plastered the windows with opaque manila sheets while the students took cover in the 'safe zone'. Then, the first observation with Ruby took place on the day the New Zealand government (re)raised the COVID-19 alert level to Level 2. This effectively meant I had to observe my distance with the students, in adherence to the school's health and safety protocols. Thus, if anything, Ruby reinstated flexibility in me, approaching me for questions at every given opportunity. Instead of a dedicated session due to her work commitments, we would converse when the students were working independently on their tasks or at the library while they were settling down.

I was kept on my toes, ready with the questions, to seize those precious moments in my quest to explore and to understand Ruby's LTL.

Part I: Introducing Ruby

In an online search, one would most probably find the place Matamata (a Māori term for headland), New Zealand, being associated with Peter Jackson's 'Lord of the Rings' and 'The Hobbit' film trilogies. The Hobbiton Movie Set is now a tourist attraction, which was exactly how Ruby had introduced her birthplace to me – “just like the Hobbiton”. Born, bred and schooled in Matamata, Ruby grew up in a tight-knit family with her mum and her grandparents. Although she was the only child, Ruby had a pretty large extended family – “there's about thirty of us” – and was “really close to her cousins”. Ruby also related that being the oldest of them all, she in a manner played the role of “kinda being like the one everyone comes to”. Because Matamata was a relatively rural place with “not much to do there other than going to the parks”, Ruby had described herself as a “more like a stay at home, play with my dolls, and read child”. School wise, she was “a little bit of a goody two shoes, I didn't really get into trouble, and always doing the right things for the teacher”. Also, Ruby had simply enjoyed “the whole feeling of being at school” and added that “it's always good to see your friends”.

Unwavering Passion for Subjects Turned into Teaching

At age 18 and fresh out of high school, Ruby left home for Hamilton to pursue her tertiary education. Since high-schooling days, English and history had been Ruby's favourite subjects for a simple reason:

Because I was good at them, I was just good. So, I wanted to learn more and the more I learnt, I was like 'Oh, I can do this pretty well'. Also, I love knowing what's happened in the past, and how the people are now.

Her passion for the subjects subsequently fuelled her decision to undertake a four-year double degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in History and English, and Bachelor of

Teaching majoring in primary education. Upon graduation, Ruby landed her first teaching position in Summerville Intermediate School and “had been here since”. She spent her first two years as a beginning teacher (BT) learning and acquiring experiences under the mentorship of more experienced teacher-colleagues. Ruby was appointed as a team leader or House Dean in her third year of teaching. Assuming the responsibility required her to lead a team that comprised four classes (including her own) in planning for academic programmes. She also headed the sports affairs such as netball, sports camp, and sports day. Although “as weird as it sounds, I hated sports back in intermediate, my students’ age”, but the role fit in perfectly because “my class is quite sporty as well”. So when I asked how she came to be the *Mahogany (a pseudonym) House Dean, she answered excitedly:

I’m a team leader in my third year which is quite cool in itself. And yeah, I was appointed [as a House Dean]. So I applied at the end of last year. It was advertised and I got it. So, I was like, ‘Hmm, cool, so I must have done something right!’.

Life Made Different and Making a Difference in One’s Life

Going back to the beginning, to how and why it all started, Ruby became a teacher because:

I wanted to make a difference in kids’ lives, and I feel like I have really made so far but you really have no idea. Yeah, so I’ve been doing this for three years and still learning, always learning. Like today Te Reo in the last block, my kids were teaching me how to say it; it’s good for them to see you’re always a lifelong learner.

A teacher who was inspired into teaching by her former teachers – particularly History and English teachers – Ruby expressed that “they’re just so great in what they did, so I just wanted to learn from them”. In addition to helping her with her learning, they knew her as a person and appreciated her as an individual. She fondly recalled that “you’re not just one of their students out of 600 kids; you’re an actual person”. Adding to that humanistic approach were Ruby’s mentor teachers in Summerville Intermediate who

guided her to frequently engage in self-questioning and self-reflection. Heeding their sound advice, the practice had helped her realise “what I am doing right, and what I am doing wrong”. Seeing their effectiveness ignited the motivation within her to follow in their footsteps. This eventually shaped who she was or wanted to be as a teacher.

Essentially to Ruby, being a teacher meant “making a difference” in the students’ lives and “actually being like a role model to some of the kids”. This was because she was aware that a significant number of the students in Summerville Intermediate were growing up without their parents around, leaving them in foster care or with their grandparents. She wanted “to be able to be that person for them; guiding them in making life choices”. In this regard, Ruby’s background of growing up with a single parent herself had enabled her to understand their home life. She shared that “there’s a massive difference between single-parent and two-parent families; especially financially and how it affects the kids”. She could relate to the students’ perspectives or behaviour, as to why some of them could not get along well with people. Thus, she actually took “a lot of time to connect” with them. Because of that too, the best thing about being a teacher, Ruby unreservedly said, was:

Seeing the reward in the kid’s face when they learn something – like when they’re on a roll and they’re so excited. Being able to help the kids on their journey in life. I don’t know, that’s really hard – the question but, I like how people looking up to me and having kids doing that is cool. But I’m definitely not here for the pay, to put it that way.

Learning from Doing: Shifting Values Following Students’ Needs

In addition to those personal experiences, Ruby thought that the teacher education programme in the university had equipped her with some useful theoretical and formal knowledge. However, it had not prepared her for the job. The primary reason was the different focus on the age-group, as “university was largely based on the younger children and not so much intermediate”. She therefore gravitated towards utilising her practical experience, and knowledge from school’s PLD programmes in her practices. Being in the

field, she had discovered that “they [can] teach you how to plan at the university but you can’t actually plan life”. She believed that she had “gained and learned much more from entering classrooms during practicums”, and from experiencing “actual doings rather than someone telling me what to do”.

Further to this, Ruby noted that “it’s quite a very common thing, like a lot of people come in from the university, and realise that university is kind of like a know-one-thing”. Ruby cited an example of when learning to explore one’s teaching beliefs and values at the university, she used to believe in being “a massive advocate for growth mindset”. However, in school, she found it challenging to implement given the “students’ strong characters”. Ruby explained that as being stuck in their own way or not caring for changes. Therefore, she had established that:

‘Okay, let’s look at student agency. How can we develop that in order to get that going?’ But then again it changes all the time really (according to the students she had). In my first year I had a completely different class. From my second year to my third year, it depends on what the kids need. That is what I believe in. So this year, it would be developing independence, developing student agency.

The versatility applied in Ruby’s teaching style too in which “it’s different every year, honestly”, shifting to accommodate the type of students she had. Having said that, there were some distinctive styles and practices that Ruby had developed. She was not a proponent of a “loud, strong teaching style” but favoured “doing-by-example” through modelling. As aforementioned, learning from her mentor teacher, she included “a lot of questionings and promptings” in her teaching with the aim of developing independent learners. She believed that such practice allowed for student agency, where “they can have their own kind of saying in what they do”. Relative to this, she saw the students for who they were and the potential that they had. Therefore, Ruby and her students would begin the year by co-constructing their expectations, such as what they would like to achieve in that particular year. Using this as a base, she would motivate them to work towards achieving the listed goals. Under and with her guidance, she hoped that her students would develop self-belief, or what she described as “kind of like a growth-

mindset but a little bit more like ‘I can actually do stuff’ and it’s not just what they have written down on paper”.

Part II: Ruby’s LTL Acts

At the time of the observations, the school’s literacy programme was focused on synthesising for reading and persuasive writing. Following the school’s guideline, the displays around Ruby’s classroom reflected these current learning foci accordingly. For instance, the "Writing/ *Tuhituhi*" section showcased the writing process, characteristics of persuasive writing such as the structure, persuasive language, sentence starters, persuasive devices and powerful statements, and writing a PEEL (Point, Evidence, Explanation, Link) paragraph. As for “Reading/ *Pānuitia*”, Ruby had put up items such as the definition of ‘synthesise’, the difference between ‘synthesis and summary’, and guiding questions to how to synthesise. Overall, each dimension of the spacious classroom walls was utilised to display the school's vision and values, proverbs, students’ work (their published writing, art pieces), and other learning areas' content. Apart from that, a bookshelf was placed near the entrance, and on it were the ‘Student Reflection and Evidence’ sheets. The students would take one of these and fill it in after each lesson as a form of self-assessment and formative assessment for Ruby to track their literacy learning progress. Though it rarely happened, Ruby would come back to those who had yet to achieve the day's success criteria. As Ruby explained:

The success criteria and WALT are shared with the students, they normally come through in their essay. And then we will have self-assessment, where they have this self-reflection sheet here and they’d go to the modelling book, like they had done a PEEL paragraph, and write down the points and areas they would like to develop the next day.

With this prerequisite information, I explore Ruby’s literacy knowledge, belief and experience, presented in the next two sections.

Act 1: Literacy Belief, Knowledge and Experience

A Journey to Knowing and Liking Writing

Ruby's aspiration for her students to be life-long learners potentially began with her journey to liking literacy, particularly in writing. Despite growing up spending most of her time indoors reading, her literacy learning experience in primary and high schools neither matched the love she had for reading nor cultivated a passion for writing. She reasoned that the treacherous practice of focusing on handwriting to the detriment of the generation of ideas had inhibited the development of essential writing skills and an appreciation of its process, contributing to her generally unfavourable experience. Ruby recalled:

I wasn't a good writer in primary school. [There was] a lot of focus on handwriting, more than anything I feel? While not much time spent on making ideas up and writing about them? It was a lot more writing and less thoughts? And reading, I used to love reading but in high school kind of killed it for me a little bit. But it's not my teachers, perhaps it's the senior side of the office.

However, inspired by her English teacher in high school, Ruby's pursuit of an arts degree with a major in English and history helped turn things around. As the courses involved a considerable amount of writing, Ruby eventually became quite adept at it. Furthermore, being a teacher had intensified the need to know and to love writing for Ruby, who gladly declared:

I've really gotten into writing and I love writing now. Writing's played a big drive for me, and this class and for the school really, just because like the more exposure they have to write, the better they write, if that makes sense? Like the writing fluency kind of thing? And I love teaching writing, it's really fun and it's like the most creative, the most individualised.

Having developed the enthusiasm, Ruby began valuing writing as a medium that allows one to express themselves. This was especially when some of her students struggled to express their emotions verbally, but managed to do so well in writing. She added that writing stood in contrast to other learning areas such as reading and maths which were “always a set answer”. Thus, together with arts, such as those paintings (with captions) exhibited in the classroom that depicted students’ cultural identity and their feelings towards their culture, Ruby believed that writing provided them with “freedom”. The students had opportunities to voice their opinions, to choose writing topics of their interests, and to express themselves. In retrospect, Ruby showed a tendency to talk about ‘writing’ as we explored her literacy practices in our conversations. This could probably be attributed to her growing love for writing and also the school’s focus. As an illustration:

Like today's lesson? Oh, there are different focuses each term and so it’s persuasive writing this term. Then, we come together as a team and plan a whole bunch of WALTs out that match that focus. We are looking at structure this week, how to write a PEEL paragraph. It’s just our own knowledge more than anything – what goes into sentences, what’s the right way to say this – little things like that.

School and Personal Contexts Informing Literacy Beliefs and Knowledge

The school curriculum underpinned much of Ruby’s LTL beliefs, which also trickled down into her class curriculum. Consistently adhering to the school's requirements, she would have the overarching learning focus represented by WALTs and success criteria (or outcomes) in every literacy lesson. Nonetheless, Ruby emphasised that “we have the freedom in our classroom to deliver how we want to deliver it.” Furthermore, as the teacher education programme was largely based on the lower levels, Ruby expressed that a lot of her learning had actually taken place on the job:

Like, the pedagogical knowledge? Yeah, I’ve learned mostly on the job, I had to teach myself first. I learned some of them in the university but then again, it was based on the lower levels whereas here, it’s mostly on the higher levels. I guess I have a lot of knowledge from my English degree as well. We have writing PD for

our literacy, we also have writing workshops for BT that we go to every Wednesday to learn. A lot of it is self-taught, like from Google? Google is my best friend. There's the Literacy Learning Progression. Mostly books and Google, and also other teachers as well. They're quite a good source of reference .

Following this, I asked Ruby what she thought literacy was and she answered assuredly:

Literacy is an act of expressing yourself through reading and writing, about learning about the world, and about how you talk. It's like you have to read to learn. [Also,] it's everything that's everywhere, like every curriculum area has got some form of literacy. You know, it's how you understand something, how you present something.

Ruby's understanding and concept of literacy notably encompassed reading, speaking, viewing, writing, and presenting. These elements were evident in her classroom teaching practices, and constituted the literacy skills she would like her students to acquire in their two years with her. These included being a confident public speaker, a critical reader, an active listener, and a writer. As she elaborated:

We're building [the students'] confidence to be able to speak clearly in front of groups; being able to really pull apart a reading text; being able to analyse and synthesise and so on. Writing is being able to write a full piece, like an essay. Also to be able to be active listeners which we are working [on] at the moment, to be able to listen to someone and respond to them if they have got questions.

Ruby's literacy practices, to some extent, were a replication of her personal literacy learning experiences. For instance, when I asked her "Why pull a text apart?", she replied "because that's what I did at high school. I literally got a novel and pulled it apart." Ruby then quickly added that the practice in essence also helped her students to develop "those critical thinking skills". Following that, Ruby related that the strong focus on equipping the students with the above mentioned skills was to "prepare them for high school", which complemented her practice of promoting the "mind-shift" from primary school to

intermediate. So, she would normally encourage her students to question a text, to form their own opinions on the text, to make the inferences and the synthesis – rather than “not having any kind of outside the script thinking and reading” in primary school.

Technology is Useful but Key Literacy Skills to Stay

Observing how the students were occupied with their laptops during the independent and follow-up tasks under the rotation system, I asked Ruby for her thoughts on the infiltration of digital technologies and how they were assisting teaching and learning in her classroom. She immediately conveyed her fondness for the use of technology, expressing that “it’s really fun”, especially when all her follow-up activities were uploaded onto Google Drive. They were stored in a class folder so that her students could access them at their convenience:

I love it. I do a lot of stuff online with my kids, do a lot of research by studying how to use the Internet safely, learning how to communicate online effectively, and so on. And every subject’s got some kind of online activity such as ‘Write That Essay’ for writing, ‘ReadTheory’ which is online for reading, and we’ve got the typing club online. There’s really a lot of online resources that the kids can use.

In relation to this, Ruby mentioned that she undertook ‘The MindLab’ postgraduate course the year before. As such, her technological knowledge had “possibly grown a lot, especially the whole presenting element”. She added that such integration of technology in the classroom was inevitable as the school’s curriculum itself emphasised the need to develop students’ “computational thinking, design thinking, and using PowerPoint to present their work”. Therefore, Ruby concluded that “it’s become a very digital-driven journey of my own, for the past five years”.

The use of digital technologies signalled an increasing consumption and production of multimodal texts in Ruby’s classroom. As envisioned in the NZC, Ruby’s students would often go online to research for facts, which invariably involved listening, viewing, and reading. Apart from this, they would use PowerPoint or Google slides to prepare and

present their “finished work”. Ruby also shared that the students loved such learning experiences because “they love bringing out their devices”. Hence, Ruby acknowledged that the representations of ideas and emotions could take various forms in her writing classes. In addition to words, there would be “tables, diagrams, and images”. However, she maintained that this was dependent on the topics. For example, a persuasive piece might be more text-based, but an explanation could be accompanied by visuals “to better explain their writing”. Therefore, despite these changes in the students' literacy learning experience, Ruby believed that the students' literacy learning needs did not differ too much from hers:

There's still a heavy emphasis on the element of writing, like physical writing in my class. Although the work is being done online, they still have the same needs. That is why they're represented differently. I reckon that we only have computers for certain things back in the day, but we're still doing the same things I did. Like we're learning how to write an introduction, how to write a paragraph and so on.

Multiliteracies Pedagogy: “Practising without Calling it That”

Following the culturally responsive teaching as emphasised in the school's curriculum, Ruby would integrate texts that were linked to the students' culture and interests to cater to cultural diversity in her classroom. With multimodality and diversity attended to, I wondered then, if she had heard of multiliteracies pedagogy. Ruby replied:

I think so. I might have heard the word. Is this like when you teach more than one literacy? Multi means more than one, right? But yeah, no, not really.

I then took the liberty to provide a brief explanation, informing her of the three elements that she might be practising in her classroom. The first, student diversity, is where teachers acknowledge their students' learning styles, cultural and linguistic diversity and integrate them into lessons. The second, multimodality, is how we look at and apply the different modes of representation of meaning; and the third is a repertoire of pedagogy. Upon hearing that, Ruby expressed that:

Yeah, yeah, I do all that, but I don't call it that. For example, in the first couple weeks, we were looking at persuasive stories based on cultures. But then obviously, not every text model will have what you need, so you have to find other stuff. I had a boy in here, and the way he learned was really visual so everything had to be visual for him whereas most of my kids are like, 'write it down, show me how to do it and I will go do it'. Yeah, I feel like I am doing all that, and it's just that I don't call it that?

With that said, I now move to how these knowledge and beliefs were practised in Ruby's classroom.

Act 2: Experiencing Ruby's classroom: LTL practices

In the morning of my first observation, retrieving the information effortlessly from her memory, Ruby informed me that her multicultural classroom comprised "12 students who identified as Māori, 3 South Africans, 1 Pasifika, and 16 Europeans." Along with that, she added that there was a massive focus on being "culturally responsive at the moment such as teaching the history and pronunciation [of Te Reo Maori]". Hence to continuously improve her command and knowledge of Te Reo, she had started acquiring and giving her classroom commands and holding some in-class conversations in Te Reo. The bell rang, Ruby settled into the comfortable-looking 'teacher couch' as the students took their spots around her on the mat. The daily routine began with the roll-call with Ruby asking students for their learning goals (either reading or writing). The short conversation went as such:

Ruby : Good morning, _____, what's your reading goal?

Some answers from the students:

Student A : Good morning, Miss Ruby, synthesise the text.

Student B : Kia ora, Miss Ruby, using different reading strategies".

Then, they proceeded with reciting the *karakia*; followed by notices read-aloud by the teacher. The day's lessons then began in this sequence (displayed on the whiteboard in

both English and Te Reo): writing (*tuhituhi*), reading (*pānuitia*), *pāngarau* (maths), and *pakirehua* (inquiry or social science). The following teaching sequence applied to the writing, reading, and mathematic blocks: assigning students into three groups, having different modelling books for each of the group of students, a sample text, modelling, guided practice or doing together, independent follow-up work, and working on personal devices. A writing and a reading class are exemplified as follows:

Write That Essay: Traditional Literacy meets New Literacies?

Implemented schoolwide as a starter activity, Ruby displayed the ‘Write That Essay’ webpage on the big screen. With the end of Term 3 approaching, the day’s writing prompt or “Daily Challenge” topic was ‘Holiday’. The instructions on the webpage read: “*Billy’s holiday got cancelled. What did he and mum do instead? In your story today, see if you can drop in **THREE** names of countries.*” Accompanying the instruction was an image of a lady and a little boy – presumably a mother and her son – sitting on the bed. The bright table lamp was switched on, they were both wearing hats and sunglasses and sipping some juice. Altogether, the image projected an atmosphere of ‘indoor holidaying’. The scene of a hustling and bustling city and the cloudy sky could be seen outside their room windows.

Ruby said to the students, “you’ll spend 10 to 15 minutes writing about this”. A student instantaneously responded by asking, “Do we have to do that?”, to which she replied with a firm “Yes”. On that cue, the students took off to their writing stations or spots and began ‘writing’. The majority of the students had opted to work on their laptops and ‘write’ on the WTE webpage itself, leaving only a handful writing physically in their exercise books. As the students were kept occupied with the starter activity, Ruby took out and placed the modelling books on the mat for the upcoming teacher-led session with the students. Once the time’s up, she called on the students to bring their work to the mat for some “sharing time”. Interestingly, the students had engaged their real-life and prior knowledge by integrating them in their stories. Among the memorable moments that came out from this session were:

A student suggested that “the mother’s got money because the husband died in a car crash and so she went shopping for glasses and hats”.

Another student added that “the mother got creative because the son cried for days due to the cancelled holiday”.

Next, a reluctant student, who upon Ruby’s insistence, shared his story, stopped reading at “when he arr..” because that was all he had written.

Finally, a student gave the excuse of “My pen went flat” when they were asked to read theirs. Ruby again insisted, and having written nothing, they made up a short paragraph on the spot.

Ruby concluded the session and moved onto the day's main writing activity – persuasive writing – and displayed the group’s rotating tasks: teacher, follow-up, and independent writing. Briefly, the *Follow-up* activity referred to students completing and/or continuing their work from the day before. *Independent work* included publishing some persuasive writing for the writing wall, completing WTE Daily Challenge and the reflection sheet. Alternatively, the students could choose to do “Quick Write – Pobble 365 and the Spelling Box”. Having been assigned into three groups according to writing achievement levels (Levels 2, 3 and 4), the students took turns to work with Ruby. Students were directed to their tasks, and those that were not with Ruby took off to do their work on their respective laptops.

On the mat, the teacher-guided writing activity with Ruby involved the use of the modelling book and a worksheet about “PEEL paragraph”. Students received the worksheet, pasted it into their writing book for their reference, and each had a highlighter ready in their hand. Satisfied that the students were ready, Ruby proceeded to read the text aloud to them. After the first paragraph, she asked the students to identify the main ideas and their supporting evidence in the paragraph: *“Identify the topic sentence: the point of what we want our readers to know, and now highlight the point. Next, look for the evidence, something that has been researched to support the fact”*. Ruby highlighted the topic sentence on the modelling book, indirectly assisting students who might still be looking. *“Next, you explain your point. So, you add more info. Finally, identify the ‘link’ to the next paragraph.”* The practice of identifying topic sentences and supporting details or evidence was repeated

with the subsequent paragraphs, using question-prompts to elicit answers from the students. However, only a couple of the students actively responded to Ruby's prompts, although they were all engaged in the task.

Ruby then summarised the structure of a paragraph, highlighting its convention using the PEEL method: **p**oint or the topic sentence, **e**xplain, **e**vidence or the supporting details, and the **l**ink. To reinforce the learning point, Ruby worked with the students to practice constructing a new paragraph entitled "time students spend in school". Students began by writing about their school life or activities they usually did in school. After 20 minutes, Ruby dismissed this group of students – who would now move onto the independent tasks – and called upon the next. Ruby adopted a different approach with this group. After introducing the PEEL paragraph structure to these students, instead of a step-by-step instruction, they worked individually to identify the PEEL in the sample paragraph and provided Ruby with the answers. Then, they engaged the PEEL method to write a new paragraph, arguing for or against the "*Ideas for School Uniforms*". The same procedures and activities applied to the third and final group. Notably, throughout the teacher-led sessions, Ruby had to simultaneously manage the students' – who were working independently – behaviour. This included controlling their level of noise, and ensuring they kept to their tasks.

During the lunch break, Ruby explained to me that the WTE Daily challenge was a piece of informal writing, "just an additional tool", that was meant for students to apply their knowledge of sentence structures and paragraphs that they were doing in their essays. It also acted as a platform to increase their "writing mileage, a bit of settler as well". With WTE, she was able to go online and check on their grammar, punctuation, and spelling. In line with the school's expectation, Ruby's literacy lessons involved the strategic use of modelling books "so that the kids can refer back to when they need to, and you will find that a lot". As Ruby suggested, the WALTs and success criteria within the modelling books helped the students to assess their own learning. Alongside a little notebook that Ruby carried with her each time she was with the students to note down their progress, she would give extra scaffolding to those falling behind during group teaching. Therefore,

she believed that “it’s more of what I do with them than the WTE” that contributed to students’ improved level of achievement in writing. The same was reflected in her reading lesson.

Reading: Inculcating and Applying Key Skills

Using the same rotation system, the students’ independent work for reading consisted of *independent reading* and *critical literacy*. On the mat, Ruby was prepared to guide the students to “look for key messages in a story about refugees”. Earlier, she had picked the text, “New New Zealanders”, from the School Journal for the teacher-led session. Each of the students had a physical copy of the book, so Ruby instructed them to read the text silently. Ruby later explained that she had picked the text for:

The message behind it. There are a range of new New Zealanders that are coming into this country, for example the refugees and immigrants. So our context for learning at the moment is leadership. So we’re actually looking at how governments impact immigrants, refugees and some issues like freeloading?

Once the students were done reading, Ruby asked them “What’s the point of reading about this?” and then informed them that it was about “finding the messages and the facts, and writing them down on a table”. Although the students were not explicitly told the reading strategies to use to identify the required information, they were essentially engaging in scanning and skimming to complete the table with “six facts and two messages”. This activity served as a prelude to the learning focus – synthesising a text.

After 15 minutes, another group took their turn with Ruby. The practice of reading to extract key information was repeated. This group was, however, more inquisitive and interactive. When the students encountered an unfamiliar Māori word, they enlisted the help of a student who identified as Māori to pronounce it for them. When they found new information and facts, they asked Ruby for further explanation. For example, “What’s the meaning of ‘residency’ and ‘citizenship’?; “How does one get citizenship?”; and “Why would one need to apply for permanent residency?” In the midst of the lively questioning-

and-answering, this group successfully completed the table with the five key ideas and two messages within the time allocated.

Deliberate Extra Teaching (DET) and Critical Literacy

Having seen Ruby's literacy lessons and some of her practices, I wondered and asked her if there were other "LTL strategies" that she engaged in. The phrase had sounded foreign to her. Rather, she knew them as "DETs, short for Deliberate Extra Teaching" and broke down her lesson structure to me:

Like my DETs? My Deliberate Extra Teaching? Yeap, so all of my lessons have the same structure for writing. We look at the WALT, we dig our prior knowledge out, we look at a text model – 'What do you notice? What do you see?' – then I model how to do some of the things. I talk out loud to the kids, such as, 'What can we write for this?', 'What can we write for that?' to prompt thinking. Then they give it a go and I give them feedback. Sometimes not always straightaway, because sometimes the follow-ups can go quite big like today, they've got to go away and do it again as follow-up. Whereas for reading, it's more the same kind of thing but we actually spend more time pulling a text apart, like this WALT here.

Finally, interested in the "critical literacy" that the students were doing as an independent task, I decided to probe further. Ruby replied:

Oh, critical literacy is like, you get a book and they have a whole lot of tasks to do with it. It's like a no-brainer activity really, it's not really like critical literacy. The tasks were like answering comprehension questions, understanding what the key message was, and Googling up on it.

With that explained, Ruby concluded our conversation of the day by saying that her current focus on reading was "analysing a text for the author's message, all the key ideas, so that sounds like pulling a text apart. And we're slowly working our way towards synthesising at the end of the term". That brought me back to our first post-observation

conversation, where she had said how her literacy teaching was based on the school's curriculum, illustrating the influence school contexts have on teachers.

Part III: Ruby's Vision of Successes and Challenges

In Ruby's classroom, I mostly kept myself seated at one designated spot due to Level 2 COVID-19 regulations. Precisely because of this non-participative observation, I saw how Ruby had her hands full with just managing the students' learning behaviour – corroborating what she had said earlier about “having a rather challenging class”. Therefore, I concur wholeheartedly with her when she said her biggest struggles would be “sometimes, I end up spending the time dealing with behaviours due to having a difficult class”. Nonetheless, she would always manage a way to successfully execute her teaching plans. Take for example that reading lesson from the second observation. As she worked with a group of students on the mat, she made it a point to follow a sequence of activities that balanced between providing inputs and eliciting answers from the students. It began with an example (a sample text) with which she used to guide the students to analyse the key-learning points of the day. She also modelled each activity and had the students contribute their ideas as they went through the task with her, before getting them to do-their-own as a follow-up activity. Under the teaching rotation system, the rest of the students who were supposed to be on independent work could be rather noisy, often causing minor disruptions to the ongoing teaching and learning activity. Ruby would nevertheless put in her best effort (and tricks) to alternate her attention between the various groups of students.

On a brighter note, Ruby expressed that she planned her lessons based on her students' learning gaps and needs. When she saw how her students were absorbing the new teaching, happiness and excitement coursed through her. Hence for Ruby, success in her literacy learning and teaching came in a relatively simple form – seeing accelerated progress in nearly all her learners from her targeted teaching.

Epilogue

It's a school-wide expectation that you group teach, like group-needs based. So, all of my Level 2's grouped together, Level 3's group together and Level 4's grouped together. Although they have very similar needs, they have different levels of independence and so on. For example, today, we were doing PEEL but I would just scaffold it differently for them. So you'll find that I will do the same kind of topic, but deliberate differently.

Despite it being a school-wide requirement to group teach, it was amazing to watch Ruby patiently executing all the planned steps thrice, each with varying degrees of support following her students' level of achievement. Occasionally when the opportunity arose, she would offer more explanation and information and seize these "teachable moments" to bring in contemporary or real-world issues to inform and educate the students. It was often in these small groups – with the students making mistakes or posing questions – that teachable moments occurred. Although she was a relatively new teacher, I witnessed her sound classroom rules and management system. There was a "full licence area" for students who were on independent work, equipped with cushions and a couch, to work comfortably in. Ruby reminded the students that it was a "luxury and not a given", in which they had to earn it with acceptable learning behaviour.

In the classroom with the students, although Ruby projected a strict image, she was often amused by the students' questions. These moments reflected the passion she had for teaching. Just as Ruby continuously strove to improve herself as a teacher and to develop her teacher identity, she said:

Well, the classroom is different every year. You can't expect your classroom to be the same for three years. The kids are going to be different, that means your practice is going to be different too, and what you need to know is similarly going to be different. You might have kids that you did know, and then send you into a learning game. It's forever changing but here I am, liking where I am.

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

This study is based on the premise that the advancement of digital technologies and increasing population diversity are redefining literacy, literacy practices and the notion of texts (Bull & Anstey, 2019; Cope & Kalantzis, 2020; Knobel & Lankshear, 2014). I sought to explore what teachers were practising to equip students with the literacy skills they need in this landscape. I wanted to gain insights into the understanding, experiences and practices of intermediate-year teachers in their LTL in English, through the MLP. I selected the MLP framework, a landmark publication of the NLG in 1996, as my theoretical lens to analyse teachers' literacy beliefs and teaching practices for their continued influence in the academic circle (Kiss & Mizusawa, 2018; Kulju et al., 2018). Furthermore, the MLP's recognition of rapidly changing working, public and personal lives, and its call to reconsider LTL to prepare students for the changes (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; The NLG, 2000), correspond with the implications my findings put forward. I undertook a narrative approach, using narrative inquiry and narrative analyses, to achieve this aim. This research involved an introductory interview, three to four full-day non-participative classroom observations and corresponding post-observation conversations to critically examine these areas of interest.

The narratives presented in the findings chapters are careful and faithful co-constructions of the teacher participants' – Petunia, Magnolia, Lily, Ruby and Helena – understandings, experiences, and practices of LTL. They were authored in the recounting and authorised by the participants. The narratives reflect matters of significance to them, at the point in time during which data were gathered. In other words, the narratives were constructed with the awareness that the teachers' practices and beliefs were located in time, social condition, and place (Barkhuizen, 2014; Clandinin, 2020; Wells, 2011). I therefore acknowledge that following the passage of time, the teachers' literacy knowledge, experiences and practices will have potentially changed since data collection was completed. Nonetheless, Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of continuity, interaction, and situation has effectively provided layers to the teachers' stories. Under this notion, I moved backward and forward into the teachers' personal literacy learning experiences and their current practices, and inward and outward to their literacy beliefs and aspirations for their students. Underpinned by the theoretical frameworks of MLP and teachers' PPK, a strong *narrative unity* was formed. Consequently, instead of a unidimensional story of the teachers'

practices, the narratives weaved in various focal points of the teachers' PPK – personal aspects, experiential knowledge, and formal knowledge.

Against this background, in this chapter I reflect on the findings presented in the previous two chapters, and I discuss the importance of the narratives in relation to the study's overarching research questions:

1. What literacy teaching practices do teachers of intermediate-year learners engage with in their classrooms in relation to their beliefs of LTL?
2. How do the teachers' literacy teaching practices reflect the three main principles of the MLP framework?

From the main questions, three sub-questions were formulated:

- a) How do teachers make sense of and apply their understandings and experiences of multiliteracies in Years 7–8 LTL?
- b) What are teachers' understandings and experiences of MLP in Years 7–8 LTL?
- c) How do teachers describe the influences and the processes that shaped their conceptions and practices of MLP in Years 7–8 LTL?

This chapter is organised into two parts. The first part is divided into three sections that correspond with the sub-questions. The first section – 6.2 *Encouraging signs of multiliteracies pedagogy* – relates to the first and second sub-questions. This section discusses how the teachers demonstrated an implicit understanding of multiliteracies and practice of elements of MLP. They are then further broken down into their respective elements – diversity, multimodality, and a repertoire of pedagogy. The second – 6.3 *Contextually-situated literacy practices* – relates to the third sub-question by discussing the factors that informed the teachers' practices. It draws on the five knowledge bases of teachers' PPK – self, milieu, subject-matter, instruction, and curriculum – as elaborated in Chapter 2. The third – 6.4 *The interplay between teacher knowledge and teacher agency* – serves as the “bind” to the first two sections. It fundamentally highlights how teachers engage with their PPK and exercise their agency to meet the demands of LTL with emerging adolescent learners. Each aspect is discussed with respect to the relevant literature and illustrated by quotations from or excerpts of the narratives of the teacher participants. The discussion of the sub-questions shows how they are interrelated and contribute to answering the overarching research questions of this thesis.

In Part 2 of this chapter, I provide a summary of the key findings and theoretical and practical implications. Following these, I put forward some recommendations for Initial Teacher Education and Professional Development programmes to enable an explicit implementation of MLP, and conclude the chapter.

Part I: Discussion and Implications of Findings

6.2 Encouraging Signs of Multiliteracies Pedagogy

My research with the teachers began by asking *How do teachers make sense of and apply their understandings and experiences of multiliteracies in Years 7–8 LTL?* that was accompanied by *What are teachers' understandings and experiences of MLP in Years 7–8 LTL?* In the findings chapters, all of the teacher participants – Petunia, Magnolia, Lily, Ruby and Helena – responded that they had either not heard of multiliteracies or MLP, or that these were just terms they were briefly introduced to at university. When I briefly defined it for them, they reflected that MLP, as terminology, was rather technical, but they expressed familiarity with its key components. They also quickly suggested that they were practising MLP's principles without necessarily calling it that. To the five teachers, multiliteracies and MLP were “big terms”, “technical”, with which they identified their current literacy teaching practices simply as “their practice”:

I guess multiliteracies is like all the disciplines within literacy – you have all the disciplines within literacy? Is that like reading, writing, and communicating? Not sure. I'm not really familiar with the term, no. (Petunia)

Not really, no. What's the brief discussion? Oh, they talked about that a lot in the university actually. Those are big words. (Magnolia)

I guess I am doing without even realising it or other people are doing without even realising but I don't think it's a term that is used often here. I remember hearing it in the past, yeah, like universities and things but I think we don't call it that – I don't know what we would call it – just our practice, I think – rather than multiliteracies. (Lily)

I think so. I might have heard the word. Is this like when you teach more than one literacy? Multi means more than one, right? But yeah, no, not really.

[*After a brief introduction to MLP*] Yeah, I feel like I am doing all that, and it's just that I don't call it that? (Ruby)

Nope, not until you had it on your information sheet. (Helena)

While these findings were unexpected given the popularity of multiliteracies and MLP (Leander & Boldt, 2012; Serafini & Gee, 2017), they were not surprising. As set out in Chapter Two, the literature is replete with studies by literacy scholars and teacher educators who introduced the multiliteracies framework to teachers, or by teachers who have come across MLP through further education. Reporting on the benefits of MLP, literacy scholars and teacher educators advocate for the inclusion of the framework in national curricula and teacher education programmes. Alongside this, they argue the importance of extending teachers' conceptualisation of literacy as multiliteracies, and the adoption of its associated pedagogy. However, Kulju et al. (2018) caution that it can be challenging to do this because the "theoretical concept of multiliteracies is complex" (p. 82). For example, while countries such as Finland and Australia have included MLP in their national curricula, Kulju et al. (2018) point out that they may have applied it as a set of communication abilities rather than a pedagogical approach.

Fundamentally, research appears to have perpetuated the tradition of a research-focused or 'top-down approach' suggesting what and how teachers should teach and therefore revealing a gap between theory and practice. Within this perspective, it could be perceived as an intervention *on* teachers rather than *with* them, thus potentially denying the teachers of individual agency and reserving power for researchers. In so doing, it ignores the "teaching as knowledge practice" (Bell, 2011, p. 3) and "teachers as knowing and knowledgeable individuals" (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 438), and it misses the opportunity to understand teachers' literacy beliefs and teaching practices from their perspectives. Consequently, as this discussion chapter draws on, I demonstrate how the findings in this study may serve to complement the MLP research surveyed in Chapter 2.

Within the Aotearoa New Zealand context, previous studies exploring LTL demonstrate two themes: (i) a traditional view of literacy that frequently refers to reading and writing only and,

(ii) an emphasis on achieving equity in literacy education through elevating the literacy performance of specific groups of students (see Chapter 2, section 2.5.4). To an extent, these themes reflect my study's exploration of teachers' literacy experiences and teaching practices in New Zealand intermediate schools. The narrative analyses in Chapters 4 and 5 partially support Sandretto and Tilson's (2016) claim that "teachers' approaches to literacy instruction frequently resemble traditional approaches used by generations of teachers, emphasising meaning making with written texts" (p. 63). However, the findings also demonstrate that teachers may hold and practise an extended notion of literacy. Furthermore, the teacher participants appeared to be practising elements of MLP instinctively. These findings are in line with Cope and Kalantzis (2015), who express that MLP supplements current LTL rather than replacing it.

In order to delve deeper into the research's first sub-question and elaborate on the points raised above, Section 6.2.1 first presents an overview of the participating teachers' conceptions of literacy and their beliefs about LTL. Then, to demonstrate how the teachers were practising MLP implicitly, I discuss them collectively through MLP's three key elements of diversity (Section 6.2.2), multimodality (Section 6.2.3), and a repertoire of pedagogy (Section 6.2.4). I incorporate Cope and Kalantzis' (2015) four knowledge processes and their call for a reflexive pedagogy in Section 6.2.5, which are essential to understand the encouraging signs of MLP in the teachers' literacy classrooms.

6.2.1 Teachers' Conceptions of Literacy and Beliefs

Uninspiring reading and writing activities, and the lack of ideas and knowledge of writing processes when required to write, were among the most prevalent personal literacy learning experiences shared by the five teachers. While these constituted the teachers' learning-to-read-and-write experiences, they all vowed not to replicate those practices in their classrooms. The teachers instantaneously referred to literacy as "reading and writing", but they included "viewing, speaking, presenting" as our discussions on the topic drew on. Further to this, more nuanced understandings of literacy emerged in their classroom practices and activities. For example, they presented their students with ample opportunities to create multimodal presentation slides that included linguistic, audio and visual modes. Beyond the traditional written linguistic texts, the teachers themselves demonstrated an extended notion of texts through employing digital texts such as computer applications and games, websites, and videos.

These findings corroborate studies into teachers' beliefs, conceptions and practices of multiliteracies, which also found that their participants were aware of the changing nature of literacy and notion of texts and were including them in their classrooms (for example Aljanahi, 2019; Boche, 2014; Carss, 2019; Mills, 2011).

The teachers' conceptions of literacy had concomitant implications for their LTL beliefs. As the teachers recognised and acknowledged students' experiences with digital technologies and new literacy practices, they believed that LTL were about engaging students and giving them the skills they need in future life. Students' literacy learning needed to be purposeful, meaningful, enjoyable, and applicable to real-life contexts. Despite this, there is an observable contrast between the teachers in their understanding of *meaningful* and *purposeful* literacy, particularly the more experienced teachers, Helena and Lily. While both regarded meaningful literacy learning as vital, Helena presented a more academic discourse while Lily foregrounded personal aspects:

I think, particularly for reading and writing, if what they're reading about has some kind of connection to them, or some kind of purpose to them, that's meaningful. You tend to be able to go up a lot further with that and get a lot more engagement. That's one of my beliefs, that whatever we are doing in literacy needs to be purposeful and meaningful for the students. Yeah, it needs to be something they have experience in particular and they can make really solid connections to it. I think that's important.
(Lily)

One of my strongest beliefs is that you have to actually enjoy it. And my second belief is if you don't enjoy it, you have to learn – so I aim for enjoyment. But at the deep-set, there is a set of skills that even if you're not an amazing writer, you can learn to get through. So a lot of it that we're talking about, like anagrams and recipes, that's to help the kid that is not naturally gifted. It's to help them get through with some kind of basic formulas and access. So it's not super exciting but when they have the skills, they become more confident. And then it's almost a self-fulfilling prophecy, isn't it? (Helena)

Lily's perspective likely emanated from her personal affinity with literacy. To her, meaningful literacy means the ability to make connections with and be aware of the purpose(s) of the texts engaged. To achieve that, she believed in developing students' interest by using their prior

knowledge and experience, to gradually inculcate their love for literacy. On the other hand, Helena demonstrated a functional perspective, seeing literacy as a set of skills that needed to be developed through practice. She thereby focused on students acquiring the literacy skills that enable them to access and participate in the society. Developing their ability to write, for example, various types of writing following established conventions or “basic formulas” correspond with her literacy lesson foci (see Chapter 5, Helena, Part 2, Act 2).

The findings aligns with Lortie’s (1975) construct of the *apprenticeship of observation* that argues “people learn about teaching from having been students in school” and so learning about teaching is “intuitive and imitative” (Smagorinsky & Barnes, 2014, p. 29). The teachers in this present study had learnt substantially about LTL from their vast experiences as students – as in the important literacy skills students should have, as well as what teaching practices *not* to replicate. Borg (2003), in elaborating on teacher cognition, points out that “teachers’ prior language learning experiences establish cognitions about learning and language learning which form the basis of their initial conceptualisations of language teaching during teacher education, which may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives” (p. 88). Although Borg (2003) discussed teacher cognition in terms of second language teaching, the teachers in this study demonstrate that it is likewise applicable to literacy teaching in first language.

Two other factors shaped teachers’ conceptions and beliefs of LTL in addition to teacher cognition. The first was school’s literacy curriculum and their corresponding professional development programmes. Summerville Intermediate School’s focus on writing initiated the schoolwide adoption of the ‘Write-That-Essay’ (WTE) programme. Helena coordinated the WTE workshops for Summerville, and both she and Ruby integrated WTE into their classroom literacy activities. Springville Intermediate School’s transdisciplinary and inquiry-based learning underpinned Petunia, Magnolia, and Lily’s planning of research and presentation activities. The second was the professional experiences of LTL that teachers progressively developed from collaborating with colleagues, personal learning, and teaching in classrooms with students. Petunia and Ruby depicted how teachers construct and reconstruct their LTL knowledge and practices to meet the demands of school expectations, and students’ learning experiences:

[My teaching approaches are based on] our school approaches to learning. So the kids are learning how to learn, communication skills, thinking skills, research skills – skills

that help them learn... Obviously my knowledge of the curriculum has developed; so understanding new ways of teaching students; yeah, just learning new ways to teach. All the little tricks and trades that you kinda learn along the way from other teachers and you get supported. (Petunia)

It's a school-wide expectation that you group teach, like group-needs based. [However], my teaching has adapted quite a bit this year especially because I have got a lot of challenging kids in my class. I guess yesterday has shaped who I am as a teacher, but now I am also finding my own identity as a teacher. Having to adapt what I do to meet the needs of kids in this class because I have a couple of ADHD kids, a couple of trauma kids – so the way you talk to them is different from the way you talk to someone else. (Ruby)

6.2.2 Addressing Diversity and Equity through Literacy Pedagogy

The two schools in this study addressed equity and diversity in multiple ways, which in turn shaped the teachers' practices. In the case of equity, both schools strove to ensure all students had access to the schools' facilities, particularly digital devices and wireless internet connections. This follows the schools' approach of encouraging teachers to utilise digital technologies in their teaching and learning to elevate students' learning experiences. Studies have demonstrated that pedagogical approaches that integrate technologies can promote literacy engagement among low socio-economic and culturally and linguistically diverse students (see for example Cummins et al., 2005; Henderson, 2012; Kim et al., 2021; Yelland, 2018). Further to this, both schools entrusted the teachers with identifying the 'focus or priority' learners, so that they could elevate their reading and writing performances to be on par with the national's recommended achievement level. Specifically, the students were to be working in advance of Level 4 or early Level 5 by the end of Year 8 – as stipulated in the NZC (MOE, 2007). However, although the schools' foci – underpinned by the NZC documents – reflected expectations on teachers to focus on traditional literacy, the teachers' repertoires of literacy pedagogy indirectly answered the MLP's call of enabling learners to achieve equity in social participation (see Section 6.2.4 for further discussion).

As for diversity, the teachers' stories indicate that they implicitly perceived it in the same way that it is framed by the NLG (2000): diversity is about "the different subjectivities – interests,

intentions, commitments, and purposes students bring to learning” (p. 15). Consequently, in addition to addressing literacy achievement-gaps in their classrooms, their literacy teaching practices exhibited attention to various learning preferences, styles and interests, and cultural and linguistic identities. For example:

I guess there’s where things like encouraging them to speak their first language come in. I would often say to them “Please speak your home language because we would love to hear it – it’s really special that you have that”. When they’re sharing things, they’re always given the option to use their knowledge and experiences, about themselves so that they know I value what they value. I guess you share a bit about yourself throughout the year and then you listen to what they’ve got to say about their own cultures and backgrounds. In a lot of our writing, they get to express their own ideas, and inquiries are really good where they get to do their own student-led inquiry because they get to share about their cultures, their values. I guess that’s kind of trying to cater to them all. (Magnolia)

I have moved to hard copy texts and modelling books to ensure everyone has access. I used culture topics and texts to cater for diversity. For example, in the first couple weeks, we were looking at persuasive stories based on cultures. But then obviously, not every text model will have what you need. So you have to find other stuff. I had a boy in here, Samia (a pseudonym), the way he learned was really visual so everything had to be visual for him. Whereas most of my kids are like, write it down, show me how to do it and I will go do it, that kind of thing? But it's my lower grade that needs a lot more scaffoldings than those in my higher group. (Ruby)

The interview excerpts from Magnolia and Ruby, as well as the teachers’ narratives in Chapters 4 and 5, portray attempts from teachers to promote equity and address diversity through literacy pedagogy in the classrooms. Furthermore, Summerville’s emphasis on culturally responsive pedagogies saw Ruby and Helena attending professional development programmes aimed at developing their cultural competency. These attempts, which included differentiating to engage, be it through instructional materials or level of guidance and support, show plausible evidence of the teachers providing equitable participation opportunities to enable students to be active participants. This aligns with the MLP’s call for literacy pedagogy that can lead to equitable social participation, and one that enables students to exercise agency (Kalantzis et al., 2016;

The NLG, 2000). In the Aotearoa New Zealand context, addressing equity and excellence outcomes through literacy education similarly remains a priority (McNaughton, 2020; MOE, 2022; Tunmer & Chapman, 2015). The teachers' literacy teaching practices likewise correspond to McNaughton's (2020) recommendation to spend "considerably more time reading and writing across a range of text types, both in and out of school, and in digital contexts; combined with collaborative activities focused on meaningful texts across content areas" (p. 45) to achieve greater impact on equity and excellence. Collectively, the findings suggest that the teachers' literacy pedagogy signals both an explicit and implicit practice of one of the elements of MLP – diversity.

Having said that, while the teachers' efforts to integrate students' cultures and languages were evident, a higher level of awareness, acknowledgement, and engagement is needed to accommodate students' uniqueness, similarities and differences. Kulju et al. (2018) argue that studies on MLP have often referred to diversity as multicultural and multilingual classes. However, how these various cultural and linguistic resources influence the students' literacy practices were less explored. For instance, although the students of the participants in this study might have felt comfortable expressing their cultural identities, their peers of different backgrounds might not notice or appreciate differences in worldviews and develop intercultural competence. In this regard, Fenwick and Comber (2021) point out that literacy education that helps students build understanding about how the structure and language of texts are connected to cultural purposes and/or social purposes could be valuable. On top of this, Luke (2018, in Garcia et al., 2018) expresses that even with the advancement of digital technologies, issues of "economic inequalities, social injustice, and cultural marginalisation" persist (p. 73). Consequently, the need to look into the cultural contexts and power implications around digital tools, and critically interrogate the ideology and structural power of texts (traditional or new), is integral. This will be further elaborated in the next part of this chapter – 6.5: Toward an explicit practice of MLP.

6.2.3 New Texts, New Literacy Practices and Multimodality

The findings in this study have illustrated how students – following the teachers' literacy beliefs and approaches – engaged in new literacy practices, new texts, and multimodality. As presented in Chapter 2, new literacy practices refer to the acts of speaking, reading, writing, viewing or presenting across multiple social and cultural groups, as well as spaces (physical or

digital). They include the purposes and ways of using literacy, as well as the contexts in which literacy is used (Bull & Anstey, 2019, p. 9). New texts refer to a variety of texts, such as social media posts, websites and videos, that are inherently multimodal in nature. Knobel and Lankshear (2014) further characterise these texts as hypertextual, hyperlinked, and hypermedia.

Over in Springville Intermediate School, Petunia's literacy lessons encompassed frequent use of images and videos, such as in 'quick-writes', to assist students with generation of ideas. This was an area she admitted to having struggled with as a student. Although those writing activities were aimed at producing linguistic texts, students' schemata, imagination and creativity were activated with multimodal texts. This was as "images bridge[d] the gap between the outside and inside world, between objective physical causality and subjective freedom of imagination" (Stadler, 2020, p. 139). Magnolia, despite finding technology use "distracting sometimes", assigned her students to work in groups to research online and create presentation slides on their devices which led to the immersion in digital and multimodal texts. She also discussed some presentation skills and etiquettes of audiences (giving appropriate feedback and responses) with them prior to them presenting with the prepared slides. In Lily's classroom, with a higher tendency to experiment with digital spaces (e-classroom, virtual museum, e-modelling book), her lessons similarly engaged a substantial amount of new texts in the form of interactive websites and videos. Showing websites of expeditions such as 'Journey to Antarctica' (a theme they were working on at that time), Lily linked these to a literacy lesson on writing an application letter to be part of the crew. She listed "expertise in using navigational tools" and "personal characteristics" as some of the criteria needed. She deconstructed a sample letter, discussed what each paragraph contained, and most importantly, emphasised why they should be picked over others for that one precious spot. Lily also recounted:

When you were here and we started the expedition applications and the students went away and found a website; they are so used to... if they're interested in something and they want to know more, they go away and use a device to learn themselves. So, I think it's a tool that they know they can use to further their learning if they're really interested in a certain topic, which I think is awesome.

On the other hand, at Summerville Intermediate School, Ruby's and Helena's literacy lessons appeared more "traditional". Their commitment to learning-to-read-and-write activities could be attributed to the school's focus and curriculum (see Chapter 5, Helena and Ruby, Part II).

Using texts from the School Journal, reading, for Ruby, typically followed the sequence of: silent reading, reading aloud to gauge students' pronunciation, question-prompts to elicit key message and information to fill in the worksheet given, and "pulling texts apart" to develop critical thinking skills on a text. These were precursor activities to develop synthesising skills. Writing, as Helena demonstrated, involved ensuring students could differentiate genres and conventions – what makes an argumentative or explanatory piece – as well as the language features. Nevertheless, while keeping to the school's literacy focus, Ruby and Helena integrated new literacy practices and new texts through independent work and social science projects. Researching online and video viewings were common in both classrooms. During data collection, Helena's students were producing a video, while Ruby's independent work during literacy lessons involved extensive work online on educational programmes, games as well as webpages.

Collectively, the teachers in both schools were committed to developing traditional literacy skills. However, they also engaged extensively with new literacy practices that arose out of using digital technologies. As the teachers and students worked in the digital spaces, these practices involved new literacy skills. For example, navigating through the internet required the ability to locate information, evaluate it critically, synthesise it, and (re)communicate it. Arguably, these are the skills that are becoming increasingly vital in this century's globalised and rapidly changing economy and workforce (Anstey & Bull, 2018; Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Serafini & Gee, 2017; The NLG, 2000). In addition, this demonstrates that the consumption and production of multimodal texts have become a norm in literacy lessons across learning areas, which altogether signals encouraging signs of teachers bridging students' in- and out-of-school literacy practices.

Undoubtedly, acknowledging that students are already engaging in literacy activities that extend their communication abilities by blending texts, sound and imagery such as in social networking, podcasting and videomaking, and replicating the experiences in classrooms will further keep school literacy learning relevant to them (Aljanahi, 2019; Mirra et al., 2018). In this regard, an explicit teaching of the features of new texts, such as their composition, which the teachers were already doing intuitively can be beneficial. For example, the placement of elements, the use of specific font design, the choice of colours, and the type of audio included can work together to achieve different effects, and to communicate a specific message. I will explore this further in Section 6.5.

6.2.4 The Various Interpretations of Critical Literacy

The teachers' focus on traditional literacy and provision of space for students to engage with critical literacy, new literacy practices and new texts across learning areas effectively addressed multiliteracies skills. These were demonstrated through a repertoire of literacy activity types and sequences that enabled students to be active agents and meaning makers in and across multiple modes. Within this, the students experienced the known and the new, conceptualised by naming and with theory, analysed critically and functionally, and applied appropriately and creatively (Bull & Anstey, 2019; Kalantzis & Cope, 2015). In the teacher participants' classrooms, collaborative inquiry-based learning and group research activities were planned in a manner that allowed students to work with each other. Work here entailed brainstorming for ideas, doing information searches online, and discussing what and how to include this information in their work as well as how best to present it. As Petunia said to her students:

You could present your findings in slides after you have researched and made notes about it. But there are many ways to present them. Instead of just texts, you gotta use pictures and videos to make them interesting. Be creative but check where the videos come from. Double-check your information. Where did the information come from? Who wrote the information? Can we trust that little bit of information? What makes you think we can trust that information? For example, NASA is funded by the US government; it is controlled by the government. How would that impact the exploration?

Or what Lily expressed about sourcing information online:

I feel like you need to guide them a little bit as to where they go and search for things so, we talk a little bit about different sources; finding three pieces of information that are the same to know – you know, so we talk about what an authentic source would be and things like that. So, it's not just as if they just go off and look for things. There is a little bit of guidance there.

Petunia's and Lily's accounts presented an indirect reference to a critical literacy approach. They appeared to understand critical literacy as evaluating the validity and trustworthiness of the online information, by comparing the authors and sources. Further, Petunia's brief comment on NASA being run by the US government highlighted her awareness of the power structures

embedded in texts. On the other hand, Ruby also had a reading activity named ‘critical literacy’ which she interpreted as:

Oh, critical literacy is like, you get a book and they have a whole lot of tasks to do with it. It's like a no-brainer activity really, it's not really like critical literacy. The tasks were like answering comprehension questions, understanding what the key message was, and Googling up on it.

Chapter 2 of this thesis discussed critical literacy as interrogating and understanding cultural and ideological representations, alongside the reader’s positioning in texts. Luke (2012) argues that critical literacy aims to explicitly critique and transform “dominant ideologies, cultures and economies, institutions and political systems” (p. 5). In this regard, the teachers’ understanding of critical literacy is interesting in two ways. First, it shows the different ways it is perceived and practised in schools. Second, it reveals the gap between the work of academics and actual implementation by practitioners. Consequently, this highlights the need to mediate and bridge theory–practice gaps, which could be undertaken as a component of MLP.

6.2.5 Reflexive Pedagogy: A Repertoire of Literacy Pedagogical Approaches

This section builds on Sections 6.2.1 to 6.2.4 to elaborate on the teachers’ literacy pedagogy. As presented in chapter two, Cope and Kalantzis (2015) propose that teachers adopt a reflexive pedagogy – one that combines didactic and authentic pedagogy – to maximise student agency. Briefly, didactic pedagogy involves teachers transmitting knowledge to learners, whereas authentic pedagogy is learner-centered and focuses on immersion in experiences. A reflexive pedagogy is in accordance with the MLP’s goal of creating and providing opportunities for learners to be active meaning makers and active designers of their social futures. Within this proposition, teaching and learning may integrate the four pedagogical moves of situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice (The NLG, 2000), or the knowledge processes of experiencing, conceptualising, analysing, and applying (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015). The NLG’s (2000) pedagogical moves and Cope and Kalantzis’ (2009, 2015) knowledge processes allow for a discussion of the teacher participants’ literacy teaching practices through the lens of MLP – specifically how they practised the pedagogical approaches.

Up to this point, the findings have established how the teachers paid attention to developing students' reading and writing skills alongside technology-mediated literacy activities. In these instances, all five teachers alternated between teacher-led and student-led learning. Teacher-led learning mostly occurred when introducing new literacy skills such as synthesising in reading and persuasive, argumentative and explanatory pieces in writing. Student-led learning took place in the forms of independent and collaborative work that saw the students transitioning from learning-to-read-and-write to reading-and-writing-to-learn. In other words, they were required to apply their learnt literacy skills to complete the tasks given. For example, after drafting their persuasive piece, Helena's students delivered their speech on 'why they should not be punished for something they did wrong' and received peer-feedback on their content and delivery. Within these approaches to LTL, the teachers' instructional strategies seemingly provided scaffolds and support for students, while also challenging them to embark on new learning. The teachers' repertoires of learning activities comprised modelling, prompting, questioning, giving feedback, telling, explaining, and directing that demonstrated "weaving backwards and forwards, across and between a repertoire of pedagogical moves" (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015, p. 4). As they corresponded with situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice (New London Group, 2000), the classroom environment became a collaborative learning community with students engaging in authentic literacy practices.

Taken together, a prominent feature that has emerged from discussing how the teachers' literacy beliefs and teaching reflect a largely implicit practice of the foundational tenets of MLP – diversity, multimodality, and a repertoire of pedagogy – is the influences and factors that shaped their teaching practices. This is explored in the following section.

6.3 Contextually-Situated Literacy Teaching Practices

This section addresses the third sub-question: *How do teachers describe the influences and the processes that shaped their [implicit] conceptions and practices of MLP in Years 7–8 LTL?* Overall, three main influences are identified from the teachers' narratives: (i) the school curriculum and its trickle-down literacy programme; (ii) personal learning on-the-job due to student age-group diversity; and (iii) multimodal texts and new literacy practices resulting from

using digital technologies and the internet. These are individually elaborated in the following sections.

6.3.1 New Zealand Curriculum vs IB's Primary Year Programme

Mapped against the characteristics of a reflexive pedagogy, the NZC and IB programmes value students' lived experiences by emphasising *constructivist* and *sociocultural* views of teaching and learning. The NZC encourages “teaching and learning programmes [that] are developed through a wide range of experiences across all learning areas, with a focus on literacy” and “opportunities for students to be involved in the community, and authentic learning experiences” (MOE, 2007, p. 41). In Literacy Learning Progression, teachers are encouraged to “actively seek opportunities to build on the skills and experiences that their students bring to the classroom” (MOE, 2010, p. 7). Likewise, the IB programme's inquiry-based model values the practices of engaging students' prior knowledge, using real world contexts and primary experiences as significant activators of learning, and engaging students' curiosity through meaningful learning to conduct conceptual investigations (IBO, 2012).

At a glance, at their cores, both the national and IB curricula foster the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes. The NZC's key competencies of “thinking; using language, symbols, and texts; managing self; and participating and contributing” weave together with the principles of “learning to learn; coherence; and future focus” to develop young people who can participate “in a range of life contexts” (MOE, 2015, pp. 7–8). The IB programme, through its transdisciplinary teaching and learning, is committed to developing “inquirers, thinkers, communicators, risk-takers” who possess five categories of interrelated skills: thinking, research, communication, social, and self-management (IBO, 2012, p. 4). The goal is to help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities (IBO, 2012). Significantly, pertinent to the focus of this research, both the NZC (via the ELP 4–8 handbook for teachers) and the IB programme mention *multiliteracies* and *multimodality* as part of LTL. As determined earlier, although not explicitly known to the teachers in this study, they nonetheless demonstrated how they weaved these key elements of MLP in their literacy instructions and activities across the learning areas in the curriculum.

Having said that, where they were similarities, some key differences jumped out too. The open-ended nature of the NZC can be both its greatest strength and also its biggest limitation. More

experienced teachers, whether through years of teaching or encounters with considerably more prescriptive curriculum documents, may have a greater professional and practical knowledge to draw on to create stimulating learning environments that inspire, motivate and challenge their students. However, for less experienced or beginning teachers, the comparable lack of practical and content knowledge may be daunting when faced with enormous amounts of teaching materials such as curriculum documents, published books, and education websites in an attempt to determine what needs to be included in planning. This might explain why Ruby adhered rather strictly to the “schoolwide expectations” while Helena demonstrated more variation. The IB programme, on the other hand, provides more structure and guidance to teachers with its six interdisciplinary themes, approaches to learning, and attributes in the learner profiles to develop. Springville Intermediate School’s curriculum coach and assistant principal further supported the teachers by sharing instructional materials (e.g. PowerPoint slides, reading materials) they prepared following the themes. Between the two schools, this suggests that the differences observed in the participants’ literacy instructions and activities could be attributed to the respective nature of the NZC and IB programme – altogether strengthening the views that teachers’ professional practices share a strong causal relationship with the school’s management and curriculum (Boche, 2014; Connelly et al., 1997; Ross and Chan, 2016). Thus unsurprisingly, a contrast between teachers of Springville Intermediate “preparing them for the more distant future” (Petunia, interview data) and Summerville Intermediate “preparing them for high school” (Helena, interview data) in their LTL goals and aspirations for the students was found.

Springville Intermediate School’s teachers expressed that their literacy programme aims to equip students with the skills and knowledge they need for their future. The content of Petunia’s, Magnolia’s and Lily’s literacy lessons – reading and writing – were planned in a manner that supported students’ “exploration” in the Unit of Inquiry (social science). Real-life and authentic literacy practices of researching online, preparing multimodal slides for publications and giving presentations were evident in Springville teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. As Petunia and Lily put it:

So, it’s preparing them for the unknown in the sense; giving them a toolkit so that they can draw on different things to use when they are learning in the future. It’s [done] through our approaches to learning, the kids are learning communication skills, thinking skills, research skills – skills that help them learn. I think that’s where it comes

in. Yeah, sort of like teaching them to be critical thinkers, (to) critically analyse their research skills, how they find out information and what they're doing with that information and so on. (Petunia)

With our current Unit of Inquiry where the approaches to learning, the skill we are looking for in terms of researching, that brings in a whole lot of literacy and being able to actually even know where to start in terms of how you would research something, how you would form a question to be able to put it into Google. And they (the students) know we cover a lot of things as well in terms of how they present themselves online. They've been creating profiles of themselves and they're writing descriptions and things. The way that you present yourself in that digital space is quite important as well. (Lily)

Over in Summerville Intermediate School, whose curriculum is very much underpinned by the NZC, as well as reports from the Education Review Office, its literacy programme had been focused on two main areas: culturally responsive teaching, and writing. These came through strongly in Ruby's and Helena's narratives and classroom literacy activities. There was a strong emphasis on grouping students according to their literacy levels, and teaching writing conventions such as the PEEL structure to writing paragraphs, and using Write-That-Essay programme as starter activity daily. Nonetheless, Helena, with years of teaching experience, conducted her literacy lessons differently from Ruby, a relatively new teacher. While Helena fulfilled similar requirements, she grouped her students following writing goals and had a multitude of quick-paced, not to mention more extensive kinds of, literacy activities. On the other hand, Ruby's literacy teaching practices and activities seem to adhere more diligently to the school's literacy programme guidelines and expectations.

Oh, it's a school-wide expectation. So, everyone is to have modelling books in their class, so that the kids can refer back to when they need to. It's (also) a school-wide expectation that you group-teach, like group-needs based. So you teach Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4 in their groups. There are different focus [for writing] each term and so it's persuasive writing this term. We are looking at structure this week – how to write a PEEL paragraph. The success criteria and WALT are shared with the students, they normally come through in their essay. And then we will have a self-assessment, where they have this self-reflection sheet here and they'd go to the modelling book, like they

had done a PEEL paragraph, they write down the points and areas they would like to develop the next day. (Ruby)

We have some school guidelines about how we should organise literacy sessions – by needs, strength and ability. It's recommended that we have three groups. However, what you might have seen, I've done it differently, as I've got kind of eight subgroups running in the room. I'm just trialling in my room this week, so it's kind of new, a bit kind of mucky. At this point in time, they seem to be really enjoying it. So the groups that are arranged are grouped by the writing goal. So some of them are higher level writers than others in the group. So it's not an ability group test but it's done by goal. (Helena)

The teachers' narratives foreground the ways these school contexts – administration, curriculum, and literacy programme focus – substantially informed teachers' literacy knowledge and teaching practices. Nevertheless, the teachers were empowered to exercise their agency to negotiate between what was required of them and their students' learning needs. Consequently, they could make autonomous decisions to practise in accordance with what they believed, and taught literacies the way they knew how or desired. Taken together, these findings corroborate Bell's (2011) theorisation of teaching as a sociocultural practice, in which teachers' knowledge of subject-matter and instructions were continuously expanded through professional learning and development.

6.3.2 Professional Learning and Development

The schools' foci and management directed the types of professional development (PD) the teachers received and how they received them. Springville Intermediate School was focused on delivering the IB programme that included its approaches to teaching and learning. Acknowledging that each teaching team might have different concerns, the school's senior leaders would hold regular meetings and discussions with the team leader and their members to tailor PD programmes to their needs. Further to this, Springville engaged a curriculum coach who was responsible for coordinating the school's literacy instructional activities and materials, aligning the IB theme(s) of the term with the topics of reading and writing, and subsequently connecting them to the Unit of Inquiry. They also collaborated with and supported the teachers – particularly Petunia as she was new to Springville – in using the school curriculum to analyse the students' strengths and determine areas for improvement. Summerville Intermediate School,

on the other hand, practised whole-school PD programmes that were focused on culturally responsive teaching and writing. They were conducted by the school-contracted PD providers. This resulted in, for example, the school-wide implementation of the Write-That-Essay programme, and Poutama Pounamu's approach that principally believes in Māori students achieving success as Māori. In the latter, the aspirations of Ka Hikitia (the Māori Education Strategy) and Tātaiako (cultural competencies for teachers of Māori learners) serve as a strong system foundation from which to build.

In addition to these schoolwide practices, the teachers' self-initiated professional learning – motivated by their knowledge of students (e.g., students' learning needs and interests), personal beliefs and literacy learning experiences – were considerably more personalised. These were in response to the exigencies of LTL, in the teachers' attempts to tailor the activities to their students. I have summarised the teachers' individual key learning as follows:

Petunia (Springville Intermediate) believed in keeping her students engaged to arouse and sustain their interests so that “they want to learn”, and to develop critical thinking skills. Thus, she carefully sourced her texts and follow-up activities from multiple sources such as printed books and educational websites, as well as investing time in finding suitable appropriate videos to support their comprehension.

Magnolia (Springville Intermediate) believed in collaborative teamwork, in learning from other teachers through discussing ideas and outcomes. Her learning also came in the form of experiences within the classroom and knowing the students, such as when given a group that were “vibrant and quite hard to settle”, she kept them immersed and engaged by letting them do their “own inquiry and own exploring”.

Lily (Springville Intermediate) spoke with enthusiasm about her projects with her team members, of creating that digital space to upload their modelling books content. She self-taught how to build a website (her e-classroom), in which she uploaded the week's learning content, tasks – so that students who were absent could also learn remotely. Her UOI project included inducting her students into the virtual museum.

Ruby (Summerville Intermediate) attended a postgraduate certificate course in digital and collaborative learning, in which she acquired the skills to bring digital technologies

into her classroom. To connect with her students, she was also acquiring Te Reo Māori and practising giving commands in Te Reo and displaying learning areas in both English and Te Reo.

Helena's (Summerville Intermediate) grouping of students based on their learning goals was in response to a piece of research done by Poutama Pounamu, a culturally responsive project. It also came from the meeting she attended – a part of her professional learning group run by one of the kāhui ako leaders – to discuss and share stories and research ideas. In addition to these, she also made reference to the guidebook “Whakākoranga Kura Tuatahi: The Hikairo Schema for Primary” to look for approaches that engage ākongā.

Perhaps more interestingly, all of the teachers expressed that literacy teaching in intermediate-setting was “a lot of learning on-the-job” (Lily, Ruby, interview data) as their university teaching programme was more focused on developing early or basic literacy. Principal to this was the act of balancing learning-to-read-and-write and reading-and-writing-to-learn activities. Hence, there was a substantial amount of self-initiated professional learning in tailoring literacy activities to intermediate-school students who expect their teachers to “teach new things that are relevant to our lives” and “give [them] work that is challenging” (Durling et al., 2010, p. 41). Before elaborating on this in Section 6.5, the next section delves deeper into the implications of the infiltration of digital technologies in the teachers' literacy teaching practices.

6.3.3 The Infiltration of Digital Technologies

The well-resourced schools, alongside their curricula that promoted utilising digital technologies for teaching and learning, provided a conducive environment for technology-mediated LTL. Consequently, the teachers and their students' engagement of and with new literacy practices and digital texts (Knobel & Lankshear, 2014) within the classroom settings were observed.

The findings illustrated Lily's passion in continuously updating the design and content of her e-classroom, while her students frequently accessed video websites and conducted research online using search engines. Together, they indicate that technology use can promote authentic, purpose-driven, and collaborative self-directed learning (Kim et al., 2021; Thibaut & Curwood,

2018). This is unsurprising given that the teachers in this study believed in purposeful and meaningful literacy learning and acknowledged that their students were practising various forms of “reading” and “writing” of digital texts. They correspondingly replicated such learning experiences in their classrooms. Furthermore, as the teachers assumed the role of facilitators during group and independent work, they demonstrated valuing and encouraging student agency. The students, through using technologies to complete the tasks given, became active explorers and designers of meaning-making (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Kalantzis et al., 2016). These observations reinforce studies of MLP (see for example Aljanahi, 2019; Burke & Hardware, 2015; Kim et al., 2021; Holloway & Gouthro, 2020) that suggest the approach honours students’ lived experiences and fosters a culturally responsive teaching and learning. More significantly, they affirm the teachers’ instinctive practice of MLP as found in this study.

However, there were also differences in the teachers’ literacy teaching practices. Informed by their PPK, all five teachers were utilising and creating opportunities for their students to use digital technologies and multimodal texts in their classrooms to varying degrees, purposes, and manners. For example, Petunia deconstructed videos to develop her students’ critical thinking; Magnolia used devices in collaborative work; Lily, through modelling, taught her students how to create their profiles online; Ruby’s students mostly worked on their devices during independent work; and Helena’s students looked at and compared the visual composition of websites. In this vein, these various practices correspond with McDowall’s (2015) view that the NZC “represents literacy as multimodal and embodied” (p. 8) and the ELP 5–8 handbook’s call to teachers “to consider literacy teaching and learning in the light of diverse and changing ways of communication” and “to think in terms of multiliteracies” (MOE, 2006, p. 18). Despite this, Carss (2019) argues that the acknowledgement of multiliteracies in the ELP 5–8 may be superficial as teachers could be better supported in working around the new concepts of literacy.

This study concurs with Carss (2019) and recognises that simply combining multiple modes in the production of meaning may not necessarily reflect an understanding of multimodality. Additionally, while assessing the credibility and trustworthiness of internet sources is a good move forward, it is imperative to also analyse the semiotic functions of texts in order to be critically literate (Carss, 2019; Sandretto & Tilson, 2016). As for bridging students’ in and out of school literacy (Aljanahi, 2019), Cassidy et al. (2021) note that “digital and multimodal literacies are the key to unlock learning across every content area in and beyond the school

curriculum” (p. 7), and that the goal is to have students move seamlessly from print-based to digital practices inside the classroom. Based on these premises, the second part of this chapter puts forward several steps that correspond with Cassidy et al.’s (2021) suggestions.

6.4 The Interplay between Teacher Knowledge and Teacher Agency

The findings and discussion in sections 6.2 and 6.3 have highlighted the teachers’ “wisdom of practice” (Shulman, 1987, p. 8), and how the aspects of their PPK – personal aspects, formal knowledge, and experiential knowledge – come together in their literacy teaching practices (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Connelly et al., 1997). In other words, the co-construction of the teachers’ narratives have presented how they developed and applied their various knowledge bases which include the knowledge of self, students, subject-matter, instruction, curriculum and milieu (Elbaz, 1983, 1991) to achieve their personal meaningful goals in literacy lessons. Accordingly, the development and engagement of teacher knowledge could be attributed to a supportive environment and curriculum that enabled the teachers to exercise their professional knowledge, professional relationship, and agency. As discussed in Chapter 2, teachers’ agency has been described as “their active contribution to shaping their work and its conditions” (Biesta et al., 2015, p. 624). The interplay between teacher knowledge and teacher agency is then positively related to their motivation and engagement in teaching (Biesta et al., 2015). While my study did not aim to capture teacher agency per se, it did become visible through how the teachers made sense of the overarching school curriculum and policy documents to write and implement their class curriculum.

The findings have also illuminated teaching as a sociocultural and relational practice. Fundamentally, Petunia, Magnolia, Lily, Ruby, and Helena regarded knowing and building relationships with their students as vital dimensions of their teaching practices in general, and LTL in particular. They exhibited great working dynamics with their students by balancing the teacher-student power relationships and giving students the agency in their learning.

I always try to be creative and relatable to the kids and, yeah, just caring. I try to be a really caring teacher so that the kids understand and know that I’ll always be there for them because I think it’s important that they know I’ve got their back... building that relationship with the kids and knowing that I’m here to support them and they can learn

from me. Yeah, I think they need to feel that way before they can learn. If they're not comfortable or not in a good frame of mind, then they're not gonna be learning. (Petunia)

I love the kids; I love that age group. I like it, our school... you keep them for two years. For most 99% of the kids, that's a great thing for me because you just develop those really deep relationships with them. And I think for the most part, the kids like it too because they form a really deep relationship with you, and we know each other really well. So yes, I definitely like the kids. So, I'm quite caring. I work very hard on the relationships, particularly at the beginning of the year, work very hard on the relationships with the kids. Yeah, a lot of mine is on like relationships and knowing them and knowing what their interests are, as well and letting them choose their own interests. (Helena)

My observation field notes further recorded the teachers setting up conferencing opportunities so they could co-construct shared understandings – for example learning expectations, goals, and purpose – with the students. Through these practices, they developed knowledge of what interested and engaged their students, knowledge of their background and home situations, and knowledge of the students' prior knowledge and out-of-school literacy practices – resulting in an implicit practice of MLP.

The teachers' multifaceted teaching practices were reflective of what Bell (2011) theorises teaching as – a sociocultural practice. Within this, Bell (2011) proposes a number of related and interacting classroom practices – “a sociocultural jigsaw” – that include *social practice*, *relational practice*, *cultural practice*, *caring practice*, and *ethical practice* (p. 10). The teachers in this study demonstrated that teaching was a *social practice* – it involved social interactions with others, including having dialogues and discussions with students, parents, colleagues. It was *relational* as they saw building and maintaining good relationships with their students as a key priority. It was a *caring practice* as they cared for students' wellbeing and achievements. It was a *cultural practice* as they valued and built on students' lived cultural experiences. It was an *ethical practice* as they treated the students with fairness and respect, as well as modelling the behaviours for the overall development of children.

Taken together, the display and interplay of teachers' PPK, agency, and teaching as a sociocultural practice support the notion of “teachers as knowing and knowledgeable

individuals” (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 438). Following the findings in sub-questions 1 to 3, it was found that numerous aspects contributed to the teachers’ implicit understanding of multiliteracies and an instinctive practice of MLP. They include, for example, their personal learning and teaching experiences, interests, various knowledge bases, and the school’s focus and literacy curriculum. The teachers were also empowered by an interpretative school curriculum and supportive school leaders that allowed them to exercise their agency and make autonomous decisions. In the second part of this chapter, this study engages these strengths to forward some practical recommendations that may be useful to LTL in Aotearoa New Zealand context in particular, and the wider contexts in general.

Part II: Recommendations

Through engaging Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000) narrative inquiry framework that encourages researchers to work with *continuity* and *temporality*, this study has looked into the participating teachers’ past and present LTL experiences and future expectations, thereby forming a narrative unity. The teachers’ narratives in Chapters 4 and 5 illuminated how the use of digital technologies in classroom settings, an emphasis on building relationships and knowledge of their students, teacher autonomy and agency, and an interpretative school curriculum can be conducive to MLP. Their repertoires of literacy pedagogy were consistent with the four pedagogical moves of situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice recommended by the NLG (2000). Perhaps more significantly, these intermediate-school teachers also highlighted the theoretical and practical gaps between what they received in their teacher education programme and formal professional development and in real classroom settings that prompted their self-initiated professional learning.

Against this background, this second part of the chapter puts forward some practical recommendations to promote an explicit practice of MLP. The recommendations proposed are underpinned by three constructs: the NZC and its trickle-down literacy curriculum documents, an understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand’s contemporary education foci, and the notion of teachers as knowing and knowledgeable individuals.

6.5 Toward an Explicit Practice of Multiliteracies Pedagogy

This section looks at the juncture of theory and practice of MLP and teacher knowledge. It does so by identifying components of MLP that future professional development and teacher education programmes may consider to enable an explicit practice of MLP in classrooms. It also considers the areas that can be further harnessed from the teachers' use of digital technologies to advance contemporary LTL. Attending to these two aspects may serve to cultivate a deeper understanding of multiliteracies among teachers, who may subsequently direct their literacy pedagogy toward developing multiliterate individuals. As Anstey and Bull (2018) propose, a multiliterate person can be characterised as:

a creative and critical thinker who can engage with new texts; having a repertoire of literacy knowledge and practices; understanding, and being able to use, traditional and new communication strategies – understanding and determining the appropriate semiotic systems and; being critically literate. (p. 7)

In this study, the teachers' implicit practice of MLP was identified through contextualising the teachers' literacy beliefs and teaching practices with the aim and foundational tenets of MLP. Figure 1 (p. 195) provides an overview of how the teachers' literacy beliefs and teaching practices were aligned with the MLP framework in their aim, recognition of the influence of digital technologies, and a repertoire of literacy pedagogy. The figure also highlights some potential improvement areas and illustrates how teachers could be better supported in integrating multiple cultures, and working with multimodality and new texts as afforded by digital technologies. Against this backdrop, this study identifies and proposes: (i) the teaching of synaesthesia and, (ii) interrogating the semiotic functions of texts (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015) to enable an explicit practice of MLP. These recommended components or teachings may also lead to the development of critical multiliteracies (Mirra et al., 2018) that extends the theory and practice from the NLG to the present time (Serafini & Gee, 2018).

These suggestions are proposed with the notion of complementing the teachers' current literacy teaching practices, which may realistically be included in professional development and teacher education programmes. It also involves calls for these programmes to adopt a constructivist approach – careful considerations for teachers' existing beliefs and knowledge – when designing courses. In so doing, it is hoped that they may contribute toward addressing

the theoretical issues of multiliteracies is complex and having little impacts in the classrooms (Kiss & Mizusawa, 2018; Kulju et al., 2018) and upholding the notion of “teachers as knowing and knowledgeable individuals” (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 438).

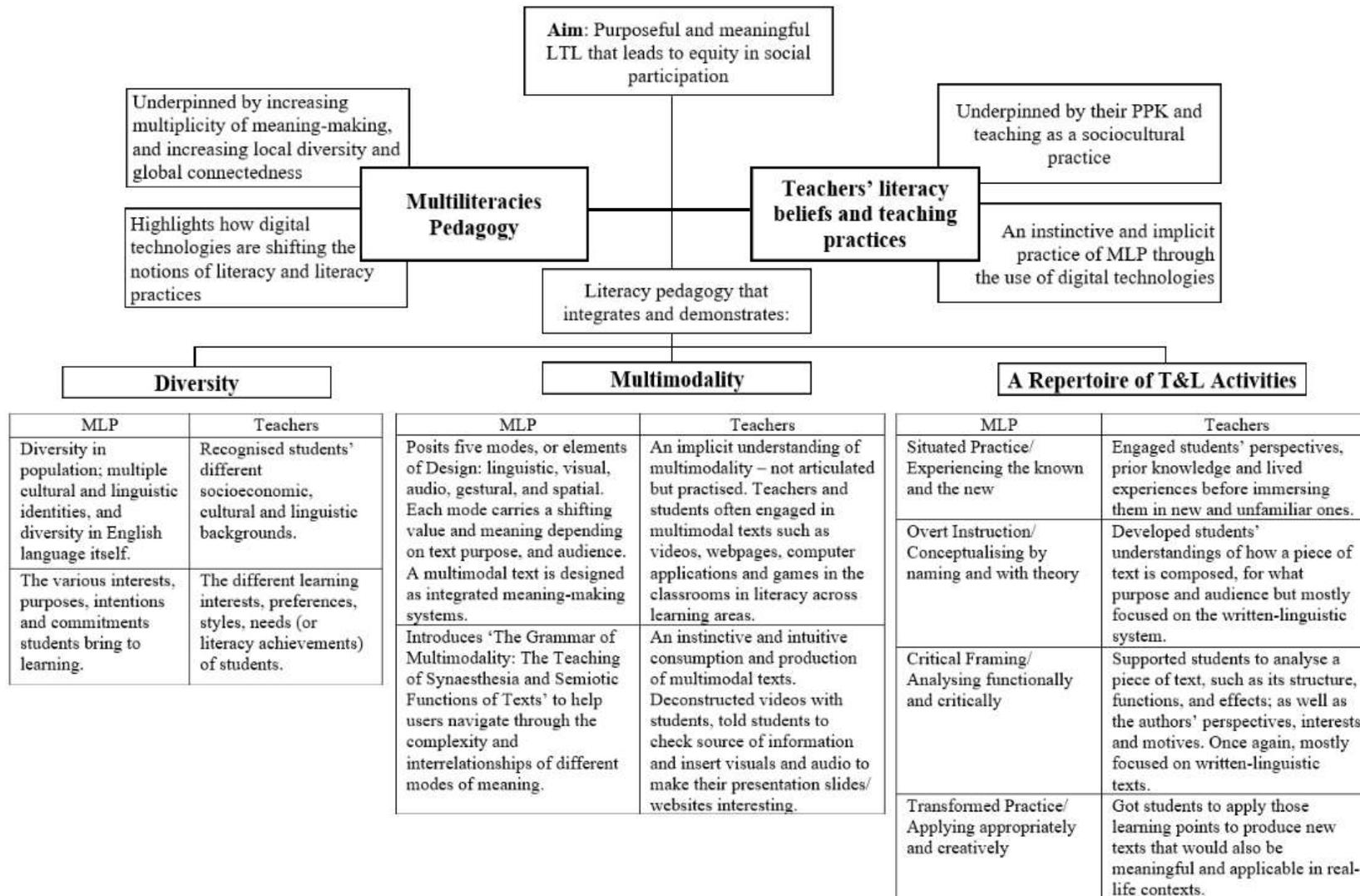
6.5.1 A Purposeful and Conscious Teaching of Synaesthesia

The instances of teachers engaging technologies meaningfully corroborate Bolstad’s (2017) survey findings of how Aotearoa New Zealand teachers are using digital technologies to support their teaching. During classroom observations, I witnessed and found extensive consumption and production of multimodal texts as videos and websites were frequently included as parts of the teaching materials. This practice occurred as the teachers facilitated their students towards learning and applying literacy skills across the curriculum. Furthermore, following the formal integration of digital technologies into the NZC as a strand in the revised technology learning area, the teachers in this study had prompted their students to verify the trustworthiness and reliability of internet sources through questioning the contexts and purposes of texts. These practices are noticeably reflective of the MLP’s pedagogical moves of *critical framing* or *analysing functionally and critically* and *transformed practice* or *applying appropriately and creatively*. However, there are two areas that might be worth paying a closer attention to. The first is the various ways teachers could further exploit the (new) texts found online with their students to enhance their LTL. The second is for teachers to explore students’ understanding of literacy and literacy practices and integrate them in tandem with their beliefs and teaching practices. As Koehler et al. (2013) argue, technology has its own affordances and constraints, and deciphering these can be difficult all by itself, especially as teachers contemplate how, when, why, and to what extent to integrate them into classrooms.

Against this backdrop, this study recommends that teachers (and thus learners) be better supported in their *active knowledge-making* and *multimodal meaning-making* efforts through a conscious teaching of *synaesthesia*, or “the representational processes of reframing a meaning from one meaning to another” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2020, p. 34). As presented in Chapter 2, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) suggest that teachers teach students to use or to shift between the various modes to support their thinking and represent the knowledge they have gained. In other words, in representing their created-meaning, students are made aware of the available Designs – linguistic; visuals such as diagram, images, animation; audio-visuals like videos; and spatial – and taught how to effectively *manipulate* them.

Figure 1

Mapping MLP to teachers' literacy beliefs and practices



Synaesthesia is made possible by the *representational parallelism* between modes which allows “the same thing to be depicted in different modes” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 179). For instance, making references to Kress and van Leeuwen’s (1996, 2020) work, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) illustrate that “actions expressed by verbs in written text may be expressed by vectors in images”, or that “locative prepositions share a similar function to the foregrounding or backgrounding in images” (p. 179). Further to this, it is equally important to recognise the “*incommensurability of modes*” or that “meaning expressed in one mode cannot be directly and completely translated into another” (p. 180). This means meanings can be expressed in all of these meaning-forms but never in quite the same way. For example, audio may have similar (or better) capacity at creating a certain atmosphere and evoking the desired emotions in the audience than language in a multimodal presentation. Therefore, addressing multimodality in MLP involves considering modes as a suite of tools for meaning-making, which may or may not have similar meaning potential.

A conscious and purposeful teaching of synaesthesia is consistent with the MOE’s vision of teaching “students to be innovative creators of digital solutions”, as it aims to develop students “visual literacy – the ability to make sense of images and the ability to make images that make sense” (MOE, 2018, p. 1) through the use of digital technologies. Therefore, I argue that integrating this into teachers’ current literacy practices across curriculum areas would be of significant importance, alongside the next recommendation about critical literacy.

6.5.2 Critical Literacy: Interrogating the Semiotic Functions of Texts

The findings chapters have provided glimpses of teachers’ understanding of critical literacy – through direct and indirect references to the term. Ruby referred to it as reading comprehension activities, while Petunia and Magnolia encouraged checking the reliability of online resources. In re-grounding critical literacy, Luke (2013) highlights that the rapidity of technological advancement has generated volatility in how information is transmitted and received. He argues that critical literacy in this age of technology involves “a normative analysis of the relationship between designs, shapes and features of texts and their consequences in material and social contexts” (Luke, 2013, p. 211). These instances make apt this study’s advocacy on MLP’s recommendation of teaching an explicit and conscious understanding of the semiotic functions of texts.

As presented in Chapter 2, MLP is theoretically connected to *social semiotics* and originated from Halliday's (1978) functional linguistics, focusing on meaning-making through language and what people do with that language (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, 2015, 2020; Kalantzis & Cope, 2015). Social semiotics addresses how meanings are created and embedded in social practices, and conveyed through semiotic resources called modes (Kress, 2010). Following the concept of modes as a social semiotic system (Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020), making-meaning and meaning-making become a dynamic process. This is as the acts of "reading" and "writing" are unique to the individuals' contexts and cultures – supporting Luke's (2012, 2013) argument that texts are thus never neutral. This reinforces the need to teach students to interrogate the semiotic functions of texts – or how texts are created and communicated, and for what purposes. To do that, Kalantzis and Cope (2015,) suggest that readers engage in these questions as they try to understand the semiotic functions of texts:

- (i) representational – What do the meanings refer to?;
- (ii) social – How do the meanings connect the persons they involve?;
- (iii) organisational – How do the meanings hang together?;
- (iv) contextual – How do the meanings fit into the larger world of meaning?; and
- (v) ideological – Whose interests are the meanings skewed to serve? (pp. 19–21)

The authors emphasise that this act of interrogating texts is increasingly necessary as digital technologies normalise the phenomenon of hybrid modes of communication and multimodality where forms of meaning (represented for example through visual and audio) are profoundly overlaid. Jewitt and Kress (2003) add that each mode is important to the other in meaning construction. Thus, Cope and Kalantzis (2015) explain that interrogating the semiotic functions of texts will allow readers to interrogate messages received in multimodal texts in a way grammar might interrogate literacy.

6.6 Multiliteracies Pedagogy for Critical Multiliteracies: A Constructivist Approach

In Section 6.5, this study proposes an explicit practice of MLP through the twin-goal of synaesthesia and examining the semiotic functions of *multimodal texts* – texts that transcend printed formats to include digital and interactive ones. Essentially, such a move supports the development of *critical multiliteracies* (Mirra et al., 2018) amongst learners. To further

elaborate, these two foci involve teaching practices that understand and appreciate learners as active meaning creators. Teachers acknowledge that the texts students create are meaning designs that contain their voices, and it is a process of making meaning with which young people can feel connected to (Mirra et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2019). As Mirra et al. (2018) argue, it is problematic to assume students are solely users and consumers of digital technologies. In introducing *critical multiliteracies*, they put forward two key propositions that are consistent with this study's recommendations. First, learners need to understand, use, and deconstruct the existing multimodal resources presented to them – achievable if both teachers and students are exposed to the existing critical traditions and theories in the relevant education field. Exposure is essential to allow them to analyse the multimodal content critically. Second, the practice of critical digital production relevant to learning contents could be promoted as students are already creating multimedia materials when given the autonomy by teachers to pursue the best way to present their work. These multimedia materials often embed textual, visual, and audio content such as short videos. Producing digital content also meaningfully engages students' out-of-school literacy practices as mobile applications become a part of their social media use.

Taken together, this section presents the key idea of designing professional learning and development programmes that support and supplement teachers with the design of their pedagogic activities that can engage emerging adolescents in higher levels of thinking about the nature of multimodal texts. It also reinforces the literacy pedagogical goal of developing multiliterate learners who are active, creative, and critical meaning-makers, and who can have an equitable participation in society. When viewed from the perspective of teachers as knowing and knowledgeable individuals (Clandinin & Huber, 2010), Johnson and Golombek (2002) highlight that professional development can only emerge from a process of “reshaping teachers' existing knowledge, beliefs, and practices rather than simply imposing new theories, methods, or materials on teachers” (p. 2). Similarly, Kirsten (2019) notes that professional development that is only weakly connected with teachers' practices may result in “implementation dip” (p. 380). What this means is that teachers may not adopt or implement recommended teaching strategies in meaningful ways. This is even more apt with more experienced teachers who have developed significant amounts of PPK through years of practice.

To elaborate, this study refers to Bates and Morgan's (2018) description of professional development that entails “teachers' ongoing learning that can take place in structured

professional development settings, and literacy coaching contexts” (p. 623). Consequently, in order for teachers to explicitly practise MLP, this study proposes that it might be useful to adopt a *constructivist* approach – one that considers teachers’ existing beliefs, knowledge and experiences as starting points. Following this, the processes of learning and development would include: a focus on content; active or meaningful learning; support for collaboration; connected to and derived from teachers’ work with their students; models for effective practice, and feedback and reflection (Bate & Morgan, 2018; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011). Further to this, Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (2011) contend that a constructivist or bottom-up approach to professional development ought to begin at initial teacher education and continue throughout teacher’s career. Therefore, this study’s recommendations may also be applicable to teacher education programmes, as teachers-to-be similarly enter the teacher-training courses with their sets of personal beliefs and values, and preconceptions about teaching (Borg, 2003, 2019).

However, a revision to the current Aotearoa New Zealand literacy conceptualisation and curriculum documents should take precedence, considering how they underpin schools’ literacy curriculum and programmes. This also follows the findings on how teachers are already conceiving literacy as beyond reading and writing, and texts as beyond the printed, written-linguistic system; and how this nation recognises the prevalent use of digital technologies among schoolchildren as well as teachers, and has revised its technology curriculum accordingly. This study therefore echoes the calls of local researchers such as Sandretto and Tilson (2013, 2016) for the implementation of critical multiliteracies in Aotearoa New Zealand curriculum, and Carss (2019) “to support teachers more appropriately in developing multiliteracies competencies” (p. 199). Following these, policymakers and the relevant key stakeholders could consider introducing a literacy curriculum that (i) (re)conceptualises and thus (re)defines literacy as multiliteracies; (ii) includes a clear outline of the components of multiliteracies; and (iii) clearly illustrates how MLP could be explicitly implemented in classrooms. These aspects may be useful as they are notably still absent from the government’s latest literacy document, Literacy & Communication and Numeracy Strategy (MOE, 2022).

6.7 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted three key findings from the study – encouraging signs of MLP; a contextually-situated literacy teaching practices and; teachers as knowing and knowledgeable individuals – alongside their implications to professional development and teacher education programmes. Based on these, I have forwarded some theoretical implications. They include introducing to teachers the two particular components of the MLP framework – the teaching of synaesthesia and semiotic functions of texts – through professional development that adopts a constructivist approach. Nevertheless, there are some limitations to the present research which require addressing, and following these, suggestions for future research. I address these side-by-side in the next and final chapter of this thesis – Chapter VII: Conclusion.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

7.1 Coming Back and Together

This final chapter brings together my reflections on this narrative research and the research process. Within this, I revisit my reasons and justifications for engaging narrative inquiry and review how the approach has provided results that matched my expectations. I also recollect the research process, specifically, my experiences of researching with the teacher participants. In the process, I acknowledge the limitations of this research project and make recommendations for future research work on this topic. This chapter concludes with my departing thoughts that summarise how this research was conceived, and some concerns I had in carrying out this study.

7.1.1 Reflection on this Narrative Research

In Chapters 1 and 3, I presented my reasons for engaging narrative inquiry and for focusing on teachers' perspectives, which primarily stemmed from my professional background and experiences. They are a narrative epistemology or the view that "human beings organise their experiences into narratives" (Moen, 2006, p. 58), a view of teachers as active implementers and thus agents and catalysts of change, and a desire to contribute to multiliteracies understanding and teaching practices. Following these perspectives, I adopted Connelly and Rosiek's (2007) notion of experience that is "relational, continuous, and social" (p. 41). Thus, I understood that the stories told by the participants were connected to and dependent on their social, cultural and institutional contexts. I maintained an awareness of these essential aspects when collecting data and co-constructing the teachers' narratives. These beliefs further underpinned my research with the teacher participants in establishing and maintaining collaborative research relationships, which is an important characteristic of narrative research (Clandinin, 2020; Polkinghorne, 2007). Specifically, I did this by respecting their narrative authority and acknowledging that only they have the access to their experienced meaning. I also assumed an open listening stance and carefully attended to the participants' responses, and invited them to check, validate and feedback on the narratives constructed. I aimed to ensure their voices were heard (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 2007). Adopting these approaches helped mitigate the potential validity threats in narrative research as raised by Polkinghorne (2007):

- a) the limits of language to capture the complexity and depth of experienced meaning,
- b) the limits of reflection to bring notice to the layers of meaning that are present outside of awareness,
- c) the resistance of people because of social desirability to reveal fully the entire complexities of the felt meanings of which they are aware, and
- d) the complexity caused by the fact that texts are often a co-creation of the interviewer and participant (p. 480)

Nonetheless, it must be noted that despite the steps to ensure the validity of the co-constructed narratives, the complexity of the teachers' stories cannot be entirely represented given the depth and breadth of the participants' lives (Clandinin, 2020). However, what I hope to have done is showcase the nuances of teachers' experiences and understandings of literacy and teaching practices, situated in the midst of their busy classrooms and professional lives. In doing so, I hope to immerse readers into appreciating the things that teachers do, and the knowledge they bring along and into their teaching.

7.1.2 Reflection on the Research Process

As presented above, a positive research relationship permitted the planned research design involving introductory meeting, introductory interview, three to four full-day classroom observations and corresponding number of post-observation conversations, and collection of teaching artefacts with picture documentations to be successfully carried out. This produced a significant quantity of data and rich details of the teachers' narratives. It was also fortunate that the five participants, across two schools, presented with various personal backgrounds (including past work experiences prior to becoming a teacher) and teaching experiences – allowing for similarities and differences to come through. The class sizes were similar, with students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The only exception was Helena's class, which was designated as the 'accelerated performance' class, and which might have afforded her with more advanced literacy planning and activities.

Regardless, there were a number of limitations to this study, as commonly associated with qualitative studies in general and narrative inquiry specifically. Although they do not detract from the findings, they must be acknowledged. First, this study gathered the literacy beliefs

and practices of five teachers over a period of six months, with the researcher spending approximately two months with each participant. While a small sample group provides researchers with the opportunities for more in-depth investigations (Chase, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hennink et al., 2020), generalisation to wider groups of teachers is not possible. Second, undertaking this study as a doctoral research project meant the pressure to complete data collection within a stipulated time frame, and two years had passed since the data were gathered. There would most likely have been changes to the teachers' understanding and experiences of literacy and teaching practices as they continue to develop PPK (including literacy pedagogical approaches) in their work (Clandinin, 2020; Ross & Chan, 2016). Nonetheless, the co-constructed narratives provided rich descriptions and the intricacies of how numerous factors come together to inform teachers' LTL. Following these, the next part of this chapter highlights areas for further considerations and directions for future research.

7.2 Further Consideration and Future Research

7.2.1 “Traditional” and Contemporary Notions of Literacy

This study acknowledges the importance of “traditional” literacy skills and understands them to be the foundation of LTL. They constitute the prerequisites to developing *multiliterate* individuals. As Cope and Kalantzis (2015) and Kalantzis et al. (2016) note, the MLP framework seeks to supplement current literacy approaches and not replace them.

However, I did not aim to explore “traditional” literacy, such as reading comprehension strategies and instructional approaches, spelling conventions, language features, and writing processes in writing. Neither did I discuss the assessments of reading and writing with the teachers, although they carried them out in classrooms during observations. Rather, I deliberately focused on multiliteracies – highlighting elements of diversity and multimodality, as well as how new literacies and critical literacy were intertwined. This was because, when reviewing literature pertaining to literacy research in Aotearoa New Zealand, most studies have focused on “traditional” literacy. Literacy is still frequently referred to simply as reading and writing, and studies continue to centre on achievement gaps between groups of students in their aim to address equity through literacy education. My research hence raises the question:

- In researching (critical) multiliteracies and emerging new literacy practices, how much emphasis should be given to “traditional” literacy?

This study marks an effort to address this gap – the less discussed area or “contemporary literacy” in New Zealand literacy literature. With the changing literacy and literacy practices brought on using digital technologies, future research may consider adopting a ‘middle path’ that mediates between the two. This could take the form of a longitudinal study that explores the teaching of “traditional” literacy (reading and writing) as teachers are required to meet school curricula and expectations (Biesta et al., 2016; Boche, 2014), and how digital technologies are enabling contemporary literacy or multiliteracies in the intermediate and high-school settings. A study that investigates both notions of literacy upholds the value (e.g., the functional aspects) of “traditional” literacy, and may also make explicit the multiliteracies skills emerging adolescent and adolescent students need to navigate through and around new literacies.

7.2.2 Students’ Understanding of Literacy and Literacy Practices

Researching teachers’ conceptions of MLP has demonstrated emerging adolescent students’ experiences with new literacy practices as they engage in digital spaces. Studies focussing on students’ perspectives suggest that students prefer to separate school’s literacy learning from their virtual presence (Aljanahi, 2019), but also appreciate a multiliteracies approach that connects literacy learning to real-life practices (Lim et al., 2021; Sandretto & Tilson, 2013). This raises the question:

- What are the teachers’ understandings of students’ understandings of literacy and out-of-school literacy practices?

McNaughton (2020) reports that “we know very little about what literacy and language activities and instruction actually occur in the everyday experiences of children and young people. We also don’t know what outcomes these activities lead to” (p. 2). What this means is that, although teachers are aware of students’ new literacy practices, they may not be familiar with the types and manners of the new practices taking place. For example, how are students communicating in their (online) communities and digital spaces? What are their preferred form(s) or mode(s) of meaning-making? What are the literacy skills that will enable them to be

more effective and agentic meaning-makers? Consequently, an investigation into this area, particularly with students of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, may contribute toward the design of literacy programmes that are more appropriately tailored to the needs of learners. This aligns with the MLP's educational mission of ensuring equity in social participation through literacy pedagogy.

7.2.3 Critical Multiliteracies and Transpositional Grammar

In the previous chapter, I recommended that the teaching of synaesthesia (manipulating modes) and semiotic functions of texts be introduced to teachers. Extending on their work on MLP, Cope and Kalantzis (2020) introduce a framework called 'transpositional grammar' that may further assist practitioners in teaching synaesthesia and semiotic functions of texts in their literacy classrooms. Cope and Kalantzis (2020) refers to *transposition* as "the activity of reframing a meaning in one form, then another, or several together at the same time" (p. 1). Building on teachers' pre-existing understandings of grammar that generally refers to the syntax of language and rules for correct speaking and writing, transpositional grammar as a framework can be useful for "describing and analysing different forms of meaning across text, image, space, object, body, sound and speech" (Cope & Kalantzis, 2020, p. i).

My findings have highlighted how technology use leads to an implicit practice of MLP. According to Serafini and Gee (2017) and Cope and Kalantzis (2020), the increasing utilisation of digital technologies and their affordances have culminated in diverse forms of representation of meaning. These include webpages, video games and interactive computer or mobile applications. This raises the question:

- How can teachers' use of digital technologies be better supported to encourage explicit multiliteracies teaching and learning?

A study that introduces the critical multiliteracies and transpositional grammar frameworks, and then investigates the effects and outcomes of technology-mediated teaching practices would provide valuable insights into teachers' literacy teaching experiences, and in turn, students' literacy learning experiences.

7.2.4 Narrative Inquiry in Literacy Teaching and Learning Research

In this section, I put forward rationales for engaging narrative inquiry and then its uptake in LTL research. I drew inspiration from Barkhuizen (2011, 2014), Barkhuizen and Consoli (2021), and Barkhuizen et al. (2014) to advocate for narrative inquiry for language and literacy teaching and learning research. I also referred to the selected work of Clandinin (2020) and Johnson and Golombek (2017) who discuss narrative inquiry for teachers' professional lives and careers.

Chapters 2 and 3 have discussed how teachers' (implicit) practices of MLP in classrooms require more explorations. This was highlighted through the number of MLP studies reviewed, where researchers were often more interested in examining MLP's benefits with teachers and students through experimental projects. I would argue that this aptly describes the situation, in addition to a paucity of multiliteracies research, in Aotearoa New Zealand. This comes as the New Zealand government has yet to officially adopt or adapt the multiliteracies framework in its curriculum – which Sandretto and Tilson (2013) dub as “a missed opportunity for New Zealand literacy policy” (p. 4). At the same time, local studies on literacy concentrate on highlighting disparities as well as elevating learners' reading and writing achievements.

In contrast, this narrative research with its richly described individual stories of teachers' literacy beliefs and teaching practices has demonstrated how teachers practised MLP instinctively. Alongside this, it has contributed to a better understanding of teachers' PPK – for example, how they interpreted and responded to the curriculum (knowledge of curriculum), their social contexts (knowledge of milieu), and students (knowledge of students).

Based on these premises, I advocate for engaging narrative inquiry for literacy and language teaching and learning research. The following questions from Barkhuizen (2014) are helpful in guiding researchers' decisions to employ narrative inquiry:

- Are you more convinced by a richly described individual case study than you are by statistical analysis of experimental data collected from large numbers of people?
- Do you believe that we can best understand the social forces that condition language teaching and learning behaviour by understanding how individuals interpret and respond to them?

- Would you like research to tell us more about the meanings that individuals attach to teaching and learning languages and the consequences that teaching and learning have for their lives?
- Would you like to hear more about the diversity of language teaching and learning experiences through the words of teachers and learners themselves? (p. 1)

By gathering stories of teachers' experiences from the various focal points – past experiences, current practices, future expectations – narrative researchers may discover and present a more nuanced literacy practices and experiences of teachers. This is as the findings of narrative inquiry studies – in the form of narratives – offer “lifelikeness” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 1), painting intricate pictures of teachers' worlds in the classrooms (and beyond) and the extent their practices are informed by their students and surroundings.

Although the findings in this study are not generalisable, the methodological commitments and methods systematically laid out in Chapter 3 make this narrative research replicable to a certain extent. I have also provided the justifications for engaging narrative inquiry and the steps to conducting narrative inquiry, emphasising on researching *with* teachers. Upholding the tenets of Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) narrative inquiry framework of working within the three-dimensional space of interaction, place and continuity, future studies may consider collecting stories of teachers' literacy experiences, beliefs and teaching practices from other various educational settings. This includes early childhood, primary, intermediate, and high schools. This may potentially amplify the voices of teachers, and gear or (re)shape professional learning and development programmes toward multiliteracies and MLP. As teachers are expected to make learning relevant and meaningful to students, professional development programmes should likewise match teachers' expectations and teaching needs. Finally, narrative studies on tertiary levels with pre-service teachers may serve to inform the preparation of teacher education courses – particularly in the area of (multi)literacies teaching and learning.

7.3 Departing Thoughts

The idea of conducting a multiliteracies study from teachers' perspectives in Aotearoa New Zealand came from my background and work experiences. I was troubled by how course instructors perceived us (the teachers) – as well as the students – as “passive recipients of

knowledge” and “compliant objects of authority” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015, p. 7) in the various professional development courses I attended. Also, as illustrated in Chapter 1 (Section 1.2.2), the autonomy I thought I had in planning my teaching was constrained by a highly regulated system that was examination and result-oriented. The acquired awareness of being positioned as an obedient implementor exerted a profound impact on my teaching worldviews. Subsequently, as a course-trainer, I developed a practice of listening and gathering teachers’ perspectives on the effectiveness of professional development courses in their classroom teaching. I remember vividly that the teachers were most concerned about the course content’s applicability and suitability for their students. This dual-role of being both a participant and a trainer provided me with valuable experiences and piqued my curiosity about *being a teacher* and *teaching*. Alongside my interest in multiliteracies, they motivated this pursuit of doctoral research on teachers’ perspectives of LTL.

In this doctoral journey, there have been numerous memorable moments from researching with the teachers. However, the chief of all was when the teacher participants expressed that my collaboration with them had positively contributed to them ‘connecting-the-dots’ in their LTL experiences and practices. This subsequently led to an increased understanding of MLP and its relevance to New Zealand context among the teachers. For example, the *values* of “innovation, inquiry and curiosity; diversity; and equity”, and the *key competencies* of “thinking; using language, symbols, and texts; and relating to others” as stated in the NZC (MOE, 2007, pp. 10–12) were reflective of the key characteristics advocated in MLP.

Nevertheless, there have also been moments of doubts and uncertainties. In the beginning, I had concerns as to whether I had clearly comprehended the essence of narrative inquiry or narrative research. There were various understandings and approaches, following the field of inquiry, in which a narrative research could take shape. In this regard, the works of Barkhuizen and Consoli (2021), Barkhuizen et al. (2014), Clandinin and Connelly (2000), Clandinin (2020), Moen (2006), and Polkinghorne (1995, 2007) have been instrumental to my study. Their arguments and thoughts guided me in discovering and embracing my epistemological, ontological and methodological commitments. I read and re-read the literature, each with its own uptake about how and what narrative research and narrative inquiry are, and formed my understanding. Barkhuizen and Consoli’s (2021) encouragement of adopting “approaches that make sense to researchers in their own contexts of work” (p. 2) provided the assurance I needed to carry on confidently. Finally, when all is done and dusted, one question remains within me:

How has this research with the teachers truly impacted their literacy beliefs and teaching practices? I anticipate this to open the door to more researching opportunities *with* the teachers into this multiliteracies line of inquiry – as I envision the making of multiliterate teachers *and* students.

References

- Ajayi, L. (2010). Preservice teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and perception of their preparation to teach multiliteracies/multimodality. *The Teacher Educator*, 46(1), 6-31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2010.488279>
- Alanazi, A. (2016). A critical review of constructivist theory and the emergence of constructionism. *American Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2, 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.21694/2378-7031.16018>
- Aljanahi, M. H. (2019). "You could say I'm a hardcore fan of Dragon Ball Z": Affinity spaces, multiliteracies, and the negotiation of identity. *Literacy Research and Instruction* 58(1), 31-48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2018.1520940>
- Anstey, M. I., & Bull, G. (2018). *Foundations of multiliteracies : Reading, writing and talking in the 21st century*. Routledge.
- Barkhuizen, G. (2011). Narrative knowledging in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45(3), 391-414. <https://doi.org/10.5054/tq.2011.261888>
- Barkhuizen, G. (2014). Narrative research in language teaching and learning. *Lang. Teach*, 47(4), 450-466. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444814000172>
- Barkhuizen, G., Benson, P., & Chik, A. (2014). *Narrative inquiry in language teaching and learning research*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203124994>
- Barkhuizen, G., & Consoli, S. (2021). Pushing the edge in narrative inquiry. *System*, 102, 102656. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102656>
- Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (2000). Literacy practices. In D. Barton, M. Hamilton, & R. Ivanič (Eds.), *Situated Literacies: Reading and Writing in Context* (pp. 7-15). Routledge.
- Bates, C. C., & Morgan, D. N. (2018). Seven elements of effective professional development. *The Reading Teacher*, 71(5), 623-626. <https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1674>
- Baurain, B. (2012). Beliefs Into Practice: A Religious Inquiry Into Teacher Knowledge. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 11(5), 312-332. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2012.723576>
- Bell, B. (2011). *Theorising teaching in secondary classrooms: Understanding our practice from a sociocultural perspective*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203154755>
- Ben-Peretz, M. (2011). Teacher knowledge: What is it? How do we uncover it? What are its implications for schooling? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(1), 3-9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.07.015>
- Berry, J. W., & Sam, D. L. (2016). Theoretical perspectives. In D. L. Sam & J. W. Berry (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology* (2 ed., pp. 11-29). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316219218.003>
- Berry, J. W., & Ward, C. (2016). Multiculturalism. In D. L. Sam & J. W. Berry (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 441-463). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316219218>
- Berryman, M., Lawrence, D., & Lamont, R. (2018). Cultural relationships for responsive pedagogy. *Set: Research Information for Teachers*, 1, 3-10. <https://doi.org/10.18296/set.0096>
- Biesta, G., Priestley, M., & Robinson, S. (2015). The role of beliefs in teacher agency. *Teachers and Teaching*, 21(6), 624-640. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2015.1044325>
- Biesta, G., Priestley, M., & Robinson, S. (2017). Talking about education: Exploring the significance of teachers' talk for teacher agency. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 49(1), 38-54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2016.1205143>
- Boche, B. (2014). Multiliteracies in the classroom: Emerging conceptions of first-year teachers. *Journal of Literacy and Language Education [Online]*, 10(1), 114-135. <http://jolle.coe.uga.edu>

- Bochner, A. P., & Hermann, A. F. (2020). Practicing narrative inquiry II: Making meanings move. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed., pp. 285-328). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190847388.013.19>
- Bochner, A. P., & Riggs, N. A. (2014). Practicing narrative inquiry. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 195-222). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199811755.013.024>
- Bolstad, R. (2017). *Digital technologies for learning: Findings from the NZCER national survey of primary and intermediate schools 2016*. New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Bonnar, M. (2017). *Are New Zealand's literacy policies still relevant for the 21st century?* University of Auckland]. Auckland, New Zealand.
- Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language Teaching*, 36(2), 81-109. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444803001903>
- Borg, S. (2015). *Teacher cognition and language education: Research and practice*. Bloomsbury Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781474219983>
- Borg, S. (2019). Language teacher cognition: Perspectives and debates. In X. Gao (Ed.), *Second handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 1149-1170). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02899-2_59
- Brinkmann, S. (2020). Unstructured and semistructured interviewing. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed., pp. 424-456). Oxford University Press.
- Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2015). *InterViews : Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Brooks, R., Te Riele, K., & Maguire, M. (2014). *Ethics and education research*. Sage.
- Bruner, J. S. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. S. (2004). Life as Narrative. *Social research*, 71(3), 691-710.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Bull, G., & Anstey, M. (2019). *Elaborating multiliteracies through multimodal texts: Changing classroom practices and developing teacher pedagogies*. Taylor and Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315149288>
- Bull, G., & Anstey, M. I. (2004). *The literacy landscape*. Pearson Education Australia.
- Burke, A., & Hardware, S. (2015). Honouring ESL students' lived experiences in school learning with multiliteracies pedagogy. *Language, culture, and curriculum*, 28(2), 143-157. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2015.1027214>
- Butina, M. (2015). A narrative approach to qualitative inquiry. *Clinical Laboratory Science*, 28(3), 190-196.
- Carss, W. D. (2019). *Exploring the beliefs and practices of first year teachers of literacy in New Zealand primary schools* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Waikato]. The University of Waikato Research Commons. <https://hdl.handle.net/10289/12421>
- Cassidy, J., Ortlieb, E., & Grote-Garcia, S. (2021). What's hot in literacy: New topics and new frontiers are abuzz. *Literacy Research and Instruction* 60(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2020.1800202>
- Caygill, R., Zhao, B., Hunter, H., & Park, S. (2021). *How our education system is performing for literacy: Progress and achievement of New Zealand learners in English medium settings*. Ministry of Education. Retrieved from <https://assets.education.govt.nz/public/Literacy-and-Maths-strategy-development-in-2021/How-our-education-system-is-performing-for-Literacy.pdf>
- Chase, S. E. (2018). Narrative inquiry: Toward theoretical and methodological maturity. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed., pp. 546-558). SAGE Publications.

- Chavez, C. (2008). Conceptualizing from the inside: Advantages, complications and demands on insider positionality. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(3), 474-494. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2008.1589>
- Clandinin, D. J. (1985). Personal practical knowledge: A study of teachers' classroom images. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 15(4), 361-385. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.1985.11075976>
- Clandinin, D. J. (1989). Developing rhythm in teaching: The narrative study of a beginning teacher's personal practical knowledge of classrooms. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 19(2), 121-141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.1989.11075320>
- Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*. Left Coast Press.
- Clandinin, D. J. (2020). *Journeys in Narrative Inquiry: The Selected Works of D. Jean Clandinin* (1 ed.). Milton: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429273896>
- Clandinin, D. J., Caine, V., & Lessard, S. (2018). *The relational ethics of narrative inquiry*. Routledge.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1986). Rhythms in teaching: The narrative study of teachers' personal practical knowledge of classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 2(4), 377-387. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X\(86\)90030-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X(86)90030-2)
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1996). Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes: Teacher stories—stories of teachers—school stories—stories of schools. *Educational Researcher*, 25(3), 24-30. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X025003024>
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. Jossey-Bass.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Huber, J. (2010). Narrative inquiry. In B. McGaw, E. Baker, & P. P. Peterson (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (3rd ed., pp. 436-441). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-044894-7.01387-7>
- Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland spaces and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology* (pp. 35–75). Sage Publications.
- Clarke, D., & Hollingsworth, H. (2002). Elaborating a model of teacher professional growth. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18(8), 947-967. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(02\)00053-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(02)00053-7)
- Collins, J. (1995). Literacy and literacies. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24, 75-93. <https://doi.org/10.2333.135.20>
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2-14. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X019005002>
- Connelly, F. M., Clandinin, D. J., & He, M. F. (1997). Teachers' personal practical knowledge on the professional knowledge landscape. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 13(7), 665-674. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(97\)00014-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(97)00014-0)
- Cook, D. L. (1962). The Hawthorne effect In educational research. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 44(3), 116-122. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20342865>
- Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2000). Designs for social futures. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures* (pp. 203-234). Routledge.
- Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2009). "Multiliteracies": New literacies, new learning. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 4(3), 164-195. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15544800903076044>
- Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2010). New media, new learning. In D. R. Cole & D. L. Pullen (Eds.), *Multiliteracies in motion* (pp. 87-104). Routledge.
- Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2015). The things you do to know: An Introduction to the pedagogy of multiliteracies. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Learning by design* (pp. 1-36). Palgrave Macmillan Limited.
- Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2017). *e-Learning ecologies : Principles for new learning and assessment*. Routledge.
- Cordero, K., Nussbaum, M., Ibaseta, V., Otaíza, M. J., & Chiuminatto, P. (2018). Read, write, touch: Co - construction and multiliteracies in a third - grade digital writing exercise. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning* 34(2), 162-173. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12224>

- Corlett, S., & Mavin, S. (2018). Reflexivity and researcher positionality. In C. Cassell, A. L. Cunliffe, & G. Grandy (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative business and management research methods* (pp. 377-389). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Cummins, J., Bismilla, V., Chow, P., Cohen, S., Giampapa, F., Leoni, L., Sandhu, P., & Sastri, P. (2005). Affirming identity in multilingual classrooms. *Educational leadership*, 63(1), 38-43.
- Czarniawska, B. (1998). *A narrative approach to organization studies*. SAGE Publications.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412983235>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). Constructing 21st-century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 57(3), 300-314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487105285962>
- Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (2011). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(6), 81-92.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/003172171109200622>
- de Bres, J. (2010). Attitudes of non-Māori New Zealanders towards the use of Māori in New Zealand English. *New Zealand English Journal*, 24, 1-13. <http://hdl.handle.net/10993/10346>
- De Costa, P. I., Valmori, L., & Choi, I. (2017). Qualitative research methods. In S. Loewen & M. Sato (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Instructed Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 522-540). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315676968>
- DeLuca, C., Bolden, B., & Chan, J. (2017). Systemic professional learning through collaborative inquiry: Examining teachers' perspectives. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 67, 67-78.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.05.014>
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.). SAGE.
- Dobinson, T., & Dunworth, K. (Eds.). (2019). *Literacy Unbound: Multiliterate, Multilingual, Multimodal*. Springer. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-01255-7>.
- Drewry, R., Cumming-Potvin, W., & Maor, D. (2019). New approaches to literacy problems: Multiliteracies and inclusive pedagogies. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*; 44(11), 61-78. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2019v44.n11.4>
- Durling, N., Ng, L., & Bishop, P. (2010). *The education of years 7 to 10 students a focus on their teaching and learning needs*. Ministry of Education.
- Education Council. (2011). *Tātaiako: Cultural competencies for teachers of Māori learners*. Ministry of Education. Retrieved from <https://teachingcouncil.nz/assets/Files/Code-and-Standards/Tataiako-cultural-competencies-for-teachers-of-Maori-learners.pdf>
- Education Council. (2017). *Our code, our standards: Code of professional responsibility and standards for the teaching profession*. Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand Retrieved from <https://teachingcouncil.nz/assets/Files/Code-and-Standards/Our-Code-Our-Standards-Nga-Tikanga-Matatika-Nga-Paerewa.pdf>
- Education Review Office. (2018). *Ethnic diversity in New Zealand state schools*.
<https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/ethnic-diversity-in-new-zealand-state-schools>
- Elbaz, F. (1983). *Teacher thinking : A study of practical knowledge*. Routledge.
- Emirbayer, M., & Mische, A. (1998). What Is Agency? *American Journal of Sociology*, 103(4), 962-1023. <https://doi.org/10.1086/231294>
- Fenstermacher, G. D. (1994). Chapter 1: The Knower and the Known: The Nature of Knowledge in Research on Teaching. 20(1), 3-56. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732x020001003>
- Fenwick, L., & Comber, B. (2021). Digital technologies and inclusive literacy practices. *Literacy Learning: The Middle Years*, 29(1), 7-12.
- Fletcher, J., Everatt, J., Mackey, J., & Fickel, L. H. (2020). Digital technologies and innovative learning environments in schooling: A New Zealand experience. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 55(1), 91-112. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40841-020-00156-2>
- Flewitt, R., Price, S., & Korkiakangas, T. (2019). Multimodality: Methodological explorations. 19(1), 3-6. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794118817414>

- Flick, U. (2018). *An introduction to qualitative research* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Freebody, P., & Luke, A. (1990). Literacies programs: Debates and demands in cultural context. *Prospect: An Australian Journal of TESOL*, 5(3), 7-16.
- Freire, P., & Macedo, D. (1987). *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*. Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203986103>
- Gallego, M., & Hollingsworth, S. (1992). Research directions: Multiple literacies. *Language Arts*, 69(3), 206-213.
- Garcia, A., Luke, A., & Seglem, R. (2018). Looking at the next 20 years of multiliteracies: A discussion with Allan Luke. *Theory Into Practice*, 57(1), 72-78.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2017.1390330>
- Gee, J. (2015). *Social Linguistics and Literacies : Ideology in Discourses*. London: Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315722511>
- Gee, J., Hull, G., & Lankshear, C. (1996). *The new work order: Behind the language of the new capitalism*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429496127>
- Giampapa, F. (2010). Multiliteracies, pedagogy and identities: Teacher and student voices from a Toronto elementary school. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 33(2), 407-431.
<https://doi.org/https://www.jstor.org/stable/canajeducrevucan.33.2.407>
- Golombek, P. R. (1998). A study of language teachers' personal practical knowledge. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(3), 447-464. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588117>
- Golombek, P. R., & Johnson, K. E. (2017). Re-conceptualizing teachers' narrative inquiry as professional development. *PROFILE: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 19(2), 15-28. <https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v19n2.65692>
- Grand-Clement, S. (2017). *Digital learning: Education and skills in the digital age*. RAND Corporation.
- Guba, E. G. (1990). *The paradigm dialog*. SAGE Publications.
- Guerriero, S. (2014). Teachers' pedagogical knowledge and the teaching profession. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 2(1), 1-7.
- Guetterman, T. (2015). Descriptions of sampling practices within five approaches to qualitative research in education and the health sciences. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 16(2), 25-48.
- Hall, N. (1994). The emergence of literacy. In B. Stierer & J. Maybin (Eds.), *Language, literacy, and learning in educational practice* (pp. 15-29). Multilingual Matters.
- Ham, V., & Wenmoth, D. (2002). *Educators' use of the online learning centre (Te kete Ipurangi) 1999-2001*. Ministry of Education.
- Healey, A. (2016). Transforming pedagogy with multiliteracies in the English classroom. *Literacy Learning: The Middle Years*, 24(1), 7-17.
- Healy, A. (Ed.). (2008). *Multiliteracies and diversity in education*. Oxford University Press.
- Heath, S. B. (1980). The functions and uses of literacy. *Journal of Communication*, 30(1), 123-133.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1980.tb01778.x>
- Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge University Press.
- Heath, S. B. (1986). Critical factors in literacy development. In K. Egan, S. de Castell, & A. Luke (Eds.), *Literacy, Society, and Schooling* (pp. 209-229). Cambridge University Press.
- Henderson, R. (Ed.). (2012). *Teaching literacies in the middle years: Pedagogy and diversity*. Oxford University Press.
- Henderson, R., & Exley, B. (2019). Thinking about planning for literacies learning. In R. Henderson (Ed.), *Teaching literacies: Pedagogies and diversity* (2nd ed., pp. 20-36). Oxford University Press.
- Henderson, R., & Woods, A. (2012). Teaching for quality and equity: (Re)focusing the lens to make diversity and difference visible. In R. Henderson (Ed.), *Teaching literacies in the middle years: Pedagogies and diversity*. Oxford University Press.

- Hennink, M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. (2020). *Qualitative research methods* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Hitlin, S., & Elder, G. H. (2007). Time, self, and the curiously abstract concept of agency. *Sociological theory*, 25(2), 170-191. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2007.00303.x>
- Hoffman, J. V., Hikida, M., & Sailors, M. (2020). Contesting science that silences: Amplifying equity, agency, and design research in literacy teacher preparation. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 55(S1), S255-S266. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.353>
- Holloway, S. M. (2021). The multiliteracies project: Preservice and inservice teachers learning by design in diverse content areas. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 16(3), 307-325. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2020.1787172>
- Holloway, S. M., & Gouthro, P. A. (2020). Using a multiliteracies approach to foster critical and creative pedagogies for adult learners. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education* 26(2), 203-220. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477971420913912>
- Holmes, A. G. D. (2020). Researcher positionality - A consideration of its influence and place in qualitative research - A new researcher guide. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, 8(4), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v8i4.3232>
- Huang, R., & Yang, J. (2016). Digital learners and digital teachers: Challenges, changes, and competencies. In M. J. Spector, D. Ifenthaler, D. G. Sampson, & P. Isaias (Eds.), *Competencies in teaching, learning and educational leadership in the digital age* (pp. 47-56). Springer International Publishing.
- International Baccalaureate Organisation. (2012). *Primary Years Programme: Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education*.
- Jacobs, G. E. (2013). Multi, digital, or technology? Seeking clarity of teaching through a clarity of terms. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 57(2), 99-103. <https://doi.org/10.1002/JAAL.227>
- Jewitt, C., & Kress, G. R. (2003). *Multimodal literacy*. Peter Lang.
- Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (Eds.). (2002). *Teachers' narrative inquiry as professional development*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kalantzis, M., & Cope, B. (2012). New learning: A charter for change in education. *Critical Studies in Education*, 53(1), 83-94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2012.635669>
- Kalantzis, M., & Cope, B. (2015). Regimes of literacy. In M. Hamilton, R. Heydon, K. Hibbert, & R. Stooke (Eds.), *Negotiating spaces for literacy learning* (pp. 15-24). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Kalantzis, M., & Cope, B. (2020). *Adding Sense: Context and Interest in a Grammar of Multimodal Meaning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kalantzis, M., Cope, B., Chan, E., & Dalley-Trim, L. (2016). *Literacies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kalantzis, M., Cope, B., & Harvey, A. (2003). Assessing multiliteracies and the new basics. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 10(1), 15-26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09695940301692>
- Karnieli-Miller, O., Strier, R., & Pessach, L. (2009). Power relations in qualitative research. *Qual Health Res*, 19(2), 279-289. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732308329306>
- Kartch, F. (2017). Narrative interviewing. In M. Allen (Ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods* (pp. 1073-1075). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Kayi-Aydar, H. (2019). A language teacher's agency in the development of her professional identities: A narrative case study. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 18(1), 4-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2017.1406360>
- Keane, B. (2011). *Traditional Māori religion – ngā karakia a te Māori*. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. Retrieved 28 July 2022 from <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/traditional-maori-religion-nga-karakia-a-te-maori/page-4>
- Khadka, S. (2019). *Multiliteracies, emerging media, and college writing instruction*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429260841>

- Kim, M. S., Meng, X., & Kim, M. (2021). Technology-enhanced multiliteracies teaching towards a culturally responsive curriculum: A multiliteracies approach to ECE. *Interactive learning environments*, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2020.1870503>
- Kirsten, N. (2019). Improving literacy and content learning across the curriculum? How teachers relate literacy teaching to school subjects in cross-curricular professional development. *Education Inquiry*, 10(4), 368-384. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20004508.2019.1580983>
- Kiss, T., & Mizusawa, K. (2018). Revisiting the pedagogy of multiliteracies: Writing instruction in a multicultural context. *Changing English*, 1, 59-68. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1358684X.2018.1403283>
- Knobel, M., & Lankshear, C. (2014). Studying new literacies. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 58(2), 97-101. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.314>
- Koehler, M. J., Mishra, P., & Cain, W. (2013). What Is Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK)? *Journal of Education*, 193(3), 13-19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002205741319300303>
- Kohli, R. (2019). Lessons for teacher education: The role of critical professional development in teacher of color retention. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 70(1), 39-50. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487118767645>
- Kramsch, C. (2014). Language and culture. *AILA review*, 27(1), 30-55. <https://doi.org/10.1075/aila.27.02kra>
- Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. Routledge.
- Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2020). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design* (3rd ed.). Taylor & Francis Group.
- Kulju, P., Kupiainen, R., Wiseman, A. M., Jyrkiäinen, A., Koskinen-Sinisalo, K.-L., & Mäkinen, M. (2018). A review of multiliteracies pedagogy in primary classrooms. *Language and Literacy*, 20(2), 80-101. <https://doi.org/10.20360/langandlit29333>
- Lai, M. K., McNaughton, S., Amituanai-Toloa, M., Turner, R., & Hsiao, S. (2010). Sustained acceleration of achievement in reading comprehension: The New Zealand experience. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 44(1), 30-56. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.44.1.2>
- Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2003). *New literacies : Changing knowledge and classroom learning*. Open University Press.
- Leander, K., & Boldt, G. (2012). Rereading "A pedagogy of multiliteracies": Bodies, texts, and emergence. *Journal of literacy research*, 45(1), 22-46. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X12468587>
- Leavy, P. (Ed.). (2020). *The Oxford handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Leu, D. J., Kinzer, C. K., Coiro, J., Castek, J., & Henry, L. A. (2017). New literacies: A dual-level theory of the changing nature of literacy, instruction, and assessment. *Journal of Education*, 197(2), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002205741719700202>
- Lim, F. V., Weninger, C., & Nguyen, T. T. H. (2021). "I expect boredom": Students' experiences and expectations of multiliteracies learning. *Literacy*, 55(2), 102-112. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/lit.12243>
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2018). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed., pp. 108-141). SAGE Publications.
- Lourie, M. (2020). Recontextualising twenty-first century learning in New Zealand education policy: The reframing of knowledge, skills and competencies. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 55(1), 113-128. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40841-020-00158-0>

- Lu, H., & Hodge, W. A. (2019). Toward multi-dimensional and developmental notion of researcher positionality. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 19(3), 225-235. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-D-18-00029>
- Luke, A. (1991). Literacies as social practices. *English Education*, 23(3), 131-147. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40172758>
- Luke, A. (1992). Reading and critical literacy: Redefining the 'great debate'. *Reading Forum NZ*, 2, 3-12. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED345211.pdf>
- Luke, A. (2012). Critical literacy: Foundational notes. *Theory Into Practice*, 51(1), 4-11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2012.636324>
- Luke, A. (2013). Regrounding critical literacy: Representation, facts and reality. In *Framing languages and literacies* (pp. 146-158). Routledge.
- Luke, A., & Freebody, P. (1999). A map of possible practices: Further notes on the four resources model. *Practically Primary*, 4(2), 5-8.
- Lynch, C., & Rata, E. (2018). Culturally responsive pedagogy: A New Zealand case study. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 27(4), 391-408. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09620214.2018.1468274>
- Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Qualitative research design : An interactive approach* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- McDowall, S. (2015). *Literacy research that matters: A review of the school sector and ECE literacy projects* (TLRI Project Plus, Issue).
- McDowall, S., & Core Education Team. (2010). *Literacy teaching and learning in e-learning contexts: A report to the Ministry of Education*. New Zealand Council of Educational Research.
- McMullen, C., & Braithwaite, I. (2013). Narrative inquiry and the study of collaborative branding activity. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 11(2), 93-105. <https://academic-publishing.org/index.php/ejbrm/article/view/1306>
- McNaughton, S. (2020). *The literacy landscape in Aotearoa New Zealand: What we know, what needs fixing and what we should prioritise*. Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor. https://dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2021-12/PMCSA-20-15_The-Literacy-Landscape-in-Aotearoa-New-Zealand-Full-report-final.pdf
- Mead, H. M. (2016). *Tikanga Māori (Revised Edition): Living by Māori Values*. Huia.
- Meijer, P. C., Verloop, N., & Beijaard, D. (1999). Exploring language teachers' practical knowledge about teaching reading comprehension. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 15(1), 59-84. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(98\)00045-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(98)00045-6)
- Mendieta, J., & Barkhuizen, G. (2020). Blended language learning in the Colombian context: A narrative inquiry of teacher ownership of curriculum change. *Computer assisted language learning*, 33(3), 176-196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2018.1553888>
- Merrett, F. (2006). Reflections on the Hawthorne effect. *Educational Psychology*, 26(1), 143-146. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410500341080>
- Mills, K. (2011). *The multiliteracies classroom*. St Nicholas House.
- Ministry of Education. (2003). *Effective literacy practice in years 1 to 4*. Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education. (2006). *Effective literacy practice in years 5 to 8*. Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum for English-medium teaching and learning in Years 1-13*. Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education. (2010). *The literacy learning progressions: Meeting the reading and writing demands of the curriculum*. Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education. (2017). *Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa Early childhood curriculum*. Retrieved from <https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Early-Childhood/Te-Whariki-Early-Childhood-Curriculum-ENG-Web.pdf>

- Ministry of Education. (2022). *Literacy & communication and maths strategy*. Retrieved from https://assets.education.govt.nz/public/Documents/Ministry/Changes-in-education/ELS-0778-Maths-and-Literacy-Strategies-Doc_web.pdf
- Mirra, N., Morrell, E., & Filipiak, D. (2018). From digital consumption to digital invention: Toward a new critical theory and practice of multiliteracies. *Theory Into Practice*, 57(1), 12-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2017.1390336>
- Mizusawa, K., & Kiss, T. (2020). Connecting multiliteracies and writing pedagogy for 21st century English language classrooms: Key considerations for teacher education in Singapore and beyond.
- Moen, T. (2006). Reflections on the narrative research approach. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(4), 56-69.
- Montoya, S. (2018). *Defining literacy*. UNESCO.
- Muspratt, S., Luke, A., & Freebody, P. (1997). *Constructing critical literacies : Teaching and learning textual practice*. Hampton Press.
- Nieto, S., & Bode, P. (2018). *Affirming Diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education* (7th ed.). Pearson.
- Ntinda, K. (2019). Narrative research. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences* (pp. 412-423). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4_79
- Olson, M. R. (1995). Conceptualizing narrative authority: Implications for teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 11(2), 119-135. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X\(94\)00022-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X(94)00022-X)
- Parr, J., & Gadd, M. (2018). *Generating positive outcomes by Year 5 to 8 priority learners in writing: An inquiry into effective teacher practice*. Teaching & Learning Research Initiative. http://www.tlri.org.nz/sites/default/files/projects/TLRI%20Summary%20Report_Parr%20and%20Gadd.pdf
- Parr, J., Timperley, H., Reddish, P., Jesson, R., & Adams, R. (2007). *Literacy professional development project: Identifying effective teaching and professional development practices for enhanced student learning* Research Division: Ministry of Education. https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/16817/851_Literacy_PD.pdf
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Perry, K. H. (2008). From storytelling to writing: Transforming literacy practices among Sudanese refugees. *Journal of literacy research*, 40(3), 317-358. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10862960802502196>
- Perry, K. H. (2009). Genres, contexts, and literacy practices: Literacy brokering among Sudanese refugee families. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 44(3), 256-276. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.44.3.2>
- Perry, K. H. (2012). What is literacy? – A critical overview of sociocultural perspectives. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education [Online]*, 8(1), 50-71.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8(1), 5-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0951839950080103>
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (2005). Language and meaning: Data collection in qualitative research. *Journal of counseling psychology*, 52(2), 137. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.137>
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (2007). Validity Issues in Narrative Research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 13(4), 471-486. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800406297670>
- Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2016). *Teacher agency: An ecological approach*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Pyle, A., Poliszczuk, D., & Danniels, E. (2018). The Challenges of Promoting Literacy Integration Within a Play-Based Learning Kindergarten Program: Teacher Perspectives and

- Implementation. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 32(2), 219-233.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2017.1416006>
- Resnik, D. B. (2020). *What is ethics in research & why is it important?* National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.
<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis/index.cfm>
- Reyes-Torres, A., & Raga, M. P. (2020). Multimodal approach to foster the multiliteracies pedagogy in the teaching of EFL through picturebooks *The Snow Lion*. *Atlantis*, 42(1), 94-119.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/27088709>
- Reynolds, M. (2019). Walking the Palagi/Pasifika edge: The va of mediated dialogic research. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 24(1), 33-42. <https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v24i1.537>
- Riessman, C. K. (2005). Narrative analysis. In *Narrative, memory and everyday life* (pp. 1-7). University of Huddersfield. <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/4920/>
- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. SAGE Publications.
- Riessman, C. K. (2011). What's different about narrative inquiry? In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research : Issues of theory, method and practice* (3rd ed., pp. 310-324). SAGE Publications.
- Robinson, S. (2012). Constructing teacher agency in response to the constraints of education policy: Adoption and adaptation. *The Curriculum Journal*, 23(2), 231-245.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09585176.2012.678702>
- Ross, V., & Chan, E. (2016). Personal practical knowledge of teacher educators. In J. Loughran & M. L. Hamilton (Eds.), *International handbook of teacher education* (pp. 3-33). Springer.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-0369-1_1
- Roulston, K., & Choi, M. (2018). Qualitative interviews. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection* (pp. 233-249). SAGE Publications.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526416070.n15>
- Rowell, J., Kosnik, C., & Beck, C. (2008). Fostering multiliteracies pedagogy through preservice teacher education. *Teaching Education*, 19(2), 109-122.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210802040799>
- Ryan, G. (2018). Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. *Nurse Researcher*, 25(4), 41-49. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.2018.e1466>
- Saldaña, J. (2020). Qualitative data analysis strategies. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed., pp. 877-911). Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190847388.013.33>
- Sandretto, S., & Tilson, J. (2013). *Reconceptualising literacy: Critical multiliteracies for "new times"*. Teaching and Learning Research Initiative.
- Sandretto, S., & Tilson, J. (2016). *Integrating critical multiliteracies using the four resources model : A New Zealand guide*. NZCER Press.
- Sandretto, S., & Tilson, J. (2017). Discursive constructions of literacies: shifting sands in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 38(2), 222-234.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2015.1075472>
- Savin-Bader, M., & Major, C. H. (2013). *Qualitative research : The essential guide to theory and practice*. Routledge.
- Schaafsma, D., & Vinz, R. (2011). *On narrative inquiry: Approaches to language and literacy*. Teachers College Press.
- Schrum, L., Niederhauser, D. S., & Strudler, N. (2016). Competencies, challenges, and changes: A US perspective on preparing twenty-first century teachers and leaders. In M. J. Spector, D. Ifenthaler, D. G. Sampson, & P. Isaias (Eds.), *Competencies in teaching, learning and educational leadership in the digital age* (pp. 17-32). Springer International Publishing.
- Schwandt, T. (1998). Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (pp. 221-259). SAGE Publications.

- Sefton, T., Smith, K., & Tousignant, W. (2020). Integrating multiliteracies for preservice teachers using project-based learning. *Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 14(2), 18-32.
<https://doi.org/10.22329/jtl.v14i2.6320>
- Seglem, R., & Garcia, A. (2018). Changing literacies and civic pathways: Multiliteracies in inquiry-driven classrooms. *Theory Into Practice*, 57(1), 56-63.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2017.1390335>
- Seifert, K., & Sutton, R. (2019). *Educational psychology* (3rd ed.). Pressbooks.
<https://uwgedpsych.pressbooks.com/>
- Serafini, F., & Gee, E. (Eds.). (2017). *Remixing multiliteracies: Theory and practice from New London to new times*. Teachers College Press.
- Shanahan, T., & Shanahan, C. (2012). What is disciplinary literacy and why does it matter? *Topics in language disorders*, 32(1), 7-18. <https://doi.org/10.1097/TLD.0b013e318244557a>
- Shoffner, M., de Oliveira, L. C., & Angus, R. (2010). Multiliteracies in the secondary English classroom: Becoming literate in the 21st century. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 9(3), 75-89.
- Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15(2), 4-14.
- Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 1-22.
- Shulman, L. S., & Shulman, J. H. (2004). How and what teachers learn: a shifting perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(2), 257-271. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0022027032000148298>
- Simon-Kumar, R. (2020). Justifying inequalities: Multiculturalism and stratified migration in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In R. Simon-Kumar, F. L. Collins, & W. Friesen (Eds.), *Intersections of inequality, migration and diversification: The politics of mobility in Aotearoa/New Zealand* (pp. 43-64). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-19099-6_3
- Siuty, M. B., Leko, M. M., & Knackstedt, K. M. (2018). Unraveling the Role of Curriculum in Teacher Decision Making. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 41(1), 39-57.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406416683230>
- Skerrett, A. (2011). "Wide open to rap, tagging, and real life": Preparing teachers for multiliteracies pedagogy. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 6(3), 185-199.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2011.579048>
- Smagorinsky, P., & Barnes, M. E. (2014). Revisiting and revising the apprenticeship of observation. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 41(4), 29-52.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/teaceducquar.41.4.29>
- Spector-Mersel, G. (2010). Narrative research: Time for a paradigm. *Narrative Inquiry*, 20(1), 204-224. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1075/ni.20.1.10spe>
- Squire, C., Andrews, M., & Tamboukou, M. (2013). What is narrative research? In M. Andrews, C. Squire, & M. Tamboukou (Eds.), *Doing narrative research* (2nd ed., pp. 1-26). SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526402271>
- Squire, C., Davis, M., Esin, C., Andrews, M., Harrison, B., Hyden, L.-C., & Hyden, M. (2014). *What is narrative research?* Bloomsbury Academic.
- Stadler, M. (2020). *The ontological nature of part-whole oscillations*. Austrian Academy of Sciences.
- Starkey, L. (2012). *Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age* [Book]. Routledge.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=473906&site=ehost-live&custid=s4804380>
- Statistics New Zealand. (2021). *Population projected to become more ethnically diverse*.
<https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/population-projected-to-become-more-ethnically-diverse>
- Stornaiuolo, A., Hull, G., & Nelson, M. E. (2009). Mobile texts and migrant audiences: Rethinking literacy and assessment in a new media age. *Language Arts*, 86(5), 382.
- Street, B. V. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice*. Cambridge University Press.

- Street, B. V. (1997). The implications of 'New Literacy Studies' for literacy education. *English in Education*, 31(3), 45-59.
- Street, B. V. (2017). New literacies, new times: Developments in literacy studies. In B. V. Street & S. May (Eds.), *Literacies and Language Education: Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (pp. 3-16). Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02252-9>
- Tang, S. Y. F. (2003). Challenge and support: the dynamics of student teachers' professional learning in the field experience. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 19(5), 483-498. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(03\)00047-7](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(03)00047-7)
- Tao, J., & Gao, X. (2021). *Language teacher agency*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108916943>
- Taylor, L. A. (2017). How teachers become teacher researchers: Narrative as a tool for teacher identity construction. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 61, 16-25. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.09.008>
- Taylor, V., & Rupp, L. J. (2005). When the girls are men: Negotiating gender and sexual dynamics in a study of drag queens. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 30(4), 2115-2139. <https://doi.org/10.1086/428421>
- The New London Group. (2000). A pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing social futures. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures* (pp. 9-37). Routledge.
- Timperley, H. S., & Parr, J. M. (2009). Chain of influence from policy to practice in the New Zealand literacy strategy. *Research papers in education*, 24(2), 135-154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671520902867077>
- Tsang, W. K. (2004). Teachers' personal practical knowledge and interactive decisions. *Language Teaching Research*, 8(2), 163-198. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1362168804lr139oa>
- Tunmer, W. E., Chapman, J. W., Greaney, K. T., Prochnow, J. E., & Arrow, A. W. (2013). Why the New Zealand national literacy strategy has failed and what can be done about it: Evidence from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2011 and Reading Recovery monitoring reports. *Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties*, 18(2), 139-180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19404158.2013.842134>
- UNESCO. (2013). *Literacy and non-formal education*. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223>
- UNESCO. (2021). *Literacy*. <https://en.unesco.org/themes/literacy>
- Vacca, R. T., & Vacca, J. A. L. (2002). *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum*. Allyn and Bacon.
- Van Driel, J. H., Beijaard, D., & Verloop, N. (2001). Professional development and reform in science education: The role of teachers' practical knowledge. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 38(2), 137-158.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. . Harvard University Press.
- Warren, A. N., & Ward, N. A. (2019). Equitable education for English learners through a pedagogy of multiliteracies. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 55(2), 89-94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00228958.2019.1580989>
- Wells, K. (2011). *Narrative inquiry*. Oxford University Press.
- Wilson, A., & Meiklejohn-Whiu, S. (2022). *Investigating the effects of a T-Shaped Literacy intervention on Year 7 & 8 students' reading and writing in subject English*. Teaching & Learning Research Initiative. <http://www.tlri.org.nz/tlri-research/research-progress/school-sector/investigating-effects-t-shaped-literacy-intervention>
- Yap, J. R. (2014). *Using systematic synthetic phonics as an approach to early literacy: The case of rural indigenous children* [Master's thesis, University of Malaya, Malaysia]. <http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/5425/>

- Yap, J. R., & Chin, M. L. L. (2020). Using systematic synthetic phonics to accelerate rural indigenous children's acquisition of early literacy skills. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19(10), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.19.10.1>
- Yelland, N. J. (2018). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Young children and multimodal learning with tablets. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 49(5), 847-858. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12635>
- Zajda, J. (2018). Effective constructivist pedagogy for quality learning in schools. *Educational Practice and Theory*, 40(1), 67-80. <https://doi.org/10.7459/ept/40.1.05>
- Zhang, Z., Nagle, J., McKishnie, B., Lin, Z., & Li, W. (2019). Scientific strengths and reported effectiveness: a systematic review of multiliteracies studies. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 14(1), 33-61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2018.1537188>

Appendices

Appendix A: Letter of approval from the ethics committee

Te Kura Toi Tangata
Division of Education
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand, 3240

DivEd Ethics Committee
fedu.ethics@waikato.ac.nz
07 8384500 ext. 7870
www.waikato.ac.nz/education



21/1/2020

Dear Yap Jia Rong

Division of Education Ethics Application Approved FEDU004/20

I am pleased to advise you that your ethics application for the project entitled "Shaping Teachers' Multiliteracies Practices: A Narrative Inquiry of Intermediate-Year Teachers in New Zealand" was approved by Te Kura Toi Tangata Division of Education Ethics Committee on January 21st, 2020.

Please be aware that the Te Kura Toi Tangata Division of Education Ethics Committee must be advised (by memo) of any changes to the details recorded in your ethics application. Please send any such advice to fedu.ethics@waikato.ac.nz. You will receive a memo of approval once the change(s) has been considered.

Kind regards



Co-chair

Te Kura Toi Tangata Division of Education Ethics Committee

Appendix B: Letter to school principal

Yap Jia Rong
School of Education
University of Waikato,
Gate 1, Knighton Road,
Hamilton, 3240

Date :

Re: Permission to Work With Your Teachers in a Doctoral Research Study

To the principal of _____ school

Dear Sir/Ma'am,

First and foremost, allow me to briefly introduce myself. I'm Jia Rong, an international student currently enrolled in the PhD programme in the School of Education, University of Waikato. As an experienced language teacher (I've taught English for a decade back in my home country, Malaysia), I've always been passionate about English literacy learning and teaching. Therefore, the research project of which I am undertaking is titled: *Shaping Teachers' Multiliteracies Practices: A Narrative Inquiry of Intermediate-school Teachers in New Zealand*.

I am writing to seek your permission to work with three/two of your teachers as part of a PhD research project I am undertaking through the School of Education, University of Waikato. To put it briefly, mine is a study on understanding the learning and teaching of English literacy in this era of digital technologies, and cultural diversity. I am aware that teaching is a demanding and challenging experience, and the project has been designed to minimise additional workload.

You'll find more information about the study in the 'Participant Information Sheet', which contains the following details: (i) the purpose of the study; (ii) what your teacher's participation would involve; (iii) what the benefits and risks to the teacher might be; and (iv) what would happen after the study ends.

If you agree to your teachers taking part in this study, please complete the attached consent form on the last page of this document. You will be given a copy of both the Participant Information Sheet and the consent form to keep. I would also appreciate the opportunity to meet you to collect the completed consent form, and to discuss and/or answer any questions that you might have. Kindly contact me anytime on your favourable time to arrange the schedule to meet you.

Thank you for your anticipated support.

Warmest regards,



Yap Jia Rong

Appendix C: Participant information sheet for school principals



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Te Kura Toi Tangata School of Education

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Study Title	: Shaping teachers' multiliteracies practices: A narrative inquiry of intermediate-year teachers in New Zealand	
Locality	: Hamilton, New Zealand	
Researcher	: Yap Jia Rong	Contact : 027-3532579 jy216@students.waikato.ac.nz
Supervisors	: (i) Dr Laura Gurney (ii) Dr Philippa Hunter	Contact : laura.gurney@waikato.ac.nz Contact : philippa.hunter@waikato.ac.nz

What is the purpose of the study?

- In this era of digital technologies and cultural diversity, teachers are increasingly bringing a range of creative literacy learning and teaching approaches into their classrooms. This practice may also include using different types of texts such as videos, interactive webpages and educational games with their students.
- This phenomenon has piqued my curiosity. Therefore, in this study, I aim to gain insights into teachers' understandings, experiences and practices in Years 7-8 English literacy learning and teaching (ELL&T). In this context, ELL&T takes place across curricular, where it refers to learning and teaching activities that involve students "practise making meaning through listening, reading and viewing; and creating meaning through speaking, writing and presenting" (MOE, 2007, p. 18).
- In particular, I am interested in the teacher's stories, or experiential knowledge, of his/her ELL&T practices with the students, and in no way is it intended as an evaluation of his/her teaching or the progress being made in this area.

What will the teacher's participation in the study involve?

Should the teacher choose to participate, his/her participation would involve:

- *A 45-minute pre-data collection appointment* to address any concerns that the participating teacher might have, to make arrangements for classroom-observations, and to discuss about the observation schedule. This will be conducted outside of school hours, at a time and location suitable to the teacher.
- Alternatively, the teacher may opt to have the discussion done via voice calls, video calls, or e-mails, in accordance with his/her preference.
- *Two sessions of individual interviews* of approximately 60 minutes duration each. The interviews are to get to know the teacher's background; and to discuss his/her understandings about ELL&T and experiences in this work. This will be held outside of school hours, at a time and location suitable to the teacher.
- The interviews will be audio-recorded with the teacher's permission.
- Also, if the teacher would like it, I will be more than happy to share information about the interviews, such as the themes/topics/questions with the teacher, prior to the interviews.

- *A maximum number of four classroom observations* on the agreed days with the teacher, where I will spend an entire schooling day in his/her classroom. This will take place fortnightly, for a total period of eight weeks.
 - I view classroom observations as a means of me experiencing the teacher's experience, such as how s/he goes about with her/his learning and teaching, and conduct of activities in the classrooms. Also, stepping into the teacher's bustling classroom will offer me the opportunity to understand better the environment and context in which s/he practices.
 - During my presence, I will focus on the teacher's literacy learning-teaching practices. In particular, I will take some notes of his/her:
 - classroom instructions, instructional strategies and guidance
 - English literacy learning and teaching activities and materials
 - classroom layout and design, and
 - other relevant classroom practices
 - As a visitor, I will endeavour to keep the observations as unobtrusive as possible.
 - Then, I will have a 15-minute short conversation with the teacher about his/her learning-teaching activities of the day. The conversation will be audio-recorded with permission.
 - The amount of time to be spent in the teacher's classroom, the number of observations and post-observation conversations will be discussed, and mutually agreed upon with the teacher.
- *Co-construction of the teacher's narratives/stories.* Approximately **one month** from the final interview/classroom observation, I will be sending the teacher my interpretations of his/her narratives. He/She is invited to review, edit, make comments, and to confirm or correct my interpretations. This will ensure that they are accurate representations of his/her personal account of practices.

Notes:

- The projected length for the activities mentioned above is approximately **three months**, scheduled to take place from **15 June 2020 to 15 September 2020**.
- The total time involvement for the teacher is a **maximum** of 4 days (for observations), 4 hours and 55 minutes (for the initial meeting, interviews, post-observation conversations, and transcript checks). This approximate time commitment is flexible and always negotiable.
- The parents and students will be informed of this study via the 'Information Sheet for Parents and Students'. There will not be any video recordings throughout all the observations, and the students' responses and/or evidence will not be focussed in this study.

What are the possible benefits and risks of this study?

Possible benefit:

- As a participant in this research project, the teacher will have the opportunity to collaborate with an interested professional in the discussion and reflection around his/her English literacy learning and teaching practices.

Possible risks:

- In this study, the teacher will be sharing his/her stories and lived experiences. Pseudonyms will be used for both the teacher and the name of the school. This is to ensure that his/her and that the identity of the school will remain confidential and anonymous. The teacher's name and/or any potentially identifiable information will not be published to ensure that his/her identity is protected. While every effort will be made to protect anonymity of all participants, this cannot be guaranteed.

What happens after the study or if the teacher changes his/her mind?

Participation is entirely voluntary. The teacher may request that the voice recorder be switched off at any time during the interviews and post-observation conversations. He/She also has the right to withdraw participation at any stage up until the final interview transcript is verified, and

withdraw or amend any information of the transcripts and constructed narratives within fourteen (14) days on the receipt of the said documents.

Findings

- I aim to have the study/findings published in the local and international literacy literature. Individual participants and schools will not be identified in any such publications. It will take some time for the findings to be completed after the teacher has taken part in the study, and I will inform the school by email of any findings and publications. A one-page summary of the research finding will be shared with the school/teacher at the conclusion of the research via email.
- The final thesis report will be accessible electronically at University of Waikato's Research Commons. Findings will also be used for scholarly publications and conference presentations.

Who do I contact for more information or if I have concerns?

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact me (the researcher), email: iy216@students.waikato.ac.nz; phone: 027-353 2579. If you have concerns or complaints about the study at any stage that are unable to be resolved by speaking with me directly, you may contact my research supervisors, Dr Laura Gurney, email: laura.gurney@waikato.ac.nz and Dr Philippa Hunter, email: philippa.hunter@waikato.ac.nz

Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation and request.

This research project has been approved by the University of Waikato Faculty of Education Ethics Committee on January 21st, 2020. Approval number: FEDU004/20

Appendix D: Consent form for school principals



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Te Kura Toi Tangata School of Education

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

[A completed copy of this form should be retained by both the researcher and the principal]

Project title : Shaping Teachers' Multiliteracies Practice: A Narrative Inquiry of Intermediate-Year Teachers in New Zealand

Researcher : Yap Jia Rong

Kindly tick the box to indicate that you have read and agreed to the terms described in this consent form.

- I agree to provide access to the school.
- I agree to invite two/three teachers to participate in this study.
- I have received a copy of the *Participant Information Sheet* describing the research project. Any questions that I have, relating to the research, have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions about the research at any time.
- I understand that the teacher's participation in this study is voluntary. I understand that he/she can, without reasons, withdraw from the study up until the final interview transcript is verified. I understand that he/she can withdraw or amend any information of the transcripts within fourteen (14) days on the receipt of the transcripts.
- I understand that when I sign this consent form, I give consent for the researcher to use the data collected for the purposes of the research outlined in the Information Sheet.
- I understand that while researcher will not identify the teacher and the school in any presentations or publications reporting the research, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- I understand that this research project has been approved by the University of Waikato Faculty of Education Ethics Committee on January 21st, 2020; Approval number: FEDU004/20, and Dr Laura Gurney and/or Dr Philippa Hunter may be contacted should there be any concerns about the conduct of the project.

Name :	_____	Researcher :	Yap Jia Rong
Signature :	_____	Signature :	_____
Date :	_____	Date :	_____
Contact Details :	_____	Contact Details :	027-3532579
	_____		jy216@students.waikato.ac.nz

Appendix E: Invitation letter to teachers

Yap Jia Rong
School of Education
University of Waikato,
Gate 1, Knighton Road,
Hamilton, 3240

Date :

Re: Invitation to Participate in a Doctoral Research Study

Dear (teacher),

First and foremost, allow me to briefly introduce myself. I'm Jia Rong, an international student currently enrolled in the PhD programme in the School of Education, University of Waikato. As an experienced language teacher (I've taught English for a decade back in my home country, Malaysia), I've always been passionate about English literacy learning and teaching. Therefore, the research project of which I am undertaking is titled: *Shaping Teachers' Multiliteracies Practices: A Narrative Inquiry of Intermediate-school Teachers in New Zealand*.

I am kindly inviting you to take part in my PhD research project, a study on understanding the learning and teaching of English literacy in this era of digital technologies and cultural diversity. I would value your participation in this project and the contributions you would make as an experienced teacher in an intermediate-year classroom.

You'll find more information about the study in the 'Participant Information Sheet'. It will help you decide if you'd like to take part. It sets out why I am doing the study, what your participation would involve, what the benefits and risks to you might be, and what would happen after the study ends. If you agree to take part in this study, please complete the attached consent form on the last page of this document. You will be given a copy of both the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form to keep.

Thank you for your anticipated support.

Warmest regards,



Yap Jia Rong

Appendix F: Participant information sheet for teachers



Te Kura Toi Tangata School of Education

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Study Title	: Shaping teachers' multiliteracies practices: A narrative inquiry of intermediate-year teachers in New Zealand	
Locality	: Hamilton, New Zealand	
Researcher	: Yap Jia Rong	Contact : 027-3532579 jy216@students.waikato.ac.nz
Supervisors	: (i) Dr Laura Gurney (ii) Dr Philippa Hunter	Contact : laura.gurney@waikato.ac.nz Contact : philippa.hunter@waikato.ac.nz

What is the purpose of the study?

- In this era of digital technologies and cultural diversity, teachers are increasingly bringing a range of creative literacy learning and teaching approaches into their classrooms. This practice may also include using different types of texts such as videos, interactive webpages and educational games with their students.
- This phenomenon has piqued my curiosity. Therefore, in this study, I aim to gain insights into the teachers' understandings, experiences and practices in Years 7-8 English literacy learning and teaching (ELL&T). In this context, ELL&T takes place across curricular, where it refers to learning and teaching activities that involve students "practise making meaning through listening, reading and viewing; and creating meaning through speaking, writing and presenting" (MOE, 2007, p. 18).
- In particular, I am interested in your stories, or experiential knowledge, of your ELL&T practices with the students, and in no way is it intended as an evaluation of your teaching or the progress being made in this area.

What will my participation in the study involve?

Should you choose to participate, your participation would involve:

- 1) *A 30-minute pre-data collection appointment* to address any concerns that you might have about the study, and to make arrangements for classroom-observations. I would also like to discuss about the observation schedule that I will be using to take some notes during my presence. This will be conducted outside of school hours, at a time and location suitable to you.
 - Alternatively, you may opt to have the discussion done via voice calls, video calls, or emails, in accordance with your preference.
- 2) *Two sessions of individual interviews* of approximately 45 minutes duration each. The interviews are to get to know your background; and to discuss your understandings about ELL&T and experiences in this work. This will be held outside of school hours, at a time and location suitable to you.
 - Also, if you would like it, I will be more than happy to share information about the interviews, such as the themes/topics/questions with you, prior to the interviews.

- 3) *A maximum number of four classroom observations* on days that are suitable to you, where I will spend an entire schooling day in your classroom. This will take place fortnightly, for a total period of eight weeks.
- I view classroom observations as a means of me experiencing your experience, such as how you go about with your learning and teaching, and conduct of activities in your classrooms. Also, stepping into your bustling classroom will offer me the opportunity to understand better the environment and context in which you practice.
 - During my presence, I will focus on your English literacy learning-teaching practices. In particular, I will take some notes of your:
 - Classroom instructions, instructional strategies and guidance
 - English literacy learning and teaching activities and materials
 - classroom layout and design, and
 - other relevant classroom practices
 - As a visitor, I will endeavour to keep the observations as unobtrusive as possible.
 - Also, I will appreciate having a 15-minute short conversation with you about your learning-teaching activities of the day, at any time and place of your convenience.
 - As will be discussed in our initial meeting, you are free to decide on the amount of time I will spend in your classrooms, the number of classroom observations, and post-observation conversations.

Notes:

- The transcripts of the interview and post-observation conversation will be sent to you to review and/or edit, and to make comments. This will ensure that they are accurate records of your intended meaning.
 - I kindly request your permission for all interviews and post-observation conversations to be audio-recorded. However, you may request that the recorder be switched off at any time during the interviews.
 - The projected length for the activities mentioned above is approximately **two months**, scheduled to take place from **20 July 2020 to 25 September 2020**.
- 4) *Co-construction of your narratives/stories*. Approximately **one month** from the final interview/classroom observation, I will be sending you my interpretations of your narratives. I kindly invite you to review, edit, make comments, and to confirm or correct my interpretations. This will ensure that they are accurate representations of your personal accounts of practices.

Additional notes:

- Your total time involvement in this study is a **maximum** of 4 days (for observations) and, 4 hours (for the initial meeting, interviews, post-observation conversations, and transcript checks). This approximate time commitment is flexible and always negotiable.
- The parents and students will be informed of this study via the 'Information Sheet for Parents and Students'. There will not be any video recordings throughout all the observations, and the students' responses and/or evidence will not be focussed in this study.

What are the possible benefit and risks of this study?

Possible benefit:

- As a participant in this research project, you will have the opportunity to collaborate with an interested professional in the discussion and reflection around your English literacy learning and teaching practices.

Possible risks:

- In this study, you will be sharing your personal stories and lived experiences. Pseudonyms will be used to ensure that your identity will remain confidential and anonymous. Your name and/or any potentially identifiable information will not be published to ensure that your identity is protected. While every effort will be made to protect your anonymity, this cannot be guaranteed.

What happens after the study or if I change my mind?

- Participation is entirely voluntary. You have the rights to not answer any question or questions for any reason, and to stop the interviews/classroom-observations/post-observation conversations at any time. You may also ask to have the recording device turned off at any time.
- You also have the right to withdraw your participation at any stage up until the final interview transcript is verified, and withdraw or amend any information of the transcripts and constructed narratives within fourteen (14) days on the receipt of the said documents.

Findings

- I aim to have the study/findings published in the local and international literacy literature. Individual participants and schools will not be identified in any such publications. It will take some time for the findings to be completed after you have taken part in the study, and I will inform you by email of any findings and publications. A one-page summary of the research finding will be shared at the conclusion of the research via email.
- The final thesis report will be accessible electronically at University of Waikato's Research Commons. Findings will also be used for scholarly publications and conference presentations.

Who do I contact for more information or if I have concerns?

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact me (the researcher), email: jj216@students.waikato.ac.nz; phone: 027-353 2579. If you have concerns or complaints about the study at any stage that are unable to be resolved by speaking with me directly, you may contact my research supervisors, Dr Laura Gurney, email: laura.gurney@waikato.ac.nz and Dr Philippa Hunter, email: philippa.hunter@waikato.ac.nz

Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation and request.

This research project has been approved by the University of Waikato Faculty of Education Ethics Committee on January 21st, 2020. Approval number: FEDU004/20

Appendix G: Consent form for teachers



Te Kura Toi Tangata School of Education

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

[A completed copy of this form should be retained by both the researcher and the participant]

Project title : Shaping Teachers' Multiliteracies Practice: A Narrative Inquiry of Intermediate-Year Teachers in New Zealand

Researcher : Yap Jia Rong

Name of participant : _____

Kindly tick the box to indicate that you have read and agreed to the terms described in this consent form.

- I agree to participate in this study.
- I agree to participate in the interviews at a time and location suitable to me.
- I agree to the researcher's presence for classroom-observations and the post-observation conversations.
- I have received a copy of the *Participant Information Sheet* describing the research project. Any questions that I have, relating to the research, have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions about the research at any time.
- I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary. I understand that I can, without reasons, withdraw from the study up until the final interview transcript is verified. I understand that I can withdraw or amend any information of the transcripts within fourteen (14) days on the receipt of the transcripts.
- I agree to have the research interviews and post-observation conversations audio-recorded.
- I understand that I do not have to answer questions unless I am happy to talk about the topic. I can stop the interviews/observations/post-observation conversations at any time, and I can ask to have the recording device turned off at any time.
- I understand that when I sign this consent form, I will retain ownership of my interview, but I give consent for the researcher to use the data collected for the purposes of the research outlined in the Information Sheet.
- I understand that while researcher will not identify me and the school in any presentations or publications reporting the research, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- I understand that this research project has been approved by the University of Waikato Faculty of Education Ethics Committee on January 21st, 2020. Approval number: FEDU004/20, and Dr Laura Gurney and/or Dr Philippa Hunter may be contacted should there be any concerns about the conduct of the project.

Participant :	_____	Researcher :	Yap Jia Rong
Signature :	_____	Signature :	
Date :	_____	Date :	_____
Contact Details :	_____	Contact Details :	027-3532579
	_____		jy216@students.waikato.ac.nz

Appendix H: Introductory interview (Interview 1)

Interview 1

Introduction & Structure of the Interview

- In this part of the interview, I am interested to know stories of your personal and professional background. This will help me to know you better, and if you'd like, you may ask me about mine too.
- Just to get formalities out of the way, I am interested in your lived-experiences, your stories. Therefore, there are no right or wrong answers. And in the event you think some things need improvement, feel free to tell me.
- This interview should take no more than 60 minutes, depending on how much we talk.
- If you don't feel comfortable answering certain question(s), just kindly let me know and I will gladly skip it/them.
- I also want to tell you that this interview is voluntary, and you may opt out at any time for any (undisclosed) reasons. You may also withdraw some or all of your data.
- Everything you say is anonymised, and the confidentiality of your identify and school will be strictly upheld. That means, you may choose a pseudonym for yourself. Similarly, a pseudonym will be used for your organisation.

Personal and Professional Background

1. Could you tell me about yourself?
 - The place that you grew up in
 - Your family, and your upbringing
 - Your growing up memories/ school experience as a student
2. How did you come into teaching?
3. How long have you been teaching?
4. What does being a 'teacher' mean to you?
5. What do you like best about being a teacher? Why?
 - Is there anything/ anything that is your source of inspiration?
 - Which aspects of your personal life do you think greatly influenced your role as a teacher?
6. How would you describe your teaching style?
 - What adjectives would you use to describe your presence in the classroom?
7. Can you remember some details of your years as a student-teacher?
 - Which aspects of your teacher education play a significant role in your present practice?
8. In your XX years of teaching, how do you think your teaching experiences have helped/guided you in your teaching?
9. What are your aspirations for your students?
10. What are some of the rough/ challenging moments in teaching that you've experienced?
 - What motivates you to keep going?
11. What about some memorable moments that you treasure/ would recall fondly?

Appendix I: Post-observation conversations (Interview 2)

Post-Observation Conversations

Introduction & Structure of the Conversations

- These post-observation conversations are scheduled to take place after school hours, and/or anytime during the day that may be suitable for you. The purpose is to get to know better your knowledge, experiences, and practices of **literacy learning and teaching**.
- We will begin with your theoretical perspectives (1st post-observation conversation), followed by your literacy teaching practices and student-learning (2nd post-observation conversation), and the major influences that may have impacted your practices (3rd post-observation conversation).
- Each conversation should take no more than 30 minutes, depending on how much we talk.
- Once again, everything you say is anonymised and the confidentiality of your identity and school will be strictly upheld. Pseudonyms will be used for you and your organisation.

Post-observation conversation 1 – Theoretical Perspectives

1. Could you tell me about your personal literacy history (e.g.: your interests in reading/writing)?
2. How would you define literacy?
 - How do you think children learn to be literate?
 - In this digital era, what sort of literacy skills do you think the students need?
 - What do you think students need to know and be able to do to become multiliterate?
3. Could you describe your beliefs about literacy learning and teaching?
 - What are some of the literacy learning and teaching strategies that you engage in?
4. What guides your literacy learning and teaching? (e.g.: your theoretical knowledge gained during teacher education; the New Zealand Curriculum; school curriculum)
5. Have you heard of multiliteracies pedagogy?
 - If yes, what do you know of/ understand about multiliteracies pedagogy?

Post-observation conversation 2 – Literacy teaching practices & student-learning

1. What sort of support/ professional learning do you receive in your teaching of literacy?
2. To what extent do you think you are meeting/supporting the literacy learning needs of all your students?
3. How does your literacy learning and teaching relate to students' lives in the home and community?
4. In what ways do you address issues of diversity and equity?
5. How do you cater for the range of needs and diverse backgrounds in your class? (e.g.: culture, ethnicity, students whose first language isn't English)
6. Could you share some success stories of your literacy learning and teaching?
7. What are some struggles in your literacy learning and teaching?

Post-observation conversation 3: Major Influences

1. What factors influenced/ are influencing your literacy practices/ approaches in the classroom? (e.g.: professional learning development, professional learning community, school philosophy, colleague, students' literacy practices)
2. How does your school view technology/ technology use in the classroom? How would you say that has impacted your teaching?
3. Looking back over your teaching years, how have your approaches to literacy learning and teaching changed?

Appendix J: Documentation Sheet

Participant's Name :

Contextual Information about the Interview	
Date of the interview	
Place of the interview	
Time & Duration	
Summary of the interview (Key points)	
Peculiarities of the interview	
Next meet-up/ interview session	
Things to probe further in the next interview/ meet-up	
Interview Transcript (Sent, Reviewed & Received Back Dates)	
Corrections Made On	

Appendix K: Observation schedule

Date & Day	Observation	1	2	3	4	
Teacher	School					
Area	Observations/ What does the teacher do?	Comments/Thoughts (on what is observed)				
Instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goals of the lesson/ activity • Things/topics that the students will know/do/understand. • Why is this learning important? 						
Activities or Exercises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length, appropriate level of skill & difficulty, develop relevant skills and confidence, student-centered, variety, assessments • Integration of technology • Prior knowledge that the students need, the connections to previous and future learning 						
Materials/ Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials used in the activities • The ways the materials are used • The type of texts used (linear/non-linear; digital, printed; multimodality) 						

<p>Instructional strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies used (<i>e.g.: explanation, demonstration, questioning, discussion, group work</i>) • Clear direction, variety of learning styles, appropriate level of challenge students engaged 		
<p>Interactions/Rapport with students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student participation, open-ended questions, connecting with students, flexibility, acceptance of various views 		
<p>Impact on learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of problem-solving, critical thinking skills 		
<p>Classroom layout and design</p>		

Some questions to ask the teacher during post-observation conversation:

Appendix L: Student/parent information sheet



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Te Kura Toi Tangata School of Education

Parent/Caregiver & Student Information Sheet

My Research Study : Shaping teachers' multiliteracies practices: A narrative inquiry of intermediate-year teachers in New Zealand



Who am I?

Hello, I'm **Jia Rong**, an international student currently enrolled in the PhD programme in the School of Education, University of Waikato. As an experienced **language teacher** (I've taught English for a decade back in my home country, Malaysia), I've always been passionate about **English literacy learning and teaching**.

Why am I here?

I'll be working with your teacher as part of a **study** to gain insights into his/her **literacy learning and teaching** practices. That means, I'll be looking at the following **activities** where your teacher works with you to:



- practise making meaning through **listening, reading and viewing**; and
- creating meaning through **speaking, writing and presenting**.

What will I be doing in your classroom?



I'll be observing and taking some notes of **your teacher's**:

- **classroom instructions, teaching strategies and guidance**
- **Literacy learning & teaching activities and materials** (e.g.: reading a map, working with online information, writing a diary entry, watching a video piece etc.)
- **classroom practices**



So, what is a study?



A research study is what you do when you want to **learn about something or find out something new**.



So, what will you be doing?

You'll simply go about your class routines and learning activities, following your teacher's plans and instructions.

*Also, please be rest assured that you **will not** be identified and video/audio recorded.* 😊



Need more information?

Thank you very much for taking time to read this.
I'll be glad to **answer** any questions that you may have about my study.