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**Cultural diversity and identity discourses in the design and
implementation of the New Zealand curriculum key competencies:
A Bernsteinian analysis**

A thesis

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Abstract

The key competencies as a curriculum construct have appeared in several national curricula from the early 2000s. Many have their origins in the Definition and Selection of Key Competencies Project (DeSeCo), commissioned by the supra-national Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). A number of international critiques have highlighted tensions between neoliberal ideologies that underpin the key competencies, and broader socio-cultural and social justice issues within their respective countries (e.g., Crick, 2008; Sjøberg, 2016; Takayama, 2013).

This research investigated who and what influenced the design and implementation of the key competencies in the 2007 New Zealand Curriculum, and how students' cultural diversity and identities were considered as part of this. Data for this case study were collected from three sources: interviews with key policy officials and academic consultants six years after the launch of the official curriculum; analysis of policy documents and discussion papers from government archives, and focus group interviews with teachers from two schools seven years into implementation. Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogical device, was used to focus analysis on the agents, influences, debates and events that impacted on the design and implementation of the curriculum. Fraser's (1989) needs' discourse theory was used to examine interpretations of cultural diversity and identity, and the implications of implicit valued attitudes and behaviours of the key competencies.

Findings indicated that in the New Zealand educational policy context, the roles and interactions between agents and processes in the fields of production and reproduction were more 'fluid' and consultative than Bernstein's (2000) structuralist model would suggest. This may be reflective of New Zealand's small population and more informal collaboration between agents in different fields. The development of this curriculum prioritised the 'process' of understanding curriculum through

consultation and feedback, compared to previous curricula which were more focussed on curriculum as a 'product'.

New Zealand's socio-political climate, and its bicultural Treaty of Waitangi, appeared to impact on how the key competencies were conceived, and how student diversity and identity were interpreted at different points in the curriculum design and implementation process. Interviews with key policy officials and academic consultants revealed that cultural diversity was largely associated with ethnicity, and in particular, differences between indigenous Māori and Pākehā (New Zealand European). Less attention was given to the concept of multiple identities and intersections between ethnicity, socio economic class, gender and so on, and how these might influence interpretations of the key competencies. This was despite evidence of early discussion papers highlighting these complexities.

At the curriculum implementation level, Bernstein (2000) argues that schools and teachers can often 'reproduce' middle class values and expected behaviours through 'invisible' pedagogical practices, with little awareness of potential disjuncts for disadvantaged groups. Yet he also states that this is not necessarily deterministic, and the finding for the two school focus groups demonstrated this. Despite no evidence that student diversity was a specific aspect of their professional development on key competencies, the teachers discussed some complexities of student diversity in their schools and how the key competencies might be interpreted in different ways. However, given the case study schools were considered to be particularly 'diverse', this type of discussion and consideration may not be typical of other New Zealand schools.

The findings support the notion that the New Zealand curriculum key competencies were 'weakly classified' and 'strongly framed' (Bernstein, 2000). This means a high level of interpretation was located with school leaders and teachers, within the context of a permissive curriculum and thus presents both opportunities and risks.

This case study highlights the importance of agents in every field understanding the complexities and implications of diversity *in* education. In addition, if the key competencies genuinely seek to enhance both vocational and social justice outcomes

for a more cohesive and equitable society, then education *for* diversity would seem to be important.

This research contributes new knowledge in relation to the process of curriculum design, highlighting the impact of a unique socio-political context on the interpretation of a curriculum construct, and the implications of 'valued' attitudes and behaviours of the key competencies on diverse students. It provides an example of how Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogical device can be used to identify important influences and processes that impact on the different stages of a curriculum design and implementation process. It also illustrates how the device can be usefully complemented by another theory, in this case Fraser's (1989) needs discourse theory, to examine more closely the discourse that relates to a particular lens of the research.

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Dedicated to my late father, Ludwik, a shy and orphaned refugee who struggled with the cultural assumptions and confusions of a new country and language, but whose resultant self-sufficiency taught me well.

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Chapter 1. An Introduction and the Structure of the Thesis

1.0. Introduction

This thesis examines the different influences on a 21st century curriculum construct in New Zealand's national curriculum for schools. It probes policy officials and schools' understanding of cultural diversity and difference in relation to the key competencies, and the implications for diverse students.

New Zealand was an early adopter of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Definition and Selection of Key Competencies (DeSeCo) framework, and adapted this for the 2007 curriculum. While a number of countries have subsequently incorporated key competencies into their curricula, it is of interest to examine how the key competencies have been constructed and interpreted in the New Zealand context. Of particular note is the officially bicultural, rather than multicultural or pluralistic society, which describes the New Zealand context (Spoonley, 2015, p. 651).

1.1. What does this research aim to highlight

The thesis traces the development of the key competencies through the policy design and implementation process, in an attempt to capture some of the important debates and events that have influenced their conceptualisation and implementation. It emphasises the importance of critical analysis of curriculum constructs at all stages of the educational policy process, if issues of equity for all students are to be better addressed. The research highlights, that throughout the policy making process, the influences, papers and debates that informed the New Zealand curriculum key competencies were not readily accessible to other

stakeholders, professional development providers, school leaders or teachers, creating an implementation gap.

The key competencies are described in an 'aspirational' way in the official document, with minimal guidance as to how they might be exemplified and developed within learning contexts. This leaves them open to multiple interpretations, potentially undermining any intended improved outcomes for diverse students.

1.2. Issues in curriculum design

In the new millennium, curriculum development in a number of Anglophone countries has experienced a shift in focus and content (Biesta & Priestley, 2013; Luke, Woods, & Weir, 2013; Sinnema & Aitken, 2013; Wheelahan, 2007). These developments are viewed by some as aligned with globalisation and the need to position education systems more strongly, and curriculum in particular, as drivers of economic development and national competitiveness (Yates & Young, 2010).

Priestley and Sinnema (2014) note that while the 'new curriculum' varies in form from country to country, their analysis of a curricula identified a number of common features, including, "a move from explicit specification of content towards a more generic skills based approach; a greater emphasis on the centrality of the learner; and [ostensibly] greater autonomy for teachers in developing the curriculum in school" (p. 1). However, as a result of an increased emphasis on the development of generic skills, often with an instrumental focus on the workplace and/or citizenship, critics are concerned at the subsequent reduction in the specification of disciplinary knowledge.

Curriculum theory and research provides a large number of theoretical tools and frameworks for debating and contesting "whose knowledge should count; whose versions of human wisdom and knowledge should and can be made to count in teaching and learning" (Luke et al., 2013, p. 2). Luke et al. (2013) note the perspectives of the social realists, who call for a strengthening of foundational disciplinary knowledge (e.g., Young, 2009); through to the critical multiculturalists

(e.g., Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; May & Sleeter, 2010; Nieto, 1999), and the feminists, post-structural and queer theorists who engage in ongoing reconceptualisation work (e.g., Pinar, 2001). Luke et al. refer to Fraser (1997), who argues the tensions between these different perspectives in curriculum design are largely about educational hegemony versus recognitive justice. He elaborates on this by describes them as being ‘between the representation of ‘dominant views of culture, ideology and science; and of bids for recognition and representation of ‘other’, minority views of the world, of cultural and linguistic practice, of everyday forms of life, human existence and experience’ (Luke et al., 2013, p. 3). Luke et al. also point out that while such debates are robust and culturally warranted, contemporary curriculum theory provides very little theoretical or practical advice on the *technical form* of the curriculum. That is, on what the different conceptualisations of the curriculum elements actually look like in schools and classrooms for diverse students. While there continue to be “broad critiques of neo-tylerian assumptions and limitations, and persistent debates over the political and social contexts of curriculum”, Luke et al. (2013) note that “there is little substantive engagement with the institutional process of curriculum making” (p. 4).

1.3. Contribution to the field

The research builds on and aims to contribute to work on understanding the institutional processes and tensions in curriculum design and implementation for both government policy and individual schools, with a focus on the New Zealand context. Recent studies in curriculum design and implementation in New Zealand have focussed on a number of aspects in relation to the 2007 curriculum, in particular the enablers and barriers to effective implementation (e.g., Hipkins, Cowie, Boyd, Keown, & McGee, 2011; Sinnema, 2011), and the relationship between specific learning areas and the key competencies (e.g., Gillespie, Penney, & Pope, 2013). However, there has not been an in-depth analysis of the institutional discourse that surrounded the conception of the key competencies, particularly through a lens of diversity and difference, and the minority group perspectives which Luke et al. (2013) and Fraser (1997) highlight. As such, this study will provide new insights into

individual and group interpretations of cultural diversity, within both policy and school settings and the implications this might have had on the identification of the valued behaviours and attitudes inherent in competencies. The analytic focus is on *how* these various interpretations were constructed as part of the policy development process and *how* they were then reinterpreted at a school and classroom teacher level, enabling further insights.

Although numerous studies (e.g., Ball, 1990, 1994; Bernstein, 2000) have identified the various processes and issues associated with realising educational policy intent, little analytic attention has been paid to educators' understanding of the wider social, political and economic factors that can underpin a particular policy initiative. This thesis addresses this gap through the analysis of discussion papers and documents that help inform curriculum policy decisions, the comments and recollections of policy officials, academic consultants and senior management and classroom teachers involved in its design and implementation in two schools.

1.4. Public education policy

Some educational theorists see public education policies performing two main functions: to state the cultural norms which the state considers desirable, and to institute a mechanism of accountability. Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, & Henry, 1997 argue that most policies are shaped by the characteristics of previous ones and that policy is thus an instrument through which change is mapped onto existing policies, programmes or organisations. They add:

With policy, it's also possible to articulate, re articulate or institutionalise the manner in which particular issues might be understood ... policies serve to manage change, but exactly how this management occurs varies greatly from policy to policy and site to site. (p. 5)

Assessing the quality of education policy is problematic because of the subjective nature of what constitutes quality. Any definition of quality is related to the specific goals of a group. The information collected on the quality of the curriculum is of an

eclectic nature and reflects the different perspectives of stakeholders. Naidu (2011) ask in whose interests and for what purposes should education policy research be done? What are the implications for students, schools and teachers? Teachers, by virtue of their profession, are engaged daily in policy. The curriculum, the school policy and their performance in the classroom are all subject to a range of policy and directives (p. 3).

Ball (1990) through in his macro analysis of education policy in the UK, identifies three levels of approach and influence; the political, the ideological and the economic. He also suggests that there are two conceptualisations of policy: policy as text and policy as discourse. Policies as text suggest that policies are representations which are encoded by the authors in different ways, via struggles and compromises, and decoded in different ways by those who need to 'implement' them. Ball argues that policies shift and change their meaning in different arenas. Policies are also discourses which are about what can be said and thought and who can speak, when, where and with what authority. We take up positions constructed for us within policies. Policies are not simply things; they are also processes and outcomes. Policy implementation is a constant bargaining process, where policy is transformed at each level of implementation, as individuals interpret and act on it (Ball, 1993; Taylor et al., 1997).

Curriculum policy reform by the government includes '*an analysis of what a nation wanted its citizens to gain from school and the nature, characteristics and needs of society*' Formulation and reformulation of the aims, goals, objectives, content, and '*pointers about contemporary knowledge about how people learn and how this can influence curriculum decisions*' and broad assessment policies of the curriculum. (McGee, 1997, pp. 42-43)

1.4.1. Implementation of curriculum policy

A number of research studies into the implementation of official curriculum policy suggest that the state has limited control over the school curriculum, and that schools and teachers interpret the curriculum in particular ways. Bowe and Ball

(1992) argue that it is “not so much being implemented’ in schools as being ‘recreated, not so much ‘reproduced’ as ‘produced” (1992, p. 114). Carr et al. (2000) elaborate on this further by referring to a ‘cascade’ of interpreted curricula, from the official curricula down to the students’ interpretation of the curriculum as a consequence of teaching and learning activities. National curricula are developed as ‘intended’ curricula, changed through regulation to ‘planned’ curricula, become ‘taught’ as they are interpreted, reformulated and internalised by teachers. Finally, curricula are ‘experienced’, ‘learned’, and ‘internalised’ by students (Harland, 1988). Curriculum reform involves reflection and change at all the different levels of curriculum, ‘intended’, ‘planned’, ‘taught’, ‘learnt’ and ‘internalised’.

The school improvement and school change literature also focuses on the important link between curriculum policy change and teachers’ attitudes and values. Stenhouse (1975) argued more than 50 years ago that in order for teachers to make curriculum changes, they first needed to develop attitudes congruent with, and I would add, be supported to deeply understand, the changes advocated and the implications for practice. Much research demonstrates that it is not straightforward to inculcate ‘new attitudes and beliefs’, which many education policies advocate. Cohen and Ball’s (1999) research shows how teachers apprehend and enact new instructional policies in light of inherited knowledge, beliefs and pedagogical practices. Typical responses from teachers can include rejection of new information because it does not fit with prior beliefs (Coburn, 2001), or *over-assimilation* whereby teachers believe that their changes in practice are consistent with what is proposed, when, in reality, the changes they make represent the new information in superficial ways only (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002; Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007).

To further highlight the complexity of policy research, Ball (1994) suggests that the policy cycle includes three interrelated contexts; the context of policy text production, the context of practice and the context of influence, and advocates the use of more than one theory to explain the intention of policy. How it is interpreted and acted upon by different agents, how people utilise policy as well to as to ascertain what agendas are being promoted or repressed. Taylor et al. (1997) note that many definitions of policy are misleading, because they convey the message that

there is general agreement when policies are implemented in a straightforward and unproblematic way; in contrast any policy definition must reflect the political nature of policy as a compromise which is struggled over at all stages by competing interests. And Ozga (2000) argues that schools and teachers must know about these compromises and debates in educational policy making. They must understand educational policy in a 'theoretically informed way' in order to be fully informed participants in and critics of the entire policy process.

1.4.2. The New Zealand Curriculum as a policy text

New Zealand has had a national curriculum since the advent of the 1877 Education Act, which established free, secular and compulsory education for children in New Zealand. All children were required to attend school between the ages of seven and 13, and were entitled to attend between five and 15. Over time, the official curriculum emerged as series of statements about typical learning experiences, activities, and content to be covered. The intention was that schools would develop programmes to suit their students as long as their programmes covered all of the aspects.

1990s curriculum policy shifted from a focus on content, experiences and activities to curriculum policy based on outcomes, reflecting a more market-oriented emphasis on accountability for investment in education; following similar trends in other jurisdictions (Luke et al., 2013; Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004; Priestley & Biesta, 2013). The OECD's 1996 report *'The Knowledge-based Economy'* placed significant emphasis on the role of knowledge and technology in economic growth. STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects were being prioritised; knowledge was increasingly viewed as a commodity, and computer literacy and access to network facilities appeared to be valued over traditional forms of literacy. Little mention was made of the contribution of the social sciences or arts to individual and societal well-being, or in terms of the multiple perspectives or world-views on valued knowledge. These ideas were discussed in depth in the New Zealand educational context through the publication of the book, *Catching the Knowledge Wave? The knowledge society and the future of education* (Gilbert, 2005).

By the end of 2002, the New Zealand Ministry of Education had completed a curriculum stocktake which identified the strengths and weaknesses of existing curriculum documentation. It sought to produce a curriculum framework that could better respond to some of the emerging local and global social, economic and environmental issues in its education of young people. The introduction of five key competencies largely drew from the work of the OECD's *Definition and Selection of Key Competencies* (DeSeCo) project launched in the late 1990s. These key competencies were subsequently seen as an important aspect of the 2007 revised curriculum, and one that could potentially bridge the academic and socio-cultural elements.

As the DeSeCo project found, agreeing on a common vision of the world as a normative reference point for identifying those competencies that foster social, economic and personal wellbeing is highly problematic. The DeSeCo initiative itself emerged from concerns that an exclusive focus on easily quantifiable competencies directly associated with economic outcomes would result in profiles of human competencies would ignore those that focussed more personal and social well-being; although it could be argued that they are not mutually exclusive.

It is difficult to see how the capabilities required for the current market model that underpins most western economies, can equally cater for the diverse values, attitudes and behaviours that comprise a pluralistic society, and this is an extremely big task for schools, when the greater society is yet to resolve these tensions.

While there have been a number of curriculum implementation monitoring and research studies pertaining to the 2007 New Zealand Curriculum (Hipkins et al., 2011; Sinnema, 2011), few have sought to capture the different understandings and influences on how the key competencies are thought about from policy design through to implementation in schools, particularly in relation to the significant tensions associated with cultural diversity and difference, and values conflicts. How policy is formulated, its range of influences and lenses, and the level of analysis and consultation undertaken on key areas are important considerations.

1.5. The research design: Theoretical and empirical fields of the study

According to Brown and Dowling (1998), the theoretical field of study is the broad area of academic and/or professional knowledge, research and debates which contains a researcher's general area of interest, and the empirical field is the general area of practice or activity or experience about which the researcher intends to make claims.

1.5.1. Theoretical field

Theoretically, my case study is broadly located within the field of the sociology of education, utilising the theories of Basil Bernstein. However, given Bernstein's theories are based within a more structuralist orientation, my study also draws on the work of Nancy Fraser's (1989) needs discourse theory, with the perspectives of Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) Maria Root (1996) and Nicholas Burbules (1997), illuminating several post-structuralist theories about culture, identity politics and needs discourse. Through utilising more than one theoretical argument, I seek to avoid an overly reductionist approach to the complex interplay of contextual influences on curriculum design and implementation.

Bernstein's theory of the *pedagogic device* (1990, 2000) provides a useful framework to investigate the potential influences at the different stages of the curriculum design process, ranging from an 'official recontextualising field' (ORF) which tends to be dominated by academics and policy officials, through to the 'pedagogic recontextualising field' (PRF), which includes external professional development facilitators as well as school leadership and teaching staff. Historically, the ORF has not included direct involvement of business and employer interest groups, but the advent of neoliberal economic policies has meant business, employer interest groups and other influential stakeholders appear to have an increased influence on the content and outcomes of the school curriculum.

In addition, with the emergence of identity politics, responsiveness to student diversity and difference in curriculum design remains complex and contested. Identity politics in the United States emerged in the later part of the 20th century

during the civil rights era as a collective term to refer to the different political positions that have been shaped by the interests and perspectives of social groups with which people identify, particularly where they have felt marginalised or suppressed. Examples include social organisations based on age, social class, culture, dialect, disability, education, ethnicity, language, nationality, gender identity, generation, race, religion, sexual orientation, settlement, urban and rural habitation etc. (Heyes, 2016).

While inclusive curricula and pedagogies are important elements in facilitating the personal, social and economic wellbeing of young people, this space can also be vulnerable to capture by powerful groups and individuals, and can promote particular identities for students and essentialised notions of cultural practices. Alternatively, interpretations of cultural responsiveness can reify some students' ethnicity or culture over others. The impact of this on individual students can be far reaching, but critics claim identity politics can also divert energy and can result in a fragmented approach to addressing fundamental class-related social and economic inequities and conflicts for a number of marginalised groups. Bernstein (1990) also warns of the 'pedagogic Janus', where neoliberal discourse appears to be responsive to diversity and makes concessions to some marginalised groups, but largely appropriates progressive language and repositions it within its own ideology and instrumental goals.

Nancy Fraser's (1989) theory on needs discourse provides a complementary theory to Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic device theory to more finely analyse the discourse in each field in relation to cultural diversity and identity politics and curriculum design. Fraser (1989) highlights the weaknesses and assumptions in uncritical approaches and theories in the area of needs discourse and identity politics, and proposes that any dialogue or representation be examined from a number of perspectives, including identifying the interlocutors and whose needs do they claim to represent, how inclusive or exclusive is the discourse, and how hierarchical or egalitarian are the relationships within the group. This type of analysis is an important element of my research within New Zealand's socio-political and cultural context.

Both Bernstein (2000) and Fraser's (1989) theories are particularly relevant in the design and implementation of the key competencies. The 2007 New Zealand Curriculum is widely regarded as a 'permissive' curriculum (Abbiss, 2011; ERO, 2012) which seeks to locate school curriculum design and decision-making processes with individual school's Boards of Trustees. It is important, therefore, to ask how official curriculum policy has helped schools to manage the complexities and influences in agreeing on the valued behaviours and attitudes inherent in the key competencies with their diverse students and communities.

1.5.2. Empirical framing

Empirically, the study is located within a specific case of curriculum change – the revision of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007). More specifically, the focus is on the inclusion of key competencies as a curriculum construct, and their subsequent implementation in state and state-integrated primary and secondary schools.

The research takes place some years after the curriculum was officially launched in 2007. Data were collected in 2013 and 2014 from policy officials and academics involved in the design of the curriculum, and from teachers and senior leaders in a New Zealand primary and secondary school. Continuous document searching and analysis of Ministry of Education curriculum archives took place from 2012 through to 2015.

The study tracks the recontextualisation of the curriculum key competencies, from the consultants and policy officials who designed the key competencies, through to the school leaders and teachers charged with their interpretation and implementation. It analyses emerging themes and debates that arose during the policy design process, as identified through document analysis of key policy papers and think pieces, and the recollections of many of those involved. These recollections were obtained from individual interviews with key government officials and academics around 6 years after the launch of the final curriculum document in 2007.

The recollections and interpretations of school leaders and teachers from two schools on their key competency implementation process were collected in 2013-14.

1.6. Research questions

The overall research questions informing the study are:

Who and what influenced the design and implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum Key Competencies?

What were the understandings about cultural diversity, and identity, at the design and implementation stages?

The methodological question is: How does the concept of Bernstein's pedagogic device assist in describing the educational policy process of designing and implementing the key competencies?

1.7. My research interests and role

1.7.1. My research interests

My interest stems from a number of different influences. On a personal level, as a child of a refugee from Poland post-World War Two and a working class family, I recall the confusion of my siblings with some of the covert social codes and behaviours of our middle-class school friends. My father was also viewed with some suspicion, due to his Eastern European origins and strong accent, particularly during Cold War tensions between the U.S and Russia, which spilled over to other western nations. At school, I recall learning about Japanese tea ceremonies or Holland's tulips and windmills, popular social studies topics at the time, while not learning about any connections or relevance to my classmates. I was given no opportunities to share my own cultural heritage, nor did I learn anything about indigenous Māori cultural practices, apart from a few waiata (songs). This is despite having a number of Māori classmates, and a marae within walking distance of our school.

Later, through my teaching career, I became increasingly involved in teaching English language to new migrants and refugee students, and became acutely aware of the subtle and not-so-subtle ways different groups and individuals are included or excluded from social interactions. I came to appreciate the sense of isolation and

frustration experienced by many students when the language and learning contexts of the classroom curriculum were not made accessible or inclusive. I also became aware of some of the more personal struggles students' had regarding their parents' traditional cultural identities and practices, and their own desire to be part of more than one cultural or social group.

My subsequent employment in the Ministry of Education from late 2002 afforded me a number of opportunities and insights into how education policy evolves, across a wide range of contexts. My involvement in the *New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) project largely occurred after it was launched in 2007, and I was given the opportunity to work with a team of people responsible for its implementation in schools. Several evaluations of the implementation of the NZC revealed that educators in both primary and secondary schools held the curriculum in high regard (Hipkins et al., 2011; Shagen, 2011; Sinnema, 2011). My particular responsibility was providing some guidance for schools on understanding the key competencies as they were described in the curriculum. Having little prior knowledge in this area, I spent considerable time reading the various papers and policy documents that informed their development. Initially, I saw the key competencies as trying to achieve a better balance between the academic and social outcomes of education, and as having the potential to make more explicit and accessible some of the 'hidden curriculum' that often marginalises minority groups. However, I became increasingly concerned about the complexity of what schools and teachers were being asked to operationalise, in particular, achieving coherence between the various curriculum elements and the risks around superficial and/or instrumentalist interpretations of the curriculum as educational policy. I was also concerned about over-generalisation and reification of some cultural identities, values and practices over others. I began to read more widely about some fundamental issues and debates associated with the key competencies in other jurisdictions, and began to question what really were the drivers and influences on this aspect of the New Zealand curriculum, and what was the relationship to the curriculum principles, particularly the *Treaty of Waitangi*, *Cultural Diversity* and *Inclusion?*

1.7.2. My research role

My employment in the Ministry of Education placed me in a unique position to undertake extensive research into the influences on curriculum policy design. I was able to identify and interview key officials, past and present, who were involved in the conception of the key competencies, as well as the small group of academics who were invited to contribute to various forums and discussion papers. In addition, I obtained official approval from the Ministry to access and analyse using both electronic and hard copy archives, a large number of policy papers, meeting minutes and discussion papers. All my research participants were extremely generous with their time and support, and during the course of the interviews, were able to identify other key people or papers that were particularly relevant to my research. I was aware that, at times, their candid comments and observations would need to be carefully reported to ensure that their personal and professional lives were uncompromised through participation in this research. This applied equally to the staff of the two schools where I conducted focus group interviews. Given New Zealand's relatively small population size, government officials, academics and schools can sometimes be easily identified by the nature of comments made, and their involvement in high profile public forums. Every effort has been made in the reporting of data to protect key officials, academics, and school and staff identities.

In conducting the research, I was also aware that my own personal and professional relationships with many of my interview subjects required a degree of sensitivity. I had to be extremely careful not to exploit these relationships for my own purposes. I needed to be sure my colleagues had agreed to participate willingly, and particularly in the case of the schools, that they did not feel pressured into participating because I was employed as a government official at that time, and known to several of them.

Finally, the opportunity to spend a three month sabbatical with Professor Michael Apple, at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA, during the final stages of my research allowed me to test my ideas with fellow international scholars who had little knowledge of, or experience with, New Zealand or its curriculum. It was here that I was supported to utilise Bernstein's (2000) pedagogical device to more explicitly frame this research, as well as to familiarise myself with Nancy Fraser's (1989, 1996,

1997, 2000) theories on identity politics, recognitive and redistributive justice, and the implications for the valued attitudes and behaviours inherent in the key competencies.

1.8. The structure of the thesis

The recontextualisation theories of Basil Bernstein (2000) are referred to throughout the thesis, in particular that of the pedagogic device. The pedagogic device provides a useful framework to examine some of the different influences and perspectives of participants at different stages of the policy design and implementation cycle, and how these have shaped their interpretation of the key competencies.

Part One:

Chapter 1 has introduced the theoretical and empirical fields of study and locates the study in the context of changes to the New Zealand curriculum from 2002. It outlined the purpose and the rationale for the study. It reviewed the literature on policy research and implementation, and in particular, the complexities inherent in policy intent and policy as process.

Chapter 2 describes the recontextualisation theories of Basil Bernstein, with a particular focus on the roles and influences that take place at each of the key fields that are part of the pedagogic device. It clarifies the difference between the Official Recontextualising Field and the Pedagogical Recontextualising Field to highlight the importance of context, participants, and the discourse in the design and interpretation of policy. Chapter 2 also details the needs discourse theories of Nancy Fraser (1989), illuminated through Kimberle Crenshaw's (1989) intersectionality theory, the related border theories of Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) and Maria Root (1996), and Nicholas Burbules' (1997) categories of difference. These different theories and frameworks will be used to help examine the different perspectives, the interpretations and discussions on cultural diversity and student identity within the context of curriculum design.

Part Two: The review of the literature

Chapter 3 explores the major theories and developments relating to culture, diversity and identity, and some of the tensions associated with these different theoretical positions at a wider societal level. Pluralism, assimilationism, multiculturalism and the emergence of identity politics and the implications for individual expression and social cohesion are explored.

Chapter 4 recounts New Zealand's settlement history and the implications for its bicultural treaty in contemporary, pluralistic society. It explores the literature on some of the tensions that can emerge for individuals and groups who are impacted differently by racial, ethnic and other forms of categorisation. This chapter serves to highlight some of the complex identity politics operating in the New Zealand education landscape, and thus the difficulties and complexities of inclusive and responsive curriculum design.

Chapter 5 examines the development of curriculum as a concept, both internationally and in New Zealand. It seeks to identify the various social, political and economic influences that have influenced how school curriculum has been theorised and constructed over time, and the implications for teachers and their students.

Chapter 6 describes the emergence of competencies as an educational construct within curriculum design, and the complexities and tensions associated within this space. In particular, it seeks to highlight the relationship to culturally-valued behaviours and attitudes and the implications for diverse students.

Part Three: The research

Chapter 7 details the methodological issues and approach taken in the study and locates it within an interpretive and critical realist stance. It utilises Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogical device to frame the concept of key competencies in the curriculum as it progresses through the policy cycle. A range of data were collected using a number of methods. The chapter describes how the data were analysed using a combination of deductive and inductive analysis methods.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 detail the data findings and the emerging themes in relation to the different recontextualising fields. Chapter 7 details the findings from the analysis of elite interviews; Chapter 8 analyses the key documents and findings from the school focus groups. Chapter 9 discusses the findings in terms of emerging themes and relationships to the current literature.

Chapter 10 reviews the research questions and how the study addresses these. It summarises the key findings in the different contextual spaces, using both Bernstein's (2000) and Fraser's (1989, 2000) theoretical frameworks, and discusses the implications of these findings for future curriculum policy design and implementation.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Frameworks

Education is central to the knowledge base of society, groups and individuals. Yet education also, like health, is a public institution, central to the production and reproduction of distributive injustices. Biases in the form, content, access and opportunities of education have consequences not only for the economy; these biases can reach down to drain the very springs of affirmation, motivation and imagination.

(Basil Bernstein, 2000, p. xix)

2.0. Introduction

This research draws on a number of Bernstein's (2000) theories to help answer the question: What (and who) informed the design and outcomes of the New Zealand Curriculum Key Competencies? Bernstein's major contribution to the sociology of education was through his examination of the nature and terms of the discourse that takes place within different fields of practice related to knowledge production, policy design and implementation processes. He argued his approach was an alternative to the many cultural reproduction studies that identified education simply as a relay for social class and other inequalities (Bernstein, 1996, p. 39). Bernstein believed that such theories were somewhat deterministic, and instead sought to probe deeply into how the production and reproduction of certain types of knowledge takes place, and who is involved.

In this chapter I describe the elements of Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogic device that are most relevant to this study. Bernstein (2000) used the term 'pedagogic device', to refer to the systemic and institutionalised ways in which knowledge is produced, and then recontextualised, implemented and evaluated

within the schooling system. In Bernstein's words, "Curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge, pedagogy defines what counts as valid transmission of knowledge, and evaluation defines what counts as a valid realisation of the knowledge on the part of the taught" (Bernstein, 1973, p. 85). Curriculum reform, as realised through shifts in policy design and direction often become "sites of struggle"; a term used by neo Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1970) to refer to discursive sites in which dominant discourses compete for ideological hegemony. Bernstein refers to the struggle for control of the pedagogic device as between those who seek to make their own bias and priorities state policy and practice. Within each of Bernstein's fields of practice, specific state institutions and their agents continue to argue for the knowledge they believe students need to acquire, how this knowledge should be structured and taught, and the ways that it should be assessed. Such views are endorsed through official curriculum statements and through the discourse and practices of the various agents in each of the fields of practice. Bernstein argues that groups and individuals who ultimately control the device "own the means of perpetuating their power through discursive means and establishing, or attempting to establish, their own ideological representations" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 65). The expectation of this 'official discourse' is that it will shape the motivations, aspirations and dispositions of teachers and students in particular ways, through their demonstration of specific practices and performances.

In this research, I propose Bernstein's pedagogical device theory offers a useful structure to identify the various participants and the different kinds of discourse that took place within each of the fields of production, recontextualisation and reproduction, as part of the New Zealand curriculum key competencies policy design and implementation process.

Bernstein not only sought to highlight the relationship between power and knowledge, and the different ways knowledge is distributed and regulated, but also how these relationships and processes operated within the contexts of cultural and social reproduction, transformation and change (Maton & Muller, 2007, 2009). Sadovnik (1995) also emphasised that Bernstein's notion of the pedagogic device "is concerned with more than the description of the production and transmission of

knowledge; he is concerned with its consequences for different groups” (p. 10). This aspect is of particular relevance to my research as I propose to investigate the interpretation and recontextualisation of a specific government policy for diverse student groups in New Zealand.

Bernstein (2000) also proposed a theory of pedagogic identities and educational purpose as a way of highlighting more recent influences and ideologies on the purpose of education. These include the state’s constructions of ‘work’ and ‘life’, and the implications of these for not only the learning performances and practices (competencies) that are required in the school setting, but also how these performances and practices are expected to be transferred into the workplace and daily lives of diverse individuals. In my research, these ideas have potential to help identify some of the ideological struggles between traditional academic or instrumentalist interpretations and activities associated with curriculum design, key competencies and singular identities, and those that focus more on social justice, student well-being and multiple expressions of identity. I elaborate on each of these aspects in Section 2.2.

My second research question is: “What were the understandings about culture, diversity and identity at the design and implementation stage?” This question was designed to explore the potential consequences of the key competencies policy for diverse student groups, and possible impacts on social cohesion.

Bernstein’s theories on the sociology of education drew significantly on the early works of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and in particular, Emile Durkheim, renewing interest in these theories for curriculum design in the 1970s (Sadnovik, 1995; Yates, 1995). Yates notes the shifts in focus since then to the impact of “feminist theory and movements ... the interest in ethnographic studies of particular groups; and policy studies assessing and examining new developments in national curricula” (p166). She posits that the questions for contemporary contexts are centred on pedagogical and normative dilemmas asking, how, in any given pluralistic and multicultural society, might schools engender a collective solidarity or spirit that can respect these differences, but form a sufficiently energised basis for continued democracy? Can

citizenship and the morality required of the citizen actually be developed through schooling? How might schools and curricula deal with the tensions between society and individualism? And what else, other than the transmission of knowledge, vocational skills and rationality, should schools be engaged in?

This focus necessitated the use of additional theories and frameworks to analyse the nature of the discourse that took place within the different fields of practice; specifically, how the policy recognised culture, diversity and difference and the possible consequences for different student groups, as highlighted by Maton and Muller (2009), Sadovnik (1995) and Yates (1995). To assist with this, I draw on Nancy Fraser's (1989, 1996) needs discourse theory. This theory emerged from the complexities of 'identity politics' (Heyes, 2016) in the United States, which had its origins in the civil rights and feminist movements, and more latterly, gender and sexual identity recognition debates. Through utilising some questions from Fraser's discourse analysis, I aim to highlight some of the different ideological perspectives and positions that were present within New Zealand's educational policy context and potential sites of struggle during the time of the New Zealand curriculum revision.

This second research question is designed to examine how *inclusive* the discourse was in relation to culture, diversity and difference amongst students and, in addition, how and if the notion of multiple identities was considered and addressed. To achieve this, I draw on Crenshaw's (1989) intersectionality theory along with the border theory ideas of Anzaldúa (1987) and Root (1996), to determine whether these might assist in understanding the complexities and politics of student identity. Nicholas Burbules' (1997) categories of difference adds a further perspective on some of the potentially different motivations of individuals and groups, and their individualised expressions of identity. I draw on Burbules' categories to illuminate and explain some of the different perspectives and interpretations that individuals may have. I set out ideas from these theorists in Sections 2.3 and 2.4.

2.1. Bernstein's pedagogical device

Bernstein's theory of the pedagogical device provides a structure with which to locate and analyse the various discourse that takes place as part of a curriculum policy design and implementation process, and the potentially different ideological positions and theories that may emerge as part of this process. In this research, I am particularly interested in the policy discourse as it relates to diverse students and constructions of identity. Not only does the device have the potential to identify possible ideological sites of struggle and power dynamics in this area, but it also may help identify the key personnel that reinforce or challenge dominant discourses.

The elements of Bernstein's pedagogical device relevant to my study are:

- (1) the notion of fields of practice, namely the fields of *production*, *recontextualisation*, and *reproduction*. Each of these three fields is associated with a typical site in which the discourse of knowledge production, recontextualisation or reproduction takes place. Typical participants or *agents* operate within these fields. Bernstein argues that each of these fields is governed by particular regulatory '*rules*' that determine what can and cannot take place within each of the fields, through their respective agents;
- (2) the nature and complexities of horizontal and vertical knowledge discourse. This refers to the discourse that takes place within the different fields and how knowledge is perceived and valued by the different agents, and whose perspectives are included;
- (3) theories to do with classification and framing. Bernstein uses these to describe how knowledge is classified within curriculum policy documents, and how it is framed within visible and invisible pedagogical practices, and;
- (4) ideas to do with competence and performance models. Bernstein used these ideas to talk about the assessment and evaluation of learning.

Each of these is described in more detail in what follows.

2.1.1. Fields of practice

Bernstein's pedagogic device consists of three fields; the field of production, the field of recontextualisation and the field of reproduction. The field of production is the field where knowledge is produced. Typical agents are university academics and other professional experts. The field of reproduction is the field of schooling institutions. Agents in this field include school leaders and teachers. The field of recontextualisation mediates between these two fields and generally includes curriculum writers, teacher educators, and other parties contracted to the state. The recontextualisation field is composed of two sub-fields; namely, the official recontextualising field (ORF) and the pedagogic recontextualising field (PRF). The ORF consists of the specialized departments and sub-agencies of the state, such as school evaluation and qualifications authorities. The PRF consists of university departments of education, including their research, and specialised educational media such as teacher professional development websites, and printed resources.

2.1.2. Forms of regulation

Each of the fields of production, recontextualisation and reproduction is governed by one of three interrelated and hierarchically organised rules (distributive rules, recontextualising rules and evaluative rules), and the people (agents) who typically operate within these fields. These implicit rules govern the discourse between the key agents on what becomes valued knowledge, ways of thinking and associated practices, and how these discourses are then privileged and embedded across the system. I summarise these rules as follows.

Distributive rules: These rules govern how different forms of knowledge are distributed to different social groups. These rules determine how and what knowledge gets valued, and what therefore people are conscious of and how the knowledge is perceived. They control access to the fields where the production of new knowledge may legitimately take place. Bernstein refers to knowledge in the field of production, typically the realm of universities and academics, as *unthinkable* knowledge. He sees this knowledge as being esoteric and abstract, and less accessible to the general public. When individuals outside the field of production create new knowledge, the production field's principles will operate to determine

whether such knowledge is valued and incorporated into the field. Different perspectives on historical events and alternative worldviews are examples of knowledge for which groups and individuals may be seeking wider recognition and legitimacy.

Recontextualising rules: These rules govern ‘thinkable’ knowledge. Bernstein refers to thinkable knowledge as everyday, mundane and fragmented. It is more accessible to primary and secondary school students and the general public, than the ‘unthinkable’ knowledge discussed previously. Recontextualising rules regulate the work of specialists in the recontextualising field. These specialists determine the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of pedagogic discourse.

The rules in this field operate as a process for taking the agreed discourses from the field of production and reconstructing them into organisational principles and relationships. Through this process the original discourse is shaped by dominant ideological positions, for example, the value that is placed on western academic knowledge, to become its new form – pedagogic discourse. The recontextualising rules govern the Official Recontextualising Field (ORF), which is created and dominated by the state for the construction and monitoring of the state pedagogic discourse. There is usually (but not always) a Pedagogic Recontextualising Field (PRF), consisting of trainers of teachers, writers of textbooks and curriculum guides, specialised media and its authors. Bernstein notes both the ORF and PRF fields may well contain agents with a range of ideological positions who struggle for control of the field.

Evaluative rules: These rules govern pedagogic practice by providing the criteria for the knowledge that is to be transmitted and acquired. More specifically, they regulate pedagogic practice at the classroom level because they define the content and standards which must be reached by both teachers and their students. In doing so, evaluative rules act selectively on content, the form of transmission and the distribution of knowledge to different groups of students in different contexts (Bernstein, 2000, pp. 114-115).

2.1.3. The influence of agents

Bernstein argues that the agents who influence or control the rules of discourse can come from any of the specialised fields of production, recontextualisation and reproduction, or from the economic field (2000, p. 110). The typical agents in each of the three fields of practice have already been described. The influence of agents from the economic field is also relevant and of interest to this research.

The increasing dominance of supra-national groups such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, and other groups on the principal types of symbolic structures in education (i.e. curriculum design, what counts as effective pedagogy, and forms of evaluation) has been highlighted by a number of academics and educational professionals (Ball, 2012; Sjøberg, 2016; Takayama, 2013). While there are benefits in sharing knowledge, expertise and policies between nations, there is also the risk of nations losing control over their education systems (Ball, 2012). They can become vulnerable to comparative performance indicators and policy recommendations that are not of their own making. Ball (2012) describes the trend towards this as 'denationalisation'. One consequence of the reduced influence of local knowledge and contextual expertise in national and state policy construction is that policy officials' ability to address the specific diversity and equity issues within their respective countries is impacted (Ball, 2012; Sjøberg, 2016; Takayama, 2013). The nature and extent of the possible influence of the OECD and other multinational groups on the curriculum design of the key competencies within the New Zealand context will be examined further in this research.

2.1.4. Vertical and horizontal knowledge discourses

Bernstein identifies two types of knowledge discourse that occur within the production and recontextualising spaces: *vertical* and *horizontal* discourse. He particularly notes the complexity and contestable nature of the latter. Bernstein describes vertical / hierarchical knowledge discourse and horizontal discourses as follows:

[vertical knowledge discourse is typified by] a coherent, explicit and systematically principled structure, hierarchically organised; and one which seeks to integrate knowledge at the lower levels to demonstrate underlying uniformities across an expanding range of apparently different phenomena. This is best exemplified in the natural sciences.

In contrast, horizontal discourse refers to everyday or 'common-sense knowledge'¹ and entails a set of strategies which are local, segmentally organised, context specific and dependent'. (Bernstein, 1999, p. 159)

In defining these two knowledge discourses, Bernstein's key interest is in analysing the *kinds* of discourse that take place with regard to different knowledge and how these different knowledges discourses are perceived. His distinction between the different types of knowledge discourses is useful in highlighting, for example, the potential differences in the way the natural sciences are regarded in comparison to social sciences; the 'elitist' academic curriculum that typified 19th and 20th century England and the 'technicist' approaches of the US (Young, 2013). One such example of this is the scientific and supposedly approach 'neutral' approach to curriculum design popularised by Bruner, Goodnow, and Austin (1960), where he argued that all the disciplines could be organised in hierarchical ways, and that this was best done by scientists. This approach seemed to disregard the complexities of different knowledge discourses in the fields of production and recontextualisation, particularly for the social sciences, which Bernstein locates within a horizontal knowledge structure (Bernstein, 2000). Discourse in this structure includes an expanding field of specialised languages and perspectives, such as Marxist, colonialist and feminist perspectives that seek to critique and rewrite authoritative 'texts' in these fields. Yet Young and Lambert (2014) note that there is very little research that explores the usefulness of Bernstein's concepts to analyse the different theoretical (or in some

¹ There are different interpretations of the term 'common sense'. In neo-Marxist theory, it should not be confused with practical or grounded in thought and is viewed as a social construct, more aligned to Antonio Gramsci's 'buonsenso'. Gramsci refers to common sense as the world-view or 'philosophy of the non-philosophers ... the conception of the world which is uncritically absorbed by the various social and cultural environments in which ... the average man is developed' (Gramsci, 1972; see also Apple, 1992).

cases, atheoretical or eclectic) positions and approaches to overall curriculum design, or as is the case in this research, how a curriculum concept is conceptualised in terms of its knowledge and value constructs, pedagogical and assessment framing.

Bernstein argues that one of the ramifications of the different kinds of knowledge discourses is that they shape consciousness, social practices, identity and pedagogies differently. In curriculum design and implementation, there are significant implications for how valued knowledge and skills are structured and articulated through expected outcomes, and how this knowledge is transmitted, assessed and evaluated. Bernstein (2000), in his articulation of 'pedagogic device' uses the concepts of *classification* and *framing* to highlight these differences.

2.1.5. Classification and framing in curriculum and pedagogy

Bernstein's deep concern for the processes of schooling and how they related to social class reproduction led him to develop what Sadovnik (2001) believes is the heart of Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse and practice. Bernstein distinguishes between two types of educational transmission and suggests that the "differences in the classification and framing rules of different pedagogic practices relate to the social class position and assumptions of the families served by the schools" (Sadovnik, 2001, p. 3). Classification refers to the degree of differentiation and boundaries between areas of knowledge. Strong classification would see a curriculum that maintained strong boundaries between subjects; weak classification would result in a curriculum where subject boundaries are more fluid and integrated.

Framing refers to *how* the knowledge is transmitted through pedagogic practices. Framing refers to the degree of control teachers and students have over the "selection, sequencing, pacing and criteria of the knowledge transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship. Thus with strong framing, control lies with the teacher, whereas with weak framing control lies apparently with the student" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 99). When there is strong classification and strong framing, the pedagogical relationship becomes explicit and visible to all, and school language and knowledge is less obscured by its typical middle-class cultural assumptions and practices. Invisible pedagogies, in Bernstein's terms, are those that are weakly

classified and weakly framed, and where students who are not familiar with the subtle language codes, values, and ways of demonstrating learning, are significantly disadvantaged.

In this thesis, I explore evidence from key policy documents, and the recollections of officials and academics who contributed to the development of the New Zealand curriculum key competencies, to determine if the competencies can be considered to be, or are intended to be, weakly or strongly classified and weakly or strongly framed. These distinctions are of interest because should the key competencies be determined to be weakly classified and strongly framed, this would present a number of issues for students who do not share similar identities, backgrounds and values as their teachers.

2.1.6. Pedagogy and assessment: Competence and performance models

While curriculum policy texts largely sit in the official recontextualising field, school and classroom curricula can be significantly reinterpreted by those agents who operate in the pedagogic recontextualising field; that is, by those who mediate between the fields of production and reproduction. Bernstein (2000) reminds us that there can be ideological struggles for control of this recontextualising field also. Pedagogical approaches and strategies can be detailed in official curriculum texts, as in the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007, pp. 34-36). Alternatively, they can be outlined in 'second tier' websites, print resources or promoted by teacher trainers and professional development consultants. In New Zealand, while some pedagogical strategies and approaches have been identified in the official document due to their extensive research base, the promotion of local and agentic curriculum design means there is a wide range of approaches promoted in print and online resources. The ability to recognise and address a number of educational issues, such as those associated with horizontal and vertical knowledge discourse and visible and invisible pedagogies, can therefore be quite reliant on the ideologies and interpretations of these particular agents. This is also the case for the type of assessment and evaluation models and practices used to determine whether learning has taken place and the types of recognition given for this. Bernstein (2000) identifies two models of assessment and evaluation in education: *competence* and

performance. These relate to the way that the transmission of knowledge is conceived and appraised these aspects are discussed next.

2.1.6.1. *Competence models*

Bernstein (2000) notes that the concept of competence emerged across the major social science fields in the 1960s. He views competencies as “procedures for engaging with, and constructing the world” (p. 42). The notion of competencies has its origins in vocational training with the identification of distinctive competences based on functional analysis (Pralahad & Hamel, 1990). Originally the focus was largely on post-school experiences: work and ‘life’. Bernstein argues that what united academics and policy makers within the social sciences around the concept of competence was probably more related to an anti-positivist stance, as he believes their different conceptions of competence had separate, even conflicting, epistemological roots. What they likely have in common however, is a much more contextualised and applied view of knowledge and skills that challenges the ‘scientific’, hierarchical and hegemonic constructions of knowledge often associated with positivism.

Bernstein (2000, p. 43) describes competencies as practical accomplishments; inherently creative and tacitly acquired in informal situations. While their acquisition may be less vulnerable to power dynamics, he argues the accepted forms of expression of any competencies certainly are. He identifies several features as integral to the concept of competencies:

- that all people can be seen as inherently competent and able to become competent;
- that they involve differences, not deficits;
- competencies are not developed through formal instruction nor part of official assessment data but are more tacitly acquired;
- that the process of learning and applying them is co-constructed between students and their teachers, or novices and experts;

- there is a more critical approach to hierarchical relations and transmission of so-called 'objective' knowledge, and their acquisition is more about the context and facilitation; and
- there is a shift from a passive temporal reception to active and applied knowledge; their relevance being at the time of the realisation of the competence.

Bernstein maintains that through this *idealised* notion of competence, the individual is abstracted from "the analysis of distributions of power and principles of control which selectively specialise modes of acquisition and realisations" (p. 43). It is important to note that Bernstein views these as 'idealised'; while they are emancipatory in principle and in ways of learning, when sets of competencies are then described and evaluated according to specific criteria, they become more controlled by particular ways of knowing and demonstrating competence.

2.1.6.2. *Performance models*

Performance models, in contrast, focus on the acquisition of something the individual does not have; as a consequence, the emphasis is placed on the specialised knowledge, skills and procedures to be acquired, and the way this is achieved. Performance models have largely underpinned the traditional, singular approach to secondary school subjects; as sets of abstract knowledge to be learned in particular ways, and assessed through written examinations and qualification frameworks.

Bernstein notes that attempts to reduce subject atomisation through curriculum integration (the reduction of subject silos and hierarchies through the introduction of themes and contexts that cut across subjects) have been largely unsuccessful (Whitty, Rowe, & Aggleton, 1994, in Bernstein, 2000). He sees it as unsurprising because of the power relations and elitism associated with traditional academic subjects, and suggests that this maybe why generic skills or competencies have been seen as a way forward in mediating the space between traditional and more contemporary and progressive approaches to curriculum design. It is important to note that Bernstein does not see discipline knowledge as unimportant; his theories are more about the access to this knowledge by *all* students.

2.1.6.3. *Comparisons between models*

Bernstein uses the pedagogic practices typical of early childhood and primary schools to compare and contrast competence models with performance models (2000, pp. 45-50). He finds that across a range of categories, such as space, time and discourse practices, the recontextualised knowledge in competence models is weakly classified, control is implicit and teacher autonomy is high. In addition, he notes the transmission cost of competence models is also high. By this Bernstein means that the teachers have to be trained well in a diverse range of epistemological and ontological theories; are required to construct the pedagogical resources; evaluation and student feedback needs to be personalised and is therefore time consuming; parents need socialising into the practice; and the co-constructed nature of the competence model requires extensive collegial interaction over planning and monitoring details. He maintains that:

this lack of recognition of hidden costs may lead to ineffective pedagogic practice because of the demands of the practice, or if these are met, the lack of recognition may give rise to ineffectiveness because of the fatigue of teachers. (p. 49)

Bernstein notes that with performance models, their explicitness makes the transmission of knowledge less dependent on the personal attributes of the teacher, and teacher supply is less restricted. Packages and algorithms can also be a feature of this approach, which reduces training costs and increases teacher supply. Planning and monitoring are less expensive because of the explicit structures of transmission and progression.

Broadly speaking, Bernstein sees competence models as trying to emphasise difference, rather than deficit; as opposing stratification procedures and as promoting an emancipatory notion. He notes that competence models focus on shared procedural commonalities and while one type of model or mode locates this inherent potential *within* the child, others locate these competencies within a local culture (class, ethnic or region). Bernstein argues that sponsors of this second model of competences, while often intrinsic to a local dominated group and generated by

local discourse practices, are largely ignored, unseen or repressed by members of official pedagogic fields. A third model of competence seeks to not focus on the competences located within a particular dominated group, but instead focuses on “inter-class/ group opportunities, material and symbolic, to redress its objective dominated positioning” (p. 51). Yet Bernstein also notes that in all three competence models, the pedagogies focus on procedural similarities and operate with forms of invisible pedagogy (Bernstein, 1973, 1990).

Bernstein argues that, in most cases, the competences are still located within a performance model of curriculum. He sees competence models as generally found in early or remedial education and performance models as “empirically normal across all levels of official education” (p. 51). Bernstein notes that competence models can at times be utilised by official education for specific and local purposes. He quotes Jones and Moore (1993) to argue that this often “appropriate[s] the language and resonances of an opposing model, silencing the cultural basis of skills, tasks, practices and areas of work” (p. 53).

This aspect of Bernstein’s theory has considerable relevance to this research. It seeks to probe into the intent of the key competencies in the New Zealand curriculum through examining the discourses and influences on their conceptualisation. In particular, how ‘emancipatory’ are the key competencies, and to what extent social class and cultural diversity were considered in their design and implementation?

To summarise my use of Bernstein’s notion of pedagogic device, the key elements have been set out as they are relevant and apply to this research. This table was developed from Maton and Muller’s (2007) table, *The arena of the pedagogical device* (p. 9).

Table 2.1. Elements of Bernstein's pedagogical device theory

Field of practice	Forms of regulation	Typical Agents	Typical sites	Kinds of symbolic structures
Production	Distributive rules Unthinkable knowledge	Academics Professional experts	Research papers Conferences Laboratories	Vertical and horizontal knowledge structures
Recontextualisation	Recontextualising rules Thinkable knowledge	Curriculum writers Teacher educators Website/print content writers	Curriculum policy Textbooks Teaching and learning resources	Curricula Classification and framing
Reproduction	Evaluative rules	School leaders and teachers	Classrooms Examinations	Pedagogy and assessment Visible and invisible pedagogies Competence versus performance

2.2. Pedagogic identities and educational purpose

An additional aspect of Bernstein's theories of relevance to this research alongside the pedagogical device, is his notion of *Pedagogic Identities and Educational Purpose*. Bernstein (2000) believes the backwash effect of the vocational emphasis of concepts such as competencies into primary and secondary schools curricula has resulted in "the recontextualising field producing and reproducing imaginary concepts of work and life, which abstract such experiences from the power relations of their lived conditions and negate the possibilities of understanding and criticism" (p. 59). This potentially reinforces more instrumentalist views of education, positioning the learner as a compliant and unquestioning employee.

Bernstein argues that a new conceptualisation of work and life has emerged in more recent times from where stability has been replaced by 'flexibility' and 'adaptability', responsiveness to change, and constructions of the 'life-long learner'. He argues that the concept of 'trainability' underpins this new conceptualisation:

[Trainability] places the emphasis on 'something' the [individual] must possess in order for that [individual] to be 'appropriately formed and reformed according to technological, organisational and market contingencies. This 'something' which is crucial to the survival of the [individual], the economy and presumably society, is the ability to be taught, the ability to respond effectively to concurrent, subsequent, intermittent pedagogics. (p. 59)

Bernstein maintains that the capacity of trainability is the outcome of a specific identity which arises out of a particular social order. He argues that an individual's future relies not on an ability, but on their adaptability; being able to respond to concurrent and subsequent retraining. Bernstein notes that the individual's identity is [re]constructed as a 'consumer', and success is defined by materialities of consumption through the abundance or absence of goods (p. 59). He regards this as individualistic, and devoid of social connectedness.

Bernstein sees this emphasis on individualism as characteristic of neo-liberal discourse, with this kind of identity legitimised and reinforced through an agreed collective purpose. In this case, access to traditional resources for identity formation, such as social, cultural and religious groups and their discourse and practices, are no longer straightforward or so easily available. Identities are regulated and fragmented in ever more subtle ways. Social class, in particular, has almost become invisible as a uniting cause across groups of people under neo-liberal discourse (Apple, 2004). Within the school curriculum, Bernstein argues both visible and invisible pedagogies have become virtually secular and market-driven (Bernstein, 2000, p. 78). While the potential of curriculum concepts such as key competencies in addressing social justice issues and strengthening student identity and agency has been identified by some (e.g., Crick, 2008; Haste, 2001), the international literature on curriculum also reveals a concern about the balance between social justice and economic agendas (see Ball, 2012; Sjøberg, 2016; Takayama, 2013).

Bernstein argues, however, that the current dominance of neo-liberal ideologies over the pedagogic device is not deterministic in its consequences, and sees possibilities in

the emergence of new social forms and struggles for its control. While a number of curriculum theorists have argued for the importance of discipline knowledge or 'powerful knowledge' as essential for the 'production' of new knowledge, and a counter-balance to constructions of the 'knowledge economy' (OECD, 1996) and the marketisation of education (Young, 2013), others have believe that traditional discipline approaches to curriculum continue to be about the 'knowledge of the powerful' and reinforce social and cultural inequities (Beck, 2013).

Others still have argued that the 'third way' (Giddens, 2000) may seem like a balance between the 'old left' with its focus on rights, equity, high state accountability and high social expenditure, and the 'old right' with its emphasis on competition, privatisation and reduced social expenditure, but is still, at least in the New Zealand context, a softer form of neoliberalism (Roberts & Peters, 2008). A number of critiques of the school textbook industry, particularly in the United States, also note that that 'knowledge production' is no longer the preserve of 'academic experts', but the site of struggle between powerful groups seeking to build political, economic and cultural accord, and those groups seeking to reveal the agendas underlying school knowledge, and incorporating alternative traditions and worldviews (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Larson, Allen, & Osborn, 2010). This would suggest that the boundaries have weakened between educational and other agents such as those focussed on economic outcomes, and the associated discourses within each of Bernstein's fields of practice. This has implications for the separation of academic and vocational fields of production.

Bernstein's pedagogic device seeks to make explicit the ways that knowledge is both produced and legitimised, and reproduced by those in power. The different agents within the fields of practice influence the nature of the discourse that takes place, and whose theories of knowledge and schooling are progressed. Bernstein's theory examines the ways in which curriculum knowledge is classified and framed, and the visibility/invisibility in the ways 'knowing and being' are constructed in the classroom and in the wider society. A concept that will be revisited throughout this research is Bernstein's 'struggle for control of the pedagogic device'. Gramsci (1972) referred to hegemonic discourse as a 'site of struggle' and I will use this term to describe the

potentially different, or even opposing ideological discourse that takes place with an educational policy setting.

It is important to recognise however, that these ideological struggles are not confined to the higher echelons of university academics and government policy officials. Groups and individuals at all levels of society engage in struggles over the inequities of class, race and ethnicity, gender, religion, etc. as reproduced through educational institutions and pedagogical practices. I therefore propose to use Nancy Fraser's needs discourse theory as an overarching theory with which to examine some of these perspectives in relation to the key competencies. The theories of Kimberle Crenshaw (1989), Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), Maria Root (1996) and Nicholas Burbules (1997) are utilised to a lesser degree throughout the thesis, but serve to illustrate in more detail some of the complex diversity and identity struggles experienced by groups and individuals, and how these diverse voices need to be considered in both curriculum policy design and curriculum implementation discourses. Each of these are discussed as follows.

2.3. Fraser's needs discourse theory

While Bernstein's (2000) pedagogical device theory provides a useful structure to examine the discourse that took place in the different fields of curriculum policy – production, recontextualisation and reproduction, it became obvious through my examination of the literature on cultural diversity and identity politics, that additional theoretical concepts were required. These were needed to analyse the different interpretations of cultural diversity and different identity discourses that potentially take place *within* Bernstein's fields as part of the key competency policy development process. Nancy Fraser's (1989) theory of needs and needs discourse provides a useful concept with which to analyse the data within the fields of practice. The diagram below captures the relationship between the two key theories in this research.

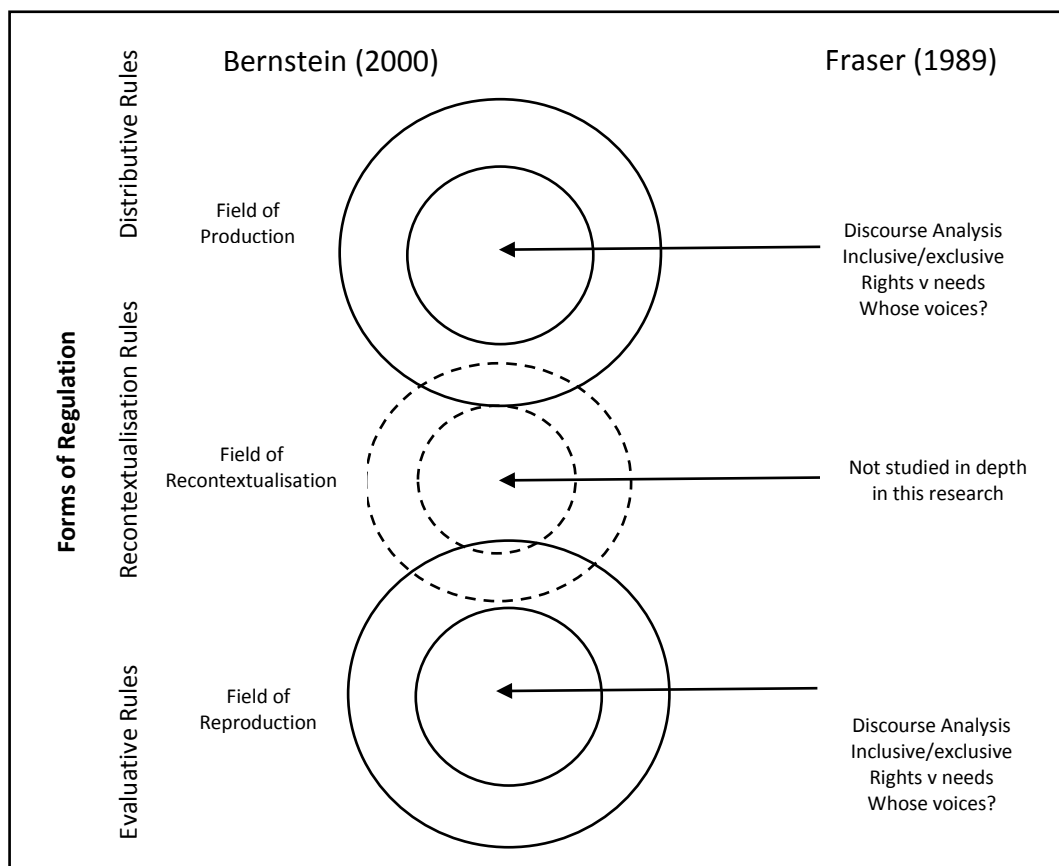


Figure 2.1. The relationship between Bernstein's (2000) Pedagogic Device and Fraser's (1989) Needs discourse theory in this research

2.3.1. Redistribution and recognition claims

Fraser (1989, 1996) notes that claims for social justice seem to divide into two types. First, and most familiar, are *redistributive* claims which seek a more just distribution of resources and goods. Fraser also identifies a second type of social justice claim – the politics of *recognition*. Here the goal is a “difference-friendly world, where assimilation to majority or dominant cultural norms is no longer the price of equal respect. Examples include claims for “the recognition of the distinctive perspectives of racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities, as well as gender difference” (p. 3). Fraser believes recognition claims are increasingly predominant and that the demise of communism, the surge of free-market ideology and the rise of identity politics all have conspired to decentre, if not extinguish, claims for egalitarian distribution. She believes both redistribution and recognition are necessary to address social justice issues – neither alone is sufficient.

Fraser (1989) maintains that 'thin theories' of needs are of little assistance in the context of contemporary needs politics because they assume the only concern is whether various predefined needs will or will not be provided for. The use of thin theories presents a number of important political issues. Firstly, that the interpretations of people's needs and satisfactions are taken as givens and unproblematic, rather than being seen as culturally-constructed and politically contested. Secondly, also seen as unproblematic, is *how* these needs are assessed. In contrast, Fraser argues that *who* interprets the needs that are in question, from what perspective, and in light of what interests, is critical. Thirdly, there are questions about whether the 'socially authorised' forms of public discourse available for interpreting people's needs, are assumed to be adequate and fair; rather than seeing them as favouring dominant social groups and marginalising subordinate or oppositional groups. Fourthly, Fraser believes such theories fail to critique the social and institutional logic of the processes surrounding needs interpretation; "where in society; in what institutions are authoritative needs interpretations' developed, and what is the nature of the relationship between the interlocutors or co-interpreters" (p. 294). Given these problematic and subjective positions, Fraser argues that an *analysis* of the discourse associated with people's needs claims is vital.

2.3.2. From needs to discourses about needs

Fraser (1989) seeks to shift the focus of inquiry from needs to *discourses about* needs, from the distribution of need satisfactions to the "*politics of need interpretation*" (p. 312). She theorises what she calls "the sociocultural means of interpretation and communication". She does this to highlight the contextual and contested character of needs claims. Fraser believes that there are at least two kinds of considerations when analysing needs discourse.

Firstly, there are the procedural considerations related to the social processes in which various needs interpretations are generated. Fraser (1989) argues that it is important to question how exclusive or inclusive are the various competing needs interpretations and discourses, and how hierarchical or egalitarian are the relations among the interlocutors. Fraser maintains that:

such procedural considerations dictate that, all other things being equal, the best need interpretations are those reached by means of communicative processes that most closely approximate ideals of democracy, equality and fairness. (1989, p. 312)

Secondly, there are the officially recognised idioms in which one can position a need. For example, needs talk, rights-talk and interests-talk; the vocabularies used for interpreting and communicating one's need including therapeutic, administrative, religious or spiritual, feminist and socialist vocabularies; and the ways in which various discourses position and label people and their dispositions (see p. 295). Fraser (1989) notes that some of the ways of talking about needs are institutionalised in the central discursive arenas of late capitalist societies such as parliament, the academy, courts and the mainstream media, while excluded discourse largely takes place outside these more formal contexts. Here Fraser aligns with Bernstein in foregrounding the contextual and cultural contestation of social inequality. Fraser (1989) situates needs talk as a site of struggle between groups with unequal discursive (and non-discursive) resources to "establish as hegemonic, their respective interpretations of legitimate social needs" (p. 296). She notes that dominant groups articulate needs interpretations that are intended to "exclude, diffuse, and/or co-opt counter-interpretations" whereas non-dominant groups articulate need interpretations in order to challenge, displace, and or modify dominant discourse. These are important questions that will potentially provide a basis with which to examine the complex discourse about culture, diversity and difference in the New Zealand educational policy context.

2.3.3. Needs versus rights

There are a number of tensions in the discourse associated with needs versus rights, (see Ivison, Patton, & Sanders, 2000; Kymlicka, 2007; Okin, 1998; Triandis, 1995). Fraser (1989) recognises those who argue the emphasis should be placed on needs and who assert rights claims' can be seen as perpetuating bourgeois individualism and as working against radical social transformation. Yet she is mindful that conservatives traditionally prefer to distribute aid on the basis of need *instead* of right precisely in order to avoid assumptions of entitlement that could carry

egalitarian implications. Fraser therefore aligns more closely with those who seek to develop and defend alternative understandings of rights, and to translate justified needs claims into social rights, that are inclusive, egalitarian and most closely approximate the ideals of democracy, equality and fairness.

Fraser (1989) argues that in addition to the procedural considerations discussed earlier, considerations of consequences are also relevant in justifying need interpretations. This means examining whether widespread acceptance of an interpretation of a social need disadvantages some groups of people vis a vis others. Fraser concludes that justifying some interpretations of social needs as better than others involves balancing procedural and consequentialist consideration or put more simply, balancing democracy with equality.

Fraser (1989) maintains that it is important to examine the discourses that surround each competing need interpretation; in particular, how inclusive or exclusive are the various rival need interpretations and discourses, how hierarchical or egalitarian are the relations among the interlocutors, and how closely do they align with the ideals of democracy, equality and fairness.

Fraser's (1989) needs discourse theory provides a useful set of questions with which to examine the various discourses associated with cultural diversity and identity, as these ideas are discussed in Chapter 3, in particular. It also provides a lens for analysing how the needs, rights and parity of participation of diverse groups and individuals are honoured within both official curriculum documents, and in their implementation in schools. However, Fraser's needs discourse theory does not provide a theoretical framework with which to examine more closely the complexities of diversity and identity discourses, in particular, the overlapping and compounding disadvantage that can occur for some minority groups and individuals within broader needs and rights contestations. In this research, Crenshaw's (1989) intersectionality theory, Anzaldúa (1987) and Root's (1996) border theory, and Nicholas Burbules' (1997) categories of difference are useful in highlighting different kinds of needs and rights and other aspects of identity politics.

2.4. Intersectionality and theories of difference

Crenshaw (1989) regards identity politics as a process that brings people together based on a shared aspect of their identity. Put another way, it is what brings otherwise diverse groups together to seek community recognition and redress. However, as Crenshaw points out, frequently groups come together based on a shared political identity but then fail to examine differences among themselves within their own group. In her words, “The problem with identity politics is not that it fails to transcend differences, as some critics charge, but rather the opposite – that it frequently conflates or ignores intragroup differences” (p. 25). Crenshaw’s criticisms were largely based the emergence of feminist discourse, and she pointed out that while there were some commonalities, the discrimination that middle-class white women faced was not the same as that of black working-class women. She argues that for some individuals, there is more than one form of oppression at play, and that this intersectionality needs to be considered in any social justice discourse. Crenshaw states that any observations that do not take intersectionality into account cannot accurately represent people’s experiences and needs.

Intersectionality theory is relevant to this research in that intra-group differences are also of interest in the New Zealand context. While there is evidence to support the concept of strong ethnic identities in educational settings (e.g. Bishop & Glynn, 1999), uncritical categorisation of people based on gender or racial heritage also risks stereotyping and othering, and potentially undermines recognition of multiple points of discrimination and inequality, within and between groups.

Border theory is closely aligned to intersectionality theory as it reinforces the need to consider individuals’ multiple ethnic and cultural identities and how these might be foregrounded or backgrounded by individuals depending on the context they find themselves in. Border theory emerged from border studies that originated through the exploration of the complex political and cultural exchanges occurring along the United States and Mexican border. This theory has grown to encompass the discourse and cultural exchanges between groups of people from different ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds. Rather than the emphasis on singular cultures often

found in multicultural literature, border studies examines the *intersections* of cultures and identities and the resulting effects. From border studies theory arises the term “border crossings,” (Anzaldúa, 1987), which refers to moving across diverse borders such as race, gender, or geography. She describes a borderland as:

a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants. Los atravesados live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulatto, the half-breed, the half dead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the normal. (p. 25)

Maria Root (1996) theorises on the different ways individuals approach their cultural heritages and locatedness. They may acknowledge each cultural identity equally and can be wholly immersed, respected, and accepted by two cultures simultaneously. Second, the individual can shift foreground and background identities to cross borders defined by race and ethnicity. At various times, a person with a bicultural or multicultural identity or background may wish temporarily to emphasize or highlight one background while de-emphasizing another, in what Root calls “situational ethnicity and situational race”. Third, Root discusses the individual who “decisively sits on a border, experiencing it as the central reference point”. Some individuals self-designate themselves in the “other” multiracial category, not defined by the typical five-race listing on many forms. These individuals wish to invent a new or revised identity. Root designates a fourth area being largely located within one cultural group, but making forays into other groups from time to time. She states that this instance is not one of changing loyalties but merely of adapting to one’s personal needs, saying that people might change ways of identifying themselves over their lifetime.

A key element of Root’s 1996 theory is the ability of the individual to shift from seeking approval from others to defining him-or herself. Such assertions of identity are referred to by Holland, Lachiocotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) as the space of ‘authoring’. Holland et al., emphasise however that ‘I’ (self) making is in no way entirely self-orchestrated. Instead it is the joining up of a number of different voices

which draws together that which is already there (built over history and time), and the continuing dynamic nature of daily interaction.

The foregrounding and backgrounding of different identities can manifest in different ways. For example, difference might at times be expressed through a national identity, and other times at an individual level through clothing choices and body adornment. In this research, I suggest that Burbules (1997) can help illustrate these various expressions of identity, as well as some of the many potential intersections, through his 'categories of difference'. An important aspect of Burbules' theory is what might be interpreted as *motivations* of difference; that is, the different reasons why groups and individuals seek to emphasise differences between themselves and others. He describes these as *difference to*, *difference against*, which is situated in a more socio-political context and about the rejection of dominant or intra-group norms and expectations. A third category is *difference beyond*. This involves some aspects of cultural expression, beliefs or value systems that are beyond the comprehension or description of other groups of people.

The theories of Fraser (1989), along with Crenshaw (1989), Anzaldúa (1987), Root (1996), and Burbules' (1997) examples highlight the complexities that surround discourses on culture, diversity and difference that are implicit within Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic device. Understanding the significance of and intersections between these theories and their implications for educational policy design is a key aspect of this research. In the context of educational or social policy design, assumptions and generalisations about individual and group identities can have the effect of undermining the very things that the policy may be designed to address, that is, inequities and disparities in educational outcomes across different groups of students.

2.5. Summary

Fraser's (1989) needs discourse theory and the understanding of intersections put forward by Crenshaw (1989), Anzaldúa (1987), and Root (1996), along with Burbules' (1997) categories of difference will be applied in this research to analyse the different

influences and interpretations within Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic device framework. Specifically, I use them along with Bernstein's notions of how specific educational discourse is developed and controlled through examining the production, recontextualisation and reproduction fields in relation to the key competencies in the New Zealand curriculum.

Within the research, each of Bernstein's fields can be viewed as a potential site of struggle for control of the discourse, and thus the pedagogic device. I utilise Bernstein's theory to examine the influence of neo-liberalist constructions of identity and role played by agents outside the field of education in curriculum design. The classification and framing of the requisite knowledge and attitudes within curricula and pedagogical practices, and the tensions between performance and competence models in assessment practices, invoke important questions regarding the impact of curriculum policy on marginalised students. Based on my analysis of Bernstein's theory, I propose that the key competencies may be positioned within Bernstein's horizontal knowledge discourse, as this would serve to emphasise their complexity and interpretation from a number of different perspectives and ideologies, not only in contestable nature of knowledge production and legitimisation, but also in relation to the different theories that relate to student agency and identity construction.

In the context of the research, Fraser's (1989) theory of needs discourse provides a means to examine the respective roles of recognition and redistribution within diversity discourse and the degree of inclusivity or exclusivity in the discourse in each of Bernstein's fields. Crenshaw (1989), Anzaldúa (1987) and Root's (1996) theory of intersectionality coupled with Burbules' (1997) categories of difference will be used to consider the implications of New Zealand educational policy related to key competencies when interpreted through bicultural as opposed to a diversity and equity lens. Whose and what student identities are included or excluded in the dominant discourse, and what are the potential tensions in this approach? These theories sit within a wider context of social justice, cultural diversity and identity politics discourses, and needs and rights contestation. The inclusion of the key competencies in the New Zealand curriculum provides a vehicle to examine the nature of diversity discourse within Bernstein's respective fields of practice, in

particular, how the intersection of these theoretical concepts play out in the research.

The following chapters examine the literature as it relates to the three areas most relevant to this research: culture, difference and diversity; theories of curriculum, and the emergence of key competencies in schools' curriculum. The conceptual framework underpinning these major concepts are illustrated in the diagram below:



Figure 2.2. Relationship between the chapters and order of the literature review

Introducing the Literature Review

Introduction

Curriculum design and its interpretation and implementation in schools, is an outcome of stakeholder beliefs about what is important in the education of the nation's children. What people value is significantly influenced by their socio-cultural contexts and histories. Those who hold power seek to reproduce 'normalised' values and behaviours, fundamental to their ways of being in the society they dominate (Bernstein, 2000; Bourdieu, 1977). As Lopes and De Macedo (2009) note,

understanding the relationship between power and knowledge within the scope of cultural production and [and reproduction] is necessary if we are not to reify the concept of curriculum. This normalised curriculum is the viewpoint of many of the current curriculum policies of the globalised world. (p. 71)

It involves assumptions about shared values and worldviews, perceptions of success, and constructions of the 'good life'; a concept dating as far back as Aristotle. It is increasingly important, from a socio-cultural perspective, that assumptions about shared values and beliefs in education policy are critically examined from different perspectives as policy travels through Bernstein's (2000) fields of practice. Increasing attention has been given to educational disparities amongst racial/ethnic groups and recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity internationally and in New Zealand, Given the arguments above, I propose that the socio-cultural context of New Zealand has significantly influenced the various iterations of the national curriculum. For this reason, I have chosen to examine the wider literature on cultural diversity, then its manifestation in the New Zealand context, followed by curriculum as a theoretical field, and then the emergence of the key competencies as a curriculum concept.

The policy discourse that surrounding the key competencies and cultural diversity and identity is the specific focus of this research.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 begins by examining the origins of the term culture. Interpretations of 'culture' have been challenged from multiple perspectives which have given rise to terms such as *cultural diversity* and *identity politics*. I examine some of the frameworks and constructs that culture and identity theorists have used to describe how people's identities and behaviours have been differently influenced, categorised, and perceived by others. Individual identity and group membership can be complicated by events such as colonisation, intermarriage, economic policies and aspects such as gender, generational differences, geographical location, language and dialect, skin colour and other physical features.

Examples from international and New Zealand literature challenge assumptions that underpin 'cultural' categorisations. Burbules (1997), Banks (2006), Crenshaw (1989), May and Sleeter (2010) and others highlight different ways of thinking about cultural difference and identity. Burbules' categories of difference provides a useful framework for thinking critically about cultural difference. I show that discourse in curriculum design and implementation should be cognisant of the *range* of perspectives that reflect the diversity of contemporary society, both within and between social groups. I argue that Fraser's (1989) approach of evaluating competing interpretations of social needs in terms of their inclusive or exclusive discourse and emphasis on the equity of social rights, presents us with a potential framework for navigating such complex issues.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 discusses the complexities of social, cultural and political contexts in New Zealand; in particular, the complexities and implications of a bicultural Treaty of Waitangi in the context of very diverse pluralistic 21st century New Zealand society. It brings into sharp relief, the discourses associated with colonisation and assimilationist theories, and more contemporary restorative justice, rights and needs, and equity and inclusion discourses.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 explores the emergence of curriculum as a theoretical field. I explore the influence of behaviourist and socio-culturalist views of the learner and learning, highlighting the significance of students' diverse backgrounds and identities, the incongruence that can occur between home and school, and the impact on educational success and wellbeing. I relate this to Bernstein's (2000) comparison between the 'refining' vertical and 'expanding' horizontal knowledge discourses, and the complexities this presents in developing curriculum constructs such as the key competencies, that are inclusive, rather than exclusive descriptions of valued behaviours and attitudes.

I examine the increasing influence of human capital and neo liberal economic theories on the school curriculum in the New Zealand context, and argue this potentially works against recognition and responsiveness to student diversity and difference. I draw on the work of New Zealand scholars, Benade (2011) and Olssen et al. (2004) to highlight issues associated with New Zealand's adoption of public choice theories in education provision, and the decentralisation of state school governance and management. The concept of local curriculum, popular with many (Shagen, 2011) potentially means greater recognition and responsiveness to diversity and the importance of different cultural environments (Welier, 1993, in Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 1995). However, I provide critique that it can also absolve central government of responsibilities to address complex student diversity and equity issues, and leave schools to negotiate different needs and rights discourses and value conflicts within local school communities.

The overall design of the 2007 curriculum is discussed briefly, with reference is made to its parallel document for early childhood education, *Te Whāriki*, and the notion of continuity of key competency development across education sectors.

Chapter 6

The final chapter of the literature review examines the emergence and development of the key competencies in national curricula, particularly in countries affiliated to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The OECD's

Definition and Selection of Key Competencies (DeSeCo) project (1997-2005) commissioned papers from experts from across a number of the disciplines to examine competencies for use in education and employment. While there was evidence of implied agreement amongst the experts, my analysis suggests this is not the case. Psychologists Fraczak-Rudnicka and Torney-Purta (2001) and anthropologist Jack Goody (1999), argued there was not agreement on what societies value and what constitutes a 'good citizen', with Goody stating 'that engaging in a decontextualized discussion of key competencies was inappropriate as theory must always be considered in the context of practice' (in DeSeCo, 2000).

The inclusion of key competencies in the curriculum, and their demonstration of them in schools and classrooms, relate to the value positions that underpin them. Some curriculum theorists see the key competencies as a way of making the curriculum more learner-centred and egalitarian through an increased emphasis on active and applied learning, and a focus on the 'tools' for developing positive learning habits and behaviours (e.g., Claxton, 2014). Some (e.g., Young, 2013) are concerned about the prioritising of 'everyday knowledge' at the expense of 'powerful [discipline] knowledge'; knowledge that has been traditionally inaccessible to more marginalised learners. Others (Takayama, 2013; Watson, 2010) express concern that key competencies are an insidious neo-liberal attempt 'to set out not what learners should know, but how they should be' (Watson, 2010, p. 99), focussing largely on economic agendas, to the detriment of social wellbeing, student agency and identity.

I examine the inclusion of the key competencies in the New Zealand curriculum as one of several elements that teachers are required to integrate and contextualise in learning. I argue that it is a complex task to integrate the five key competencies into learning area contexts, not only recognising diversity of valued behaviours, attitudes and dispositions amongst students, but also that competencies might be demonstrated differently across disciplines. I challenge universalist assumptions about shared values and beliefs, highlighting risks around an uncritical approach to cultural responsiveness and student identity in curriculum design.

The literature review highlights different, but interrelated fields of culture diversity and identity, curriculum, and the key competencies, to show the complexities of curriculum design that purports to be inclusive and empowering for all learners. There is a gap in the literature on curriculum design where the three fields converge in the complex socio-political context that is New Zealand in the 21st century.

Chapter 3. Culture, Diversity and Difference: Major Theories

Education is deeply implicated in the politics of culture. The curriculum is never a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge. It is produced out of the cultural, political and economic conflicts, tensions, and compromises that organise and disorganise a people.

(Apple, 1993, p. 1)

3.0. Introduction

Curriculum design and implementation is the result of what a group of people believe to be important in the education of a nation's children. It involves assumptions, generalisations, conflicts and compromises, so it is important to first explore the literature on the diversity of underlying beliefs and values, and highlight whose values and perspectives might be excluded. Those in power seek to reproduce the values and behaviours fundamental to their ways of being in the society they dominate (Bernstein, 2000; Bourdieu, 1977). What people value and why is significantly influenced by cultural and economic contexts; values and beliefs they expect to see replicated in school curricula.

Key competencies are an increasingly visible component of school curricula internationally. They identify and describe valued attitudes and behaviours, such as the ways in which students are expected to relate to others and participate and contribute across a range of contexts. Such developments are particularly evident in countries affiliated to the OECD. Yet many of these countries, including New Zealand, contain very diverse populations. Through examining the literature on culture,

diversity, and identity, I highlight some assumptions and conflicts that can emerge when people encounter concepts determined by more powerful others.

According to Nordby (2008), in cases of cultural conflict, dominant groups believe that problems of disagreement and conflicting interests can be solved rationally by providing additional information and rearranging factual beliefs and existing knowledge to explain to others why they need to conform to new norms. Nordby argues,

the mistake of addressing issues of cultural values as though they were issues of rational explanation and objectivity involves, in a fundamental sense, the oppression of value meaning. It is an unjustifiable discounting of those personal identities and preferences that underlie the way a cultural group live their lives. (p. 1)

Fraser (1989) points out negotiating needs and rights discourses is complex and confronting; and potentially none more so than in the context of designing educational policy that seeks to be inclusive and equitable for all young citizens. Which groups are represented and by whom, and do the interlocutors speak for all members of their group? Whose perspectives are being left out of the discourse? By engaging with some discourses and not others, are policy analysts and government officials also at risk of perpetuating inequities and injustices?

In this chapter, I explore the literature on the term culture; its origins, definitions, and applications. I discuss historical approaches to diversity in society, such as assimilationist, pluralist and multicultural theories, and the implications for equity, democracy and social cohesion. I examine issues associated with terms such as *cultural competence*, *strategic essentialism*, alongside the potential for essentialised and exclusive interpretations of cultural practices. This is important for critical multiculturalists, who highlight research where individuals and groups have struggled with sometimes well-intended, but rigid, inequitable and exclusive categorisations.

I argue that recognition of concepts such as border theory (Anzaldúa, 1987; Root, 1996) intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989), and Burbules' (1997) categories of

difference, may be helpful in better recognising and accommodating diverse needs and rights in educational policy. This is particularly relevant in the New Zealand educational context where culture appears to be frequently conflated with ethnicity. I maintain that a closer examination of many complex intersections, through the employment of Fraser's (1989) needs discourse analysis, may illuminate areas where greater analysis of the potential impact of policy decisions is required. I suggest that such understandings are critical to ensure that those who seek to control Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic device, honour democratic principles of fairness, equity and inclusion.

3.1. Cultural categorisation

The term "culture" has many meanings. Early references were to the cultivation or improvement of livestock and crops, betterment of the individual, and human phenomena respectively. More recently it has been used to refer to influences on human behaviours across a wide range of contexts. However, in the review of the literature, defining culture has been difficult and complex. Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) and Spencer-Oatey (2012) have identified over 150 different definitions. Uses of the term 'culture' relate to different political and ideological agendas (Avruch, 1994) which contribute to its complexity, interpretation and application.

Avruch (1994) uses examples from Tylor (1870) and Boas (1940) to illustrate these different ideologies. Tylor's use of culture was interpreted as a reaction to the exclusive, aesthetic nature of its initial use. In Tylor's view, all folks have culture which they acquire through membership of some social group – society. Cultures were seen as complex wholes – integrated systems. Less palatable in later years was the evolutionary basis of his argument; that all social groups could be arrayed on a social continuum from savagery through barbarism to civilisation, a theory forcefully rejected by later anthropologists.

According to Avruch (1994), Boas (1940) rejected Tylor's (1870) social evolutionary theories and emphasised the uniqueness of cultures of different peoples and societies. Boas renounced the value judgements of Tylorian views and maintained

that one should never differentiate between high or low cultures, nor categorize cultures as savage or civilised.

These historical interpretations continue to influence how people view cultural differences in contemporary contexts. The value judgements that underpin beliefs about different cultural groups are an important aspect of this research.

3.1.1. Some definitions of culture

What is seen as a cultural practice or value system by some, may not be viewed in the same way by others. Spencer-Oatley (2012) used examples from the literature to highlight how definitions are influenced by theoretical perspectives. Examples show that some definitions have a more static, deterministic view of culture, while others, such as Matsumoto (1999) and Spencer-Oatey (2008), emphasise individual variance *within* the group, and more dynamic interpretations of cultural codes:

Culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man [sic] as a member of society (Tylor, 1870).

[Culture] is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another (Hofstede, 2009).

[Culture is] the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next (Matsumoto, 1999).

Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour (Spencer-Oatey, 2008).

(Spencer-Oatey, 2012, p. 2)

Culture is a significant contributor to diversity. It is a comprehensive concept and encompasses components such as values and behavioural styles, language dialects, non-verbal communications, and worldview frames of reference. Culture is also dynamic. Individuals, practices and environments constantly change so it is difficult to have a single definition of culture (Banks, 2006). None of Spencer-Oatey's (2012) collection of definitions refer explicitly to racial or ethnic cultural practices, yet there appears to be strong association in the literature between culture and race/ethnicity. I assert that contemporary definitions of culture must recognise both commonalities and differences within a categorisation, and that identification with beliefs and behaviours of that group can be varied and dynamic.

3.1.2. Why we use cultural categorisation

Bruner (1996) argues that people have a cognitive need to categorise for their own sense of security and identity. He maintains that:

... mind could not exist without culture. For the evolution of the hominid mind is linked to the development of a way of life where reality is represented by symbolism shared by members of a cultural community, but conserved, elaborated, and passed on to succeeding generations who, by virtue of this transmission, continue to maintain the culture's identity and way of life (p. 3) ... Our values and beliefs, our styles of communication, our significant celebrations and our choices of foods represent "the way of life and thought that we construct, negotiate, institutionalise, and finally ... end up calling reality to comfort ourselves. (p. 87)

Past experiences and processes of categorisation guide daily human judgements, making things seem more predictable and to quickly identify related objects. But not all of these judgements are derived from our own experiences. Some are influenced by the "deeply embedded and historical perceptions and values of a wider group, with subsequent experiences filtered through these lenses to reinforce the groups beliefs" (Allport, 1954, p. 20). Increasingly, judgements are influenced by media

portrayal, and, at times, selective statistical reporting. An example of this is the prevalence of negative cultural and racial stereotypes and criminal profiling.

3.1.3. Visibility of differences

Theorists have developed several analogies to highlight the complexities of cultural practices. A commonly used one is the cultural iceberg (Hall, 1976), suggesting that most aspects of culture are not visible and are beneath the surface. Another analogy is the onion (Schein, 1990), suggesting that by removing the visible outer layers of artefacts and products (or symbols, heroes and rituals), one reveals deeper layers of norms and values, attitudes and hidden basic unconscious assumptions. Swartz (2012) uses a pie graph to show that there are ten main personal values that are universal across cultures, but that groups and individuals differ in the degree of motivation and emphasis placed on them. They are positioned along different continua accordingly. The values are grouped under four categories: self enhancement (which includes attitudes to success and ambition, wealth and power); openness to change (focuses on freedom and creativity); conservation (encompasses traditions, conformity and security of the social order) and self-transcendence (focuses on social justice, equity and benevolence).

However, people are not always free to practice or express their deeply-held beliefs and values in diverse societies when they are members of minority ethnic or religious groups, or where practices are in direct conflict with the beliefs and values of more dominant perspectives. For example, the roles and relative status of males versus females, or an emphasis on group versus individual achievement (Song, 2005). Fraser (1989) highlights these tensions in examination of inclusive or exclusive discourses. These are important considerations when consulting with diverse voices in social policy and curriculum design.

There are a number of literature reviews on culture, cultural practices and values in different contexts (Hanley & Noblit, 2009; Keown, Parker, & Tiakiwai, 2005). Hanley and Noblit (2009) emphasise that culture necessarily exists within a *socio-political* context. They cite Cabral (1974) who highlights the interaction of politics and the economic basis of society:

the close interaction of dependence and complementarity existing between the cultural fact and the economic (and political) fact in the functioning of human societies. Indeed culture is, at any moment in the life of a society ... the more or less conscious result of economic and political activities, the more or less dynamic expression of the relationships prevailing in that society. (p. 45)

Cultural expression is influenced by the power structures in a society. What gets currency in terms of the values, beliefs and practices of that society are determined by those who hold power. This influences how those with less power shape their responses. This may involve assimilation, acculturation or rejection of the dominant culture, or the group people may have formerly been associated with. This position aligns with Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogical device and relations of power, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Others argue that culture is a tool, and a product of human activity (Erickson, 2006). Erickson highlights the generative nature of cultures over time, and points to changes possible in culture based on the context. He maintains that culture is a social construct passed through generations, and is dynamic and changing because of alterations in the context of meaning making, and created through the dialectical interactions of individuals and groups. Erickson believes that:

since what we see, know, and want – is culturally constructed, and since culture varies, persons really do not inhabit the same subjective worlds. This would apply to individuals within a cultural grouping. How we experience things is never quite the same across the various individuals who have joined together in interaction ... individually and collectively, we make cultural worlds and they are multiple. (p. 41)

The notion of diversity *within* cultural groupings is examined in more depth as a key premise of this research in relation to constructions of cultural diversity and student identity in curriculum design.

3.2. How societies have responded to cultural difference and diversity

Cultural difference and diversity are responded to in a range of ways by various societies and throughout history. Enslavement, persecution and genocide are the result of superior or exclusive attitudes towards race, caste, gender, religious differences, and between and within, racial or ethnic groups.

3.2.1. Cultural assimilationism

Banks (2006) discusses 'assimilationist' and 'pluralist' ideologies, highlighting the delicate balance of diversity and unity. This aligns closely with Bernstein's Durkheimian influences and the questions raised by Yates (1995) and others in Chapter Two. Contemporary assimilationists, according to Banks, do not deny that ethnic and cultural differences exist within western societies, but believe that the importance of ethnicity wanes or disappears under the impact of modernisation. They believe strong ethnic attachments are dysfunctional and inconsistent with modern democratic societies. Assimilationists argue that the ethnic group promotes group rights over the rights of the individual and the individual must be freed of ethnic attachments in order to have choices within society. Ethnicity is seen as promoting divisions and conflicts and leading to the Balkanisation of society. The assimilationist sees integration as a societal goal in a modernised state, not ethnic segregation and separatism.

3.2.2. Cultural pluralism

Cultural pluralists argue that cultural and ethnic identities are very important in pluralistic western societies. Western nation-states consist of competing cultural and ethnic groups each championing its' own economic and political interests. Pluralists argue that it is important for individuals to be committed to their group, especially if it is oppressed by more powerful groups within society. Each member has a moral obligation to join the liberation struggle. Pluralism prioritises the rights of the group over the individual, and assumes that a group attains inclusion only when it can bargain from a powerful position and when it has closed ranks within (Banks, 2006, p. 113). Cultural pluralism would appear to align with the arguments associated with 'strategic essentialism' (Spivak, in Ritze and Ryan, 2010 p.93), a major concept in

post-colonial theory utilised as a political tactic in which minority groups, nationalities, or ethnic groups mobilize on the basis of shared gendered, cultural, or political identity to represent themselves. While there may be strong differences and debates within these groups, it is sometimes advantageous for them to temporarily 'essentialize' themselves and to assume a group identity in a simplified way to achieve certain goals, such as equal rights. Spivak (2008) later disavowed the term, indicating her dissatisfaction with how the term has been deployed by nationalist groups to promote (non-strategic) essentialism.

3.2.3. Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is promoted as a middle ground. Cultural pluralists are seen as exaggerating the importance of the ethnic group in the socialisation of the individual. Assimilationists greatly understate the role of the cultural and ethnic groups in people's lives. Multicultural theorists assert that pluralists and assimilationists have distorted views of societal realities. They argue that although the ethnic group is important in the socialisation of individuals, individuals are also strongly influenced by the common national culture during early socialisation (e.g., school, mass-media, courts, technology) even if they remain located within their ethnic community (Banks, 2006, p. 119).

3.3. Critical multiculturalism and minority perspectives

Yet multiculturalism is not without critics, particularly in educational settings. Sleeter (2004) notes a number of right-wing critiques charged that 'multiculturalism is damaging education and social cohesion, that multicultural curricula are intellectually weak, and that such curricula addressed minority student achievement in damaging ways by appealing mainly to self-esteem rather than hard work and challenging ideas' (p. 126). Sleeter notes, however, that the standards movement that embraces back to basics and competency-based outcomes, sought to raise student achievement by specifying exactly what all students should know and has been driven by a competitive economic imperative to educate and train future workers for a global economy (see Chapter 6). This instrumentalist perspective is different from

multiculturalists who see the main purpose of 'curriculum as social improvement, particularly as it relates to peoples who have been marginalised on the basis of race, ethnicity, language, social class and other identities' (Sleeter, 2004, p. 123). While multiculturalist theorists see the central issues differently, for example attitudes versus social structural change, and from the perspectives of different focal groups (e.g., racial groups, women, people with disabilities), Sleeter sees them as all sharing the goal of reforming schools around principles of equity and justice.

May and Sleeter (2010) note that as early as 1984, Banks lamented that while multicultural education sought to address issues of social justice and inequities in power relations, it was frequently trivialised as a 'misunderstanding of differences', and pedagogies were reduced to describing 'others' and their ways, and sharing in their cultural celebrations. May and Sleeter argue, as did Taylor (1994) that culture then gets reified, essentialised and treated as a thing. It is often conflated with ethnicity, seen as characteristic of individuals, and a set of stable practices that can be taught. These interpretations raise questions regarding the nature and approach of some courses on cultural competence and culturally responsive pedagogies, which, rather than placing emphasis on openness to other worldviews and perspectives, seeks to categorise individual values and practices solely on the basis of ethnic heritage. This is a key risk associated with superficial understandings about multiculturalism, culturally-responsive pedagogies and curriculum, and student identity construction. Because educators cannot be deeply conversant with all cultural backgrounds and practices of their students, a level of generalisation is likely.

The balance between recognising and responding to diversity and highlighting commonalities and unity is complex. Ethnic groups have some unique cultural characteristics but Banks (2006) maintains that all groups in a society share many cultural characteristics and values. As members of ethnic groups become upwardly mobile, ethnic group characteristics become less important but they do not disappear. When nation states are discussing the balance between diversity and unity within their populations, equity and inclusion are important aims. They can protect the rights of minorities and enable diverse groups to participate only when they are unified around a set of democratic values such as justice and equality. Thus

a closer examination of within-group minorities is required, adding complexity to culturally-embedded roles and systems (Banks, 2006; Fraser, 1989).

A number of other theorists (Banks, 2006; Davies, Evans, & Reid, 2005; Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Armadeo, 1999) argue that citizenship education must be transformed in the 21st century because of deepening racial, ethnic cultural, language and religious diversity in national states throughout the world. Citizens in a diverse society should be able to maintain attachments to their cultural communities as well as participate effectively in the shared national culture. Banks (2006) suggests that individuals should develop three kinds of interrelated identifications; cultural, national and global. Identifications should be clarified, reflective, and positive and individuals should understand how they developed. Individuals can examine their cultural group, nation, and world thoughtfully and objectively, and understand both the personal and public implications of these identifications. From a Bernsteinian perspective, it is important to reflect how this might play out in education and the curriculum for schools and classrooms. In particular, the role of citizenship education might play in fostering social cohesion in society through the recognition of similarities and differences, equity and the common good.

Dominelli (2007) notes, in an effort to support ethnic minorities in their struggle for cultural and physical survival, that in the context of social work, identity has been treated in largely 'homogenising' and essentialist terms, and this has denied the uniqueness of the individual or family within a specific context as the basis of an assessment. It presumes the supremacy of ethnicity above all other factors operating in a client's life, causing a lack of consideration of other issues, [such as socio-economic class] and an appreciation of similarities.

This seems to hold true in education contexts. Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) assert the dangers of assuming individual responses to learning are regular and static, and that general traits of individuals are attributable categorically to ethnic group membership. Ascribing individual traits to cultural backgrounds risks over-generalisation, reductive notions of culture, and homogenised responses to the group. They suggest that 'a cultural-historical approach can help move beyond this

assumption by focusing researchers' and practitioners' attention on variations in individual and groups histories of engagement in cultural practices because the variations reside not as traits of individuals or collections of individuals, but as proclivities of people with certain histories of engagement with specific cultural activities. Thus, individuals' and groups' experience in activities – not their traits – becomes the focus' (p. 19). Gutiérrez and Rogoff advocate examining the different cultural processes in which individuals engage with other people in dynamic cultural communities, *some* of which may be influenced by ethnic or racial group membership. In many cases, it is the belief in a set of common values and practices that binds group membership (p. 21). However some groups and practices may be more visible than others. I argue that sensitivity is required in ensuring an inclusive approach to all cultural communities, as well as recognising the intersections of ethnicity, social class, and other dimensions of individual difference that impact on identity construction, social interaction and wellbeing.

Nancy Fraser's needs discourse theory (1989) recognises the importance of these debates. She argues that while there needs to be recognition of different identities, there also needs to be a more equitable distribution of society's resources to enable marginalised groups to participate fully in democratic decision-making. Universalists' arguments that 'everyone is diverse' does not recognise the power and resource differentials between groups and individuals. Such debates are important in the context of educational policy, where curriculum design may tend toward universal and homogenising approaches, in an effort to highlight similarities, rather than differences between students. Maintaining balance between the recognition of diversity and identity, and the importance of a cohesive and egalitarian society and its educational outcomes, is difficult and complex.

3.4. Culture and identities

Fraser (1989) reminds us that recognition and redistribution aspects are important issues. Constant examination of the discourse of different groups is required if we are to respond fairly and equitably. The inclusive/exclusive nature of the discourse that

surrounds group claims needs critical examination. Banks (2006), Rothbart and John (1993), and Smith and Mackie (1995), maintain that the sense of connectedness that individuals have with their cultural group is often manifested as “us” and “them” feelings, perceptions, and behaviours. Whenever in-groups and out-groups form, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination develop. Keddell (2007) assesses the case for and against the recognition of cultural identity in the context of social work with children and their families in New Zealand. Drawing on Dominelli (2007) she highlights the connection between exclusionary processes and identity formation, and argues that:

when cultural identity is presented as being a fixed, universal state with little room for movement, change or membership of more than one group, this rigidity makes it easier for relationships of exclusion and inequality to be reproduced. It also demands loyalties to be expressed to one group only, reinforcing conflictual social relations. Such dichotomies encourage the idea of demanding minority peoples to represent themselves as ‘legitimate’ or ‘authentic’ in order for their claims to be recognised. This in turn encourages a concept of culture that is essentialist and encourages strict boundaries based on certain values, beliefs and behaviours. (p. 57)

Benhabib (2002) believes that culture has been equated with identity primarily in response to the development of Western capitalist economies. She notes that whether in politics or in policy, in courts or in the media, one assumes that each human group ‘has’ some kind of ‘culture’ and that the boundaries between these groups and the contours of their cultures are specifiable and relatively easy to depict (p. 4). Benhabib, along with Taylor (1994), sees the conflation of culture with individual and group identity as a ‘reductionist sociology’ of culture. Taylor argues that such a view,

risks essentialising the idea of culture as the property of an ethnic group or race; it risks reifying cultures as separate entities by over emphasising their boundaries and distinctiveness; it risks over-emphasising the

internal homogeneity of cultures in terms that potentially legitimise repressive demands for communal conformity; and by treating cultures as badges of group identity, it tends to fetishise them in ways that put them beyond the reach of critical analysis. (p. 412)

A review of the literature highlights the notion that individuals belong to many different cultural groups, and their level of identity with a particular cultural group varies greatly and is contextual (Breakwell, 1993; Burbules, 1997; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Renn, 1998). In some situations, individuals may choose to foreground a particular aspect of their identity and background others. This may be a result of strategic essentialism, feelings of comfort and solidarity with others, or as a source of conflict and confrontation. Sometimes they will find the discourse and attributes associated with their different identities conflict. Giddens (1990) refers to the idea of identity as life politics; that is, a rejection of traditional 'natural' givens. Instead every aspect is negotiated, chosen and consciously decided. Hall (1990) captures this position as follows:

Cultural identity ... is a matter of "becoming" as well as "being". It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something that already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture ... far from being grounded in a mere recovery of the past which is waiting to be found and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity. (p. 225)

While recognising the diversity of individual identities within a group is often associated with western conceptions of individualism, some have argued that the sharp division between individualism and collectivism is an illusion, and context-dependent (Cools, 2014). The assertion of an individual identity can occur when a person feels unable to observe the rules and practices that are part of a group's culture, whether as part of a more collective or more individualistic culture. Cools asserts that individualism is a not only reliant on collectivism, but a product of it.

Breakwell (1993), in her discussion of the relationship between social identity theory and social representations theory, believes that a threat to identity occurs when the

processes of assimilation-accommodation are unable to comply with the principles of continuity, distinctiveness, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. An individual has access to multiple social identities, and interpersonal and intergroup behaviour. Variance in adherence to a group's social representations can be the result of an individual need for positive social identity and to achieve personal goals. However, a rejection of salient representations could result in censure and rejection from a particular group. As Rorty and Wong (1990) note:

an individual's attempt to discount the centrality of group identity can often fail. The attempt to diminish the significance of race, ethnicity, or gender is often treated as itself a focal expression of the very identity whose centrality is denied. For example, blacks or African-Americans are now often called upon to give race relative dominance over other aspects of their identity. Even if an individual African-American subjectively attempts to discount race and to stress [their] ideal identity, [their] refusal to privilege race identity is often socially-interpreted as a form of racism. [They] may be charged with identifying with the oppressor, and [they] are likely to be continuously role cast in ways that can override the centrality that [they] attempted to accord [their] ideal identity. (pp. 28-29)

Equally, the identification with multiple ethnicities is vulnerable to exploitation by both majority and minority group members. In a political context where identities based on distant minority ancestors are subject to challenge and measures of 'authenticity', in the New Zealand context, the recognition or assertion of a Pākehā (non-Māori) as well as a Māori identity can be perceived as betrayal (O'Regan, 2001).

To continue group membership, individuals may be required to accept on-going injustices and inequity within the group to prioritise stability and endurance of group identity. Decisions related to what is most important to represent tend to be made by the more powerful members of the group and the socio-political context they find themselves in. Intergenerational conflicts are common, as are continual challenges to the role and status accorded individuals based on their age, gender, class, caste,

sexual orientation and identity associations. However, for some groups and individuals, fear of losing their common cultural and linguistic identities and distinctiveness is paramount. This can result in increasingly essentialised cultural practices and perceptions by others of the rigidity of cultural values and behaviours, previously seen as being more dynamic and adaptive to changing societal and global contexts.

3.5. Culturally responsive education and identity

The relationship between culturally responsive educational policy and pedagogy appears complex. While culturally responsive education is regarded by some as a vehicle to challenge hegemonies and the inequities of different cultural capital, Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) caution that assumptions about the cultural knowledge of any student based on predetermined cultural norms may lead to stereotyping and further alienation of learners. They point out that not all children share equally in the 'funds of knowledge' (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) of their group and that educators must take care to take account of variations such as class, gender, age and location. This is particularly relevant in situations where ethnicity becomes conflated with culture.

In some cases, appearance, social class and status can play significant roles in students' experiences of inclusion and exclusion *within* ethnic and cultural groups. Extensive research on multiracial college students undertaken by Renn (1998) found numerous examples where students felt a sense of belonging and ability to participate because they held shared cultural knowledge, acquired from their homes and communities before coming to college. Yet conversely, a cultural knowledge deficit was just as powerful in keeping a student out of a certain space, by overt and covert criteria of legitimacy or membership determined by the different groups, such as appearance, or through an inadequacy perceived or experienced by the individual student. Renn found that in a society where others' initial impression of one's race is generally based on appearance, physical appearance seems to be an important determining factor in inclusion or exclusion.

3.6. Multiple identities: Border and intersectionality theories

There are a number of theories in the literature which seek to highlight the overlapping and intersecting nature of race and ethnicity (Anzaldúa, 1987; Giroux, 1992; Root, 1996) and other aspects of identity (Crenshaw, 1989).

As discussed in Chapter 2, border and intersectionality theory (Anzaldúa, 1987; Crenshaw, 1989; Root, 1996) have a number of similarities. Border theory, originating from the activities and cultural exchanges between the Mexican and United States border, challenges traditional notions of race (and other identities) and recognises the emergence of people who identify across and/or between 'normalised' categories. Anzaldúa (1987) draws attention to the various derogatory terms and vagaries of life that have been used to describe those who transition between racial, gender and other divides, such as 'mongrels', 'mulattos' 'queers' and 'half breeds'.

Unlike multicultural approaches that emphasise individual cultures, border theory examines the permeable intersections of culture and race and the individual's level of comfort in moving between the different groups of people they identify with. Root (1996) argues that this reinforces the notion that identity formation is much more of a dynamic and integrative process that does not follow an orderly progression through developmental stages, with individuals accepting or rejecting various beliefs and practices they encounter in their interactions with others. Root highlights notions of bicultural and multicultural identities, the foregrounding and backgrounding of these within different contexts, and their varying participation and association with various cultural groups, according to need at various times in a person's life. This implies a level of self-authoring, and the ability of the individual to define him or herself away from the approval of others, Holland et al. (1998) argues that 'self-making' emerges from the joining up of a number of different voices and the continuing dynamic nature of human interaction.

Intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989) reinforces the notion of multiple, intersecting identities and the importance of context. It draws attention to differences between intersections, and assumptions about the consequences and

experiences for various individuals and groups. Aligned with Fraser (1989) and Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003), Crenshaw (1989) highlights the importance of examining differences *within* broader groups to ensure that the discourse is inclusive and interlocutors do not assume to speak for all. Intersectionality theory emerged from feminist assumptions about the homogeneity of women and their life experiences, in particular, that white middle class women shared the same forms of oppression as black, working class, disabled women. Crenshaw sees one of the problems with identity politics is that it frequently conflates or ignores intergroup differences (p. 25). Crenshaw's key argument is that individuals can experience more than one form of oppression or social injustice and needs or rights discourse that does not take intersectionality into account cannot accurately represent individual experiences.

Identity, border and intersectionality theory are important to this research, when compared with Frasers' (1989) questions about inclusive or exclusive needs and rights discourses within Bernstein's fields of practice in education. Where a needs or rights claim is located on singularities of race or ethnicity, gender, class or disability, for example, it fails to recognise the inequities that are perpetuated when intersectionalities and multiple disadvantage are not taken into account. In New Zealand, recognition of the inequities between ethnicity and cultural identity expression are highlighted, but recognition of other identities beyond gender, or more specifically, recognition of multiple, contextualised identities, particularly in educational contexts, has received less attention. I argue that inequities and intersectionality associated with social class, for example, has been overshadowed as a significant factor in education and life opportunities. There has been little appetite by governments to address this given the dominance of neo-liberal economic policies (see Apple, 2004). How these powerful, but often invisible factors (see Bernstein, 2000) are addressed in relation to education policy and concepts such as key competencies are not well represented in the literature, and are of particular significance when coupled with other factors such as gender, disability or sexual orientation.

3.6.1. Intersections of culture and gender rights

Okin (1999) argues that group rights defendants tend to focus on similarities among groups, rather than differences within them, and that advocates of group rights pay little attention to the private sphere. Some liberal defences of group rights urge that individuals need 'a culture of their own,' and that only within such a culture can people develop a sense of self-esteem or self-respect, or the capacity to decide what kind of life is good for them. But such arguments typically neglect both the different roles that cultural groups require of their members. Namely, the context in which persons' senses of themselves and their capacities are first formed and in which culture is first transmitted – the realm of domestic or family life, and the often inequitable and unjust expectations and treatment of women and girls.

The term minority here refers not to a group's numerical strength in the population but to groups that are marginalized or disadvantaged in some way. Vulnerable subgroups within minority groups include religious dissenters, sexual minorities, females, and children. Song (2005) takes a constructivist approach and sees cultures as evolving from not only internal contestations but through interactions with other cultures. She describes it as being more intercultural, rather than multicultural.

Such intersectionality gives rise to problems that cannot be addressed by movements focused solely on any single identity. Deveaux (2006) moves away from the position of 'toleration', which she believes is highly problematic in that it circumvents a fuller discussion of group claims about identity and self-governance, of the many possible processes for the evaluation and reform of cultural practices, and of power relationships between minority groups and the state. Deveaux advocates a deliberative democratic approach, which requires that female members of cultural groups have a voice in evaluating and deciding the fate of their communities' customs, both by including women in formal decision-making processes and developing new, more inclusive, forums for mediating cultural disputes.

In evaluating the literature from a feminist perspective, Crenshaw (1989), Song (2005) and Deveaux (2006) align with Fraser's (1989) focus on the rights and needs of a group; to both within group and between group minorities, and attention to the

interlocutors in examining whose rights and needs they are seen to represent and who they do not. I argue this is particularly important in educational policy making. In the processes of policy design and implementation, who are the different agents in Bernstein's (2000) fields of practice? How were they 'selected' and whose views do they represent? In Holland et al.'s (1998) words, whose account of culture is being privileged and whose view is being constructed as though it were only one?

3.6.2. Intersections of culture and social class

Perhaps one of the most significant and complex categories is that of social class, central to Bernstein's theories on education, and the compounding discriminatory effects that can be experienced when this intersects with race, gender or disability, and this is. Not all sub groups within a racial or ethnic category enjoy the same rights, status, and access to community resources. Such rights may have been determined early through birthright, or by caste or tribal affiliations. In more contemporary settings, while 'social class' is a commonly used variable across a range of social and educational policy research, it is much more complex than simply people's ability to access material resources that shape their life conditions. Kraus, Piff, & Keltner (2011) maintain that objective resources (e.g., income) shape cultural practices and behaviours that signal social class. These signals create cultural identities among upper- and lower-class individuals – identities that are rooted in subjective perceptions of social-class rank compared with others. Differences in the practices and values of middle and working classes, and a student's cultural background, can be a major influencer of academic attitudes and attainment. This is a key aspect of Bernstein's (2000) theory of pedagogical device. When school curriculum is weakly classified (the boundaries between subjects more fluid and integrated) and weakly framed (where instruction is less explicit and teacher-led), the pedagogies and ways of demonstrating school learning (competence versus performance models) become invisible to many learners not steeped in the middle-class practices of schools.

Calarco (2015) notes that some sociologists see the recent emphasis on non-cognitive behaviours (such as 'soft skills' or 'competencies') by economists and psychologists as being middle class behaviours, and that schools – as middle class institutions – reward the behaviours of the middle class. Her longitudinal research found that

students' problem-solving behaviours varied according to social class, the responses that those behaviours elicited from teachers and the factors that shaped those responses. This concurs with the findings of Bernstein's (2000) research into 7 year-olds classifications of food groups, which found that middle-class students were able to classify and describe the food groups in more than one way, including ways which were privileged in school-based criteria, compared to working class students who were only able to classify according to their own immediate contexts and experience.

Calarco (2015) found that teachers also privileged middle-class expectations through requiring students to voice their needs and proactively seek help. These were conveyed in inconsistent and ambiguous ways, including granting middle-class students' constant requests, even when they wanted to say no. Calarco's findings are important in that they highlight key aspects of my research inquiry. How have policy makers and teachers considered student diversity, such as the intersections between ethnicity, gender *and* social class, in the requirements and interpretation of the key competencies?

Economic capital is important to provide resources for learning. It also provides the freedom of time to assimilate this knowledge, transforming it into cultural capital for the individual and the social class he or she inhabits. Working class families may possess cultural wealth, but lack the time to invest it. Kraus et al. (2011) explain that educational 'goods' can be provided by schools, but the students must either personally, or in networks, have means to appropriate these 'goods'. Schools value the types of knowledge middle classes can access. They are thus considered sites of cultural reproduction. The middle class often represents a standard, a target, against which others are measured. Kraus et al. (2011) and others (e.g., Bernstein, 1971, 2000) argue that the working classes also value certain types of knowledge, although the types of knowledge valued by curriculum and the culture often differ. Spoken and written language is the key vehicle through which this knowledge is communicated and evaluated, so it is important to also consider the relationship between social class and language.

3.7. Class, language and identity

Bernstein's (1971) work on language codes highlights time as a resource that impacts the type and function of language used. Bernstein identifies two codes of language, elaborated and restricted, and states that; 'status groups may be distinguished by their forms of speech. Difference is most marked where the gap between socio-economic levels is very great ... different emphases are placed on language potential' (Bernstein, 1971, p. 61).

Bernstein (1971) argues that the working classes, through economic necessity, are likely to adopt language to direct *how* to perform immediately necessary tasks, whereas the middle classes, economically permitted the luxury of time, may be able to focus on explanation and justification of their directions. Time regulates learning the codes themselves, as the abbreviated code of the working classes is readily learned and habituated, and all people have access to it, whereas the elaborated code of the middle classes requires longer periods of learning, formally and informally, and not all have access.

There is criticism that Bernstein's (1971) work takes a deficit view of working class discourse and is deterministic (Edwards, 2010; Gordon, 1981; Jones, 2013). Others (Sadovnik, 2001; Singh, 2014) argue that Bernstein makes an important contribution to the sociology of education, highlighting how the discourse of school, and in particular, tests and examinations, privilege the middle classes and prevent working class children from demonstrating their true ability. Furthermore, some critics champion a competence-based approach to education, arguing that it positions all children as 'inherently capable'. Bernstein (1971), along with Calarco (2015) challenge this 'idealism' by countering that it obscures the invisible pedagogies, assumptions and power relations of the middle classes.

Engagement in learning and construction of positive learner identities is discussed by Weil (1986), who notes that individuals' early experiences of formal school learning significantly shape the way they perceive themselves as learners and the way they interpret the immediate and wider learning context. Learner experiences serve to

affirm, or disaffirm identities in learning. Learners' relationships and interactions produce and reinforce messages about their place in formal education and as well as in the wider social and economic system. In keeping with Kraus et al. (2011), Weil argues that learner identities interact with class-cultural makeup and are mediated by wider cultural expectations about the learning process. In some contexts, learners continue to conform to cultural and class stereotypes and expectations, as in working class students playing out dominant images of antipathy and resistance to formal schooling. In other contexts, learners may make deliberate attempts to subvert dominant stereotypes and assume new identities, intersections and forms of expression. Research on Asian girls in the UK (Shain, 2003) highlighted resistance to dominant stereotypes as passive and compliant learners. By asserting alternative identities and agency, they disrupted wider cultural expectations of their educational attitude and performance.

For the majority of learners in the middle class, learner identities are more positively aligned to the cultural values, practices and structures of the educational system. As Ball (2003) illustrates, middle-class learners are largely imbued with the notion that educational success leads to the 'good life' of social and economic rewards and status.

While identity politics may have overshadowed the focus on traditional class politics and its influences on material and economic resources, Devine and Savage (2005) argue that class is as much a subjective condition that is embodied through cultural practices and a quantifiable measure of individuals' socio economic and occupational standing. People acquire cultural resources, dispositions and ways of seeing through formative class experiences. Such experiences frame, sometimes unconsciously, how individuals see the world and their place in it. Goldthorpe (2003) argues that for all the educational and economic changes that have occurred over the past four decades, there continues to be a normative link between people's social origins and their wider life chances and outcomes. Social class continues to be a significant force in shaping people's social experiences and life outcomes. The emphasis on emancipation of the individual, and freedom to choose has been exaggerated by some.

Giddens (1990) proposes a 'third way'; that mediates capitalist and Marxist-socialist theories by the provision of social services, but with an emphasis on the individual responsibility and agency. Giddens does not acknowledge the powerful influences of class (and other intersectionalities) on early socialisation and education experiences highlighted by Bernstein (1971) and others. There is an assumption that every individual and community share the values and aspirations of those wedded to neo-liberal capitalist ideologies. As discussed, this is not the case. Through choice, or lack of choice, there are significant differences in the ways people live their lives, the values they hold, and how they view success. This is not always recognised.

3.8. Recognition of other differences

Through examining the literature on culture, diversity and identity politics, a strong emphasis has been placed on understanding and responding to differences between ethnic groups and their traditional cultural practices, particularly in educational and social services settings. While these have an important place in challenging people to examine culturally-based assumptions about how best to engage with their diverse students or clients, I argue that there is also the risk of 'othering', and the potential for surface level understandings leading to stereotyping and over-generalisations. A number of theorists have highlighted throughout this chapter (Anzaldúa, 1987; Benhabib, 2002; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Root, 1996; Rorty & Wong, 1990), not all individuals are steeped in, or have access to, the traditions and practices of an ethnic group. Fraser (1989) notes, in the area of identity politics, the discourse and practices associated with particular groups and individuals can be exclusive or inclusive to varying degrees.

Burbules (1997) argues that while there may situations where identifying race and/or ethnicity serves a clear and justified social purpose, there are also many in which it does not. He asks what constitutes the major racial/ethnic categories, who belongs to them, who is doing the assigning, and how do border and intersectionality constructions impact on these historically-constituted determinations? Burbules

raises another point that is important to this research, aligning with some of the literature discussed earlier. He argues that:

Such categorical identifications are often overlaid with social policies structured in particular ways by the state and other institutions. Because of the way in which categories are embedded in policies and practices, they tend to become static, reified. Particular categories become elevated and highlighted in significance; in many contexts only *one* category is regarded as relevant or important. People are identified and identify themselves in terms of these categories, instead of *visa versa*. There are circumstances in which either invoking or challenging these categories can become the substance of strategic group assertions of self-interest; but there are also circumstances in which provisionally accepting these categories or defining group identity either for or against them is to cede greater significance than they deserve. (p. 101)

Such interpretations present significant risks for how government policies are interpreted, by whom and for whom. Bernstein (2000) argues that there are significant power dynamics at play in each of the different fields of knowledge production, recontextualisation and reproduction in education and, drawing on Fraser (1989), the way 'difference' is recognised and resourced and the way student identities are constructed.

Burbules' (1997) preference is to use various permutations of the term 'difference'. He, along with as Bhabha (1990, 1996) challenge constructions of 'cultural diversity' in that they imply a pluralistic harmony. Bhabha argues that this harmony is only achieved when there is some form of alignment or consensus with the social norms of dominant groups which provide the reference points for identifying diversity. Rizvi (2011), in his discussion of Bhabha's preference for the term 'difference' explains that the concept of difference:

does not assume such a consensual logic. It seeks to make problematic the very norms which are used to identify difference. Differences, then, do not constitute either clearly marked areas of experience and practice

or a unity of identity, as is so often assumed by teachers seeking to implement multiculturalism. Rather, differences are understood through a politics of signification – that is, through practices which are both reflective and constitutive of prevailing economic and political relations.

(p. 183)

In elaborating on his constructions of difference, Burbules sees the issues as particularly relevant in educational and cultural contexts. He cautions against our tendency to over-simplify our categorisations of peoples. He notes that increased awareness of the different permutations of difference has likely come about from firstly, post-modern suspicion of ‘metanarratives’ (the explanation that smaller or individual narratives will all eventually contribute to a societal grand plan), and of unifying discourses generally. Such theories ignore the heterogeneity or variety of human stories, and that metanarratives are created and reinforced by power structures, and are therefore untrustworthy.

Burbules sees the current emphasis on ‘difference’ [or identity politics] as a political trend; a framework within which groups can argue their distinctiveness, against conceptions of community, solidarity, or liberal consensus that tend to stress common needs and interests. He argues that it is an ‘expression of social and psychological models of identity and subjectivity that highlight the internally fragmented and performative aspects of human personality and action; ... difference comes to be seen as a profound feature of inner life, and not only a matter of encounters among diverse groups (p. 97).

A third development according to Burbules, has been the shift from the presumption of sameness to a recognition of difference, highlighting issues of fragmentation and hybridity. He welcomes shifting the burden of proof from the shoulders of those who have had to justify their non-conformity with conventional dominant norms or identities. Burbules proposes a number of categories of difference, beyond just ‘differences between’. These cover different aspects and expressions of identity discussed in this chapter, including physical appearance, the intersectionalities of difference associated with style of clothing and personal expression, and difference

against dominant norms or beliefs, such as those associated with gender roles such as agreeability or assertiveness, body shape and dress codes.

Table 3.1. Categories of difference

Difference With reference to a single category or any combination of categories	Difference: Variety... e.g., national identities	Difference: Degree of... e.g., Skin colour	Difference: Variation... e.g., on basic elements: body type or features/ ability v disability	Difference: Version...in meaning and tone e.g., sexual identity and roles	Difference: An analogy... comparable parallel standards, abstract sense of difference e.g., styles of dress/ moral distinctions/ generational: Gen Y
Difference: Within... categories are never entirely stable. The way difference is enacted and interpreted by individuals.					
Difference: Against... actively trying to differentiate themselves from and call into question dominant or conventional norms and beliefs					
Difference: Beyond...comprehension from an outsider perspective e.g., no concept of family in some cultures					

(Adapted from Burbules (1997) with permission from the author)

The chart above may be useful in a number of contexts, including examining universalist assumptions or inclusive discourse in social and educational policy design, as well as critiques of intercultural competence and cultural responsiveness training. The various orientations and motivations emphasise the risks and difficulties in simple categorisation of individuals and groups. Such categorisations are likely be based on one’s interpretation and world view, and, because of the complexities of difference, may risk superficial and potentially harmful categorisations. Burbules warns that there is “a simultaneous danger of levelling all differences, or of celebrating difference as if there was no history to some of these differences – histories of real harm and deprivation, of discrimination and even genocide” (p. 109).

Burbules (1997), along with Banks (2006) and others discussed in this chapter, highlights the tensions between recognising and responding to diverse peoples, and the potential to undermine unity and promote a splintered, separatist society. In addition, there are the pragmatic implications of literally hundreds of individual

permutations that need to be considered, as this is particularly relevant in the context of student diversity in school and classroom settings. Such are the complexities of responding to difference in educational policy design.

3.9. Summary

The literature in the field of culture, diversity and difference appears to be as diverse as the subject it seeks to investigate. Historical, and largely homogenising associations with the term *culture*, have given way to a host of alternative perspectives, ideologies and intersections which serve to highlight the complexity in categorisations of people. While race and ethnicity still appears to be frequently conflated with culture, the emergence of identity politics highlights the different voices and perspectives that can be marginalised through traditional power dynamics, customs and practices. Nancy Fraser's (1989) emphasis on a closer examination of the needs and rights discourse associated with different groups draws greater attention not only to the needs and rights of minorities *within* larger groups, but also to how decisions made at a societal level position some needs and rights over other. This potentially creates further inequities, injustices and divisions. She highlights the importance of examining specifically whose perspectives are being represented and by whom, whose are not, and the implications of this on a number of levels, particularly in the equitable distribution of societal resources.

Likewise, Crenshaw (1989) highlights the assumptions made by groups and individuals who use a single identifying feature, such as gender, ethnicity, class or disability, to argue that the inequities and struggles experienced by that group are the largely same. Individuals who traverse a number of different minority categorisations can experience compounding injustices and inequities.

Intersectionality theory, and awareness of the different perspectives and assumptions associated with broad encompassing terms such as culture, diversity and difference, and the inclusive or exclusive nature of the discourse, have significant implications for education policy and curriculum design.

Bernstein's (2000) pedagogical device highlights the powerful influence that the perspectives and ideologies that groups and individuals within the respective fields on curriculum design and implementation, and the subsequent impact on student's educational successes and life outcomes. Where the nuances and intersections of student diversity, and the implications for pedagogical practices are not sufficiently examined and prioritised in policy discourse, Bernstein argues that the reproduction of the values, attitudes and outcomes that favour dominant groups will prevail. Some reflexive modernists (commonly referred to as 'third way' theorists) such as Giddens (1990) emphasise the balance between social systems and individual responsibility, but they rest on the assumption that the individual is viewed in the same way amongst cultures; that they have the same opportunities to develop, deeply understand and demonstrate the knowledge, attitudes and values expected of them by societal institutions and the workplace, and that they receive the same rewards and recognition promised through their participation in the social contract.

A review of the international literature suggests a number of tensions and struggles in the field of culture, diversity and difference, particularly when examined in the context of educational policy. Superficial and reactive responses to student and teacher diversity and difference risk a number of potentially unintended consequences. It can result in the singularisation of identities, stereotypical responses, and pressure on individuals to conform to a particular group's practices, values and/or political causes. It can surface issues regarding an individual's appearance, authenticity and traditional status, and can lead to the reification and prioritising of some needs or rights over others. A focus on diversity and difference can be seen as undermining societal cohesion and fundamental human rights, and a distraction from the increasing inequities and injustices created by pervasive economic ideologies.

Well-considered policies and initiatives can help challenge assumptions about universal values, and foster an increased awareness of different perspectives and world-views and the different ways people's life's successes are celebrated. They can result in the increased recognition and responsiveness to minorities within groups and acknowledgement of the histories of different groups and individuals that have

been abused by more powerful others, and their lasting effects on their participation in, and access to society's roles and resources.

Chapter 4 will specifically examine the New Zealand context; its history as a nation and in particular its complex intersections of ethnicity and class on traditional and contemporary identities and values. Race is generally only referred to in anthropological terms in New Zealand, and culture is often used as a shorthand for race and ethnicity. Keddell (2007) concurs with much of what has been discussed above when discussing the New Zealand cultural context. She argues 'a more useful understanding recognises the socially constructed, complex and adaptive nature of culture, the political and economic forces that contribute to its reproduction, the presence of culture among all people (not just those deemed "cultural") as well as the agency of individuals to be active participants in creating and constructing their own culture and identities' (p. 52). In the following section I outline historical settlement patterns and political developments in New Zealand, and highlight some of the different conflicts taking place in more contemporary settings. While I draw attention to some significant public policy gaps in the area of ethnicity and diversity, I also recognise such issues are extremely complex, and as Nordby (2008) stated at the beginning of this chapter, cannot simply be resolved through rational debate and explanation by those in charge.

Chapter 4. The New Zealand Context

4.0. Introduction

Many of the major theories and debates that have emerged with regards to culture, diversity and difference, and the complexities of the politics of identity as discussed in Chapter 3, are relevant to the New Zealand context, albeit with some significant differences. New Zealand in many ways can be considered unique. It has a Treaty signed in 1840 between the British Crown and indigenous Māori that sought to protect Māori rights and responsibilities in exchange for land and British sovereignty. The sovereignty aspect has been greatly contested due to different language versions of the Treaty, and as the Treaty was about Māori rights under the Crown, New Zealand has no constitution that applies to all its citizens. New Zealand is a very diverse nation by international standards (Chen, 2015) relative to its small population of approximately 4.89 million, with more than 112 languages spoken by over 160 ethnicities. It is the last significant land mass to be inhabited by humans due to its relative isolation from the rest of the world.

In the New Zealand context, it is important to ask what role does or should the Treaty of Wāitangi play in contemporary New Zealand classrooms and curriculum, and what are the implications of these roles for diverse students, and for equity and social cohesion? In constructions of culture and diversity, how cognisant are policy makers and educators of border and intersectionality theories (Anzaldúa, 1987; Crenshaw, 1989; Root, 1996) and the differences *between, within, against* and *beyond* described by Burbules (1997), discussed in Chapter 3. Importantly, how much agency do students have over their own emerging and multiple identity constructions and conflicts?

David Bromell's *Ethnicity, Identity and Public Policy* (2008) provides an important critique of some key theories related to multiculturalism, biculturalism and identity, and their relevance and appropriateness to New Zealand societal and policy contexts. Bromell (2008) cites Boston and Callister (2005) who identified three reasons why policy advisers and policy makers in New Zealand must take diversity seriously. Some examples they give are as follows:

First, diversity is part of the context in which policy making occurs. It thus affects the design, delivery and effectiveness of many policies e.g. How might the New Zealand government manage the conflicting ideologies of biculturalism and multiculturalism? How is indigeneity to be understood in the New Zealand context? ... 'How are individual identities to be acknowledged where a service is focussed on families (which contain individuals with diverse identities)? ... How is public policy to ensure equality of opportunity across an increasingly diverse population? (Boston & Callister, 2005, in Bromell, 2008, pp. 55-56)

The authors raise questions about the composition of public institutions, the representation of ethnic minorities, the role of population agencies within the public service, the basis for which resources should be allocated, and to whom. Boston and Callister (2005) note that while diversity is increasingly being advanced as a policy principle in New Zealand, with an implied moral claim, they question some of the assumptions that underpin this position. In particular, they ask whether all diversity is good, and does diversity necessarily enhance overall wellbeing, and what therefore are the limits to tolerance in a liberal democracy?

These and other questions relating to cultural diversity and individual identities in public policy are no less significant when examined in an educational policy context. In the context of New Zealand's national curriculum, it is important to consider the process surrounding the introduction of a major curriculum construct such as the key competencies, particularly in the identification and evaluation of desired outcomes. While policy borrowing from other countries and supranational organisations such as the OECD is relatively common, such as international student assessments and key

competencies (Ball, 2007), local contexts can be so diverse that the policy recontextualisation process (Bernstein, 2000) becomes problematic.

As key competencies are descriptions of the valued behaviours and attitudes that are to be developed in young people, I provide evidence to argue that it is important to examine the policy implications of prioritising specific cultural identities, values and behaviours over others, by whom, and for what purpose. I argue that it is important, when diversity and difference is considered in policy contexts, whose voices are included and whose are not, and why?

This section examines the discourse and research literature that surrounds culture, diversity and identity in New Zealand's contemporary societal and educational policy context. I draw on Bromell's (2008) analysis of the unique features of the New Zealand demographic and the implications of the bi-cultural emphasis in government policy making. I briefly discuss New Zealand's migration history and conclude by highlighting the difficulties and contradictions in the current approach to cultural diversity arguing, along with Bromell, that despite the complexities and sensitivities in this space, a dialogue on cultural diversity, identity and the implications of Fraser's (1989, 1996) recognition and redistribution theory particularly for education and other government policy is important.

4.1. New Zealand today

Bromell (2008) believes there are four features of New Zealand's demographic that challenge aspects of normative theory developed within other national contexts. Normative theory, as defined by Bromell (2008, p. 275), refers to 'what *ought* to be the case, rather than an analysis of and response to what *is* the case in a particular place, at a particular time.' Bromell asserts that people are driven to normative theory, but in response to particular and local challenges.

The first feature that distinguishes New Zealand relates to population size. At 4.89 million people (Statistics New Zealand, 2018), New Zealand is relatively small, with an intermingled, highly urbanised and generally well-integrated population. It does not

have tribal reserves as in the US. Therefore, political remedies such as secession or territorial self-government are largely unsustainable socially, economically, politically and environmentally.

Second, according to 2013 census data, 14.9% (598,605) of New Zealand's population identify with the Māori ethnic group (Statistics New Zealand, 2014b). The indigenous population in the US is approximately 1.5%, 2.3% in Australia and 4% in Canada, by comparison. Indigenous rights, and the rights of subsequent migrants over a 250 year period, are a significant tension in New Zealand social and economic policy.

Third, 11.2% of New Zealanders identify with more than one ethnicity. 74% of people identified with at least one European ethnicity, with younger generations and Māori and Pacific people increasingly identifying with two or more ethnicities. It is a widely-held belief that all Māori have some degree of non-Māori ancestry (Butterworth & Mako, 1989, p. 1), but this is difficult to determine as Statistics New Zealand and other government departments do not collect information related to genealogy, but through people identifying with particular ethnic groups. According to Statistics New Zealand (2014b), half of the Māori population identify as both Māori and European. Normative theory that requires the differentiation of discrete, stable and largely homogenous groups is thus made problematic because of New Zealand's considerable ethnic mobility and integration.

Finally, more than one quarter (25.2%) of New Zealand's population was born overseas, with a comparable number of New Zealanders currently living overseas, including approximately 1 in 7 Māori living in Australia (Statistics New Zealand, 2014a). Bromell (2008) points out that in terms of ethnic relations, cultural justice, social cohesion and national identity, the context is that of a diverse, highly mobile, trans-national and largely cosmopolitan population.

While Bromell's (2008) analysis largely focuses on ethno-cultural diversity, there are a number of historical and social developments that I suggest are also important in New Zealand, particularly in relation to the intersections of religion and spirituality, gender and sexual orientation, and class. In terms of religion, New Zealand's population is increasingly secular, with 41.9 % of the population reporting they had

no religion, and people identifying as European or Māori were most likely to state no religion (Statistics New Zealand, 2014b). New Zealand women were the first in the world to be given the vote in 1893 (in the US, it was almost 30 years later), and legislation protecting the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) is regarded as the most advanced in Oceania, and some of the most liberal in the world (Carroll, 2016). New Zealand was the first in the Oceania region to enact same sex marriage (2013), and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and (implicitly) gender identity was outlawed several years later by the Human Rights Act 1993. These developments are important in the context of multiple and intersecting identities and, in particular, Nancy Fraser's (1989, 1996) politics of recognition and redistribution, and the nature of the inclusive/exclusive discourse.

4.2. How inclusive is New Zealand really?

In 2007, the New Zealand government claimed that it was an inclusive society that led to New Zealand's prosperity (Department of Labour, 2007). While it may appear that New Zealand is very liberal and accepting of diverse peoples, white British colonial attitudes and policies have prevailed until relatively recently. According to Brooking and Rabel (1995, p. 23), until 1945, all governments in New Zealand followed a 'White New Zealand' policy, or more specifically a policy favouring Protestant Anglo-Celts, and specific land and taxation policies discriminated against Catholic Irish, Chinese, Dalmatians, Indians, and Jewish respectively (Bromell, 2008, pp. 22-23). Economic growth in the 1950s and 1960s led to large numbers of Pacific peoples migrating to support booming manufacturing industries; a subsequent economic downturn resulted in restricting permanent entry and in notorious dawn raids to remove Sāmoan and Tongan overstayers. Increasing recognition of the importance of Asia and the Pacific in terms of closer economic relations saw a shift in the attitudes towards cultural diversity and ethnic preference in immigration. While there could be cause for some cynicism in that, increasingly, the only valued identity is people's relative contribution to the economy (see Giddens, 1990), New Zealand has continued to increase its refugee quota and has relaxed a number of family reunification policies.

An interesting position was taken by some Māori in their recommendations to the government Working Party on Immigration (Walker, 1985, in Bromell, 2008). Walker (1985), along with others, argued that in terms of the preamble to the Treaty of Waitangi, Māori agreed in 1840 only to immigration into New Zealand from Europe, Australia and the United Kingdom. Given the diversity in the ethno-cultural identities of citizens from these countries, this position would seem problematic. As in the international literature, how people choose to self-identify is complex, and categorisations based on ethnicity versus genealogy, physical appearance versus cultural practices etc. are fraught, and this is the case for government policies relating to current New Zealand citizens, new migrants, and in this research, how diverse cultural identities are responded to in school curriculum design.

4.3. Multiculturalism, biculturalism and the Treaty

While multicultural policies might be seen by some as an approach to accommodating diversity in government policy, it is not without its issues, as discussed in Chapter Three. It has been criticised for emphasising cultural recognition over resource distribution for minority cultural and ethnic groups, as well as failing to provide enough common ground upon which to sustain civic nationalism (Smits, 2011). This aligns with Fraser (1989, 1996) who highlights the tensions in pluralist politics between egalitarian redistribution and recognition of group identities. According to Fraser, while recognition affirms and acknowledges differences in group identities, redistribution policies requires the minimisation of group differences in order to address socio-economic equities across society.

New Zealand, unlike Canada and Australia, has never adopted an official policy of multiculturalism, largely due to the objections by Māori, and the role of the Treaty in protecting indigenous rights. Yet neither has it adopted an official policy of biculturalism, as advocated by many as ‘a power-sharing partnership between Maori and the Crown’ (Bromell, 2008, p. 41). According to Bromell (2008), attempts to

formulate a New Zealand Bill of Rights² that would have recognised the Treaty as part of the supreme law of New Zealand were again rejected by some Māori as relegating the Treaty to a lesser position and increasing its vulnerability to subsequent removal by referendum. While commonly referred to as New Zealand's founding document, "[the Treaty] is not part of New Zealand's domestic law, except where its 'principles' are referred to in various statutes enacted since the 1980s. There is no consensus, however, on what these principles are, or what they mean for public policy" (p. 38).

Bromell (2008) argues that biculturalism assumes that Māori and the Crown are as distinct in 2008 as they were in 1840, and that the Crown and New Zealand Europeans can easily be conflated into the same thing. The Treaty partners need to be understood as being between the government the Crown and Māori (the iwi and hapu who signed the Treaty), as government represents New Zealanders whose ancestry comprises British, Irish, Chinese, Indian, Samoan etc. and thus do not constitute one race or culture. As New Zealand citizens, Māori are not distinct from the Crown, as they participate in elections, have a government department charged with looking after Māori interests and have specific representation at cabinet level. The Treaty is further complicated by the fact that it was with individual tribes and subtribes (iwi and hapu) not with a Māori race. Bromell (2008) notes the following:

Biculturalism ignores the fact that Māori are neither an homogenous group nor a closed population – all Māori also have European or other ancestry, and around half the Maori population identifies as both Māori and European ... Biculturalism assumes there is unbroken continuity between the governing entities represented at the Treaty's signing and today's hapu and iwi, and makes somewhat problematic the participation and representation of Māori descended from hapū and iwi whose chiefs declined to sign the Treaty or who were never given the opportunity to do, and Māori who are not aligned with and not feel themselves to be represented by contemporary iwi and hapū. (p. 42)

² See <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1990/0109/latest/DLM224792.html>

Furthermore, argues Bromell (2008), biculturalism marginalises Pacific peoples, Asian peoples and other non-British New Zealanders by excluding them from national identity discourse. However Māori, as ‘tangata whenua’ (people of the land), would seem to deserve some pre-eminent status, particularly in light of the Treaty and its obligations by government. Where this becomes difficult is the extent of this status and the implications in practice and for whom, particularly given the inappropriateness of ideologies based on essentialised categories, policies and programmes based on race. Using Fraser’s (1989) needs discourse analysis, what would be the criteria for inclusion or exclusion? Would some members of a family or whānau be excluded based on parentage or ancestry? How does this align with democratic and human rights principles of non-discrimination on the basis on race, ethnicity etc.?

Smits (2011) notes that biculturalism’s focus on the recognition and inclusion of Māori cultural expression in public life has led to particular controversy when Māori practices are perceived to contravene egalitarian civic values, particularly those with respect to gender equality. It thus becomes important to consider Crenshaw (1989) and Root’s (1996) intersectionality and border theories when responding to diverse identities in public policy. In the case of the New Zealand curriculum therefore, how do schools and teachers respond to the potentially conflicting intersections of the underpinning Treaty of Waitangi, Cultural Diversity and Inclusion principles in contemporary settings? And more specifically, in considering the valued attitudes and behaviours that underpin the key competencies, whose and what values are reflected?

A ‘national’ cultural identity and its associated values has been difficult to identify given New Zealand’s relatively recent settlement history. Keown et al. (2005) briefly refer to the traditional ‘pioneering’ values that are common to a number of colonised countries; but because of the increasing diversity of the New Zealand demographic, many expressions of ‘kiwi³ culture’ are less than universal. According to Smits (2011)

³ Kiwi is the colloquial term given to describe New Zealanders. The kiwi is one of New Zealand’s native bird species and is a national icon.

national identity in liberal settler societies is constructed primarily in civic terms. Smits notes that civic nationalism is expressed as a commitment to common political principles, institutions and processes, rather than by membership in a homogenous and exclusive ethnic community' (p. 90). Drawing on Habermas (1994), Smits sees settler societies as separating cultural and ethnic affiliation from civic identity; relegating the former to the private sphere, and citizenship defined in terms of individual rights and obligations in the public sphere. She notes that:

While the distinction between civic identity and ethnic membership is relatively easy to maintain, cultural identity cannot be so easily relegated to the private sphere ... cultural communities produce the social solidarity that allows citizens to commit to civic institutions. (p. 90)

Smits (2011) questions whether membership of a minority ethnic community can ground a commitment to civic principles and institutions that have emerged in a distinct majority societal culture. While she notes that some argue that a common language and cultural framework are essential to social cohesion and commitment to the common good, defenders of multiculturalism argue that rather than being an obstacle to civic nationalism, public recognition of minority cultures reinforces civic democratic values and institutions by enabling greater inclusion in public life.

New Zealand is not dissimilar to other countries where new migrants often hold fast to the traditional cultural values and practices of their home countries. Yet because the relative smallness of the New Zealand population, these diverse communities tend not to have the same visibility or 'voice' in public life as do the two Treaty signatories; Māori and British European. Therefore, argues Bromell (2008), much of the 'cultural' discourse in New Zealand has been about honouring the terms of the Treaty, settling historical grievances and trying to address the inequity of social and economic outcomes between these two ethnic groups. This has also influenced approaches to government policy design and has resulted in a number of initiatives

focussed on Closing the Gap⁴ (cross-government policy, 1999). In education contexts, Ka Hikitia (2013-2017) is the on-going Māori education policy strategy aimed at ensuring that the position of Māori is considered fairly when developing policies and funding; that there are policies and initiatives targeted at improving outcomes for Māori learners and in realising their full potential. Education continues to be seen as a key lever in addressing inequities between Māori and non-Māori as part of the government's Treaty obligations. It is appropriate, therefore, to briefly examine the historical context in which the Treaty came about.

4.4. New Zealand's migration history

New Zealand's migration history extends to early settlement by Māori, who originated from East Polynesia around 1300 A.D.⁵. At that time they were a mixed group of Polynesians whose affiliations were tribal or clan. They collectively called themselves Māori, which means normal or local, but this term did not come into common use until the nineteenth century as a means of distinguishing themselves from the Pakeha; of white/European descent (Brooking, 2004).

It was through the 1642 visit by Dutch East India explorer, Abel Tasman, that the name 'New Zealand' came about. Early European settlement comprised mostly of whalers and sealers who were using New Zealand as an outpost for their main bases in Australia. By 1830, there were a series of whaling stations around the coastline and conflicts over land increased, particularly as more and more arrivals came from Britain and colonisation took effect. The Treaty of Waitangi, signed in 1840 between the British Crown and many, but not all, Māori chiefs, was designed to give the Crown pre-emption. This meant that private settlers could not buy land directly from Māori; instead Māori could sell land only to the Crown. Other articles confirm the land possessions and gave assurance on the Queen's protection. This was seen as a

⁴ **Closing the Gap** was a policy of the Fifth Labour Government of New Zealand for assisting socio-economically disadvantaged Māori and Pacific Islander ethnic groups in New Zealand through specially targeted social programmes.

⁵ The earliest evidence for human habitation in New Zealand is about 1280-1300 as confirmed through radio carbon dating of Pacific rat and rat gnawed native seeds (Landcare Research, 2008).

way of bringing order into an increasingly confusing and disorderly situation. Translations and interpretations of what this meant for Māori, particularly regarding the transfer of sovereignty was not clear, and compensation for Māori tribes (iwi) under treaty settlement negotiations, and increased commitment to more equal partnerships Māori through government policies continue to the present day (Treaty of Waitangi information programme, 2005, pp. 9-15).

4.5. Ethnicity and traditional values

In the 2013 census, nearly three-quarters of the population 2,969,391 (74%) identified with one or more European ethnicities. Of particular interest have been census findings indicating an increasing preference for people to identify as 'New Zealander', possibly indicating a reluctance for diverse people of European descent to identify with early British settlers, or from an increasing resistance by a potentially much wider group to identification based on ethnicity. Subsequent large scale longitudinal social surveys such as the New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study⁶ found similar findings in relation to Pakeha/ New Zealand Europeans. As part of this study, Houkamau and Sibley (2014), found that Māori who preferred the term Pākehā to other descriptions such as 'New Zealand European', 'kiwi' or New Zealander, tended to view their own ethnicity and language as more central to their self-concept, as in references to non-Maori, rather than other ideological arguments. Houkamau and Sibley (2014) found that overall, use of the term Pakeha was low at 14%, compared with New Zealander, which was used by 50% of those surveyed. Smits (2011) argues however, that "the current ambiguity of the term Pākehā, which refers alternately to European New Zealanders and to all non-Māori, reflects the unsettling concepts of national identity by recent diverse immigration" (p. 95).

⁶ See <https://www.psych.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/our-research/research-groups/new-zealand-attitudes-and-values-study.html>

4.6. Diverse citizens and the Treaty

The place and status of different peoples under New Zealand's 1840 Treaty of Waitangi continues to be debated, and in particular, on the implications of being defined as a bicultural or multicultural nation. In 1997, Race Relations Conciliator Rajen Prasad appealed for a new way to think about New Zealand which avoids the debates of the past. He described New Zealand as 'a multi-ethnic society with an indigenous culture and with a founding document that regulates the relationship between iwi and Crown' (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). O'Sullivan (2007) claimed that by 2004, debates on biculturalism had been largely replaced by ideas about individualism, democracy and justice in the way governments and the public sector talk about New Zealand.

Yet Rata (2003) notes New Zealand, like other liberal-democracies in the 1970s, rejected liberal ideas of integrating diverse populations into the social contract of the modern nation-state, turning to culturalism instead. According to Rata, culturalism is a pre-modern concept of social organisation. It includes multiculturalism, biculturalism (the New Zealand version) and mono-culturalism. It is the idea that a social group's historical identity, which has a contemporary manifestation in various combinations of physical appearance, language, religion, cultural beliefs and practices, and so on, is the primary source of social belonging – and one to be acknowledged politically. Rata argues however, despite the rights discourse used to promote bi- and multi-culturalism, and the racist discourse used to promote mono-culturalism, all three forms are racial ideologies because the criterion for belonging to the social group is set down in the genetic link to the historical group. She cites Mahuika (1998) who maintains that Maori leaders are quite clear about this genetic criterion, 'If you are born a Māori, then you have to accept the consequences of that biological fact, and the culture that comes with it'. Rata notes, however, that according to Statistics New Zealand (2005), ethnicity is the ethnic group or groups that people identify with or feel they belong to. Ethnicity is a measure of cultural affiliation, *as opposed to race*, ancestry, nationality or citizenship. Ethnicity is self-perceived and people can belong to more than one ethnic group (her italics).

4.6.1. Māori diversity and identities

Rata (2003) and others (Chapple, 2000; Poata-Smith, 1996) believe that biculturalism as played out through the Treaty settlement process context has not benefited those Māori for whom many New Zealanders expected it would. According to Poata-Smith (1996), the emphasis on culture in the struggle for equality 'resulted in a dramatic expansion of opportunities for middle-class professional Māori in the state apparatus, education system, health and the media, but has been "an unmitigated disaster for the vast majority of working-class Maori whānau" [extended families] (p. 97). Māori with no tribal affiliation are 'some of those most disadvantaged in society' (Gill, Pride, Gilbert, & Norman, 2010, p. 19). As a consequence, Rata (2003) believes inequalities between the elite, the new professional class, and the poor has actually increased.

Rata (2003) and others (Chapple, 2000; Harker, 2006; Marie, Fergusson, & Boden, 2008; Nash & Harker, 1998; Wylie, 2001), also maintain that it is largely class-based factors that are the cause of persistent low achievement for Māori students; that educational achievement is directly related to the resources available to, and the family cultural practices of, people at the lower end of the working class or in the inter-generational unemployed. Stewart (2009) discusses cultural/ethnic issues in the New Zealand educational context, with particular reference to Māori and Pasifika identities. She notes that there are some problems with the concept of culture as it applies to teaching. In referring to ethnic notions of culture, Stewart argues it becomes similar to largely discredited Darwinian concepts of *race*, and thus by association, open to challenge. Conversely, where a 'culture' is largely defined by its members, Stewart highlights the risks when others' denial of this cultural 'existence' occurs. Achieving a dynamic balance between the two in terms of ethnicity theory neither privileges, nor denies, 'heritage' or 'choices.'

4.7. Culturally responsive pedagogy in New Zealand

Culture Counts (Bishop & Glynn, 1999) and Ministry-funded professional development and research projects such *Te Kotahitanga* (2003-2014), highlight the impact of cultural alienation and widespread disengagement by Māori students. Students describe at length their classroom experiences; the lack of an empowering relationship with teachers and the mismatch between their own cultural capital and what is valued in the classroom setting. The *Te Kotahitanga* project, in particular, worked on developing democratic and respectful teaching and learning relationships between teachers and their students, as well as at the school leadership level. While all students were found to have benefitted from the intervention, Māori students made the most significant gains across a range of measures.

Yet in evaluating a Ministry-funded Quality Teaching Research and Development project, Earle, Timperley and Stewart (2009) found that there was not a shared understanding around culturally responsive pedagogy and the implications of this in a range of Māori and Pasifika bi-lingual and English-medium settings. Thus interpretations and emphases differed across contexts, with minimal attention to evidence-informed practice. Defining what is meant by ‘culture’; what it encompasses and the implications of cultural responsiveness is a complex task, and as discussed throughout this chapter, New Zealand classrooms are increasingly diverse in many ways.

Meredith (1998) believes the cultural politics that have emerged in Aotearoa/New Zealand has:

concentrated and contested around the binary of Māori (the colonised) or Pākehā (the coloniser), over-simplified and essentialised. The dichotomous categories of ‘us/them’, ‘either/or’ have alarmingly found an increased currency resulting in adversarial polarities premised on exclusion and purity. The continued employment of this bifurcated structure offers little to a conceptualisation of Māori/Pākehā relationships where there are multiple subject-positions, aspirations, and

contrasts continually at play through ongoing interaction and exchange. That is, the 'diverse realities' (Durie, 1998) of Māori/Pākehā relations influenced by a manifold of considerations including race, gender, generation, class, geographical locale, political and sexual orientation. What is required is a far more critical perspective of bi-cultural politics in New Zealand that rethinks our assumptions about culture and identity from an 'us-them' dualism to a mutual sense of 'both/and'. Thus must acknowledge and negotiate not only difference but also affinity. (p. 1)

4.7.1. Critical multicultural pedagogy

Negotiating differences is an important tenet of critical multicultural education and pedagogy where it is important to deliberately surface and examine one's own socio-cultural positioning and the different variables that impact on that positioning within particular contexts (May, 2009). These include, but are not limited to, factors such as ethnic heritages, language, age, class, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability and so on. Through this critical self-reflection, critical multiculturalists believe individuals may be more able to engage with how others' may be differently positioned and their experiences, beliefs and values shaped accordingly by the groups with which they interact. Through such practices educators may be themselves less likely to perpetuate cultural stereotypes or othering⁷, even when well-intended, that privilege some cultural practices over others, and in turn help students better understand issues of racism and social justice. In considering an individual's relationship to the different groups they are associated with, interpretations may be more consciously analysed, and responses more negotiated and personalised. Yet, critical multicultural pedagogy is not just defined by the day to day interactions between the teacher and his/her students but also in terms of how the school and classroom curriculum is framed by the school and its community. It is within these wider institutionalised frameworks that valued knowledges and practices and beliefs are determined, and

⁷ **Othering** has been described as a process that identifies those that are thought to be different from oneself or the mainstream, and it can reinforce and reproduce positions of domination and subordination. (Johnson, Bottorff et al, 2004)

through which a classroom teacher's attempts at an inclusive and democratic curriculum may be directly undermined.

4.8. Power imbalances between groups and individuals

Liberalised interpretations of (multi)culturalism may in fact be counterproductive if studies are limited to discussions of similarities and differences between groups and individuals, without examining the overarching power structures that either underpin or negate particular forms of cultural expression and practice within a society.

Meredith (1998), as discussed earlier, acknowledges the challenges to hybridity theory, particularly in colonising situations where the discourse is seldom between equal players, given contexts of power and socio-political dominance. Yet hybridity, (and border and intersectionality theories) align with Burbules' (1997) suggestion that given the increasing fragmentation of society and the assertions of difference and determinism by numerous minority groups, that if we don't wish to follow its logical conclusion to a highly divided separatist society, then some sort of 'third' space is required. This could help manage some power imbalances between and within groups, promoting awareness and understanding of alternative perspectives, and working on acceptable solutions towards greater cohesion. The work of critical multiculturalists, particularly in the area of education (May, 2009; McLaren & Sleeter, 1995) largely align with this position; while it may be important to recognise and support the cultural aspirations and historical and contemporary grievances of particular groups, individual student's own voices and diverse identities should not be disregarded in this process.

In addition, superficial approaches risk stereotyping or reifying aspects of a culture from a distance and reducing culture to an exploration of more visible aspects of difference without taking account of individual factors. Some critics of liberal multiculturalism accuse proponents as being naïve humanists, who tend to privilege racism over other forms of discrimination that may be experienced by an individual, making assumptions about their own priorities and life choices and the multiple contexts in which they operate (May, 1999).

I would argue that these criticisms are valid and present in the New Zealand context; while multiculturalism and biculturalism have never been officially adopted, there has been an ad hoc acceptance of the latter in many government policy and educational settings, without the necessary critical debate about what this means in practice, and for whom. Equally, however, an alternative position that claims to treat everybody the same does not recognise the significant power imbalances that exist between some groups; the impact of colonisation and punitive measures that have resulted in language loss and societal marginalisation; and the fact that for Māori, there is no other place that is their cultural home, whatever contemporary forms of expression this may entail. This is not typically the case for more recent migrants.

Along with Bromell (2008), Meredith (1998) and others, I argue that the difficult, sensitive conversations about the Treaty, cultural diversity, and difference, and the multiple construction of identity in New Zealand need to take place. In the educational policy context, they need to include academics, government officials and others in Bernstein's (2000) field of knowledge production. Such conversations may have been deferred for a range of reasons, but this has had significant consequences for comprehensive policy design and implementation across a number of social policy contexts, including education. As a consequence, it leaves the fields of recontextualisation and reproduction of educational policy vulnerable to different interpretations and ideologies, particularly by those who perhaps have had less time, expertise, or inclination to engage with such complexities.

4.9. Summary

A review of the literature in the areas of culture, diversity and identity politics reveals a number of interesting and complex tensions, particularly for government policy design that seeks to address inequities and injustices across groups and individuals in societies. Through examining historical and contemporary constructs of culture, diversity and identity both in internationally and in the New Zealand context, it would appear that attempts to define and categorise culture or groups of people in static

and potentially singular ways is problematic, given the complexities of social, political, economic and individual characteristics and circumstances.

While the literature reveals that people have a basic need to categorise on the basis of appearance or other markers to enable them to manage and make sense of their worlds, the literature also highlights the risks of stereotyping and racism, and marginalising within-group differences. Even well-intended cultural competence or responsiveness programmes in schools can risk attributing values, roles and practices to groups of people who may not subscribe to them or outrightly reject them. In some contexts, historical and static conceptions of culture, race, ethnicity, gender etc. have been challenged by within-group minorities, who have argued different perspectives and injustices. These have sometimes resulted in more dynamic, multiple identity constructions that can become highly politicised. Individuals within large and small groups may also simultaneously background and foreground aspects of their identities depending on the context and their positive or negative responses to it. Such responses may have different motivations and be expressed in different ways, such as those described by Burbules (1997). The intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and disability etc. as captured by intersectionality, border and hybridity theories, highlight the difficulties and complexities in singular notions of culture, identity and difference.

The different types of responses can also be influenced by whether individuals originate from individualist or collective cultures, which is particularly relevant in the New Zealand context. In individualist cultures, individual uniqueness and self-determination is valued. A person who shows initiative or work well independently and aligns with many of the pioneering values of European New Zealanders. Collectivist cultures, on the other hand, expect people to identify with and work well in groups which protect them in exchange for loyalty and compliance. Māori, Pacific and Asian peoples are more likely to ascribe to these values. Paradoxically, individualist cultures tend to believe that there are universal values that should be shared by all, while collectivist cultures tend to accept that different groups have different values.

These different perspectives and interpretations have implications, however, for how governments and societies are able to respond to the wants and needs of diverse peoples through public policy initiatives. Importantly, it highlights issues about how to respond to authoritative spokespeople and advocacy groups who may not represent some minority perspectives, particularly where social class or disability limits access to such forums.

While acknowledging these difficulties, there is also the risk of cultural relativism; where the complexities of difference and diversity can sometimes be an excuse for failing to address the injustices and inequities experienced by particular groups of people. I would argue that Fraser's (1989) needs analysis theory provides important questions to help guide some of these complex conversations in social policy design.

Both Bernstein (2000) and Fraser's (1989) theories continue to draw attention to the *nature* of the discourse that takes place within the different fields or contexts of educational policy, and the decisions about the underpinning knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of the school curriculum. They draw attention to the power, political ideologies and influence of the different agents, the degree of transparency and inclusivity of the discourse and pedagogies, and how individual students are being viewed and shaped by the school system through the knowledge, values and attitudes they are expected to demonstrate.

Bernstein (2000) argues through his theory of the pedagogical device, that whoever controls the device wields a lot of power and influence over the priorities and outcomes of curriculum. Where there is very generalised guidance as to how the technical form of curriculum should be implemented in schools and classrooms (Luke et al., 2013), in this case, the values, behaviours and attitudes inherent in the key competencies, then it is likely that the values, attitudes and assumptions of dominant groups will prevail. Students are vulnerable, not only to the explicit or implicit curriculum values, pedagogies and identity constructions, as highlighted by Bernstein's theory, but also the expectations of more powerful others, be they cultural, gendered, or class-based.

The following chapter will now examine the literature on the development of curriculum as a theoretical field. It highlights how various socio-political developments have impacted on curriculum design and the changing nature of what the more dominant voices in society value as outcomes from its educational systems. This includes not only perspectives on the knowledge, skills and attitudes desired, and thus the cultural values that underpin them but how teaching and learning has been understood, promoted and enacted for the 'benefit' of all students.

Chapter 5. Curriculum and its Values: International and National Developments in Curriculum Design

Curriculum as a concept has its origins in the running/chariot tracks of ancient Greece. It was, literally, a course. In Latin curriculum was a racing chariot; currere was to run.

5.0. Introduction

In the previous chapters I explored the literature on the different interpretations of culture, diversity and difference, and the multiple identities, attitudes and value sets that come into play when diverse peoples interact. I also examined the discourse related to biculturalism and multiculturalism specifically in the New Zealand context, with its complex interpretations and contradictions in social policy design for diverse citizens and their families and whānau.

In this chapter, I examine the literature on different ways these interpretations impact on curriculum theory, design and implementation, and importantly, the complex power dynamics that determine who gets to decide the valued outcomes at each stage of the policy. “Understanding the relationship between power and knowledge within the scope of cultural production [and reproduction] is necessary if we are not to reify the concept of curriculum. This normalized curriculum is the viewpoint of many of the current curriculum policies in the globalized world” (Lopes & De Macedo, 2009, p. 71).

It is important that significant historical developments in curriculum theory and design are explored as part of my literature review, not only to examine how student diversity and value differences have been addressed within the curriculum, but also how developments such as the key competencies have emerged. Goodson (1989)

maintains that contemporary curriculum theory must be defined in relation to historical positioning and disciplinary lenses, and that curriculum theory worldwide should be reported historically. I thus draw briefly on the histories of the United States and United Kingdom in particular, given a number of parallels in educational, political, and economic influences that have also impacted on the New Zealand context. My review of the literature on curriculum has highlighted how much the school curriculum is influenced by wider social and political agendas, and more recently, global socio-political events, economic ideologies and associated value systems. Bernstein (2000) highlighted, in particular, the growing influence of economic 'agents' in the fields of production and recontextualisation in his theory of the pedagogical device. The literature review also supports Bernstein's notions about the types of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are valued, and the processes by which these are taught and evaluated, and how these are largely determined by those who control the pedagogical device.

Another important development that I highlight is that curriculum policy is increasingly seen as less separate from implementation. The tension between what is planned for and what is carried out in practice is one of the most persistent tensions within curriculum studies (Westbury, 2008). Curriculum policies need to be seen as texts and as discourses within the multiple contexts of the policy cycle; at the government level, professional development and resource development level, and the school and teacher practice level (Ball, Bowe, & Gold, 1992; Bernstein, 2000).

In reflecting on Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogical device, contemporary curriculum design becomes a site of struggle between different educational ideologies and values of an increasingly diverse range of agents. Curriculum is strongly underpinned by values. Through the ways certain knowledge is identified as important to the ways it is framed and delivered as part of accepted cultural norms. In the ways that learners are perceived; as largely passive, or as contributors and creators of new knowledge and perspectives. And through the incorporation of behaviours, attitudes and values that dominant groups often take as given, and superior to alternative world views, and ones which will likely perpetuate the political, social and economic structures that they benefit from.

These ideological struggles appear to be amplified in the case of the curriculum key competencies, as they have been conceptualised as mediating between the academic and social outcomes of curriculum design, of addressing 21st century workplace demands as well as empowering individuals to be reflective learners and critical thinkers. They thus straddle a number of potentially opposing ideologies. It is important to examine how the key competencies sit in relation to social realist perspectives on knowledge, and how can they be underpinned by a child-centred, ‘inherent capacity’ ideology, yet embedded in middle class values systems. The key competencies as a curriculum construct will be examined in more depth in Chapter 6, but it is important to introduce a number of curriculum theories and their inherent value positions beforehand. I begin by exploring the concept of ‘curriculum’.

5.1. What is curriculum?

A curriculum can be seen as the result of human agency. It is underpinned by a set of values and beliefs about what students should know and how they come to know it. It tends to arise out of an administrative need and the curriculum of any institution is often contested and problematic (Pinar & Grumet, 1976). Welner, Oakes, and Howe (2008) see the focus of curriculum texts as a planned intervention targeting a predetermined learning objective and in keeping with Ball (1994), analysed in terms of a commitment to instruction and first order effects. Yet little attention is often paid to second order effects, such as those related to social justice and reducing social inequalities (Lopes & De Macedo, 2009).

5.1.1. Curriculum as product

Curriculum as a ‘product’ was significantly influenced by Darwin’s 1918 *Origin of the Species*. Curriculum was seen as an attempt to achieve certain ends in students – product and curriculum theory involved detailed attention to what people needed to know in order to work, live their lives and so on. The impact in the early twentieth century of the supposedly ‘neutral’ scientific frameworks of Tyler (1949) had widespread appeal across a number of countries and jurisdictions. Yet the ‘behavioural objectives’ approach formalised in the Tyler’s *Basic Principles of*

Curriculum Instruction, appear to be based on simple formulaic logic, and understated the complexities of curriculum design, including the privileging of certain types of world views, epistemologies and approaches. This approach was also evident in the structure of the disciplines approach advocated by Bruner et al. (1960). Despite the extensive academic criticism that emerged around such a behaviourist orientation, and its valuing of certain knowledge, skills, and dispositions over others, it has continued to influence many people's belief in the notion that there exists a set of 'robust and objective' curriculum outcomes that are culturally-neutral and independent of social, political and economic agendas.

5.1.2. Curriculum as process

The concept of curriculum and its perceived purpose has changed over time, however, and within different contexts. In the UK, Lawrence Stenhouse (1975) defined curriculum more as *process*, tentatively suggesting that, "A curriculum is an attempt to communicate the essential principles and features of an educational proposal in such a form that it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice" (p. 4). The notion of curriculum as praxis was seen by many as a development of the process model. It was promoted largely by Huebner (1966) and Apple (1995) in the US, who maintain that curriculum theory needs to draw on fields other than psychology, in particular political science and the impact of local and international events. This was seen as a significant challenge to the fundamental discourse of educators, in what influences valued outcomes.

Huebner (1966) emphasised the political influences on curriculum design and highlighted that events such as the cold war, stock market crashes and youth unemployment significantly impact on what skills and knowledge take precedence over others. Events such as these increase the influence of the business community in particular, in determining educational efficiencies and priorities, and who may be less concerned with social justice, inequities and different culturally-defined value systems and beliefs people hold within society.

Research nationally and internationally has shown that curriculum design can never be a neutral process and is developed within the dominant political, economic and

social forces at the time (see Apple, 1993, p. 1). The predominance of neo-liberal ideologies in western capitalist societies that is discussed throughout this research has become a source of tension with those who are more committed to the egalitarian principles of fairness and equity highlighted by Fraser (1989, 1996) and others.

5.2. Emerging theories in curriculum design

Phenomenology, postmodernism, and post structuralism have emerged as significant concepts in the reconceptualising of curriculum theory. Structuralism shows meanings to be decentred and external to the individual; post structuralism shows meanings to be relative, shifting and dynamic. Kuhn and Hacking (2012) posit that communities explain their world by using paradigms, which are theories or constructs of the world. As things around them change, these paradigms need to assimilate or accommodate them. More significant and radical changes are required when new anomalies can no longer be assimilated or accommodated by existing theories. They then experience a state of crisis as they lose their explanatory power for their communities. As a result, they are required to consider and appropriate new theories to alleviate the crisis. Kuhn and Hacking see these shifts as political, where a community agrees to shift their thinking about the world, rather than the shift occurring to actual changes in the world. Social theorists commonly use the notion of a paradigm shift to describe the social and intellectual change involved in a reorientation of thought and/or practice. These theories are particularly relevant when the discourse that surrounds traditional and contemporary conceptions of culture, diversity and difference are examined within twenty-first century curricula.

5.2.1. Internationalisation of curriculum

Curriculum development in the latter part of the twentieth century began to be less focussed on bureaucratic protocols and improving institutional curriculum and more on *understanding* curriculum, and deliberative and innovative practice. It involved exploring not only local and national contexts for curriculum innovation, but also international contexts and transnational aspirations. It was also argued that the

education of the public requires making the curriculum public; that it inseparable from democratic principles (Ibanez-Carrasco & Meiners, 2004).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, particularly in the US, a focus began on dismantling Tyler's (1949) behaviourist theories, and addressing the issues of class, racial, and gender inequalities generated by Marxist and Neo-Marxist political theories. Pinar (2007, p. 21) argued that internationalisation promises to intensify the intellectual sophistication of U.S. curriculum theory, especially that theory committed to multicultural, gendered and political activism toward social justice and ecological sustainability. Others, however, in reviewing international curriculum developments more recently, see globalism and its largely neo-liberal agenda as being a pervasive force in 21st century curriculum design (Bernstein, 2000; Biesta & Priestley, 2013; Olssen et al., 2004).

5.2.2. The rise of neoliberalism and its impact on curriculum design

A number of critical theorists view the education reforms of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries as bringing about a marketisation of education and a de-emphasis of a traditional role in enhancing community cohesion and advancing the interests of the social democratic welfare state. Benade (2011) argues that 'new right' is associated with the economic policies of Ronald Reagan (President of the United States of America, 1981-1989), Margaret Thatcher (Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, 1979-1990) and in New Zealand, 'Rogernomics' (Roger Douglas, Finance Minister, 1984-1988) which followed monetarist policies (see Milton Friedman) that slashed public spending, and introduced privatisation and deregulation of local markets. Apple (2004) sees neoliberals as the market liberals and neoconservatives as the moral conservatives. However, Olssen et al. (2004) refer to the new right as the grouping or alliance of both market liberals and moral conservatives, where new right is the alliance and neoliberalism its underlying ideology.

Market liberals seek to reduce state interference into free market activities, while moral conservatives seek government policies that are pro-nuclear family and anti-crime. What Olssen et al. (2004) see they have in common is a belief in individual

freedom that manifests as competitive individualism in a free market, and reduced social spending. Yet the emphasis on individual freedom is not without its contradictions; on one hand they seek to reduce state interference in their lives; on the other, they require that the state design policies that safeguard these rights and protect their private property. In contrast, social democracies see the role of the government as having a key role in social justice and equity, of preventing the domination of some groups over others, and a fairer share of the resources than the free market allows.

5.2.3. Human Capital and Public Choice Theories

An increased perception of people as economic resources has led to the emergence of Human Capital Theory (HCT) and Public Choice Theory (PCT). These are seen as key components of the neoliberalist cache, and influential on constructions of curriculum (Benade, 2011). Benade (2011) describes HCT as ‘the notion that capital investment in education leads to enhanced skills and knowledge for individuals, representing a return on investment for the state’ (p. 8); a view that sees a linear relationship between education and later economic success. Drawing on Brown and Lauder (2009), and Olssen et al. (2004), Benade argues that this theory is flawed for a number of reasons, including “its ahistorical assumptions, its notion that humans behave rationally, and that education necessarily leads to economic success” (p. 8).

According to Benade (2011), PCT is premised on individualistic market and business principles, and as such, rejects the possibility of public interest. It is underpinned by a distrust of public service bureaucrats. A solution is the

eradication of potential conflicts of interest by separating policy, implementation and regulation of public services. Quasi-markets are created by uncoupling services from the parent organisation, placing these services in competition with each other and requiring the parent organisation to engage in contestable practices with the now outsourced providers. (p. 9)

Benade (2011) cites Olssen and Peters (2005) who regard contractualisation as a product of public choice theory that has extended neoliberal market norms to the

public sector. While Benade highlights the potential of Third Way theories, said to have emerged from a socio-political and economic context that has seen the emergence of a global knowledge economy, rapidly changing personal identity politics and the dramatic rise to prominence of eco-politics, I would argue that these too are vulnerable to capture by neo liberalist policies. Bernstein's (2000) notion of the pedagogical 'Janus' warns of the appropriation and assimilation of the language and concepts associated with these new developments in covert or superficial ways, while continuing on with free market ideologies (Sadovnik, 2001). Control of Bernstein's pedagogical device can occur in very subtle but powerful ways, particularly at the beginning and end of the policy cycle through emphases on outcomes and efficiencies, while seemingly relinquishing control in the various recontextualisation spaces; a point visited later in this chapter in relation to self-managing schools and community engagement.

In the area of personal identity politics, Benade (2011) points out the contradictions of the post-modern position. He argues that postmodernism challenged the patriarchal, Eurocentric notions of reason and rationality and truth, and the artificial binaries and boundaries that define black and white, gay and straight, emphasising difference and individuality and the legitimacy of different groups, yet fail to acknowledge that these multiple identities flourish in a pluralistic world, where national boundaries are weakened by globalisation. This highlights the complex motivations that underpin identity politics in more contemporary settings. However, Benade assumes that the policies that support globalisation necessarily subscribe or promote these expressions of individuality. While there may be greater recognition of identities and intersections related to race and ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, less recognition is given to the impacts of class on people's ability to participate in society and achieve success. This reinforces Fraser's (1989) emphasis on the need to consider both recognition and redistribution responses in seeking equity through needs discourse. Furthermore, Giddens (2000) asserts that the neoliberal state is less interested in personal identity politics, and sees people's identities in more singular ways; as economic units that are seen as contributing to the economy or not.

5.2.4. Influence of international organisations on national curriculum design

Despite the modern state's apparent acknowledgement of individual diversity and "the importance of preserving national identity and the integrity of national values" (Benade, 2011, p. 14), the increasing impact of global initiatives such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Achievement (PISA) appears to have reduced, rather than increased, responsiveness to difference and diversity within and between countries, and their ability to determine the valued outcomes of their respective education systems.

There have been a number of critiques of these programmes, particularly regarding their narrow, but high stakes, interpretations about what is important in education across participating countries. Sjøberg (2016), in his critique of the OECD's PISA project, highlights the overarching political aims of the OECD and the underlying commitment to a competitive global free market economy. He notes that in PISA's efforts to manage the 'objectivity' through the exclusion of contextual, cultural or curriculum bias of the tests, it eliminates and thus devalues the very aspects that prepare young people to function successfully in their contextualised local and national environments. According to Sjøberg, only a minority of these students will operate in a global, international market. And while PISA states that it does not test school knowledge, and that it does not test according to national curricula, the PISA results are interpreted, also in OECD reports, as valid measures of the quality of national school systems, and the PISA reports are full of policy recommendations regarding schools (Loveless, 2009, in Sjøberg, 2016). In addition, the prioritising of some subjects and content knowledge over others undermines the importance of education's contribution to a cohesive and socially just society through focussing solely on those areas deemed to have economic outcomes.

The OECD's other educational initiatives, such as the *Definition and Selection of the Key Competencies* (DESECO) led in 2002 by Rychen and Salganik (see Chapter 6 for more discussion on this), appeared to more closely align with the wholistic and culturally sensitive educational outcomes espoused by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), (UNICEF) and other

similar organisations. Yet they appear to be additional, rather than integral to the OECD's approach to PISA. Interacting with heterogeneous others (DeSeCo, 2002) relies on complex understandings and sensitivities to local, national and international difference and diversity across multiple contexts; how do these skill sets receive importance and value if they are absent from a country's high stakes assessment drivers and policy decisions?

Furthermore, there appears to be increasing unease around the significant involvement of international publishing companies on curriculum design and assessment tools as part of the OECD cache. Ball (2012) critiques the influence of companies such as Pearson Inc. and the impact of its related products and services in terms of shaping and ultimately prescribing local and national curriculum design on an international scale. This is particularly concerning for developing countries who, through a desire to become part of a global economy, will be particularly vulnerable to the prescribed content, cultural values and benchmarks of external agencies and multinationals.

5.3. Socio-political influences on the New Zealand curriculum context

New Zealand has not been isolated from the impacts and influences of international developments in curriculum design. It appears that a similar sequence of events in curriculum development has occurred in New Zealand, albeit with some unique differences.

1965-1981 was referred to as the period of equality of outcomes. According to Beeby, Director of the Ministry of Education from the 1940s (see Begg, 2005), a statement of educational policy that is concerned only with the rights of the individual within the educational system will not suffice for the 1980s. Any new thinking must now give equal place to the relation of the system to the country and different communities it serves. Beeby's observations appear to align with Kuhn and Hacking's (2012) paradigm theory mentioned earlier; of communities shifting their thinking about the world to better accommodate anomalies and unresolved issues, rather than actual changes in the environment.

5.3.1. Decentralising curriculum: The New Zealand context

The literature from the 1970s reflected disenchantment with the idea that a centrally-developed curriculum could meet the learning needs of students in a rapidly changing and diversifying social environment. Where centrally-developed curricula were highly prescriptive and focussed on what, and often how, things were to be taught, there was concern that the curriculum was alienating many young people and becoming increasingly irrelevant, inappropriate, or simply insufficient for new generations of learners. This gave rise to the thinking in many countries that decentralising curriculum development to teachers and schools could make curricula more relevant (Brady, 1995, in Bolstad, 2005). Welier (1993), in Pinar et al. (1995), provides an interim assessment of the decentralisation debate in the United States and noted the following:

The notion of decentralising the contents of learning as a means of recognising and accommodation the diversity and importance of different cultural environments in one society, is generally considered meaningful and valid. At the same time, however, it encounters the conflicting claims of different conceptions of knowledge, which contrast a kind of learning that is more geared to the specifics of cultural contexts with the national and international universalities of dealing with modern systems of technology and communication. (p. 66)

Unsurprisingly perhaps, the OECD at the time supported the notion of a 'decentralised curriculum as one example of the general trend towards greater citizen autonomy and participation in many walks of life. Given Sjøberg's (2016) critique of the OECD earlier, one might be somewhat cynical that the underlying agenda was not one focussed on diversity, but more about reduced state intervention.

In the New Zealand context, the notion of self-managing schools was a key principle of Tomorrow's Schools policy, outlined in the government-commissioned Picot report and brought in by the then Labour government of the 1980s, seen by some as a means to protect state education from partisan interference (Earl, Watson, & Katz,

2006). The report, however, was based on a business model of largely decentralising services rather than the curriculum. Schools' curricula at this time were still centrally determined and, according to Bolstad (2005), in the 1980s and early 1990s New Zealand, along with Australia and England, saw renewed government interest in developing centralised curriculum statements to provide coherent direction for school education, and thus embarked on a period of extensive curriculum review.

5.3.2. The review of New Zealand's core curriculum

New Zealand's core curriculum was reviewed in 1982-3. A final report, *The Curriculum Review: Report of the Committee to Review the Curriculum for Schools* was published in 1987.

This report suggested that the curriculum must provide for learning in three equally important aspects of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and values, and that knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values are interdependent and interrelated. It noted that traditionally, schools had emphasised knowledge along with some planning for skills, leaving attitudes and values largely to chance, and went on to suggest that skills and attitudes are as important in learning as knowledge, and need to be planned for. It also suggested that schools will need to reorganise the curriculum to ensure that learners are aware of the connections between knowledge and skills, and the attitudes and values they carry. Learners must not be left to work out for themselves the interdependence of the aspects of learning; they must be helped to see and experience the relationships (Committee to Review the Curriculum in Schools, 1987, pp. 12-13). The different conceptions of valuable knowledge, skills and attitudes, and from whose worldview this is determined, is a key tenet of this research.

5.4. Valued attitudes and behaviours in the New Zealand curriculum

As part of the curriculum review, a questionnaire asked schools and school communities, what attitudes and values should young people develop at school? The final report provides information on the responses (Committee to Review the Curriculum in Schools, 1987, pp. 58-60). The Curriculum Review reported that:

... some of the desirable attitudes and values the community mentioned most frequently in their responses were a sense of fairness; concern for truth; honesty; self-respect and self-esteem; self-discipline; respect for other people and for their cultures, beliefs, opinions and property; responsibility for one's own actions, trust in other people, aroha (love) manaakitanga (hospitality); wairua (spirituality); tolerance; and adaptability (p. 13). These provided the basis for the values list on page 21 of NZCF, (Ministry of Education, 1993). The committee concluded that "some values are clearly understood and can provide a base for curriculum planning" ... and that others ... "are more controversial and need careful consideration. (Committee to Review the Curriculum in Schools, 1987, p. 13)

Yet from the late 1980s until the late 1990s, the extensive literature review on values in the curriculum commissioned by the Ministry of Education and undertaken by Keown et al. (2005) found that the recognition of differences in values and attitudes seemed to disappear off the educational radar as the neo-liberal new right economic reforms took hold. They cite Snook (2000) who suggests that the

... most cunning and effective values education ever seen in our country occurred during this time as the attitudes and values encouraged became those of self-centredness, acquisitiveness and a 'survival of the fittest' kind of competitiveness. Self-interest replaced altruism and commercial models replaced community models. [Such values] fly in the face of the lessons of the past and the values of our secular and religious traditions. To those of us with humanistic and/or religious perspectives this is a tragic outcome. (Snook, 2000, p. 3, in Keown et al, 2005)

Argument about the values and attitudes that should drive schooling, education, the curriculum, schools and classrooms is fundamental to debates about the purpose of schooling. Yet the literature reveals that many of these important debates, however difficult, do not appear to have taken place, at least not publically. I would argue that the influences on the intent and direction of the curriculum need to be made more

transparent to the public and the education profession, and to highlight some inherent tensions, multiple perspectives and compromises that need to be considered within a principled framework.

5.4.1. Increasing attention to diverse values and knowledge

In the early 2000's, there appeared to be increasing recognition of the importance of prior knowledge and relevant local contexts for students learning the 'big ideas' of content knowledge; a departure from an atomistic approach to learning, and recognition of the increasing diversity of New Zealand society. The Curriculum Stocktake Report (Ministry of Education, 2002) was similar in fashion to the 1987 Curriculum Review, and strongly emphasised the importance of exploring diverse values and attitudes and the need for their integration within the curriculum. Keown et al.'s (2005) literature review on values was one of a number of papers commissioned to help inform the early conceptualisation of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (2007). While it has been argued that all curriculum elements and design are inextricably designed and interpreted from particular world views and their inherent values, curriculum values statements are often used to articulate key positions and underpinning beliefs more explicitly.

Keown et al. (2005) found that while many people and organisations have been arguing for greater acknowledgement and articulation of the key place of values in the curriculum, there were sharply contrasting ideas about how these should be addressed in the curriculum. In particular, the difference between what is variously reported as a traditional, socialisation, character, prescriptive and virtues approach on the one hand, and a progressive, counter-socialisation, descriptive, value inquiry, critical thinking approach on the other, were marked. They found evidence to suggest that it was easier to develop values at the whole curriculum and whole school level, but much more difficult to address values directly in individual curriculum (learning area) statements and in the curriculum at school department/syndicate, classroom, and lesson level.

5.4.2. Values in praxis

While there is widespread use of lists of values in many schools and classrooms, there is evidence in the literature that these can often ignore or disguise the wide range of interpretations of values concepts across ideological and cultural boundaries, and importantly, how they inform the overall curriculum design and its valued outcomes. This can lead to simplistic practice in the teaching and learning of values where the wide range of meanings, concepts and implications for individuals across ideologies and cultures are not fully explored. Of interest to this research is how hegemonic/universalistic assumptions about desired attitudes and values can perpetuate inequities and injustices between different student groups, particularly where pedagogies become invisible and competency based (see Bernstein, 2000). Some literature points out that conflict between these high-level abstract values frequently occurs in everyday practice, and 'agreed' lists can lead to approaches that do not fully recognise this or prepare students for difficult values clashes (Keown et al., 2005; Saville-Troike, 1971).

5.4.3. Different theoretical perspectives on diverse values and the curriculum

Donnelly (1998) suggests that a need to get beyond polarised positions. He suggests that much of the disagreement is created by the differing assumptions that protagonists bring to the debate. This results in people talking past each other. Schools, he suggests, are able to either reinforce or challenge the values and beliefs of home. He argues that in order to achieve a cohesive society, it is necessary for schools to do both. However, as discussed earlier, such complex tensions need to be firstly explored in the production and recontextualisation fields of school policy design. Schools need to be supported to engage in the important, but often complex discussions with their diverse communities, ensuring that all voices and perspectives are considered and balanced against democratic principles. Saville-Troike (1971) offers a range of questions that might be asked of parents or caregivers and students, to ascertain areas of commonality and areas of potential conflict that need to be resolved. Fraser's (1989) needs discourse theory highlights the importance of analysing the inclusive or exclusive nature of the discourse, and the navigation

between recognition of identities and redistribution of power and resources, both within and between groups.

5.4.4. The role of values frameworks in curricula

Ideally, national values that are clearly understood and shared by all can form a coherent thread which permeates the education system from aims through to outcomes. Yet, in reality, this is difficult to achieve. A single educational structure needs to reflect the diversity of values and aims in society as well as the inherent dissonance and conflict within them (Le Métais, 1998).

Le Métais (1998) notes there is a clear link between values and educational aims. Typically, aims include: artistic, cultural, developmental, economic, environmental, personal, political, social, moral or religious and physical considerations. Further, issues of national identity are often included. Thus aims and values promoting social cohesion through respect for, and reconciliation of, diversity are often included. However, Le Métais observed that due to the considerable difficulties involved, there is little, if any, formal assessment of student growth in terms of attitudes, values and moral judgments in most countries. This is an important finding, given how particular values and ideologies underpin constructions of the curriculum key competencies and therefore how these might be taught and evaluated within particular contexts.

5.4.5. Shared values and liberal inclusiveness

Others highlight the tensions between political ideologies and the struggles between which values are inculcated into curriculum. Bernstein (2000) argues that these struggles are integral to control of the pedagogical device. Some see the source of much tension about the nature of values in the curriculum and in schools in the context of a tension between the need for shared values and the premises of the liberal inclusiveness. Strike (1999) notes that while society should be stabilised and secured by a shared view of social justice, this does not include a shared view of the 'good life', as promoted by the OECD key competencies project. He argues that institutions of government such as the public curriculum, he argues, must include all people equally, regardless of attributes such as race or ethnicity or their views on human flourishing. This liberal inclusiveness principle prohibits discrimination on such

bases as religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual preference, age, political conviction, or view of the good life. Any curriculum that fails to be neutral concerning the various conceptions of the good life will, he suggests, fail the test of liberal inclusiveness.

Strike notes in his paper, *Can schools be communities? The tension between shared values and inclusion* (1999), that the notion of a community presupposes that it is constituted by specific values, while state schools are premised on the principle of liberal inclusion which assumes both free association and non-discrimination. Strike's compromise of "big tented values that are thick but vague enough, to gather diverse points of view" appears to be the basis of the NZC values but does not effectively address the inherent conflicts. As Benade (2011) points out, several of the values:

accord with the already expressed intention of building an education system enabling students to prepare for success in a global market economy that is governed by a knowledge economy. It has been pointed out repeatedly that this economy privileges the privatisation of knowledge and encourages proprietary behaviour over personal individual knowledge capital. The Ministry of Education has designed an inspiring vision by developing values aimed at building a community, but this is offset against the lingering aspect of an instrumentalist curriculum vision in which students are seen only in terms of the value they can add to the nation's economy. (p. 23)

Benade (2011) does suggest however, that the values dialogue between the school and its community may be able to offset this more narrow view of educational outcomes. I would also add, drawing on Bernstein's (2000), Fraser's (1989), and others' theories, that while there is the 'official' discourse as determined by the various curriculum policy texts, the dialogue and interpretations that subsequently takes place with various agents in each of the fields of production, recontextualisation, and reproduction, can also potentially 'disrupt' the nature of discourse and its implementation messages in schools (Ball et al., 1992; Bernstein, 2000; Fraser, 1989).

5.4.6. Diverse values and contestations of knowledge

Bernstein (2000), Gilbert (2002), and Barrett and Rata (2014) caution that 21st century curriculum design does not involve the side-lining of important conceptual knowledge or ‘powerful knowledge’ (Young, 2009) and replacing it with familiar and accessible, everyday ‘thinkable’ knowledge that may be located within local cultural communities, or as ‘inherent capabilities’ within an individual. Rather, they stress the importance of understanding the role and purpose of knowledge that enables marginalised students to participate and make decisions in those powerful groups they previously were denied access to. Yet Young’s (2009) conceptualisations of ‘powerful’ knowledge has also been challenged as hegemonic (Mayo, 2015). Bernstein’s (2000) notion of *unthinkable* knowledge; the creation and management of new knowledge which he argues has been largely the preserve of academic institutions and their agents, also highlights the power dynamics operating to legitimise what becomes knowledge. The *thinkable* knowledge is that which has already been determined by more powerful others as useful and important to learn.

Integrating diverse cultural knowledge and perspectives has the potential to not only scaffold important conceptual understandings across the curriculum, but it also becomes the vehicle with which to critique and conceptualise new (unthinkable) knowledge for the benefit of diverse societies and communities (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Others argue that a focus on capabilities or competencies for the workplace is in danger of being prioritised over conceptual knowledge for particular student groups (Barrett & Rata, 2014; Wheelahan, 2007). They argue that by not paying attention to the importance of powerful knowledge and how the competencies interact with, rather than replace this knowledge and skills, we disempower our vulnerable student groups even further.

5.5. Curriculum coherence across the sector: Te Whāriki

The importance of educators’ understanding of the theoretical basis of a number of key curriculum and pedagogical concepts and debates appears to be critical to achieving the best outcomes for diverse students (Kliebard, 1986). How have these

different historical, political and philosophical debates managed in the process of developing the current New Zealand curriculum? One key mandate was to try and achieve coherence and continuity across all sectors of the education system, particularly between early childhood, primary and secondary curriculum contexts.

In the early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996), the principles and strands of the curriculum are clearly values-orientated. The four principles at the centre of the curriculum are: empowerment, recognising the curriculum empowers the child to learn and grow; holistic development, reflecting the holistic way children learn and grow; family and community, which acknowledges the wider world of the family and the community as an integral part of the curriculum; relationships, which acknowledges that children learn through responsiveness and which includes reciprocal relationships with people, places and things.

The strands of this curriculum are:

- Well-being, emphasising that health and well-being of the child are protected and nurtured;
- Belonging, emphasising the need for children and their families to feel a sense of belonging;
- Contribution, emphasising that opportunities for learning should be equitable and each child's contribution is valued;
- Communication, where the languages and symbols of their own and other cultures are promoted and protected; and
- Exploration, acknowledging that the child learns through active exploration of the environment (Ministry of Education, 1996).

These five strands are paralleled with the five key competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) and emphasised in a diagram on page 42.

Te Whāriki is seen to have a strong emphasis on the values of equity, diversity, inclusion, family and whānau, community, relationship, belonging, caring, well-being, contributing, inquiry and exploration. Yet while *Te Whāriki* has been celebrated both

nationally and internationally as a model of best practice (An Agenda for Amazing Children, Early Childhood Education Taskforce Report, 2011), recent evaluations by the Education Review Office (ERO, 2013) found wide variability in the quality of its implementation.

The non-prescriptive and open nature of *Te Whāriki* has been referred to as both its strength and its weakness (Cullen, 1996; Dalli, 2011; Nuttall, 2002, cited in ERO, 2013). While *Te Whāriki* enables services to adopt many different philosophical and pedagogical approaches to curriculum within the broad framework of principles and strands, this flexibility can also accommodate considerable variability in quality, with ERO noting that in some services, *Te Whāriki* was used to justify quite inappropriate, poor quality practice. The report cites Cullen (1996) and Te One (2003), who highlight the risk that *Te Whāriki* could be used to affirm and justify current practice rather than being a curriculum to transform practice, with Te One noting that many teachers found it difficult to implement *Te Whāriki* in a way that was not just confirmation of existing practice.

The writers of the report speculate that the issue may lie with the broad nature of the prescribed framework or it may be that leaders and teachers do not have the theoretical and pedagogical knowledge to effectively implement this framework. They cite A. B. Smith (2011) who notes *Te Whāriki* makes bigger demands on teachers and challenges them to apply theoretical knowledge to their practice, and Hedges and Cullen (2005), who question the broad definition of curriculum in *Te Whāriki*, noting that it potentially lacks guidance for teachers with regard to content, with its emphasis on learning processes and orientations rather than knowledge outcomes and bicultural content. According to A. B. Smith (2011), one of the main criticisms of *Te Whāriki* has been its lack of attention to subject-based knowledge, with Hedges (2008) noting that the learning outcomes described as dispositions and working theories in *Te Whāriki* have not been fully explored. Furthermore, the report's findings suggest that "there are some misunderstandings about the nature of a bicultural curriculum and the difference between providing a bicultural curriculum for all children and supporting Māori children to experience success as Māori" (p. 18). *Te Whāriki* explicitly states that since "New Zealand is the home of

Māori language and culture’, curriculum in early childhood settings ‘should promote te reo and ngā tikanga Māori, making them visible and affirming their value for children from all cultural backgrounds” (p. 42). Early childhood programmes “should include Māori people, places and artifacts and opportunities to learn and use the Māori language through social interaction” (p. 43). This is somewhat different, but not contrary, to an approach that ensures that Māori children, in particular, are provided with learning environments where there are culturally familiar practices and values, where they feel a sense of belonging and can thrive.

This highlights the different theoretical perspectives, values and ideologies that people bring to curriculum design and implementation. The strands of *Te Whāriki* are the English translations of the Māori domains of mana (loosely translated as respect, esteem, sense of self) and was the result of extensive consultation with iwi (Māori tribes) across the country by two esteemed Māori educators, Tamati and Tilly Reedy. Tilly saw *Te Whāriki* as encouraging “the transmission of my cultural values, my language and my tikanga, and your cultural values, your language and customs” (in Nuttall, 2013). Yet despite these comments, some educators have appear to have interpreted *Te Whāriki* as a largely bi-cultural document about Māori and Pākehā children, with few explicit statements or images of Pasifika or Asian cultures and values, let alone any consideration of intersectionalities. The revised *Te Whāriki* (2017) sought to be more explicit about the knowledge and skills outcomes as well as being more inclusive of other cultures and practices, highlighting all children’s sense of belonging and efficacy, without compromising the indigenous principles and improving outcomes for young Māori learners.

A number of these developments are relevant to New Zealand’s curriculum for the schooling sector, and are discussed throughout this research. The relative strengths and weaknesses between permissive and prescriptive approaches to curriculum design (Sinnema 2016); the importance of deep theoretical and pedagogical knowledge and rigorous self-review processes; the relationship between learning dispositions and discipline knowledge; the collision between inherited understandings of curriculum policies and practices and expectations of current practice (Goodson, 1989) and, particularly in the New Zealand context, the role of a

bicultural curriculum in a pluralistic society, are all key issues in curriculum design and implementation across the sector in New Zealand. Many of these provided the impetus for the curriculum stocktake in the early 2000's.

5.6. Achieving a balance between academic and social outcomes

The NZ Curriculum Stocktake (2002) signalled the need for significant shifts in the organisation and prioritisation of different aspects of content knowledge, as well as the pedagogical approaches that underpinned them. The 2007 document saw a significant departure from a disciplines-oriented framework to one that sought a greater balance between and integration of the academic and the social outcomes of education. At the time of the development, and throughout the development period of the NZC, there was a growing body of discussion internationally that called for educational change to meet the needs of learners in the 21st century. These were based on the idea that society is changing and that contemporary youth will live in a world different quite different to that of their parents and teachers; unshackling the legacies of modernity and the industrial age to post-modernity, the knowledge age and an increasingly complex society (Gilbert, 2002; Trilling & Hood, 2001). Importantly, while many students may have appropriate content knowledge for the various vocations they were choosing, they were less prepared for working in collaborative ways with diverse, sometimes multinational peoples; skills and dispositions that are increasingly required in 21st century work and social environments (Wagner, 2010). Yet as highlighted throughout the review of the literature, such discourse can be seen as part of a postmodern paradigm shift (Gilbert, 2002) or part of neoliberal economic and social agendas that seek a fluid and flexible modernity (Bauman, 2005).

5.7. Theoretical underpinnings of the New Zealand Curriculum

The 2007 curriculum had been designed to serve as guiding document for schools. As a result of the two year curriculum stocktake and consultation process, a significantly different curriculum evolved. The 2007 version, although not stated explicitly,

appears to be premised on a constructivist view of curriculum design (Eames, Roberts, Cooper, & Hipkins, 2010; Naysmith, 2011). The basic epistemological assumption of constructivism, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) is transactional subjectivism:

The assertions about reality and truth depend solely on the meaning sets (information) and degree of sophistication available to the individuals and audiences engaged in forming those assertions. (p. 1)

There is also some evidence of social constructivist theories underpinning a number of statements within the curriculum, but this does not appear to be consistent throughout. Greater emphasis in the NZC was placed on a learner-centred curriculum, with principles of cultural diversity, inclusion and high expectations for all, central tenets. This appears to be largely in response to significant evidence that the education system was not sufficiently flexible and responsive enough to the diverse strengths and needs of learners and their communities (Alton-Lee, 2003). Through reframing curriculum concepts, it provided opportunities to challenge deficit thinking and over-reliance on intervention programmes for 'at risk' groups.

As with the early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki, The New Zealand Curriculum* (2007) was seen as much more 'permissive rather than prescriptive' in its design and implementation frameworks than previous curricula, and placed greater responsibility on individual schools to develop a school-based curriculum that was responsive to their student populations in content and context. As discussed earlier, this presupposes that school curriculum leaders, teachers and Boards of Trustees have a deep understanding of the complexities of curriculum theory and implementation across a range of areas, including different socio-cultural perspectives and value systems that underpin curriculum decisions. It also opens up the possibility of a wide range of interpretations of the intent of the curriculum.

5.7.1. The curriculum framework

The curriculum principles are designed to underpin school decision making around curriculum design and require schools to consider how aspects such as the *Treaty of Waitangi, Cultural Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement* are seen as

integral to both classroom and school-wide programmes and processes. This section includes concepts relating to knowledge construction, critical thinking, identity construction, the importance of social context and its relevance for learners, global connectedness, and future focussed issues. Learning experiences are expected to support students to “critically analyse values and actions based upon them” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 10); thinking is about using creative, critical, and metacognitive processes to make sense of information, experiences and ideas” and that students who are competent thinkers can ‘ask questions, and challenge the basis of assumptions and perceptions” (p. 12). Figure 5.1 below provides a schematic overview of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007).

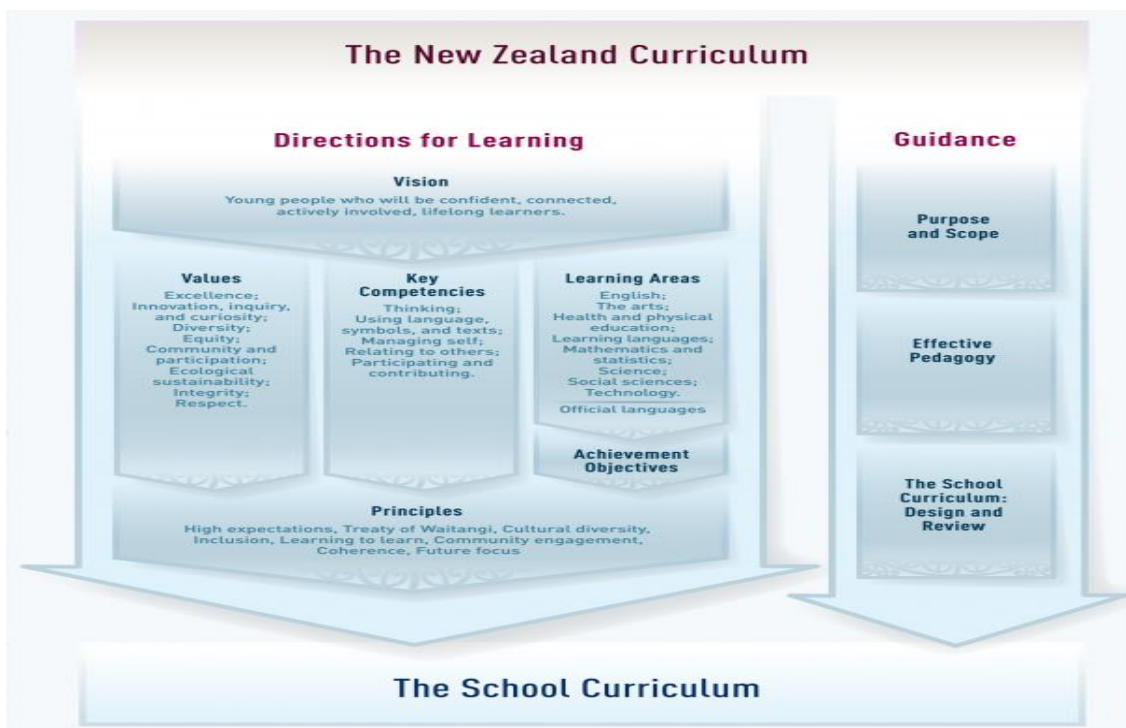


Figure 5.1. The New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007)

The New Zealand Curriculum states that “Each Board of Trustees, through the principal and staff, is required to develop and implement a curriculum for students in years 1-13” (p. 44). In addition,

Curriculum design and review ... [will] give effect to the national curriculum in ways that best address the particular needs, interests and circumstances of the school’s students and community. It requires a clear

understanding of the intentions of the New Zealand Curriculum, and of the values and expectations of the community. (p. 37)

As Benade (2011) argues, this requires a school's professional staff to trust and respect its community, and may 'test the limits of democratic tolerance of ethical teacher professionalism' (p. 198).

The school's charter outlines the board's vision for the school and activates this through its mission statement and strategic plan. While there is bound to be some tension between local and national values in different communities, and as discussed earlier, between different groups and individuals that comprise a community, boards are also reminded that the implementation of the curriculum is underpinned by, and consistent with [its] principles.

Yet as Ball (1994), Bernstein (2000), and Codd (1988) point out, all texts are open to interpretation, and "for any text, a plurality of readers must necessarily produce a plurality of meanings" (Codd, 1988, p. 239). In many ways, the statutory obligations of the board largely become the responsibility of the principal, as well as the various responsibilities involved in developing and implementing a curriculum. So while it may seem that the local curriculum has been constructed by its community given "the greater devolution of management to local level by the state, the policy control still remains at the centre, placing the principal in the position of key mediator between government and the school community" (Moore, George, & Halpin, 2002, in Benade, 2011, p. 200).

5.8. The reality of policy implementation

A permissive curriculum presupposes a deep level of understanding of curriculum theory and practice, and thus the ability to align effective pedagogical practice with the implicit or explicit intent of the curriculum (Sinnema & Aitken, 2013). But as Luke et al. (2013) point out,

the official curriculum cannot by its very definition, contain and express, control and micro-manage what goes on in the classroom. [While] it

might constrain and enable certain practices and processes and not others, [the] written document is never the same as the lived experience of the curriculum constructed and enacted by teachers and students in classrooms. (p. 6)

They argue that there has been insufficient research on the 'technical form' of the curriculum, that is, the effectiveness of the different types of structures and layouts that curriculum writers, policy makers and educators can draw on to help make important decisions that impact on policy implementation. They argue that in the case of ensuring equity for all students; this matters. The negotiated and contestable nature of the official curriculum documents suggests that ideological tensions can be expected to exist within the national curriculum, which are subsequently reflected in the different discourses and assumptions about teaching and learning (Abbiss, 2011). Yet this has implications for the theoretical underpinnings of the curriculum, its interpretations, discourses and practices as it travels through the different fields of Bernstein's (2000) pedagogical device.

The New Zealand Curriculum requires a lot of integration of the different elements, including some new elements such as the key competencies, where the intent is not necessarily clear. Not only are schools and teachers required to integrate the vision, values, key competencies into the eight learning areas when planning and teaching to realise the curriculum's vision, but they are also required to underpin this with the eight principles. Given that I have highlighted that the relationship and associated needs discourse between the Treaty of Waitangi, cultural diversity and inclusion principles is not clear at a government level, it is of little surprise that schools have found this difficult; and in some cases ignoring some elements altogether, or over-assimilating the shifts required (ERO, 2009, 2011).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, early exploratory research and sampling into the amount of community consultation and collaboration on shared values and priorities for curriculum design (New Zealand Curriculum Exploratory Studies: New Zealand Council for Educational Research; Monitoring and Evaluation of Curriculum Implementation, Auckland University) indicates that New Zealand schools have found

this aspect difficult. Ministry of Education and Education Review Office reporting on New Zealand Curriculum implementation in schools continue to highlight relatively low levels of community consultation in school curriculum discussions (ERO, 2009, 2011.) For some, consultation has meant community endorsement of the school's curriculum statements and practices unpacked, discussed and defined by the school. For others, the vision and values have been actively co constructed by the school and its community through a range of consultative processes. The risk is that if schools don't seek to collaborate with their parent community, or engage only with those parents or caregivers who traditionally have always engaged because of the comfort of a common cultural capital, curriculum design may continue to be the preserve of the dominant class and their 'unchallenged' values and practices as interpreted by the teaching profession. This could potentially include more neo-liberal curriculum constructs and outcomes, evaluated by the mechanisms of instrumentalist educational agendas.

5.9. Summary

In reviewing the literature on curriculum as a theoretical field, and the various influences on how it is conceptualised, interpreted and implemented as official national or state policy texts, it largely supports Bernstein's (2000) theory of the contestations of control over the pedagogical device, albeit sometimes, in less clearly demarcated and visible ways. Both national and global socio-political influences, such as the scientific and technological dominance and competitiveness, and behaviourist approaches to social engineering, can be evidenced in the history of curriculum. In Bernstein's model, the typical agents in the production field are academics and professional experts. Yet both the agents and sites of discourse in each of the fields appear to include some new and influential players, potentially as a result of the increasing dominance of neo liberal policies and organisations and value systems, nationally and internationally. While elected governments have the mandate to progress a particular view of curriculum, they too, are required to accommodate an increasingly wider range of interest groups. In more recent times, trying to achieve a balance between economic progress, and social justice and environmental impacts

appears to have had an influence on contemporary curriculum design. This has perhaps been exemplified through different interpretations around the intent and outcomes of the curriculum key competencies, discussed in more depth in the following chapter.

The design and implementation of school curricula, whether it be explicitly prescribed by central government, or indirectly managed through the various legal and accountability levers as it cascades to local school level, continues to be a contentious and difficult process. While appearing to reflect democratic processes, each level curriculum policy appears to be largely (re)interpreted by those who hold the most power. Most postmodernist theorists would support the notion that policy making is non-linear and messy, and requiring negotiation and compromise, yet how policy is presented in either draft form for consultation, or in its final form, determines the type of and extent of the discourse that takes place and who is 'empowered' to participate. In reviewing the extensive literature on the underpinning values and ideologies that inform curricula, there appears to be minimal acknowledgement in the official New Zealand curriculum of the potential for the ethno-cultural and/or individual value conflicts that might underpin the national, school or classroom curriculum discussions, nor how they might be sensitively addressed.

A permissive curriculum appears to provide greater opportunities for democratic processes and wider participation, but its lack of explicitness and at times contradictions in terms of its intent, its underpinning values and desired outcomes, make it difficult to clarify or argue its position in a number of areas. There is evidence to suggest that both policy makers and educators may not necessarily be aware of the theoretical positioning, values and belief systems that underpin their curriculum decisions, and it would seem important in terms of trying to improve outcomes for diverse students, that 'critical consciousness-raising' needs to take place (Olssen et al., 2004; Timperley, 2008). Policy makers and educators are traditionally the key agents through which the content and intent of the curriculum is delivered, they are therefore agents of particular ideologies, unconscious and conscious biases and the consequences of these. In a similar way to *Te Whāriki, The New Zealand Curriculum*

could mean all things to all people, and in the same vein, provide the flexibility for an exceptional school curriculum that is highly responsive to its diverse student community, or the flexibility to continue poor or hegemonic practice in a number of critical areas.

While there appear to be a few documents and papers that helped articulate the underpinning theories and intent of the 2007 New Zealand curriculum, I would concur with Kliebard (1986) who believes that the ahistorical and atheoretical nature of traditional curriculum development has disabled teachers [and their communities] from understanding the history of their present circumstances, or the political and economic contexts which have determine those decisions. I would argue that Kliebard's position is particularly relevant when viewed in the context of the New Zealand curriculum's key competencies, which will be examined in the following chapter.

Chapter 6. The Emergence of Key Competencies in Education

6.0. Introduction

In this final chapter of the literature review, I examine the origins of the concept of competences, and the emergence of *key competencies* in 21st century schools curricula, which is a key focus of this research. The concept of 'competences' appear to have largely emanated from the business and employment sector, and traditionally relate to those sets of knowledge and skills which have been relatively easy to define and more easily observable in terms of mastery or competence. As working environments have become more complex, expectations have extended beyond knowing 'what' to being able to determine *how* and *when*, although not necessarily *why* a particular response is required, in increasingly unpredictable and challenging situations. This appears to underpin the shift from using the term *competence* commonly defined as the capability to carry out a defined function effectively, to *competency* as the description of the knowledge, skills, experience, attributes and behaviours necessary to carry out a defined function effectively; descriptions that have found their way into a number of school curricula.

Along with Westera (2001), Hutmacher (1997) debates whether there is much difference in the range of terms used in relation to competence and competencies, but sees significant problems with the theoretical construct, particularly in educational contexts. In keeping with Bernstein's (2000) theory of control of the pedagogical device, Hutmacher draws attention to the discourse that underpins the language of those in power, particularly at the valued outcomes and qualifications level.

Takayama (2013) draws on Bernstein's (2000) visible and invisible pedagogies to argue that the implicit nature of the key competencies likely perpetuate inequities

for marginalised groups. He leads us to question whether all children and young people have had the multiple opportunities required to understand and to learn what one is expected to do in diverse situations. This includes how explicit the requirements have been, and whether children and young people have been given the opportunity to critique and reconcile this with their own experiences and values. Although an individual may be aware of the desired behaviours and attitudes, their motivation or ability to demonstrate these may be influenced by a whole range of factors, such as those highlighted by Burbules (1997) and Crenshaw (1989), and others as discussed in Chapter 3. Westera (2001) notes that if competence is the ability to transfer desired behaviours from one setting to another equally unique and unpredictable setting, then how is this ability determined if every situation is different. Are the competencies required by individual employers the same as those sought by a democratic society, including the tenets of human rights and social justice? The emergence of 'key' competencies as defined by supra-international bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the European Union, seem to have had a global impact on national curricula and the valued knowledge, skills and attitudes that all young people must aspire to. As stated in the introduction to this research, the OECD's 1996 report *'The Knowledge-based Economy'* placed significant emphasis on the role of knowledge and technology in economic growth. Knowledge was increasingly viewed as a commodity, alongside human capital theoretical frameworks which emphasised continuous learning and adaptability to the demands of the workplace. Little mention was made of the contribution of the social sciences or arts to individual and societal well-being, or in terms of the multiple perspectives or world-views on valued knowledge. These ideas were discussed in depth in the New Zealand educational context through the publication of the book, *Catching the Knowledge Wave? The knowledge society and the future of education* (Gilbert, 2005).

Crick (2008) along with Takayama (2013), reflect on the implications of the OECD competencies beyond educational contexts. Others, such as Reid (2006), are also concerned with the pervasive neoliberal economic and individualistic agenda, argue for reframing competencies as capabilities. He believes the use of the term

‘capabilities’ as being much more action-oriented and representing the potential of what a person is able to ‘be’ and ‘do’ in a well-functioning and just society.

In the case of vocational competencies, Wheelahan (2007) raises concerns about relativism (see also Nussbaum, 2000); that everything is of value relative to the perspective and the context, and thus results in the devaluing of discipline knowledge. She argues from a Bernsteinian perspective that unless all students are supported to have access to, and can integrate or critique powerful discipline knowledge from their own perspectives or world views, many will continue to be disadvantaged.

It remains unclear whether the intent of the key competencies was to balance the perceived over-emphasis on traditional discipline knowledge with a more holistic approach to the education of young citizens, or whether there was a much more instrumentalist agenda in prioritising the skills and dispositions for a highly demanding, but increasingly insecure workplace. The New Zealand curriculum key competencies are part of a high-level permissive policy framework, and it would appear that they can be largely (re)interpreted by professional development providers and individual schools and teachers. The effectiveness of this approach is of course, highly dependent on schools’ ability to critically engage with the theoretical debates that underpin them, and at the same time demonstrate they are delivering on the outcomes required by central government. The different interpretations of the key competencies in national and local curricula can become a potential site of struggle between a number of different world views, value systems and ideologies. It is therefore important to examine the original construct of competence and competencies, how these have been appropriated for use in the educational contexts, and the issues in the design, application and evaluation of desired outcomes for diverse students.

6.1. Competences and competencies

Hutmacher (1997) notes that there are many definitions of competences and competencies. He sees only a marginal difference between skill, competence, competency, ability, mastery and craftsmanship, and notes that in the European multilingual context, there is a great wealth of nuances and significant potential for misunderstanding and misuse. He cites Anderson (1992), who distinguishes between abilities and competences; abilities representing the operational outcomes of the test, while competences represent the underlying cognitive functioning.

The term 'core competences' was introduced by Westera (2001), to identify the qualities associated with the competitiveness of businesses and companies. In this context, they are generally equated with individual or organisational characteristics that are directly related to effective behaviour or performance. Clearly-defined behavioural characteristics form the basis of much of this work. Yet others note that even training towards well-defined skills in applying factual knowledge in appropriate and productive ways seems insufficient as a basis for professional work, and the traditional emphasis on factual knowledge is no longer enough (Kirschner, Vilsteren, Hummel, & Wigman, 1997). Westera captures the nature of the workplace today as demanding that "employees are able to operate in complex environments, i.e. environments characterised by ill-defined problems, contradictory information, informal collaboration, and abstract, dynamic and highly integrated processes" (p. 75).

While the notion of competence may be widely accepted, there are concerns about the assumptions that underpin its use. Hutmacher (1997) claims that "managers and experts glibly employ it when they speak of what is supposed to be, or ought to be the purpose of schools and education systems, and they do so as if the notion were self-evident" (p. 45). The concept of competence is strongly associated with the ability to master complex situations – and it is assumed that 'competence' is the effective combination of different levels of knowledge and skills. As a result, the term has become attractive for both educators and employers because it is easily identified with valued capabilities, qualifications and expertise (Westera, 2001).

There is also a much broader everyday use of the word competence, which goes beyond the simple mastery of relevant knowledge; successful performance in complex environments requires individuals who are able to select from their available knowledge and skills so that efficient and effective behaviour occurs.

Kirschner et al. (1997, p. 155) draw on Stephenson and Weil (1992) and Barnett (1994) to define competence as 'the ability to make satisfactory and effective decisions in a specific setting or situation'. Stephenson and Weil (1992) argue that competencies also include attitudinal components, such as self-confidence, motivation and persistence and use the term 'capability' to define the integration of confidence in one's knowledge, skills, self-esteem and values. They state that capable persons "... have confidence in their ability to take effective and appropriate actions, explain what they are about, live and work effectively with others, and continue to learn from experiences" (p. 155, in Kirschner et al., 1997). Stephenson and Weil emphasise that it is not the mere possession of skills alone, but the self-confidence in knowing how to use skills within unfamiliar and changing circumstances that really matters. Kirschner et al. (1997) believe this also aligns with Barnett's (1994) definition of competence refers to the ability to 'cope with unpredictability and even allow for creativity' (p. 73). Given the arguments of competences as being much more than sets of predefined sets of skills but as having a significant attitudinal component (competencies), this highlights a number of issues related to the value judgements, power dynamics and socio-cultural contexts in which an individual finds themselves.

Preparing diverse young people to be able to respond as different employers or communities might desire, across infinite contexts and possibilities, is a huge ask of any education system. Not only are societies and workplaces undergoing rapid change in terms of the technologies, knowledge and skill requirements, but the impact of migration and globalisation means that young people need to be able to respond 'appropriately' in situations where languages, cultures, values and ways of doing things are completely new, sometimes confronting, for diverse individuals. At a time when education is increasingly recognising the centrality of a student's sense of identity, wellbeing and cultural-locatedness, this presents a significant challenge,

particularly in relation to more unitary constructions of education and its contribution to economic outcomes. Both Westera (2001) and Bernstein (2000) note in their discussion of competences, that making 'right' choices as a measure of competence is hugely subjective. Watson (2010) in particular, asks whether we are moving from what we want young people to know, to what we want young people to 'be'?

6.1.1. Knowledge, cognition and visible behaviours

An important characteristic of knowledge is that it is relatively straightforward to determine whether or not a person possesses a specific body of knowledge. If someone is unable to reproduce the knowledge at hand in a test situation within reasonable length of time, it is concluded that the person lacks the knowledge. Westera (2001) cautions, however, that one should not confuse knowledge with understanding. The ability to reproduce information does not necessarily presuppose understanding of the information, for example mathematical formulae. Understanding represents an intellectual capability to use information in a sensible meaningful way, and understanding is assumed to emerge when existing knowledge can be applied in a new situation. Because cognitive skills taking place in the brain are difficult to test directly, the only way to test mastery of a cognitive skill is to provoke observable behaviours that can be directly linked to that skill. For this reason, learning objectives for cognitive skills are usually described in operational (behavioural terms).

Hutmacher (1997), along with Bernstein (2000, pp. 44-50), also distinguishes between competency and performance. Hutmacher sees performance as 'doing' in a given situation. It is the demonstration of a competency or capacity (or capability) and of a more general disposition to act, or of a potential for action in a given situation. However, only performance is observable; competency (or habitus, as the total set of competencies) is a characteristic which can only be inferred from the observation of action, from performance. Competency is what enables performance or action, and might be seen as the capacity to find the procedure (knowledge and action) which suits a problem. Drawing on the findings of the sociology of knowledge and social psychology, Hutmacher stresses that the capacity to generate practice or

performance does not remain constant in the same individual in different situations, or between subjects in the same situation. Furthermore, it could be argued that people see different solutions to the same problem; solutions which are influenced by a number of socio-cultural constructs and value systems.

6.1.2. Competences and societal values

Westera (2001) situates the notion of competence as an overarching educational goal which is embedded in a sociocultural, historical and ethical trajectory and includes a sense of agency, intention and capability in real-life contexts of achievement, lifelong learning and citizenship. The journey towards competence encompasses both the deeply personal and private (sense of identity, desire and motivation) and the highly public and formally assessable. He argues that the development of competence requires the accumulation of personal identity, motivation, values and attitudes, the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding in order to become competent in a particular domain (Westera, 2001). A competent citizen may have a particular sense of identity, and desire for participation. They may be disposed to participate, and have a set of values which mean that participation is important to them. As a consequence, they may develop the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to engage productively in community, and public life – and to be fully competent they will be drawing on all of these in developing the practical know-how and wisdom about how, when and where to engage. These are sometimes referred to as ‘meta-competencies’ or ‘meta-capabilities’ (see Section 5.7 for a more detailed discussion of these concepts). Competence may be the goal or outcome of the process of learning – but a competent agent will also be self-reflexive, able to revise their identity, values and knowledge as appropriate.

Hutmacher (1997, p. 47) compares two lists of synonyms for ‘competency’ and associated terms also noting different registers that reflect the way the competencies are thought about. In his example (see Table 6.1 below), one register describes individual capacities and the other the power to act granted by society. He argues that the competencies acquired and the aptitudes, individual talent, genius and mastery that are recognised, are thus linked to power, to authority or permission to

decide and to act in particular fields or situations. Hutchmacher, in keeping with Bernstein (2000) believes that the blind spot concerning the social distribution of power needs to be analysed.

Table 6.1. Synonyms for competencies and associated registers

Knowing how to do:	Being able to do:
talent	qualification
aptitude	authorisation
capacity	licence
know-how	authority
disposition	power
art	attribution
genius	delegation
cleverness	responsibility
skill	nomination
dexterity	power to act
experience	influence
mastery	right
astuteness	permission

(From Hutmacher, 1997, p. 47)

Through his analysis of the social logic of competence, Bernstein (2000) views the recent emphasis on competence as idealistic, and suggests from his analysis that it reveals:

1. an announcement of a universal democracy of acquisition. All are inherently competent and all possess common procedures. There are no deficits.
2. the subject is active and creative in the construction of a valid world of meanings and practice. Here there are differences but not deficits.
3. an emphasis on the subject as self-regulating, a benign development. Further this development is not advanced by

formal instruction. Official socialisers are suspect, for acquisition of these procedures is a tacit, invisible act not subject to public regulation.

4. a critical sceptical view of hierarchical relations. This follows from (3) as in some theories the socialisers function should not go beyond facilitation, accommodation, and context management. Competence theories have an emancipatory flavour.
5. a shift in the temporal perspective to the present tense. The relevant time arises out of the point of realisation of the competence, for it is this point which reveals the past and adumbrates the future. (p. 43)

Bernstein (2000) argues that this is an idealistic approach, and even though it appears to be 'a celebration of what we are in contrast to what we have become', it is "bought at a price; the price of abstracting the individual from the analysis of distributions of power and principles of control, which selectively specialise modes of acquisition and realisations" (p. 43). So while it may feel emancipatory and learner-centered on the surface, both the means by which individuals acquire competence, and the ends, by what and how this is judged, are still determined by more powerful others.

6.2. Competing ideologies and the influence of The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

Following on from Bernstein's (2000) social justice position, Crick (2008) argues that the construction of competence is an ideological and political act, because of its particular understanding of the 'good life', which may be different when viewed from within a social justice narrative or a neo-liberal narrative. From the time of Socrates and Plato, there have been differing conceptions of what the concept of 'the good life' is (see Chapter 4, Section 4.6.). Crick refers to *The European Reference Framework, European Council, 2006, 394.13* which describes one of its main aims is to identify and define the key competences necessary for personal fulfilment, active

citizenship, social cohesion and employability in a knowledge society. She notes that through these dual goals of personal and social fulfilment and the needs of the economy in a global society, two different narratives emerge in the way competence is described and exemplified, and the underpinning value sets which inform policy and practice in relation to monitoring and evaluation. Within the European Union, social cohesion and justice are key tenets within and across diverse member states, while the other narrative is driven through the need for the EU to be competitive on the global economic stage. Crick questions whether these two narratives are competing and mutually exclusive, or whether they might be achieved through a finely nuanced social and economic ecology. This view may be more closely aligned to the third way approach favoured by Giddens (1990) and Benade (2011) as discussed in Chapter 4, which I have argued is not without its contradictions. Yet it has been the work of the OECD, in their definition and selection of key competencies in education, which appears to have had a significant influence on New Zealand's interpretation of key competencies in the 2007 curriculum.

6.2.1. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) policy discourse – characterized by such keywords as 'skills and knowledge for life', 'key competencies' and 'knowledge economy' – has been influential in shaping [inter]national education policy discourse (Ball, 2008; Bieber & Martens, 2011, in Takayama, 2013). Dominique Rychen and Laura Salganik led its *Definition and Selection of the Key Competencies Project* from 1997. The term 'competence' as defined by Rychen and Salganik (2003) is described as:

the ability to successfully meet complex demands in a particular context through the mobilisation of psychosocial prerequisites (including cognitive and non-cognitive aspects' and as the 'internal mental structures in the sense of abilities, dispositions or resources embedded in the individual' in interaction with a specific real world task or demand. (p. 43)

Rychen and Salganik further elaborate, describing the internal structures of a competence as including dimensions of knowledge, cognitive skills, practical skills, attitudes, emotions, values, ethics and motivation. “Competencies are broader than knowledge or skills, and are acquired in an on-going, lifelong learning process across the whole range of personal, social and political contexts and is at the interface between the person and the demands of the real world” (p. 44).

Takayama (2013) outlines the OECD’s lifelong learning policy agenda, which emerged out of an international consensus around education policy in the late 1990s:

OECD countries and other supranational organizations shared the view that the globalization of economy, the rapid advancement of information and communication technologies, the rise of knowledge as the critical commodities in late capitalism and the associated social and cultural changes were fundamentally altering the way people would live, work and learn. (pp. 68-69)

He notes the influence of The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations’ (UNESCO) report, *Learning: The Treasure Within* (Delores, 1996) (see Chapter 4, Section 2.4) which called for ‘advanced industrial nations to recognize the provision of lifelong and society-wide learning opportunities as the key strategy for economic productivity, individual and social well-being and socio economic inclusion’ (p. 69). Jacques Delores’ four pillars of learning were ‘learning to live together, learning to know, learning to do and learning to be’.

Building on UNESCO’s work, the OECD proposed in the late 1990s, a new vision of learning that ‘embraces individual and social development of all kinds in all settings – formally in schools, vocational tertiary and adult education institutions and non-formally, at home, at work and in the community’ (Gonczi, 2006, in Takayama, 2013). The concept of lifelong learning, actively promoted by these two influential organizations, has been actively promoted and endorsed by a large number of member countries and their respective institutions. Yet as Bernstein (2000) argues, this new conceptualisation of work and life means that stability has been replaced by ‘flexibility’ and ‘adaptability’, responsiveness to change, and constructions of the

'lifelong learner'. He posits that the concept of 'trainability' underpins this new conceptualisation:

[Trainability] places the emphasis on 'something' the [individual] must possess in order for that [individual] to be 'appropriately formed and reformed according to technological, organisational and market contingencies. This 'something' which is crucial to the survival of the [individual], the economy and presumably society, is the ability to be taught, the ability to respond effectively to concurrent, subsequent, intermittent pedagogics. (p. 59)

Bernstein (2000) maintains that the capacity of trainability is the outcome of a specific identity which arises out of a particular social order. He argues that an individual's future relies not on an ability, but on their adaptability; being able to respond to concurrent and subsequent retraining. Bernstein notes that "the individual's identity is [re]constructed as a 'consumer', and success is defined by materialities of consumption through the abundance or absence of goods" (p. 59). He regards this as individualistic, and devoid of social connectedness.

Bernstein (2000) sees this emphasis on individualism as characteristic of neo-liberal discourse, with this kind of identity legitimised and reinforced through an agreed collective purpose. In this case, access to traditional resources for identity formation, such as social, cultural and religious groups and their discourse and practices, are no longer straightforward or so easily available, or even acknowledged as being important. In the context of the OECD's Programme for International Student Achievement (PISA), any contextual, cultural or curriculum bias is excluded to maintain the 'objectivity' of the tests. Yet in doing so it eliminates and thus devalues the very aspects that prepare young people to function successfully in their contextualised local and national environments. According to Sjøberg (2016), only a minority of these students will operate in a global, international market. Sjøberg also notes while PISA states that it does not test school knowledge, nor test according to national curricula, the PISA results are interpreted in OECD reports, and by the different countries, as valid measures of the quality of national school systems, and

the PISA reports are full of policy recommendations regarding schools (Loveless, 2009, in Sjøberg, 2016).

6.2.2. The Definition and Selection of the Key Competencies (DeSeCo) project

The OECD's DeSeCo programme identified four analytical elements of key competencies: they are multifunctional; they traverse social fields; they refer to a higher order of mental complexity which includes an active, reflective and responsible approach to life; and they are multidimensional, incorporating know-how, analytical, critical, creative and communication skills as well as common sense. This shift in emphasis from the 'know-what' or 'factual knowledge/recall' to the 'know-why, know-how and know-who' has been a feature of the OECD school curricula recommendations since the late 1990s (Takayama, 2013). According to Tiana (2004), in an emerging 'knowledge society', formal schooling should not be "so concerned with nurturing minds and defining the contents to be learned, but 'must improve the (students') capacity of reacting to new demands and adapting to new circumstances" (p.38). Tiana also notes that this new conceptualisation of learning is also reflected in the design and content of the OECD's Programme for International Student Achievement (PISA) as well. It is designed to assess "the relevant skills developed by students', or 'life skills' as opposed to the knowledge they acquire through the school curriculum, or 'school skills" (p. 55). This raises a number of concerns about the use of a high stakes international assessment tool to promote the particular conceptions of curriculum it espouses, and does not, and cannot take account of the unique country contexts which inform local curriculum. The OECD's work in this area gave rise to the DeSeCo project which identifies nine key competencies under three broad categorizations: (1) acting autonomously, (2) using tools interactively and (3) functioning in socially heterogeneous groups (OECD, 2005), and have been used in various forms and permutations in a number of national curricula of OECD member countries.

6.2.3. Debates within the DeSeCo project

Keating's (2001) contribution to the DeSeCo project (see Chapter 1) highlighted the fact that several experts believed that many of the broader set of competencies are unlikely to be primarily fostered through formal schooling and that a number of them

found the project rather problematic. While Canto-Sperber & Dupuy (2001) refer to key competencies as competencies indispensable for 'the good life', Fratzak-Rudnicka and Torney-Purta's (2001) submission argued that there was not agreement on what societies value and what constitutes a 'good' citizen, and Jack Goody's (1999) paper challenged some of the fundamental premises that the key competencies were based on:

The anthropologist Jack Goody rejects engaging in a decontextualized discussion of key competencies on grounds that theory must always be considered in the context of practice. Recognizing that there may be some very general qualities required by modern life, Goody focuses on the intractability of specifying key competencies at a level that can span cultures, social contexts, and individuals and at a level that would also be useful for developing measures. He also cautions against limiting the work to developed countries because it is bound to be used in a larger context and have a negative, homogenizing effect. (Rychen & Salganik, 2000a, p. 9)

As stated earlier, the lifelong learning policy framework also guides PISA; it is designed to assess 15-year olds' "individual attributes which were developed in a variety of contexts beyond formal schooling" (Gonczy, 2006, in Takayama, 2013; Tiana, 2004). It would appear that the OECD influence potentially extends not only to nation's education system and its curricula, but also into people's homes, communities and workplaces and ways of being. Takayama (2013), in particular, finds it particularly concerning that the development of key competencies for all students requires not only a change in the nature of teaching and learning in formal schooling but also a careful rethinking of roles and responsibilities of a wide range of partners across the whole society – families, communities, voluntary associations, cultural and religious organizations, schools, workplaces and governments (see Rychen & Salganik, 2000a; Gonczy, 2006, in Takayama, 2013; Tiana, 2004).

Analysis of the wider social and physical environment policy context that impacts on people's ability and desire to participate in the wider society and the workplace,

including their family, health and care responsibilities, needs to be undertaken if the policy is to be equitable and just (Keating, 2001). In addition, Hutmacher (1997) maintains that while it is legitimate to require results in terms of competencies acquired by young people, he also argues that it may become excessively instrumentalist if equal attention is not given to the processes by which individuals become competent. These considerations would seem to be of critical importance for curriculum designers and educators in ensuring that there is not the 'reproduction' of the cultural hegemonies, invisible pedagogies and inequities that the key theorists for this research, Bernstein (2000), Fraser (1989), Crenshaw (1989) and Burbules (1997), have highlighted.

There appears to be a number of different lists of desirable competences in school curricula from around the world. As countries, including New Zealand, respond to their constituents social, political and economic concerns (see Table 6.2 below), several have based their framework quite closely on the OECD competencies.

Table 6.2. Examples of countries' definitions of key/core competencies

OECD Key Competencies				
Thinking				
Acting autonomously ~ Functioning in socially heterogeneous groups ~ Using tools interactively				
UK/Northern Ireland	Norway	Scotland	Australia	New Zealand
Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Personal and interpersonal skills • Managing information 	Pursuit of five basic skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to express oneself • Being able to express oneself in writing • Being able to use digital tools • Being able to read • Being able to develop numeracy 	Pursuit of four main capabilities – individuals to develop as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful learners • Confident individuals • Responsible citizens • Effective contributors • Literacy • Health and wellbeing • Skills for learning, life and work • Numeracy 	Ten capabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Thinking skills • Creativity • Self management • Teamwork • Intercultural understanding • Ethical behaviour and social competence • Literacy • Numeracy • ICT 	Key Competencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking • Using language, symbols and texts • Managing self • Participating and contributing • Relating to others
Indonesia	Singapore	Nambia	South Africa	
National examinations will target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intelligence • Knowledge • Personality • Noble character • Skills to live independently • Skills to continue studies 	Core skills and Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills • Character development • Self management skills • Social and cooperative skills • Thinking skills and creativity • Literacy and numeracy • Information skills • Knowledge application skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to learn • Personal skills • Social skills • Cognitive skills • Communicative skills • Numeracy skills • Information and communication technology skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and solve problems • Work effectively with others • Collect analyse, organise and critically evaluate information • Communicate effectively • Use science and technology effectively • Demonstrate understanding of the world as a set of related systems • Full personal development (reflecting on and exploring strategies to learn more effectively, responsible citizens, cultural and aesthetical sensitivities, education for career and entrepreneurial opportunities) 	

(Adapted from: Technical Note 111.3 International Bureau of Education UNESCO)

It is interesting to note that New Zealand does not make explicit reference to citizenship in the same way that Scotland, Australia and South Africa do, nor is there

reference to cultural sensitivity, or intercultural understanding as in the South African and Australian curricula. In addition, both Scotland and Australia refer to them as capabilities, rather than competencies.

6.3. Competencies or capabilities

In the quest for jurisdictions to identify essential or core competencies, there has been an exploration into what might be called 'broad-spectrum' competencies, which seem to offer a certain universality and the applicability to contexts which are neither too limited nor too specialised (Hutmacher, 1997). While they might be called key competencies because they open the door to other competencies with a more specific application, this presents problems in terms of their generality. He argues that key competencies have to be defined so that they can be taught in an educational process, otherwise, there would be a return to vague, general statements of aims. Others, Sen (2002) and Nussbaum (2000), in Reid (2006), seek to reframe the debates around competencies and the overly instrumentalist, individualist emphasis to one centred more on understandings about social justice and equality. Reid (2006) suggests there may be two broad approaches to competency thinking: the first is a utilitarian economic focus, organised around the intention to develop competences for the workplace in the knowledge economy. The second has a liberal-humanist focus, organised around an intention to develop personal and civic well-being as well as economic life. He argues that both versions are inadequate. The former limits education to being a servant of the economy and the latter is individualistic, seeing education as a private benefit. He goes on to develop a rationale for key competences based on a commitment to democracy and social justice, in which the term 'capabilities' replaces 'competence' and represents what a person is able to 'be' and 'do' in order to be able to function successfully, personally and publicly in contemporary society.

Capabilities to function are the basis of a just society, because they ensure people not only have rights, such as the right to political

participation, but also that they have the capabilities to exercise those rights. (p. 49)

Reid (2006) argued that the development of such capabilities is an entitlement for all, and should be a key curriculum goal, enjoying equal and integrated status with the traditional curriculum goal of the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. If competencies are viewed as the knowledge, skills and dispositions a person develops over time; capabilities are about ensuring they have ability to mobilise and apply these in their lives, now and in the future. Along with Sen (2002) and Nussbaum (2000), Reid (2006) suggests that instead of economic growth, the indicators of a nation's quality of life and civic well-being should be capabilities – what people are actually able to be and to do.

The notion of 'meta-competence' (Haste, 2001) is explored as a potential means of transcending the binary tension between an economic and a social narrative. While Nussbaum (2000) describes a basic set of 10 capabilities that every person needs in order to become the person they are capable of being, Sen (2002) has argued that attempting any further specificity risks a separation from context and recognition of the powerful influences that determine whether certain capabilities can be demonstrated, or be recognised as such; whether specific political, social and economic contexts are enabling or constraining for individuals. Jaggar (2006) posits that Nussbaum's capabilities may have ignored not only the power imbalances between men and women, but also Western and Non-Western peoples, and appears to take somewhat of a neo-colonialist position on determining what is 'informed' and 'just' and 'right'.

6.4. Cultural norms and valued competences

In discussing the types of valued behaviours and attitudes that comprise competence, Westera (2001) argues that that clearly 'successful' performances and 'right' choices refer to normative criteria; this can risk arbitrary standards and assessments in complex environments involving many different peoples, perspectives and interests. Competence has been associated with successful performance,

effective use of resources, and making the right choices. In such situations, success (or failure) from one perspective can be interpreted quite differently from another perspective.

6.4.1. Differences in experiences and opportunities to develop competency

Hutmacher (1997) describes competency as a general capability based on knowledge, experience, values, dispositions which a person has developed through involvement with educational practices, and believes it is necessary to take into account the differences in experience, education, background and situation. He also raises the issue of 'chance', referring to "the way in which each person views the process of becoming a human being and learning, and the way in which he or she sees the school's mission and analyses how schools are organised and can operate in their own specific context" (p. 45). Hutmacher refers to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1977), which describes the continual, transferable disposition to perceive, think, evaluate and act which is internalised by human beings in the course of, and by way of, their experience of interaction with a specific social environment. An individual's ability to adapt to an infinite variety of life situations is linked to their capacity to 'mobilise' the knowledge and experience they have acquired through their life.

The capability to make 'good' use of the learning opportunities that an individual might be presented with is affected by a whole range of contextual factors, some of which have been discussed throughout this review of the literature. An individual's cultural, linguistic and economic identities and environments can significantly influence the ways in which they have access to and respond to the knowledge, skills and valued behaviours being presented to them. As Bernstein (2000), Fraser (1989), Crenshaw (1989) and others have pointed out, it may not be a level playing field in terms of the ways these competencies have been constructed, in the ways that diverse individuals can exercise them in the communities and in the workplace, and in the ways they may be rewarded for doing so. Individual agency would seem to play a critical role in any notion of key competencies and Haste (2001) raises the notion of meta-competences as a way of transcending some of the more hegemonic interpretations of important knowledge and skills.

6.5. Meta-competence and meta-capabilities

Haste (in Crick, 2008) suggests that the notion of competence implies ‘effective interaction and agency in relation to the physical, social and cultural world’ and describes this as a ‘meta-competence’. Unless it is embedded in such meta-competence, a domain-based skill cannot be defined as a ‘competence’. She argues that for life in the twenty-first century people need to develop the overarching ‘meta-competence’ of being able to manage the tension between innovation and continuity. Haste acknowledges that the ‘canon’ of knowledge which societies reproduce in their curricula, and thus becomes the organising framework, as undergoing constant and rapid change. However she argues, along with Wheelahan (2007) and others, that it is important to enable all young people to acquire publicly assessed, rigorous specialist knowledge and at the same time to participate in learning how to manage, assimilate, critique, reproduce and apply that knowledge in real life. Haste also highlights the Western liberal assumption of ‘individual as autonomous agent’, as a key aspect of this meta-competence, and which Crick notes has come under increasingly diverse and sustained critique, from Foucauldian sociology, communitarians⁸ and social cultural theorists and other perspectives:

The interdependence of persons in ‘maintaining continuity laterally (in community) and temporally (with one’s roots and traditions) is an increasingly contemporary concern and has to be held in creative tension with the management and assimilation of change. (Crick, 2008, p. 315)

Haste notes, however, that managing the challenge between the traditional, publically-assessed rigorous specialist knowledge and learning how to integrate, critique and apply that knowledge in diverse contexts is a significant challenge for both curriculum design and pedagogical practice. While some ‘vocationalists’ might argue that such meta-capabilities are too broad and prioritise a social justice agenda,

⁸ **Communitarianism** is a philosophy that emphasizes the connection between the individual and the community. Its overriding philosophy is based upon the belief that a person’s social identity and personality are largely molded by community relationships, with a smaller degree of development being placed on individualism: Wikipedia

a number of social realists (Muller, 2000; Rata, 2012; Young and Lambert, 2014) also claim the emergence of key competencies in education risks side-lining important discipline knowledge and risks relativism, where knowledge and skills are reduced to personal perspectives and everyday applications, and an overly simplistic approach to vocational competencies.

6.6. Vocational competencies and the demise of discipline knowledge

In her critique of Australia's vocational competencies, Wheelahan (2007) employs a Bernsteinian analysis to explore the impact of competency thinking on vocational pathways and tracks for 'less-academically oriented' students. She believes vocational education and training developments in Australia and elsewhere, have reduced knowledge into statements about correlation and prediction within closed systems, citing Bhaskar (1998), who argues that these do not reflect the world of work nor any aspect of the social world. Such positivist views of knowledge are being seen as under the guise of progressivism, where the centrality of disciplinary knowledge and school subjects were challenged in favour of developing the intrinsic capacities of the child/student, and so the task of the teacher was not to instil disciplinary knowledge, but to "expose students to situations in which they could construct their knowledge of the world" (Bates et al., 1998, p. 111, in Wheelahan, 2007).

Wheelahan (2007) argues that rather than learning the isolated and unconnected contents of disciplinary knowledge, students need to learn the systems of meaning. Access to disciplinary knowledge or 'powerful knowledge' (Young and Lambert, 2014) is important because it provides students with access to the 'collective representations' about the causal mechanisms that the discipline studies, mechanisms that are not always accessible through direct experience (or problem-based learning). Students need access to the disciplinary "style of reasoning" (Muller, 2000, p. 88, in Wheelahan, 2007) to move beyond a focus on isolated examples of content.

6.6.1. Neo-liberal reductionism and conflation of 'learners and workers'

A focus on specific content for a specific context means that the meaning of that content is exhausted by the context. Students need to know how these complex bodies of knowledge fit together if they are to decide what knowledge is relevant for a particular purpose, and if they are to have the capacity to transcend the present to imagine the future. This has significant implications for students from low socio-economic backgrounds who have been less well supported by the system to access this 'powerful' knowledge and the style of reasoning represented in disciplinary knowledge (Muller, 2000), thus (re)producing class divisions in the workplace and wider society. So while key competencies or "soft skills" may have been touted as the means to prepare all students for 21st century living and learning within local and global communities, unless students also have access to and can integrate or critique important discipline knowledge from their own perspectives or world-views, then they may become further disadvantaged. This aligns with the arguments of Gramsci (1970) and Bernstein (2000) in their discussions of everyday versus discipline knowledge.

6.7. Key competencies in the official and enacted school curriculum

The integration and alignment of the key competencies (or capabilities) into the broader outcomes of education appears to be a significant challenge for curriculum designers. There has been considerable influence of business and employment on the school curriculum and in particular, the 'vocational' competencies they require of school leavers. While it is understandable that employers are wanting school graduates who are able to be responsive and flexible ('know how') in rapidly changing environments, the pressures on curriculum reform, particularly over the last few decades, have been immense. While the traditional siloed approach to knowledge is facing significant challenge, there have been constant calls to add more and more content to the curriculum, without recognition of the need for a coherent, organising framework (Luke et al., 2013). The emergence of 'knowledge' societies and human capital theory (HCT – see Chapter 5) with its investment in 'human intellect and creativity' is becoming the key economic strategy for a nation

(Takayama, 2013). Referring to Basil Bernstein's (2000) 'totally pedagogized society', Takayama (2013) believes people are increasingly required to develop "the [flex]ability to profit from continuous pedagogic reformations and so cope with the new requirements of 'work' and 'life' in order to survive the constantly changing 'risky' world" (Bernstein, 2001, pp. 365-366, in Takayama, 2013, p. 71). As they grow more complex, the economy and social, political and cultural life will require general knowledge of that type, which is what schools are designed to provide. Society will thus become more dependent on schools and the education system.

6.7.1. Teaching key competencies: Explicit and visible, or implicit and invisible

In revisiting the concept of the key competencies as a site of struggle for a number of opposing theories and ideologies, this plays out not only between the agents in Bernstein's (2000) fields of production and recontextualisation, but also in the field of reproduction, with the typical agents in this field; school leaders and teachers. If diverse students are expected to develop and apply the competencies across a wide range of predictable and unpredictable situations, it is not enough to design curricula and teaching methods for the various subjects and expect that the competencies will be a by-product. As Perrenoud (1999) notes in a DeSeCo experts paper, the acquisition of competencies depends on learners being active. He argues that notion of the formal curriculum conflicts in this case with that of the real curriculum, the total learning which is a result of pupils' experience in life and everyday work in school and of their relationship with their teachers, schoolmates and acquaintances.

An approach which aims at the 'acquisition' of competencies risks adopting a short-cut approach, whereby it is thought that worthwhile skills and competencies can be acquired without an immersion and serious engagement with the relevant domains of knowledge and experience. Engagement depends on the value and meaning which pupils and students give to the activities and studies they are offered. With regards to 'meaning, some people refer to motivation or interest, others of values, and yet others of emotional intelligence or moral purpose. But above all, it is important to emphasise that if rich experiences are required to develop the competencies, they must seem relevant and make sense to *all* pupils, and not only to teachers and school

leaders. “More often than not, difficulties and school failures are ‘breakdowns in meaning’ rather than intellectual inabilities to learn” (Hutmacher, 1997, p. 54).

Takayama (2013) draws on Basil Bernstein’s (2000, 2003) notion of ‘visible’ and ‘invisible pedagogies’ and their associated class bias to highlight their implications for teaching and assessing the key competencies, and is of particular relevance to this research. According to Bernstein, ‘visible pedagogies’ (or ‘performance models’) are where the instructional context and the task requirements are explicit, and the teacher is at the centre. The focus is on the child’s performance, on “the text the child is creating and the extent to which that text is meeting the criteria’ and thus on the ‘the external product of children” (2003, p. 19). In contrast, ‘invisible pedagogies’ place the child at the centre and the teacher acts more as a facilitator of children’s self-directed enquiries which often encompass multiple disciplines. Pedagogies, task requirements and assessment criteria are less explicit and more diffused. Bernstein questions the equity consequences of that latter approach, particularly “ the tacit assumption that the procedures of acquisition are equally possessed by all learners, or what he calls ‘an in-built procedural democracy” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 43). He argues that the acquisition of the procedures and competences are strongly dependent on the how familiar learners are with the invisible pedagogic codes that are closely aligned with the cultural practices and values of the middle classes. Codes which remain obscured and uncontrolled for the economically and culturally marginalised.

In the New Zealand context, employing what is perhaps the key element of Bernstein’s pedagogic device (Sadovnik, 2001), the five key competencies appear to be both ‘weakly-classified and strongly-framed’ (see Bernstein, 2000, pp. 14-15). *Classification* refers to the degree of differentiation and boundaries between subjects. While it has been argued throughout this chapter that the key competencies are context-specific, and require students to be able to utilise both knowledge and cognitive strategies in their learning, and to demonstrate they are developing the valued attitudes and behaviours as part of this process, the official curriculum does not provide specific guidance in the learning areas on *what* needs to be taught. *Framing* refers to how the knowledge is transmitted through pedagogic

practices, and the degree of control teachers and students have over the 'selection, sequencing, pacing and criteria for what transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship. With strong framing, control lies with the teacher, whereas with weak framing control lies apparently with the student (Bernstein, 2000, p. 99). As Bernstein (2000) notes, although the framing carries the message to be reproduced, there is always pressure on the pedagogic discourse and practice, and a struggle over the nature of the 'symbolic' control. As discussed throughout this literature review, there are a number of struggles for control of the pedagogic device, from sources both internal and external to the school. He suggests that where there is pressure to change the intent (or in Bernstein's theory, '*elaborated orientation*'); classification, or framing, from strong to weak, or visa-versa, that the following questions need to be asked:

1. Which group is responsible for initiating the change? Is the change initiated by a dominant group or a dominated group?
2. If values [strong or weak] are weakening, what values still remain strong? (Bernstein, 2000, p. 15)

Takayama (2013) questions how much of the post-modern capabilities are actually shaped by the school's pedagogic interventions, and sees them as much more strongly influenced by children's socio-economic backgrounds. He challenges the way that the concept of key competencies has been separated from the original lifelong policy discourse and the ability to achieving equitable outcomes when it becomes solely located in PISA and national educational policies. He sees this as side-lining the roles of 'the family, voluntary associations, religious organizations, cultural activities, recreational activities, and the workplace'; contexts that Rychen and Salganik (2000a, p. 72) acknowledge as critical complements to school-based learning, and believes this as placing unrealistic expectations on the role of schools in equalising children's competencies as learning outcomes. Takayama (2013) argues this 'decoupling' fundamentally undermines the potentially equitable implications of key competencies, and reinforces the existing cultural hierarchy that demonises 'other' families and communities whose everyday social interactions with children differs from the desired social 'norm' (Bernstein, 2000, 2003). Bernstein (2000) believes that

the opportunity to acquire the desired values, attitudes and motivations can never be equally distributed to all students because those psychosocial resources are tacitly acquired in informal interactions in families and communities. Takayama (2003, p. 77), drawing on Bernstein, argues that the current OECD approach to key competencies, referring specifically to the Japanese context but also beyond, “fails to recognize material conditions outside school walls as the basis of children’s psychosocial development, and is likely to perpetuate the ‘deficit’ view of these children, parents and communities”. As the main authors of the OECD key competencies work, Rychen and Salganik (2000a, p. 67) do acknowledge that competency learning is not only a matter of personal effort but more importantly requires “a favourable social and ecological environment, which includes, but goes beyond the satisfaction of basic needs (food, housing, health, etc.)”.

6.7.2. Observable ‘performance’ and assessment of competencies

According to Westera (2001), when competences are chosen as the ultimate objectives of education, they should be described in terms of well-expressed behaviours in well-expressed situations. When someone is deemed competent, their performance meets a standard. But as Westera and others have argued earlier, given that competences are commonly associated with unique, complex situations and ill-defined problems, this has consequences for their assessment. Assessment is usually associated with reproducibility; with the prediction of success in future behaviours; competence defined as the ability to produce successful behaviours in non-standardised situations.

As noted previously, contexts are necessarily charged emotionally, ideologically and politically (albeit to varying degrees), and they are subject to the perceptions and interpretations of the persons involved. Alongside Sen (2002), Hutmacher (1997) cautions that it is unwise to indulge in too much cognitive or instrumental reduction of the notion of competency. Observation of performance cannot ignore the issue of meaning, especially the meaning given to situations by subjects, the implications they see in them and the interpretations they give to them. How can a consensus be reached on a common concept? When a group of people from very different backgrounds is confronted with such a complex task, it is likely that a feeling of

confusion will emerge. School practice is traditionally based far more on the figure of the teacher and on the transmission of knowledge constructed and presented by teachers, than on pupils' (re)construction, acquisition and internalisation.

As discussed earlier, Crick (2008) sees defining competences for learners is a political and ideological act because it defines what does and does not count as evidence of worthwhile learning and thus shapes discourses and possibilities. She quotes James (2005, p. 89), who sees competences as “revealing not only a set of values but also to whom and to what we are prepared to listen when we seek evidence of learning”.

Crick believes that:

developing indicators and assessment tools to evaluate and measure competence is even more of a political act, because they constitute the technology of control. In other words, beyond merely defining outcomes, the act of creating and using assessment tools formalises and structures what is valued in that particular community and bestows value, success and status, or failure and exclusion, depending on how the tool is used.

(Harlen & Deakin Crick, 2003, in Crick, 2008)

In light of the complexities of values, contexts and ways of being, Barnett (1994) believes that the capacity to cope with profound societal, international and ecological change cannot be covered by any concept of standardised competences. In his view, no competences can be identified that are dynamic enough to be relevant in a changing world – because no competences will have the same relevance today as what is needed for tomorrow. Most competences are defined from an operational perspective, focussing on observed actions, outcomes and skills, rather than the underlying processes. People are expected to become increasingly efficient and effective in complex situations; their thinking, judgements and selection of relevant skills will move faster and the associated behaviours will become more fluent. Yet increased speed and fluency implies more automatism and less thinking.

6.8. The key competencies in praxis: The New Zealand context

While the five New Zealand curriculum key competencies may seem more manageable than the fifty-seven essential skills of the previous curriculum, they are also described as being more complex (Brewerton, 2004). They are less about opportunities to demonstrate sets of skills that could be ticked off on the basis of teacher judgement, but more situated learning that embraces the means as well as the desired ends. Brewerton described three important government policy influences that led to the Curriculum Stocktake recommendations being further developed and 'skills' replaced with key attributes or "competencies" (Brewerton, 2004). Students now needed to be able to:

- participate appropriately in an increasingly diverse society;
- use new technologies; and
- keep on learning in order to cope with rapidly changing workplaces (so-called lifelong learning).

A skills emphasis alone is not enough to achieve these things. People needed to value these attributes and willingly employ their skills and knowledge in a range of situations. Thus:

- competencies include the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values needed to meet the demands of a task;
- competencies are performance-based and manifested in the actions of an individual in a particular context; and
- key competencies are defined as those competencies needed by everyone across a variety of different life contexts to meet important demands and challenges. (Brewerton, 2004, p. 2)

Brief descriptions of the five key competencies *Using Language, Symbols and Texts*, *Thinking*, *Managing Self*, *Relating to Others*, and *Participating and Contributing* are provided in the official curriculum document. It is then the responsibility of the individual school to discuss, interpret and integrate the promotion of these in classroom and school-wide contexts.

Several discussion papers have sought to highlight the context-dependency and socially-mediated nature of the key competencies and the implications for teacher practice. Carr and Claxton (2002) note that dispositions reflect culturally-determined values, and Carr (2006), in discussing her *'Dimensions of Strength'*, recognises that educational environments can either be enabling or disabling for diverse students. The four interrelated dimensions of strength she identifies include student agency, contextual breadth, curriculum continuity and depth. The suggestion is that these provide a planning framework through which students are empowered to contribute, reflect and respond to their own and others' knowledge, skills and attitudes across a range of learning contexts.

Hipkins (2006), in discussing whether the key competencies reflect the diversity of New Zealand's population, notes some disquiet around the DeSeCo papers and their focus on Western European cultural values. She cites Rychen and Salganik's (2003) suggestion that any differences may not be in regard to the types of generic competencies but rather in the weight given to them, or the way they are interpreted, between cultures. Hipkins refers to the work of Keown et al. (see Chapter 3) who, drawing on Strike (1999) recommended a "big tented" approach in which overarching shared values are interpreted locally, as appropriate, in different cultural contexts. Howie (2003) and Baldwin (2008) highlight the importance of teacher awareness of diversity in the interpretations of competencies and opportunities for their development, and frame their discussion around the thinking competency and social sciences contexts respectively. But as discussed, this assumes some level of homogeneity and shared values at the local school level, and given that the important debates and discussions on identity and diversity do not appear to have taken place at a national level, this is a potential minefield for schools and teachers. Deep pedagogical content knowledge is also required in order to effectively integrate the key competencies into the curriculum achievement outcomes and contexts for learning, and evaluate diverse students accordingly. For primary teachers, this means within and across all eight learning areas; for secondary teachers, this means coherence of pedagogical practices across departments and

faculties to ensure students have opportunities to develop them and to recognise similarities and differences across contexts.

Much of the responsibility has therefore been placed on an effective locally-constructed school curriculum; the implications of which are deeply understood by school staff, and extensively co-constructed with its diverse local community. While a draft curriculum document was released for consultation in 2006, and a two-year lead-in period was given before the final curriculum was officially mandated, schools across the country have interpreted it in a range of ways (ERO, 2011). Some schools were better placed than others to understand its requirements, having been part of a ministry-funded 'early-adopter' project, (*Curriculum Implementation Exploratory Studies*, Cowie, Hipkins, Boyd, Bull, Keown, & McGee, 2009) that helped inform the final document and the subsequent professional development priorities and centrally-funded programmes. It was thought that these schools could help provide some case studies and leadership in effective practice. Some schools, however, procured the services of private professional development providers, as is acceptable within the devolved schools management policy, and thus were 'open' to a wide range of practices and interpretations. A number of commercially-produced resources were also developed in this context. Given that it has been highlighted throughout this chapter that the key competencies are informed by, and inform the values, attitudes and knowledge enacted through the curriculum, it would appear in the implementation context, as with the policy design context, that discussion and critiquing of what and whose values underpin the curriculum key competencies in the New Zealand educational context may have been minimal.

6.9. Summary

The identification, intent and assessment of key competencies appear to be a particularly controversial development in schools' curriculum. It raises questions about the purpose and difference between formal education and vocational training, and the place of discipline knowledge versus 'knowledge as process'. The key competencies surface different understandings and perspectives on knowledge and

skills, at times exemplifying the tensions captured by Bernstein's (2000) vertical and horizontal discourse model; between the relatively straightforward and systematically principled structures best exemplified by the natural sciences, compared with contested, nuanced and context-dependent nature of the social sciences (see Chapter 2). But perhaps more importantly, they raise questions about the influence of a particular ideology into people's homes and communities via the school curriculum; one that potentially promotes a more singular human capital theory and a shift in emphasis, from Watson's (2010) 'what we want young people to know, to what we want young people to 'be'. Some interpretations may have left little space for Fraser's (1989, 1996) needs and equity discourses, discussion and debate on the diversity and difference in values and perceptions of the 'good life' held by groups and individuals, and how their life circumstances enable or disable them from utilising the 'opportunities' afforded them.

Operationalising the key competencies in schools and classroom appears to be a huge task. While there are currently five key competencies in the New Zealand curriculum, there is some evidence of additional frameworks that have been designed by employer and business groups specifically for secondary schools and vocational pathways. Some of these can read as wish lists of desirable employees, but are written in ways that are devoid of contexts and do not recognise the different power dynamics and value judgements that underpin them. In addition, they are largely focussed on the outcomes, but give little guidance as to how they might be taught and developed, somewhat similar to the 'name and hope' approach Reid (2006) discusses in his critique. Yet the New Zealand curriculum is a permissive curriculum framework, and as such, individual schools are theoretically able to utilise a range of frameworks and tools in consultation and collaboration with their local communities, including those that appear as 'key competencies'. The curriculum has been designed to integrate both the 'front end', which contains elements such as the principles, values and key competencies, with the 'back end', which contains each of the learning area statements and achievement objectives for the eight levels of the curriculum.

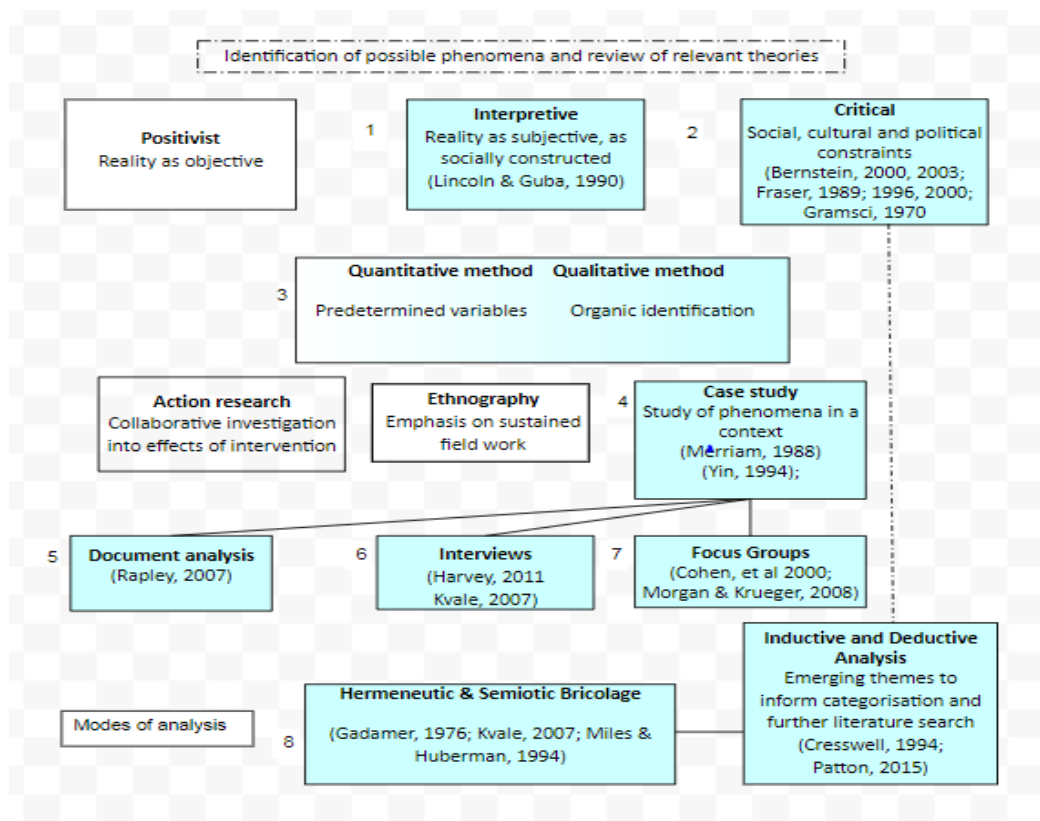
While a number of papers have been written around issues to do with assessment of the key competencies (see Hipkins, 2006), and online resources include examples of how the key competencies might play out in different learning area contexts (see Ministry of Education, 2014), it would appear that schools and teachers have been provided with little upfront guidance as to some fundamental issues associated with integrating such a complex curriculum construct into their school curriculum. How did the policy makers envisage the key competencies being implemented in schools? Have schools been able to collaborate with their diverse communities to develop a coherent and well-considered approach to key competencies that maintains a balance between the academic, social and vocational outcomes anticipated, and enhances outcomes for their children? Has there been explicit attention paid to pedagogical practices that ensure that what is required is explicit, learnable, and achievable by all students in a school and classroom context? Is there a difference between how primary and secondary schools have implemented the key competencies? These questions and others form the basis of this research.

This final chapter of the literature review examines the key competencies in relation to wider theories and debates about curriculum and valued knowledge as discussed in Chapter 5, but with a particular focus on the complexities and issues associated with student and community diversity and differences in their values and the ways they live their lives, as discussed in Chapter 3. In reviewing the literature on the New Zealand context in Chapter 4, it appears that the complexities of diversity and difference in individual and group values and beliefs may not have been widely researched or discussed beyond bicultural differences and obligations, at either a policy design level, or in schools, especially in relation to key competencies. My research seeks to contribute to this potential gap in the literature, examining the nature and extent of the discourse at the policy design and implementation level. The following chapter details my research methodology and the challenges and limitations of this research.

Chapter 7. Research Methodology

7.0. Introduction

I begin this chapter with a diagram (Figure 7.1), to illustrate the different theoretical positions that underpin my research approach, and the nature of the processes I undertook. I discuss each of these numbered areas in turn in what follows, highlighting the challenges and limitations inherent in each and specific to my research. I also examine the difficulties associated with my role as a researcher, the importance of maintaining professional and ethical relationships, and the integrity of the data.



(adapted from Myers, 1997)

Figure 7.1. Some theoretical positions informing the methodological approach

7.1. Research methodology location within an interpretive orientation

Interpretive studies generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them ... (Walsham, 1993, pp. 4-5, in Myers, 1997)

Within an interpretive orientation, reality is viewed as subjective and socially constructed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). An interpretive design recognises that people exist within social and cultural contexts, with all the influences, nuances and complexities that entails (Myers, 1997). Researchers working from this orientation aim to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them. My research included people who had different roles and responsibilities, operating within diverse social, cultural, and political environments, all with potentially different perspectives in how the phenomena, in this case, the curriculum key competencies, were intended to be, and have been, interpreted. It is therefore appropriate that I have located my research within this orientation.

7.1.1. Critical theory

Critical theory has its origins in Marxism, but rather than an orthodox focus solely on conflicts of class and economic factors, critical theory also recognises the key role of culture in reproducing inequities (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Wodak and Meyer (2009) believe that in terms of critical theory,

social theory should be oriented towards critiquing and changing society, in contrast to traditional theory oriented solely to understanding or explaining it ... the social embeddedness of research and science, the research system itself and thus critical discourse analysis are dependent on social structures. (p. 7)

A critical lens regularly aims to reveal power structures and sometimes covert ideologies. Wodak and Meyer (2009), in discussing the place of critical discourse analysis, focus on ideology that manifest “in the more hidden and latent everyday

beliefs, which often appear disguised as conceptual metaphors, and analogies” (p. 8). While they note that frequently people with diverse backgrounds and interests may find themselves thinking alike in startling ways, dominant ideologies appear ‘neutral’, with assumptions left largely unchallenged. Van Dijk (1993), sees ideologies as the “worldviews that constitute ‘social cognition’; schematically organised complexes of representations and attitudes with regard to certain aspects of the social world” (p. 8, in Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

I have utilised Basil Bernstein’s (2000) theory of the pedagogical device, and in particular, his theory of recontextualisation from the field of production to reproduction to frame the analysis and interpretation of my research. I have also employed Fraser’s (1989) needs discourse theory to examine more closely aspects of the social justice narrative that emerge in the various data. As discussed throughout this thesis, Bernstein (2000), along with Gramsci (1970) and Apple (2012) provide a critical lens in this case study, largely due to their theories on society and power, epistemology and language as a mediating construct. While Jager and Maier (2009) use a Foucaultian critical discourse analysis framework, the questions they ask are of relevance here, particularly in relation to knowledge:

- What is valid knowledge at a certain place and a certain time?
- How does this knowledge arise and how is it passed on?
- What functions does it have for constituting subjects?
- What consequences does it have for the overall shaping and development of society?

Jager and Maier (2009) refer to the work of Jurgen Link, in particular, who defines discourse as an institutionalised way of talking that regulates and reinforces action and thereby exerts power. Their discussion of ‘power over discourse’ is an interesting one and relevant to the focus of my research, particularly in terms of curriculum statements and their intent, and the actual implementation at school and classroom level. While the authors acknowledge, along with Bernstein (2000), different individuals and groups have different chances of influence, they assert that

no one can simply defy dominant discourse; no one alone has full control over discourse, and that everybody is co-producing discourse. No single individual or group controls discourse or has precisely intended its final result. (p. 38)

Referring to Burr (2003), Jager and Maier (2009) caution that the power effects of discourse should not necessarily be interpreted as the conscious and manipulative intent of some individual or group. There may be a difference between a speaker's reasons for using a particular discourse, and the social consequences of doing so.

Wodak and Meyer (2009) view power as central to critical discourse analysis and they align this with Foucault and others' view of power as 'a systemic and constitutive element/ characteristic of society' (p. 9). Text is often regarded as a manifestation of social actions which again is widely determined by social structure. In Bernstein's (2000) theory of recontextualisation (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1), knowledge is actively 'produced' in the upper echelons of the education system, recontextualised and embedded into pedagogic content in the lower fields, and is almost transformed into a Gramscian 'common sense' discourse where the underlying assumptions are often unexamined.

A critical analysis of the recontextualisation process and its associated discourse is particularly relevant in my research into the key competencies, as I examine people's interpretations and assumptions at various stages of the process. I was interested in people's views of key competencies; what importance did they place on them and were their views different from others, and perhaps most importantly, did they examine any assumptions they might have had about their ultimate purpose and underpinning values and what were the implications for diverse students and pedagogical practices.

7.1.2. Qualitative method

Patton (1990) argues that rather than entering into a qualitative versus quantitative debate, that 'a paradigm of choices' should determine methodological appropriateness. In some cases it may be useful to employ a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a rich data set from which to analyse

and interpret. This allows for a 'situational responsiveness' that strict adherence to one paradigm or other does not necessarily allow. For my research into the design and implementation of the curriculum key competencies and considerations of diversity, I believe a qualitative inquiry provides data that enables insights into participants' experiences and reflections of the phenomena of curriculum design and, in the case of the school-based participants, how this design has translated into praxis. A larger scale research project may usefully include quantitative methods to capture statistical data on aspects such as school size, the diversity of student groups, how students are identified and how this data is used to inform local curriculum design and pedagogies. Other data may be relevant to create a more complete picture of policy implementation. However, my research is primarily focussed on the relationship between power and knowledge, and its impact on interpretations of the key competencies. Such a focus cannot be measured quantitatively.

Qualitative research can be broadly defined as 'any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 17). Eisner (1991, in Hoepfl, 1997) points out that all knowledge, including that gained through quantitative research, is referenced in qualities, and there are many ways to represent our understanding of the world. This is in keeping with Bernstein's (2000) theory of vertical and horizontal knowledge as either "the integration of knowledge across an expanding range of apparently different phenomena' or as 'a series of specialised languages, each with its own specialised modes of interrogation and specialised criteria" (p. 207). Strauss and Corbin (1990) claim that qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is yet known. They can also be used to gain new perspectives on things about which much is already known, to gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively, or where the researcher has determined that quantitative measures cannot adequately describe or interpret a situation.

The ability of qualitative research to more fully describe a phenomenon is important from a reader perspective as well. Qualitative research reports, "typically rich with detail and insights into participants' experiences, may be more epistemologically in

harmony with the reader's experience" (Stake, 1978, p. 5). This is important in my research where readers, researchers, policy makers, school leaders and teachers, are able to see similarities and differences with their own curriculum insights and experiences.

Hoepfl (1997, p. 49) synthesises of the work of Bogdan and Biklen (1982), Lincoln and Guba (1985), Patton (1990), Eisner (1991), and others, to identify a number of prominent characteristics of qualitative research. These include the use of the natural setting as the source of data; the researcher as the 'human instrument' of data collection; the predominant use of inductive data analysis, and research reports that are descriptive, incorporating expressive language and the "presence of voice in the text" (Eisner, 1991, p. 36). Qualitative research has an interpretive character, aimed at discovering the meaning events have for the individuals who experience them, and the interpretations of those meanings by the researcher. These help to provide "a direction and a framework for developing specific designs and concrete data collection tactics". Patton (1990, p. 40) proposes that these characteristics should be considered as 'interconnected', and Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 39), 'mutually reinforcing'.

Qualitative research has an emergent (as opposed to predetermined) design, with researchers paying attention to the idiosyncratic as well as the pervasive, seeking the uniqueness of each case, and focussing on this emerging process as well as the outcomes or product of the research. Strauss and Corbin (1990) believe that theoretical sensitivity for the researcher comes from a number of sources, including professional literature, professional experience, and personal experiences. The credibility of a qualitative research report therefore relies heavily on the confidence readers have in the researcher's ability to be sensitive to the data and to make appropriate decisions in the field (Eisner, 1991; Patton, 1990).

My professional experience as a primary and secondary school teacher, adviser to schools and ministry official involved in curriculum policy implementation, afforded me a range of perspectives and insights into the complex interface between government education policy and schools' implementation. That said, it was also

important to maintain the role of an independent researcher in order to elicit and interpret the unique historical and recent experiences and perspectives of all participants, and in my examination and analysis of the various documents that were included in the research scope.

7.2. Research design and data collection strategies: A case study approach

In relation to the phenomena of the key competencies in the NZC, a case study appeared to be the most appropriate methodological approach. According to Merriam (1988) and Yin (1984), case studies are where the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon (the 'case'), that is bounded by time and activity (a program, event, process, institution, or social group). They collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures. While an ethnographic approach may better reflect the diversity of what is happening in particular classrooms and schools across the country in terms of curriculum key competency implementation, some of this research has already taken place as part of the Ministry's curriculum monitoring and evaluation studies, albeit with a more generalised curriculum implementation lens. Data collection of this sort, however, requires sustained fieldwork which is time and resource intensive, both of which are limitations in my research. Furthermore, given the focus of the research is on the views and perspectives of a range of people across the policy design and implementation contexts, such extensive fieldwork may not add significant value. As Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) argue, because case studies provide fine grain detail, they can also be used to complement other, more coarsely grained – often large scale – kinds of research, providing 'powerful human-scale data on macro-political decision making fusing theory and practice', citing the work of Ball (1990, 1994) and Ball et al. (1992) who have explored the impact of government policy on schools (p. 183).

Cohen et al. (2000) draw on the work of Hitchcock and Hughes (1995, p. 316) who suggest that case studies are distinguished less by the methodologies they employ

than by the subjects/objects of their inquiry, although Cohen et al. note that there is often a resonance between case studies and interpretive methodologies. Hitchcock and Hughes (p. 317) consider that the case study has several hallmarks:

- It is concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case
- It provides a chronological narrative of events relative to the case
- It blends a description of events with the analysis of them
- It focuses on individual actors or groups of actors, and seeks to understand their perceptions of events
- It highlights specific events that are relevant to the case
- The researcher is integrally involved in the case
- An attempt is made to portray the richness of the case in writing up the report. (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 182)

This country case study focuses on the design and implementation of key competencies in a revised national curriculum. It examines the impact of significant events, the debates and discussions on how the key competencies are interpreted. It seeks to examine the perspectives of key stakeholders and interested parties within the context of a small, bicultural/multicultural country, both at the time of the development and in retrospect.

While there are a number of different types of case studies (see Stake, 1994; Yin, 1984), Merriam's (1988) categories prove useful. Merriam defines three types as (a) narrative accounts; (b) interpretive (developing conceptual categories inductively in order to examine initial assumptions; and (c) evaluative (explaining and judging). Merriam also identifies four kinds of case studies: ethnographic, historical, psychological and sociological. Using this framework, I describe my case study as interpretive, within a socio-historical setting.

Andelman et al. (1980, p. 59-60, in Bassey, 1999) view case study data paradoxically as 'strong in reality but difficult to organise. In contrast, other research data is often weak in reality but susceptible to ready organisation'. Case studies can recognise the

complexity and situated reality of social constructs. By carefully attending to social situations, case studies can represent something of the discrepancies or conflicts between the viewpoints held by participants. The best case studies are capable of offering some support to alternative interpretations. Andelman *et al.*, see case studies, when viewed as products, as offering an archive of descriptive material sufficiently rich to allow for subsequent reinterpretation. They argue that given the variety and complexity of educational purposes and environments, there is an obvious value in having a data source for researchers and users whose purposes may be different from our own. Their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use; for staff or individual development, for within-institutional feedback; for formative evaluation and in educational policy making.

Case studies present research or evaluation data in a more publically accessible form than other kinds of research reports and are capable of serving multiple audiences, although this can be compromised by their length. The language and the form of the presentation is usually less esoteric and less dependent on specialised interpretation than conventional research reports. It reduces the dependence of the reader upon unstated implicit assumptions and makes the research process itself accessible.

Case studies, therefore, may contribute towards the 'democratisation' of decision-making (and knowledge itself). At its best, they allow readers to judge the implications of a study for themselves. Cohen *et al.* (2000) see a key issue in case study research is the selection of information and note that:

Though it is frequently useful to record typical, representative occurrences, the researcher need not always adhere to the criteria of representativeness, e.g. it may be that infrequent, unrepresentative but critical incidents or events that are crucial to understanding the case. Significance rather than frequency is the hallmark of case studies, offering the researcher an insight into the real dynamics of situations and people.
(p. 185)

Nisbet and Watt (1984), while supporting these observations, also highlight a number of weaknesses. The results will not be generalisable in a unique case except where

other readers /researchers recognise some aspects as applicable inside another case. Because they are not easily open to cross checking, they may be selective, biased, personal and subjective, and they are prone to problems of researcher/observer bias, despite attempts to address reflexivity. They suggest that it is important to separate conclusions from the evidence, with the essential evidence included in the main text, and to balance illustration with analysis and generalisation. In summarising their suggested approach, they recommend starting with a wide field of focus without selectivity or prejudgement; they believe this is important because case studies are able to capture the dynamics of an unfolding situation. Through progressive focussing, one is then able to establish a narrower field of focus, identifying key foci for subsequent study and data collection.

Data to address my research questions were sourced via interviews and focus groups with a range of people involved in aspects of both design and implementation of the key competencies at government and at school level, as well as a number of discussion and implementation documents from both these contexts. My 'case' boundaries were determined by the historical events associated with the NZC: the commencement of the curriculum stocktake in 2002, the official launch of the curriculum in 2007, its formal implementation requirement in 2010. However, my interviews with government policy officials and academics took place in 2013, and my focus group interviews in 2013 and 2014, extending my case study boundary to this point.

In keeping with Nisbet and Watt's (1984) suggested approach, the early stages of document collation and analysis generated a large amount of data and potential themes, particularly during the curriculum design phase and I used an inductive process to group these. However, as my research progressed, I was able to refine the focus and thus regroup relevant data using both an inductive and deductive process, identifying emerging themes that better addressed my research questions. I acknowledge that other researchers may have interpreted and grouped the data in different ways, as is the nature of qualitative research.

In reflecting on Cohen et al.'s (2000) discussion on case studies, I have attempted to quantify the number of comments that were similar in the points raised, particularly in data generated from the elite interviews. However, in many cases, I have included comments made by individuals because appeared to capture important perspectives and events in the discourse. The data, the discussion and analysis, and conclusions have been separated into different chapters, as suggested by Nisbet and Watt (1984).

7.2.1. Data sources and sampling processes

I have drawn on Yin (1984) to capture the inherent strengths and weaknesses of the different data sources I have used, and follow this with further discussion on each approach. Some of these issues are explored further in discussing the limitations of my research.

A. For the curriculum design phase I:

- i. sourced discussion documents, papers and meeting minutes pertaining to the New Zealand curriculum stocktake and key competencies conceptualisation. These included both internal Ministry of Education documents as well as those publicly available on government websites (*The New Zealand Curriculum Online: Te Kete Ipurangi; Education Counts*)
- ii. interviewed key people involved in this process, either as ministry officials or contracted academics and consultants. This involved 14 individual participants.

B. For the curriculum implementation phase I:

- i. conducted two focus groups of school leaders and teachers from:
 - 1) a co-educational secondary school, and
 - 2) one of its contributing primary schools within a greater urban region.

These focussed on the implementation of key competencies within their school and classroom curricula. I was interested to see whether there were any differences in their interpretations and approach, given the curriculum sought to establish a seamless years 1-13 learning pathway.

- ii. sourced documents relating to interpretation and implementation of the key competencies at the school level. These included documentation from the two participating schools, along with official supporting documentation to the NZC key competencies from the Ministry of Education.

Table 7.1. Strengths and weaknesses of data sources

Source of Evidence	Possible Strengths	Possible Weaknesses
Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion papers • Meeting minutes and memos • Summaries of consultations • International critiques • National and international research papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stable – repeated review • unobtrusive – exist prior to case study • exact – names etc. • broad coverage – extended time span 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • irretrievability – difficult • biased selectivity • reporting bias – reflects author bias • access – may be blocked • status/use of document difficult to determine
Archival Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above* • School curriculum documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as above • precise and quantitative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as above • privacy might inhibit access
Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With government officials and selected academics who were central to the design process • With a primary and secondary school with ethnically-diverse student populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeted – focuses on case study topic for both groups • insightful – provides perceived causal inferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bias due to poor questions • response bias • incomplete recollection • reflexivity – interviewee expresses what interviewer wants to hear

(Adapted from Yin, 1994, p. 80)

7.3. Document and archival records selection

Purposeful sampling tends to be the dominant strategy in qualitative research. Purposeful sampling seeks information-rich cases which can be studied in depth (Patton, 1990). According to Patton (1990, pp. 169-183), there are a number of different types of purposeful sampling approaches which include extreme or deviant case sampling, typical case sampling; maximum variation sampling; snowball or chain sampling; confirming or disconfirming case sampling; politically important case

sampling; convenience sampling; and others. For small samples, a great deal of heterogeneity can be a problem because individual cases are so different from each other. The maximum variation sampling strategy turns that apparent weakness into a strength by applying the following logic: any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared aspects or impacts of a programme (Patton, 1990, p. 172).

For purposive sampling of ministry-produced documents to support schools implementation of the key competencies and individual school or cluster-produced documents competencies, I used a keyword search across a number of websites in the initial phases, and following any themes or directions that emerge from other data sources through an inductive process, refining searches further. I was also provided with documents that were not on public websites but were willingly shared by several participants in my research as a result of my interactions with them, particularly where they wanted to further illustrate a point they made.

Creswell (1994) in his table of *Qualitative Data Collection Types, Options, Advantages and Limitations*, identifies the following advantages of documents as a data source:

[documents] enable the reader to obtain the language and words of informants; can be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher – an unobtrusive source of information; represents data that are thoughtful in that informants have given attention to compiling; as written evidence, it saves a researcher the time and expense of transcribing. (p. 150)

Creswell lists one of the disadvantages of documents as data sources being that they may be protected information unavailable to public or private access. My ability to easily access official Ministry of Education documents makes this is less of an issue in this research, but I was presented with other challenges because of this.

There are a number of tensions regarding my role as a researcher and government official. Given I employed by the ministry of education at the time of the research, my position afforded me access to a wide range of documents and personnel that would have been much more difficult for an external researcher. However, I was required to

obtain high level approval to access such documents and was required to declare a conflict of interest, and was subject to a number of requirements. In addition, while I was no longer involved in the implementation of the curriculum when I undertook this research, my role prior to this had been to support schools with the key messages related to the curriculum and the key competencies as contained in official documents and papers. While there was the potential for me to have had greater influence on the diversity discourse in relation to the key competencies, having not been involved in the design process meant that my influence was limited. As identified in this research, the emphasis was very much on schools' locally responsive curriculum design, with minimal interference from central government. This meant that the work largely entailed the coordination of sector forums, development of websites and supporting external providers to guide and capture schools' curriculum journeys for wider dissemination. Yet it was through reading the official documents to familiarise myself with what took place that I became interested in interpretations of cultural diversity.

The beginning of the governments' curriculum stocktake process began as early as 1999 and drew on a wide range of sources to inform the process. Much of the written material was still accessible through archived processes. Documents to be sourced include papers related to the reconceptualisation of the curriculum, Ministry of Education discussion papers and meeting minutes and public consultation feedback analyses and summaries. Important papers include the *Definition and Selection of the Competencies* (DeSeCo project) from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development; internal policy papers and discussion documents, and contributing papers and/ or presentations by national and international academics and consultants. I also examined papers which detailed how the relationship between the key competencies and other elements of the New Zealand Curriculum were discussed and documented and in what contexts. In particular, documents relating to the guidance given to schools in constructing their *Vision* and *Values* statement, the role of formal decision-making framework of the principles in school curriculum design, particularly the principles of the *Treaty of Waitangi*, *Cultural*

Diversity and Inclusion and their relationship to the Key Competencies, were sourced as data.

Other sources I was able to access included the *New Zealand Curriculum Online* website, that has an archived a selection of key documents and papers that have informed the development of the 2007 curriculum, and the Ministry of Education research website *Education Counts*. Both of these are accessible to the general public.

Criteria for evaluating the documentary sources is in keeping with interpretive methodology (i.e. see my discussion of trustworthiness later in this chapter). Consideration of authenticity asks whether the document has been produced by the attributed person or someone delegated to do this, and if so, is this an issue or not? In terms of credibility, is it credible, or has the author been unduly influenced by the socio-political environment? How representative is the document – has there been selectivity in what is recorded and what is prepared. How much integrity can be placed in the data set? How well does it corroborate with other sources? And finally, what meaning can be attributed to documents? (Rapley, 2007). Atkinson and Coffey (2004), in *Analysing Documentary Realities*, note the following;

... it is important to realise that documentary reality does not consist of descriptions of the social world that can be used directly as evidence about it. One certainly cannot assume that documentary accounts are 'accurate' portrayals in that sense. Rather, they construct their own kinds of reality. It is, therefore, important to approach them as texts. Texts are constructed according to conventions that are themselves part of documentary reality. Hence, rather than ask whether an account is true, or whether it can be used as 'valid' evidence about a setting. It is more fruitful to ask ourselves questions about the form and function of the texts themselves. (p. 73)

An interesting point in relation to data sources and differentiates between primary and secondary sources. Documents that are directly from the people involved are commonly seen as primary sources, and those that are second-hand accounts as

secondary. This raises some interesting decisions in terms of whether meeting minutes or official policy documents, for example, would be seen as primary or secondary sources of information. Data sources are constructed in particular contexts, by particular people, with particular roles and purposes.

Identifying and coding the significant number of documents that informed the final design of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007), particularly those that broadly informed the curriculum framework, and specifically key competencies, was a significant task. There were a large number of commissioned and submitted papers, curriculum audits of particular elements or from particular perspectives, along with surveys, focus group reports and meeting minutes that contained specific recommendations. In addition, it was difficult to establish with some of the more informal or 'operational' documents, why the documents were prepared, who prepared them, under what conditions and according to what criteria and conventions, what issues they may have sought to address and any impact or response to the document and by whom. In total, 154 documents underwent an initial coding against broad themes.

As the research progressed, I was guided by the themes that emerged from deductive and inductive analysis of the elite interviews and the focus groups, particularly where there were references to specific papers or documents, and identified key documents accordingly. The more refined focus and fine grained analysis allowed for greater manageability of the previously very large data set. Papers or documents that discussed a particular theme in some depth or from a particular perspective were included in the final analysis. This obviously posed some risk to the integrity of the data as it is acknowledged that a degree of researcher bias is present in the selection of some papers over others, and potential use of papers to prove assumptions. However, I tried to ensure that any content that offered different views or perspectives on a theme were included. Details of papers and documents are listed against each theme.

7.4. Elite and focus group interviews

My research also involved the collection of data from two different groups of people involved in the curriculum key competency design and implementation within the context of the case study. One group involved 'elite' interviews (see discussion that follows) with government officials and consultant academics. To help identify key people involved in the curriculum design process to interview, snowball sampling was employed and proved a useful approach. A combination of reputational and positional criteria was used when selecting interview subjects – that is, interview respondents were chosen not just by virtue of their political positions and their known involvement in the process of interest, but also by virtue of their reputation among their peers as established through the method of chain-referral, or snowball, sampling (Tansey, 2007). This included both current and former Ministry of Education personnel, as well as key academics and consultants who were closely associated with the design and implementation of the NZC.

7.4.1. Elite interview design

In exploring the research on elite interviewing, Harvey (2011) argues there is no clear cut definition of the term 'elite'. He notes "it is not necessarily the figureheads or leaders of organisations who have the greatest claim to elite status, but those who hold important social networks, social capital and strategic positions within social structures because they are better able to exert influence" (p. 4). Harvey largely defines elites as those who occupy senior management and board level positions within organisations. Neal and McLaughlin (2009) caution against assumptions associated with the term elite, often related to fixed and linear conceptions power. They argue that such assumptions can obscure other notions of vulnerability associated with elite roles. This latter point is particularly relevant to my research context, and the fact that I was a colleague of many of the participants at the time they were interviewed. While Cohen et al. (2000) largely focus on the often asymmetrical power relationships between the researcher and the subjects, noting that It can be potentially demeaning for high status personnel being interviewed by the researcher, and potentially intimidating for lower status personnel, Kvale (2007)

also highlights the vulnerabilities of the elite participant. He notes that elite interviews can be problematic in a highly politicised or publicised context, and that one needs to be aware of the professional vulnerabilities, political uncertainties, and personal costs and experiences of participants in the policy process. Ethical considerations relate to the use of human subjects for purposes of research, and the potential risks to their personal and/or professional wellbeing both during and following the interview process. The anonymity of subjects needs to be protected, particularly in the case of elite participants where the participant's position and institution may be highly visible. While the participants in my research may not be identifiable within the field to the general public, it is possible they could be identifiable to other participants involved in the study, as well as the wider policy group.

Cohen et al. (2000) advise that thorough preparation at each stage of the interview process can help mitigate many of the risks and potential problems that can occur during the interview and in the analysis/interpretation phase. Lancaster (2017) suggests one practical way of managing a number of sensitivities is to advise that participants would be sent a copy of their transcript to review for the purposes of verifying accuracy, correcting errors or inaccuracies, and providing clarifications. This approach was taken in this research due to the professional, personal and political sensitivities of the research topic. In all cases, participants agreed the transcript was a true and accurate record of what was discussed and no changes were requested.

It is difficult to determine however, in the context of this research, whether participants were being more candid or more guarded with their comments given I was a colleague in the same part of the organisation, and was thus aware of some of the professional and political risks. Upon reflection, there were perhaps instances of a commonly-used agreed official line or policy position, and my questions perhaps did not probe sufficiently into personal perspectives or recollections of the different debates. Berry (2002) cautions the researcher that it is not the obligation of a subject to be objective and to tell us the truth, and reminds us that the subjects also have a purpose in agreeing to the interview; the opportunity to talk about their work and justifying what they do. He notes that this may not be an issue if all we want to

know is the subject's point of view, or that given there are a number of interviews within a single case so no one interview is likely to carry too much weight. Kvale (2007) highlights a key dilemma encountered by qualitative researchers; the balance between faithfully reporting the findings with potentially exposing participants' identities, and deciding to withhold information to reduce the risk of harm to participants, but potentially compromising the accuracy and usefulness of the research. As Lancaster (2017, p. 101) notes, "respecting participant's concerns about the use of particular data, or choosing not to report sensitive issues, can maintain and perpetuate the very power relationships participants may fear or seek to uphold." This is particularly relevant in public policy contexts where transparency of process is compromised by those who might benefit from, or be victimised through retaliation, in a more opaque process. Lancaster reminds researchers that the decision not to disclose particular information is a political choice, and has implications beyond a singular piece of research.

7.4.2. Interview design

The interview design was guided by the principles and considerations outlined by several writers on interview research design, and detailed in Cohen et al. (2000).

Patton (1990) writes about three types of qualitative interviewing: 1) informal, conversational interviews; 2) semi-structured interviews; and 3) standardized, open-ended interviews. The semi-structured course of the interview 'conversation' is largely determined by the interviewer, and may take the form of a manipulative dialogue whereby the interview follows a more or less hidden agenda. The integrity of the researcher comes under close scrutiny in a number of important areas, necessarily, as 'the interviewer is the main instrument for obtaining knowledge' (p. 29).

Lofland and Lofland (1984) describe an interview guide or 'schedule' as a list of questions or general topics that the interviewer wants to explore during each interview. Although it is prepared to ensure that information on the same topic is obtained from each person, there are no predetermined responses, and in semi-structured interviews the interviewer is free to probe and explore within these

predetermined inquiry areas. Interview guides ensure good use of limited interview time; they make interviewing multiple subjects more systematic and comprehensive; and they help to keep interactions focused. In keeping with the flexible nature of qualitative research designs, interview guides can be modified over time to focus attention on areas of particular importance, or to exclude questions the researcher has found to be unproductive for the goals of the research.

I employed a semi-structured 'funnel-shaped interview design process' (Kvale, 2007), where the questions largely focus on the subject's recollection of discussions and experiences as a participant in the general curriculum design process, with the underlying cultural diversity lens of the research revealed towards the end of the interview. My reasons for structuring the interview in this way was to try and capture whether interviewees made mention of diversity without researcher prompting, and what responses were received once this was revealed as a focus of the research. This approach assisted me in interpreting the extent to which the socio-cultural aspects of diversity and identity were an important consideration of key competency interpretation and implementation.

This process did pose ethical questions in terms of informed consent. The participants' personal or professional wellbeing was paramount, and there was a risk that they may have felt personally or professionally inadequate for a perceived lack of awareness of diverse cultural perspectives in curriculum design, and their contribution to the curriculum design process. In some cases I felt I was unable to probe further with some comments, and reflected on whether my interview questions actually surfaced some of the deeper issues as I had hoped. The opportunity for participants to offer any further closing comments was helpful in mitigating any potential issues or discomfort, and also provided an opportunity for participants to add to or explain any comments made. The interview questions and interview process underwent trialling with other colleagues. Following the interview, the audio files were transcribed by persons employed by my supervising university, who were signatories to confidentiality agreements. I then cross-checked the audio files against the transcripts and made any additional comment on the transcripts, including relevant notes taken during the actual interview.

7.4.3. Recording method

The use of an audio-recording device as part of the informed consent process is also not without issue. Cohen et al. (2000, p. 281) discuss the trade-off between the need to capture as much data as possible and yet avoid having too threatening an environment that impacts on the interview. I used a small unobtrusive tape recorder as opposed to a video device, and made brief notes to capture relevant non-verbal information. All interview participants were offered the opportunity to view a summary of the interview, once the transcript process was complete, and all deemed the transcript an accurate record of the interview.

7.5. Curriculum implementation focus groups

For the other group of people I interviewed, school-based educators, I used purposeful sampling to identify two schools which were considered to be 'culturally diverse' schools: a secondary school (years 9-13); and one of the secondary school's contributing primary schools (years 1-8). This was a deliberate decision to examine how student diversity and curriculum continuity was interpreted in each of the two schools with a similar demographic. School selection was determined via the public, New Zealand schools database, which uses a range of categories of school type (primary, intermediate, secondary, urban/rural; school size; decile; ethnic mix) to identify one secondary school and a contributing primary school.

It is acknowledged that these two schools may be more, or less, representative of schools in New Zealand, in terms of their size and student composition. While their student demographics may have engendered a heightened awareness of cultural diversity and the implications for local curriculum design, the literature on cultural diversity and identities (see Chapter 3) reveals a much wider interpretation and application of this term than is perhaps common in the New Zealand context. It may have been useful to compare the responses between schools which were considered more culturally diverse with those considered less culturally diverse, but this would have been difficult to establish using data other than ethnicity, gender and English Language Learners (ELLs), as recorded in government databases. In addition, it is

important to acknowledge the diversity of individual teachers within any one school, and the identities, attitudes and values they may espouse. Therefore any comparisons between individual schools would be of limited use.

In drawing on the theories of Habermas (1994), given the relative smallness of the New Zealand educational community and the interrelationships that exist between them, it was important to observe and reflect on how candid school-based participants appeared to be in the focus groups. Naturalistic or field research offers the opportunity of observation of participants in the context of a natural scene and the perspective of the participants on what is observed. It can lead to deeper understandings than interviews alone, because it provides a knowledge of the context in which events occur and may enable the researcher to see things that participants themselves are not aware of, or that they are unwilling to discuss (Patton, 1990). This is a limitation of the case study approach in this study; the researcher is reliant on the views expressed in interviews, focus groups and some school documents. The proposed data collection does not include observation on how the key competencies were translated into school and classroom practice, evaluation and reporting processes. This would have made for a very interesting lens on the policy to practice cycle. However, this would have necessitated further resources and extensive methodological considerations, including how the schools documentation interpreted and described how and if the key competencies should be intentionally included in lesson planning, what this was expected to look like in practice in the classroom and in the wider school environment, and how this might be observed and recorded in moment by moment interactions. In addition, it would potentially require differentiation across primary and secondary classrooms and across learning areas.

Both schools provided me with school documentation they had created that helped guide their approach to the key competencies. However these are only briefly referred to in the data analysis and discussion, and to clarify some comments made.

Given the relatively small sample of school leaders and teachers and their subsequent comments and interpretations, it is difficult to generalise to any extent

the effectiveness or otherwise of communications between the ministry and individual schools on matters of curriculum implementation. Participants may have also felt constrained or manipulated by the nature of the questions I asked. These further highlights the tensions between approaches that are more ethnographic in method and take a more narrative, hermeneutic approach than ones that seeks to include critical theory and an emphasis on cultural diversity and identity as my research does.

7.5.1. Advantages and limitations of focus groups

According to Morgan (1997) the main advantage of focus groups in comparison to participant observation, extensive individual interviews and questionnaires, is the opportunity to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic in a limited period of time. This is based on the researcher's ability to assemble and direct the focus group sessions. He notes, however, that this control can also be a disadvantage, as focus groups are in some sense, unnatural social settings. Because the discussions in the focus groups are controlled by the researcher, one can never be sure of how natural the interactions are. A key advantage of focus groups as an interview technique lies in its opportunity to observe interaction on a topic. However, focus groups can also confront the researcher with a choice between either giving control to the group and possibly hearing less about the topic of interest or by taking direct control over the group, possibly losing the more free-flowing nature possible in group interviews.

The focus group itself may influence the nature of the data it produces. There is both a tendency toward conformity, in which some interviewees withhold things they might say in private, and a tendency toward polarisation, in which some interviewees express more extreme views in a group than in private. In some cases the interviewees' level of involvement in a topic is too high, in others, too low. If the group has little interest or involvement in the topic the researcher may collect only scattered references to the desired material; if they are too highly involved with the topic, the researcher may have to work hard to control the discussion. In addition, it is possible the topic or focus question is highly controversial and there is real disagreement amongst the group.

Given my research is about cultural diversity and inclusive curricula, the discussion in the focus groups provided direct data on these topics. However, it was very important for me to be prepared for the possibility that my questions could provoke tensions between colleagues, generating potential harm, and I was prepared with additional questions and explanations that might help diffuse this.

In summarising the strengths and weaknesses of focus groups, Morgan (1997) notes that they offer something of a compromise between the strengths of participant observation and individual interviewing. Because the researcher defines the discussion topics, focus groups are more controlled than participant observation, and because of the participant-defined nature of group interaction, the focus group setting is less controlled than individual interviewing.

7.5.2. Semi-structured and funnel-shaped question format

I used focus group interviews to establish the understandings and interpretation of the key competencies by school leaders and teachers as intended by the policy, as evidenced through the document analysis and interview data from those who were involved in the design of NZC. In particular, I wanted to elicit both beliefs and attitudes related to the key competencies, where these understandings might have derived from, and any awareness of the diverse perspectives that could potentially influence how particular aspects of the key competencies are valued, organised and implemented at a school and/or classroom level.

Interviewees were asked to respond to more generalised questions related to curriculum implementation before more specific questions related to community consultation and intercultural awareness are raised. Interviewees were given the opportunity to respond in more detail to questions that were more open ended in nature, and at the end the interview or focus group session, were invited to give a summative or reflective comment either related to the interview/focus group questions and/or their experience in participating in it.

All interviewees were asked where and when they would like the interview to take place, with most of the elite interviews requesting a private office or meeting room on Ministry of Education premises that they were familiar with. For other academics

and consultants, I conducted the interviews at their workplace offices at their request. The secondary school focus group was conducted after school in place of a usual heads of faculty meeting. The primary school focus group was conducted in the morning session of a teacher-only day in a classroom, towards the end of the school holidays.

7.6. Summary of data sources and participant roles and characteristics

In the table below I have attempted to summarise the statistical information associated with my data sources. In the elite interviews group, I have not given the numbers of people in each category to protect the anonymity of participants in relation to comments made, particularly at more senior levels of management. In the case of the documents, it was difficult at times to distinguish between discussion papers, minutes and memos, as well as the audience and purpose.

Table 7.2. Data sources and participant roles and characteristics

	Elite Interviews	Archived documents and web-based artefacts	School Focus groups
	(Bernstein's fields of production and recontextualisation)		(Bernstein's field of reproduction)
Number	14	153	2
Role	Group managers (level 1 & 2 officials); Chief advisers Senior policy analysts; Senior advisers; Academic consultants Policy consultants/ contractors	Discussion papers Meeting minutes and memos Summaries of consultations International critiques National and international research papers	A. One inner city primary school (Total student roll: 255) (11 staff participants: Principal and all teaching staff) B. One inner city co-ed secondary school (Total student roll: 1183) (9 staff participants: Heads of Faculty and Deputy Principal)
Gender	F (11) M (3)		A. F (9) M (2) B. F (5) M (4)
Ethnicity	Pakeha/NZ European	Authors mostly Pakeha/European	Majority NZ European Two Māori males
Nationality	All New Zealand citizens	Mostly New Zealand citizens Some international critiques Dutch; Australian; British and European OECD papers	All New Zealand citizens
Other information	Snowball sampling	Keyword/s search in archived efolder	Purposeful sampling Feeder schools Ethnically; SES diverse; Co ed Inclusive reputation*
Dates:	2013	2012-2014	2014

7.7. Modes of analysis

Given that both written and verbal texts were sourced in my data gathering, I chose to take a mixed methods approach to data analysis, commonly known as bricolage⁹. This essentially means utilising a range of resources and strategies to understand and interpret the data. This allows for interplay between techniques during analysis. I thus read the documents, interviews and focus group transcripts to get an overall impression of what was said, and went back to specific comments or passages in texts to try and interpret further what had taken place, and to indicate what possible positions or theories they might be highlighting in relation to the phenomena. Sections that at first seemed less revealing proved more relevant as the analysis took place. All documents were uploaded and coded using the QSA Nvivo 10 data programme. Through my coding process, I was also able to categorise or note patterns in the way things were described or responded to, which either supported or contradicted some of the interpretations and assumptions I had made, thus contributing to the overall meaning of the texts. This approach follows the hermeneutic circle as described above where:

The meaning of the text is established through a process in which the meanings of the separate passages are determined by the global meaning of the text as it is anticipated. Re reading the passages may in turn alter the first anticipated global meaning of the text, which then alters the meaning of the single passages. (Kvale, 2007, p. 109)

The analysis of documents and discussion minutes, interview transcripts and notes, and focus group responses always takes place through the lens and perspectives of the researcher. The concept of an objective reality that can be replicated by other researchers is incongruent with an interpretive/critical orientation that I have adopted. It is more in keeping with the assumptions of positivist science. What is said, or not said, is not only interpreted and evaluated in a range of ways by those

⁹ Bricolage. This French term literally means 'tinkering', fiddling, creative 'do-it-yourself', making use of any resources that happen to be at hand (Jager, 2009).

who are listening to or reading comments made, but the language used by the speaker or writer is itself socially mediated and may not fully represent a perspective or experience. This was an important consideration for me as I coded and condensed data into broader, recurring themes, and in particular, the selection of representative comments to illustrate each theme. This involved a high level of researcher interpretation which not without its risks in terms of misinterpretation or confirmation bias. To try and mitigate this, as discussed earlier, where there appears to be similarity and agreement between a number of interviewee comments I have quantified these. If I wasn't able to identify other comments that are similar but the comment was included as it contributes a different perspective or point of view, I have identified them as individual comments.

My frame of reference is from an educational policy perspective, and my research questions sought to determine what was recontextualised in the space between the curriculum design and school implementation, particularly in relation to cultural interpretations and considerations involving the key competencies. This will be necessarily mediated by those who have participated in this process, the range of perspectives and frames of reference they bring to the dialogue. The frame of reference that a ministry official responsible for curriculum design will be quite different to that of a school or classroom educator's experience of curriculum, and potentially between educators from different school settings. It will be the convergence and comparison of a range of texts that provide rich data for analysis and discussion.

The data from the three sources (elite interviews, document analysis and focus group interviews) could be grouped under five common themes, with sub-themes used in a number of cases to reflect the subtleties and differences in the data. The elite interviews largely guided the initial identification of the themes, with the document analysis either aligning with these or surfacing related themes. Given the large number of available documents and their potential scope, this helped focus and contain the scope of the research.

In addition, through the use of both deductive and inductive analysis, the themes and underpinning concepts emerging from the various meetings and discussions that took place between groups and individuals within Ministry of Education curriculum development contexts were sometimes different from those that took place at an individual self-managing school context. They also differed between the two school contexts, given the different student ages, curriculum priorities and interpretations, and different political, educational and local sensitivities. This is a key aspect of my research – how policy is recontextualised from the policy design context through to the implementation context – what gets lost and what is gained in the distillation and interpretation of complex ideas and theories into an accessible and usable ‘text’ for schools, and whose and what interpretations prevail.

7.8. Trustworthiness of the research

I have used Lincoln & Guba’s (1985, 2001) trustworthiness criteria to help guide my considerations and interpretations of my research design and data processes. In keeping with an interpretive framework the following criteria are discussed as follows:

Credibility – a true picture of the phenomenon under scrutiny including thick descriptions of contexts, groups and individuals; coherence amongst different data sources; examining plausible alternative interpretations

Transferability – sufficient detail of the context to allow the reader to recognise similarities in other contexts and assess applicability of findings

Dependability – range of data sources to strengthen decisions related to categorisation and interpretation, including comprehensive search for key documents. Snowball sampling; saturation sampling.

Confirmability – that the findings emerge from the data and not from predispositions, includes checking for researcher bias in categorisation and interpretation.

(Lincoln & Guba, 2001)

In seeking to represent as accurately as possible the conversations, discussions and activity surrounding the various phases of the curriculum stocktake, I make explicit that many of these events took place up to ten years ago; that people's recollections of what was said, or not said, and their interpretation of events will be affected by the course of time.

I have used Miles and Huberman's (1994) list of *Relevant Queries* to help guide my examination and reflection of the various aspects and phases of my research, in particular to assist me in attending to the *confirmability* aspect of trustworthiness. This include a focus on the importance of exploring and managing researcher bias and plausible alternative interpretations as mentioned previously; thick descriptions of contexts, groups and individuals involved in the research; checking for coherence or otherwise amongst different data sources, and questions related to the credibility and authenticity of the findings and interpretations.

An important process was the search of plausible rival explanations or interpretations of early emerging themes and patterns in the data collection, and the confirmation of particular interpretations as a result of more and varied data is sourced (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This was an important aspect of my interpretivist approach to research methodology; to manage the possible strong influences of emerging theories and positions in viewing the data and potentially selectively representing that data to support those positions. However, I was mindful of Miles and Huberman's (1994) advice that closing too *late* can causes difficulty in building a good case for the favoured interpretation and increases the amount of data analysis activity required. This prompted my decision to be guided by the themes that emerged from the elite and focus group interviews, and to limit the number of documents to those that provided content that elaborated on or disconfirmed these interpretations.

Other strategies I used for checking the relative strength of interpretations and explanations included discussion with, and feedback from, colleagues and supervisors, and the interviewees themselves. For the latter, Bronfenbrenner (1976) classified feedback to the informants as a source of 'phenomenological validity'. In

addition, ethical responsibilities allowed for and ensured that participants were provided with transcripts of interviews and were invited to clarify and amend accordingly.

7.9. Summary

My case study investigates the phenomenon of the key competencies in the revised New Zealand curriculum. It examines how student diversity was conceived and interpreted in relation to this new curriculum construct within the boundaries of a particular time frame and socio-political context in New Zealand in the early 21st century.

Key government officials and academics were identified using snowball sampling, and data gathered on their recollections and perspectives from individual interviews. Document identification and analysis undertaken through an inductive and deductive approach. The two school focus groups were identified using a purposive approach.

My research design employed a qualitative methodology where the variables were not predetermined, but where the findings emerged organically. Data collected were analysed using an interpretive, critical lens where the reality of events are seen as subjective and socially constructed. This includes the role of myself as the researcher, who as the research instrument in both the selection and interpretation of the data, was required to examine similarities and differences in the interpretations of events and documents, as well as consider other possible explanations for particular findings.

The following chapter presents the data from the elite interviews, with Chapter 9 presenting data that emerged from documents identified as relevant to the research, along with data from the two school focus groups.

Chapter 8. The Elite Interviews

8.0. Introduction

The key themes

As a result of data coding, grouping and refining, seven broad themes emerged across the three sets of data (elite interviews; policy development document analysis, and school-based focus group interviews). The focus of this research has largely been on Bernstein's (2000) production and recontextualisation fields of curriculum policy as reflected in the elite interviews and policy development documents, but the findings from the two school focus groups provide vignettes of the reproduction or implementation field. The key themes that emerged from across the data sets are as follows:

A The Context of Curriculum

This theme draws on Ball (1994, 2012), Bernstein (2000) and Apple (2013) to highlight the notion that curriculum design and implementation does not take place in a vacuum but is influenced by the historical, political, social and economic contexts and discourses within which it interacts. This theme includes data relevant to Bernstein's fields of production, recontextualisation and reproduction; the agents and types of discourse that predominate and influence these fields at the time of the policy development.

B Differences in Educational Ideologies

This theme captures data that reflects a range of different perspectives and debates on the role of education in relation to the individual and wider society. This theme also includes data that critiques or comments on those different perspectives.

C What and Whose Knowledge is Valued in the Curriculum

This theme focuses on the data related to the relationship between key elements of the New Zealand Curriculum. In particular, it focuses on data regarding the place and priority given discipline knowledge, and its relationship to elements such as the key competencies. Bernstein's (2000) concept of vertical and horizontal knowledge is relevant here, as it highlights in particular the differences between knowledge in the natural sciences and the ever-expanding perspectives and critiques in the social sciences, and the privileging of 'western' knowledge and values.

D Understanding the Intent of the Key Competencies

This theme narrows the focus to data that reflects the intended purpose, theoretical underpinnings and potential issues associated with this specific element of the New Zealand curriculum. It draws on data that explores how the key competencies have been recontextualised and interpreted in each of Bernstein's (2000) fields of practice.

E Diverse Students, Values and the Curriculum

This theme specifically examines the data on understandings and perceptions associated with the cultural diversity and student identities, and the relationship with the key competencies. I examine how this was reflected in policy discourse and documents, and in a primary and secondary school. This theme relates to Bernstein's (2000) concerns for social justice in education and the institutionalised reproduction of valued behaviours and knowledge of middle classes.

F The Interpreted and Enacted Curriculum

This theme examines how curriculum policy is perceived by different agents in the field of production, and how it is recontextualised, interpreted and translated at the school and classroom reproduction level. It seeks to highlight any mismatches between intent and enactment, awareness of educational debates and ideologies in the way the policy has been conceived, and how the policy is thus interpreted. It also draws attention to Bernstein's (2000) concept of classification and framing, and visible and invisible pedagogies.

Under each of the main themes, several subheadings have been used to highlight specific aspects of the theme that are significant to the data in question. Rather than compile the results of the analysis across the three data sets, each data set is presented separately. This chapter presents data from the elite interviews, with data from the document analysis and focus group interviews covered in Chapter 9. The results of the analysis are presented in this way to reflect Bernstein's (2000) fields of practice, and reflected in the table below.

Table 8.1. Presentation of results under the key themes

8. Elite Interviews (Field of production)	9. Document Analysis (Field of production/ recontextualisation)	9. School Focus Groups (Field of recontextualisation/ reproduction)
<p>A The context of curriculum development</p> <p>8.1. Reflections on past and present curricula development processes</p> <p>8.2 Bi-cultural and multicultural New Zealand</p> <p>8.3 Curriculum as process or curriculum as product</p>	<p>The context of curriculum development</p> <p>9.1 Learning from the enacted curriculum</p> <p>9.2 Bi-cultural and multicultural New Zealand – the political landscape</p>	<p>The interpreted and enacted curriculum</p> <p>9.14 The recontextualisation process</p> <p>9.15 Balancing the permissive and prescriptive curriculum</p> <p>9.16 Community consultation and collaboration</p>
<p>B Differences in educational ideologies</p> <p>8.4 Balancing economic and social justice narratives</p>	<p>Differences in educational ideologies</p> <p>9.3 Balancing economic and social justice narratives</p>	<p>Differences in educational ideologies</p> <p>9.17 Balancing economic and social justice narratives</p>
<p>C What and whose knowledge is valued in the curriculum?</p> <p>8.5 Valuing different kinds of knowledge and skills</p>	<p>What and whose knowledge is valued in the curriculum?</p> <p>9.4 Valuing different kinds of knowledge and skills</p>	
<p>D Understanding the intent of the key competencies</p> <p>8.6 The influence of the OECD</p> <p>8.7 Social justice or social engineering</p>	<p>Understanding the intent of the key competencies</p> <p>9.5 The influence of the OECD</p> <p>9.6 Social justice or social engineering</p>	<p>Understanding the intent of the key competencies</p> <p>9.18 The influence of the OECD</p> <p>9.19 Social justice or social engineering</p>
<p>E Diverse students, values and the curriculum</p> <p>8.8 Diversity in Education</p> <p>8.9 Education for diversity</p> <p>8.10 Understanding and valuing diversity in the New Zealand context</p>	<p>Diverse students, values and the curriculum</p> <p>9.7 Diversity in education</p> <p>9.8 Education for diversity</p> <p>9.9 Understanding and valuing diversity in the New Zealand context</p> <p>9.10 The diversity audit</p>	<p>Diverse students, values and the curriculum</p> <p>9.20 Diversity in education</p> <p>9.21 Education for diversity</p>
<p>F. The interpreted and enacted curriculum</p> <p>8.11 Balancing the permissive and prescriptive curriculum</p>	<p>The interpreted and enacted curriculum</p> <p>9.11 Balancing the permissive and prescriptive curriculum</p> <p>9.12 Community consultation and collaboration</p> <p>9.13 Interpreting the key competencies for diverse students</p>	<p>Located at the beginning of the section instead of Theme A.</p>

The elite interview data comprise the views of (i) people who were members of policy groups charged with the overall strategic direction of curriculum policy. This includes group managers, senior policy managers; senior policy analysts), (ii) people who were more responsible for operational policy and implementation. This includes senior education managers; senior education advisers, project managers), and (iii) people who worked for universities and other organisations such as government educational publishing agencies, and people who acted as academic consultants and educational consultants. In their interviews, this range of people offered a variety of different perspectives, in relation to their world views and type of role, expertise and interests they brought to the project.

As noted in the methodology chapter, it is important to remember that in the interviews respondents provided their personal views and recollection of events up to ten years earlier. I have not identified their role category beyond the three broad groupings of interviewees as outlined above, given the complexities of distinguishing between the specific roles and perspectives they took during the development process.

Theme A: The Context of Curriculum

This theme sets out interviewees views of the curriculum process. It relates to ideas from Ball (1994, 2012), Bernstein (2000) and Apple (2013) when they highlight that curriculum design and implementation does not take place in a vacuum but is influenced by the historical, political, social and economic contexts and discourses within which it interacts. Hence this theme includes data relevant to Bernstein's fields of production, recontextualisation and reproduction, the agents and types of discourse that interviewees considered predominated and influenced these fields.

8.1. Review of the past and present curricula

In the early 2000s, the Ministry of Education's schooling policy team embarked on an extensive work programme to prepare for the development of the 2007 curriculum.

Some of these papers were referred to by respondents. Several interviewees referred to the stocktake process and final report, along with the international critiques from Joanne Le Métails of the British National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), and Sue Ferguson from the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). Comment was made about the lack of relationship between the individual learning area documents and the overall curriculum framework that had been developed in the 1990s.

One of the main findings was that the sheer volume of the curriculum statements, by the time you piled them one on top of another, because they'd come out in serial, each group of people who worked on a learning area had developed, without necessarily paying too much mind to what was the cumulative effect of each of these documents in terms of whether schools could actually manage them ... could even deliver a proportion of what was in them. (Senior policy manager)

Five elite interviewees commented that the 2007 curriculum design process was an improvement on the previous one, which occurred in the 1990s. They explained that it was deliberately called a 'stocktake' in that the process aimed to identify strengths and weaknesses of the existing curriculum, and 'revisions' that might be required to reflect new priorities and directions. This approach was taken to ensure people didn't become weary of 'curriculum churn', and perceive it as 'change for changes sake'. Some interviewees highlighted the importance of the extensive and phased consultative process that followed the stocktake. This involved bringing together different groups of people to seek their views; the commissioning of different papers by various experts to inform the discussions and debates; and drawing on international curriculum policy developments as starting points for the overall curriculum design. This is a somewhat different approach to that which typically takes place in Bernstein's (2000) field of production.

So we had leading thinkers around the country taking a lead and then again in each curriculum area, we put subject experts together to write their two pages, in terms of the essence of their curriculum area. And then

we had an ongoing reference group that represented all sectors, as well as all key stakeholders including employers, Business New Zealand, academics, teachers, teacher reps ... they would interrogate the work that the people leading the theory and work the consultative groups had done, and they would give their feedback and that would help to shape it.
(Senior education manager)

The consultation initially focussed on principals' associations (primary, intermediate and secondary), and Ministry of Education officials often spoke to local and regional branches of these organisations. In the early stages, a few interviewees reported that a degree of trust was established through sharing ideas and documents that were still in the policy design phase and were not final or 'official'. Interviewees from the ministry's strategic and implementation groups indicated that this had been a deliberate strategy, given documents in the 1990s and earlier, were considered by teachers to have been designed by a small selective group and presented to the teaching sector as a fait accompli.

It had always been developed by experts sitting in a room writing. Not to say they didn't engage their own learning communities but it wasn't up there as drafts and anyone could comment. (Project manager)

They felt that it [the previous curriculum] had been developed without their involvement, active involvement; that it had just arrived out of the sky from the ministry as a draft. (Group manager)

Two interviewees commented that this lack of consultation had resulted in schools not having a sense of ownership of the curriculum.

[There] was anger at the process that had taken place. And so what was clear was it had never been their [the teachers and schools] curriculum. It was never anything they owned. It was foisted on them. (Group manager)

They also commented that the consultation process also helped mitigate any concerns that the then government might have had about the direction that the

curriculum was taking, given that many of the key, potentially adversarial stakeholders, were engaged in the consultation process.

I mean, of course we reported to the politicians and they knew what we were doing, but there was not a high level of political interest in it. And I think in part, because people were having their say and they were being heard and we were working it through together there wasn't a lot of noise back to politicians about it. (Senior education manager)

The extensive public consultation on the draft curriculum generated over 10,000 written responses alone, and six interviewees felt this was an indication of sufficient consultation. One interviewee commented that some internal and external officials and academics were not used to a wide range of people being consulted.

Often we'd go out with stuff and you know it would be half written and things we'd hand it out and say, engage with this and for many people I think they appreciated that. At times we'd say actually, this isn't public so we'd appreciate if you didn't take it out. And at times, people still found that challenging because, and even with some learning areas people, some who'd been involved externally, not just in Ministry, found it hard that other people could have a say. (Project manager)

It is interesting to note some of the assumptions that may have been drawn from this process; namely that it represented a diversity of perspectives, and that consensus amongst those who contributed represented understanding of the deeper issues, as Aitken (2006) comments on later in this chapter.

8.2. Bi-cultural and multi-cultural New Zealand: The wider political landscape

One interviewee felt that discussions and debates during the consultation process weren't always respectful of the need to manage a number of diverse perspectives and peoples. This interviewee received rebuke from a Māori group, who argued that the proposed framework, with its principles and values, did not explicitly promote a

Māori world-view and was like 'beads and blankets' (a reference to the unjust and tokenistic colonialist trading practices of the 1800s).

Yet another interviewee felt the level of input from indigenous Māori was insufficient, particularly in relation to the key competencies, while a further interviewee commented on how it was difficult to get diverse voices in the public consultation process.

I'd have to say that the shame of it was there didn't seem to be a strong Māori input into [the key competencies] or Pasifika, so that was missing. (Senior adviser)

You see, we worked in groups of parents and so on but quite often you'll still have the dominant voices will be talking in those groups. So if you really really want to sample diversity in a deeper way we would have needed to do more. (Senior policy manager)

In the draft curriculum, the Treaty principle was left out. Comment was made that this was because it was implicit throughout the document. One interviewee recalled extensive debate about the relationship between biculturalism and multiculturalism, and future focussed themes particularly in relation to the Treaty, and that this important dialogue wasn't maintained.

If we go back to the idea of biculturalism and multiculturalism and we scroll right back to the curriculum stocktake and the future focus themes, bicultural and multicultural society. Those might not have been the exact words but that was certainly the intent. There was a lot of debate about that and then it quietly disappeared off the radar because people couldn't agree about the meaning of those things or the emphasis to be given to it. And I think that it was a great pity that that dialogue wasn't kept. (Academic consultant)

Two interviewees recalled that its omission was a result of a political response to a divisive speech made by an opposition political party leader at the time of the draft's development (the Orewa Speech¹⁰), as explained by a senior policy analyst.

I think the really big problem for us was the political issues around the Treaty of Waitangi at the time. At that time there was a ministerial directive to the ministry to remove the Treaty from many documents and I had occasioned back then to meet with the then Minister. (Senior policy analyst)

This point was reiterated by a senior education manager.

It was the time of the Orewa speech. We were not to be mentioning the Treaty of Waitangi and so in the first draft of the curriculum, it wasn't mentioned. And so we had had the Labour government reaction to the Orewa speech and there was sort of a backlash at that time to sort of closing the gaps policy and funding to increase equity in the system and so on. Don Brash's speech caused a bit of a backlash and we were given new directions by the government of the day. Now that in itself, putting out a curriculum that didn't mention the Treaty of Waitangi, that was probably the biggest criticism at the time. So of course, we then had the mandate to address that in the final, so it is clearly there in the final. (Senior education manager)

The *Treaty of Waitangi* became one of the principles of the New Zealand Curriculum, as did *Cultural Diversity* and *Inclusion*. They were intended to guide formal decisions and practices around school curriculum design, including the key competencies. Yet two interviewees were of the view that even with its inclusion in the final version, minimal guidance was given to schools in terms of how the *Treaty of Waitangi*

¹⁰ The Orewa Speech was a speech delivered by the then-leader of the New Zealand National Party Don Brash to the Orewa Rotary Club on 27 January 2004. It addressed the theme of race relations in New Zealand and in particular the special status of Māori people. Brash approached the once-taboo subject by advocating 'one rule for all' and ending what he saw as Māori's special privileges.

principle might be operationalized, or in its intersections with, and implications for, the other principles in order to achieve a coherent, equitable school curriculum.

Because you look here and you've got high expectations, and you've got excellence there. You've got diversity and equity here, and there you've got cultural diversity and Treaty of Waitangi. Here you've got ecological sustainability, and there you've got future focus. So why is it that these two lists, which have at least certain similarities, are two lists? And so how to distinguish them in a relatively simple way for the user? This was a huge challenge. (Educational consultant)

8.3. Curriculum as process or curriculum as product

One interviewee noted that the difference between the stocktake and subsequent consultation, and the 1990's approach reflected different beliefs about curriculum design and implementation. Specifically, the notion that curriculum is a product, an official text; versus curriculum as process, a discourse of 'interpretation and translation' (see Ball, 2015, p. 307):

So I had a number of conversations with [the Minister of Education] at that time. So I kind of know how he was thinking about the curriculum and he did absolutely see it as just simply you just had to get the right stuff into the books and then it would all happen'. It was seeing it as instrumental. The document itself would become an instrument of what they would learn, rather than the process by which he developed it would become the process by which people would enact it. And that was part of what led to Tomorrow's Schools because Treasury, in particular, believed that it was not addressing the right stuff in education. (Group manager)

The development of the 2007 curriculum by ministry officials appeared to place great emphasis on the process of understanding curriculum (Pinar et al., 1995), and how it might play out in the unique contexts of New Zealand's approximately 2,500 primary and secondary schools.

We were told very clearly that this was not about a product development. That we had produced products all the way through the 90's in terms of the curriculum but actually the evidence was showing the ministry that actually nothing had changed in terms of outcomes for kids' achievement. So she was very clear to us that actually while we were going to end up producing a product that was not to be seen as the emphasis; the emphasis was on the process. (Project manager)

Three elite interviewees reflected there had been a number of weaknesses in the final 2007 curriculum document, particularly in the level of support and guidance it offered schools. This is an interesting area of curriculum design, as it is a difficult balancing act between providing extensive operational guidance in the document given the wide range of schools and contexts, and its emphasis on having single document that provided a framework for discussion and interpretation in each school community. Second tier support documents and professional development providers were expected to guide schools through this process. There was comment that suggested that this tier of support, particularly for integrating new concepts such as the key competencies, was insufficient.

The level of support that has been given, in relation to the key competencies for teachers and for schools has been benignly inadequate. I don't think anyone intended it to be inadequate which is why I said it like that. I think we completely underestimated their complexity. We completely underestimated their curriculum potential in reach. We completely underestimated the challenge of weaving them into the learning areas and what we need to know and be able to do, to do that. We just underestimated them all round. (Academic consultant)

Four people also commented on the impact of new central government legislation and increased accountability mechanisms. They believed that this impacted on the 'permissibility' of the curriculum, as well as the time devoted to understanding its implications for school curriculum design. The National Administration Guidelines (NAGs) increased schools' boards of trustees accountability in a number of areas; the

National Standards assessment and reporting for reading, writing and mathematics for Years 1-8 were introduced when the revised curriculum had just been mandated; and the release of research on quality teaching as the biggest system level difference in improved outcomes for students. While these developments are not unaligned, they impacted on school's time and priorities in understanding and implementing the revised curriculum.

There was a revision of the NAGs with more prioritisation being put in, in terms of reporting to parents, in terms of assessment, in terms of focus; and then National Standards and, you know, whatever else has come along since. I wonder if the curriculum as a whole has kind of been pushed down in terms of priority and things that are parts of the curriculum that are not seeing direct expression in those things schools now do or feel as if they have to do are getting less attention. (Senior policy analyst)

Three interviewees felt that what was being asked of schools in terms of curriculum implementation wasn't clear. The sections in the curriculum document that were intended to give guidance to schools were seen as insufficient, and interviewees believed schools were largely left to their own devices in terms of implementing the document.

They're all on their own, all 2500 of them, so I think the variation in how well they take the curriculum and its intentions and what's described and specified and produce a really good quality programme of teaching and learning for their kids is probably very variable. (Senior policy analyst)

An interviewee from the operational policy group felt that the section in the document entitled *School Curriculum Design and Review* had the least amount of thinking underpinning it. They commented that central government findings on what had worked for successful schools over time, could have usefully informed processes that schools could undertake as part of an on-going cycle of improvement. This comment presupposes that there is agreement and clarity over what successful schools look like given diverse communities and resources, but also that different

government agents interpret policy implementation in different ways, as potentially reflected in the following comment:

Right from the 1993 curriculum framework, because it was the 1993 set of NAGs that came in, is where the accountability is expressed for what a school has to do with the curriculum, and that accountability is checked by ERO. So the message always was ... this is what it says in the curriculum and this is what the Ministry says and this is what the government says – what's ERO looking for? (Senior policy analyst)

One interviewee questioned the knowledge requirement and role of the Board of Trustees in understanding and supporting how well the curriculum is expressed in the teaching and learning programmes in their school. They believed that the responsibility has largely remained with the principal and teachers.

I mean, if you did a spot quiz with boards of trustees about key competencies, what answers would you get? (Senior policy analyst)

I think in many ways, particularly the key competencies are valuable, but it's the whole issue of deep support for capacity building, professional learning and system-wide improvement that's missing. (Senior research analyst)

The data highlights the different interpretations and mechanisms of how new curriculum policy gets implemented, the impact of other policy directives and agendas, and the influences and perceptions of various stakeholders that are involved in that process.

Theme B: Differences in Educational Narratives and Ideologies

Following on from differences in how curriculum is understood, this theme highlights the various perspectives and debates raised by interviewees regarding the role of education in relation to the individual and wider society. This can be seen in the different ways the key competencies are perceived and interpreted, as discussed at

length in the review of the literature (see Chapter 6). This theme includes critiques or comments on these different perspectives.

As discussed in Chapter 5, curriculum is designed at a point in time, and is reflective of economic, political and social contexts and agendas that are in play. For ministry officials, much of the design process involves working within the ideological frameworks and manifestos of the elected government and its agencies. In some cases, agreement on policy direction and content can be relatively straightforward; in other cases it can require extensive clarification and negotiation of concepts and outcomes. Comment was made by one interviewee from the operational policy group that a few individuals and groups, both within and external to the ministry, seemed to exert undue influence over some decisions made. This is an artefact of what was believed to be an extensive and inclusive consultation process; how to you balance the weight of particular perspectives against others, and how representative are they? This includes the perspectives and potential mandates of different government agencies, such as Treasury.

[Senior policy manager] had this conversation a lot with Treasury, and with the Secretary for Education and others, about how important it was to have a curriculum and what a curriculum document was and what a curriculum was ... but they always questioned it. And the conversations we had with Treasury were about, kind of, this isn't an important thing to have. It's about getting the schools, you know, getting the kids learning, working differently, you know, so they were coming from a different framework from the one the educators are coming from. (Group manager)

Business New Zealand had a representative there and they weren't just spectators, they were pretty intrinsically involved across the whole curriculum. (Senior education adviser)

8.4. Balancing economic and social justice narratives

Yet six interviewees also stated that both the content and language used was open to different interpretations, assumptions and ideologies. Four people from both the strategic policy group and the consultancy group, commented specifically on the tensions between an economic and social justice narrative. They argued that the documents, both the official curriculum document and its supporting implementation documents, are open to a number of interpretations, and people bring their different perspectives and lenses to those interpretations.

*The whole approach of the Ministry of Education to curriculum from the nineties onwards – was that it was far too instrumental; you know, the curriculum was really being designed to support an economic agenda, not a social or a cultural agenda – and yet that’s the reading into it, you know ... I can read those documents and see balance between all of those outcomes of a national curriculum but people will bring either their perspectives or their suspicions or whatever to bear on it and read into it.
(Senior policy analyst)*

While some of the interviewees believed a balance between the two narratives had been achieved, three people from the academic / education consultant group felt that the social justice outcomes were less visible in the document:

Well the social outcomes are there, but I think the driving strand of the curriculum is this: New Zealand has to pay its way in the world, and we need capable people to do that. In the past the view might have been that if you are fully developing young people, then out of that development will arise a generation of people who are effective in the marketplace, and so on. This curriculum attempts to draw a much straighter line between what is wanted economically and what should be happening in schools. In the past it’s been more of a fuzzy line. (Educational consultant)

I’m thinking of the view that education has, well to be blunt, has to serve an economic end. Personally I don’t share that view, but philosophically

the curriculum has quite a utilitarian streak to it. And the government is concerned that schools should develop young people who will be entrepreneurial go-getters ... who can hold their place in the world and start business and make money and pay for their own retirement and all those sorts of things. That's not the only possible view of education but it's the prevailing view and the curriculum reflects it. (Educational consultant)

It is possible that this particular group, who mediate between the official policy discourse and school level discourse, may be more aware of the discourse in the recontextualisation and reproduction fields. Another interviewee was particularly concerned that the curriculum placed too much emphasis on the individual, and not enough on social responsibility and the collective good. They felt “citizenship had been ripped out of the curriculum”.

The area we build citizenship, identity and social outcomes and who we are as a nation and how we relate to each other is the social sciences. And some really arbitrary decisions were made and I contested them over and over again to no end, that I think ripped citizenship out of the New Zealand curriculum. To use the levels [achievement] objectives as only having conceptual outcomes has actually destroyed in practice the effect of the relating to others, of the key competencies through the curriculum area that most other jurisdictions use to build citizenship and participation. (Senior research analyst)

This quote suggests that collaborative design of curriculum policy is a complex task given the wide range of ideologies and expectations people have of the school curriculum, and whether people feel that particular aspects they value are explicit enough. Bernstein (2000) argued that the perspectives and values that get currency are largely determined by the more powerful agents within the different fields of practice.

Theme C: What and Whose Knowledge is Valued in the Curriculum

This theme foregrounds data relating to the place and priority given to discipline knowledge and its relationship to elements such as the key competencies. It highlights, in particular, the differences between knowledge in the natural sciences and the ever-expanding perspectives and critiques in the social sciences, as well as the privileging of ‘western’ knowledge and values.

8.5. Valuing different kinds of knowledge and skills

While elite interviewees made a number of comments on the tensions between neoliberal and social justice narratives, they were aware of other debates that took place in the wider education sector. A particularly contested area was the place and importance of subject-specific ‘knowledge’ versus more generic competencies, who determines the knowledge young people need for their lives and for society, and from what worldview this is determined. Three interviewees mentioned the tensions between what was viewed as valued knowledge, and how much prominence different knowledges had in the document. A senior education advisor described the emphasis given to ‘skills to survive in the world’ over established disciplinary knowledge as ‘sort of the new knowledge wave’:

There was a very strong line of thinking at the time that we don't need knowledge anymore. That we can access knowledge whenever we like on the internet and so what we need is the skills to survive in the world, so let's focus on the skills and we can pick up knowledge at any stage. And I think that completely ignored the knowledge base that we need to have as people in a community. But it was quite, it was sort of the new knowledge wave. (Senior education adviser)

Traditional views of the role of discipline content knowledge were said to be challenged by those who wanted an increased emphasis on process for knowledge generation and applied knowledge in 21st century contexts, along with the exploration of different ‘knowledges’ and world-views. Elaborating on their comment

above, the interviewee argued the need for some level of agreement over the type of knowledge that was valued by the wider society.

Knowledge was a process, and the process to get knowledge was actually the thing you needed to learn, not the knowledge itself. So you needed how to get knowledge and how to make judgements about that knowledge but the fact that you actually needed to have some shared knowledge to be a society was not really considered. (Senior education adviser)

Two interviewees felt that the key competencies highlighted this struggle between knowledge as discipline ‘products or outcomes’ and ‘knowledge as process’. Others, however, were concerned about the importance of authentic contexts for developing discipline knowledge and not separating these from key competency development, such as critical thinking and perspective taking.

These two people commented that the curriculum design process meant that in most cases, those that were working on the learning area outcomes were not part of the debates and discussions of the key competencies, and argued that the outcomes statements reflected this. They felt the design of the final curriculum, with the separation of the ‘front end’s vision, principles, values and key competencies, from the ‘back end’s learning area outcomes reinforced these divides, rather describing authentic contexts that integrated the principles, values and competencies with discipline knowledge as discussed previously. Because the key competencies were a new addition to the curriculum, some people focused on these in isolation.

One of the things that really struck me once the key competencies took off, became, they almost became the best thing since sliced bread almost to the exclusion of all other aspects of learning and that really worried me. The key competencies were really only part of the picture. They were an important part but you also had to have the knowledge base. And that was a big concern to me, and there was even talk at the time about a whole new curriculum being structured around the key competencies, rather than around various areas of knowledge. And I fought quite

strongly at the time to say that you actually do have to have a knowledge base and we also have to have some sort of shared cultural historical knowledge as New Zealanders. (Senior policy analyst)

For others, the tension lay in identifying or acknowledging the shared knowledge that was valued across a diverse society. What types of knowledge and skills were deemed important in different contexts, by whom and for whom? One senior education advisor commented on this particular aspect in relation to the perceived differences between Māori and Pākehā world views on knowledge

For example, in thinking, when we talk about knowledge base in te ao Māori where that knowledge would come from might be different in a Pākehā school or a Pākehā environment. And I'm thinking, for example knowledge that might come from a spiritual base or might come from a historical background would be given equal, if not higher status, than that that's come from a written, historical or what we would consider evidence base. Whereas it would be the reverse in a Pākehā setting in terms of relating to others. (Senior education adviser)

Theme D: Understanding the Intent of the Key Competencies

The key competencies are the main focus of this research, with specific attention given to the implications for diverse students. According to those interviewed, the competencies were the element of the curriculum that generated considerable debate, to the extent they could be seen as a microcosm, or 'site of struggle' of some of the big debates in curriculum design. The final stocktake report (see Part A in the following chapter), reported widespread dissatisfaction with the curriculum's 'essential skills' which, partly due to the sheer number of them, tended to be operationalised as isolated checklists with minimal impact on teaching and learning programmes or pedagogical practices.

8.6. The influence of the OECD

The New Zealand Curriculum key competencies drew significantly from the OECD's DeSeCo project. Comment was made by four interviewees that this work had a strong research and evidence base internationally because of the collaboration of experts across a range of disciplines, for example anthropology, sociology and economics, and what everybody needed for a range of contexts, as opposed to lists of skills and attitudes that employers wanted. One senior policy manager summarised this, commenting that the OECD wanted to identify what competencies in an education system would lead to the 'good life', and that Switzerland had strong influence on this work. In early curriculum meetings, there were differences in how these key competencies were being viewed.

The first thing was within the consultation process, the thing that came out was a response particularly for Māori and Pacific communities. That they felt that the OECD gave primacy to acting autonomously and that that came from a very Western cultural background. And that they were operating in cultures where the collective was more important than the individual and they therefore wanted to see that reflected in the competencies.

Feedback on the draft curriculum document showed the curriculum vision and key competencies were two of the most highly supported areas during the public consultation process, particularly with parents. One interviewee commented that while the key competencies may be less contentious than sexuality education, the issues that had surfaced at policy level were possibly not yet recognised, or that some people may have felt wary expressing their discomfort when others in the group were largely positive.

[There was] tremendous excitement from the sector [principals and teachers] about the key competencies, people just said, this looks fantastic, I love it, and then they asked the question, but how do you do it, and can you measure it. But we didn't sort of go too deeply into those

operational questions; we just liked the idea of the key competencies.

(Project manager)

People picked up on the competencies and ran with them and they got involved with them and there became a cult around the competencies that I don't think we moved quickly enough to how the whole curriculum came together, and particularly the lived culture of the curriculum and the enacted curriculum. (Senior policy analyst)

8.7. Social justice or social engineering?

Three interviewees spoke of the positive impact that the key competencies had on the overall approach to curriculum coherence and pedagogical practices in some secondary schools following its launch.

Where people have engaged with parents on competencies, anecdotal reports that I've heard from various principals, is they have had the highest levels of engagement ever, because the competencies are really important to parents at home. You know, how the kids relate to other people and how they manage themselves and how they participate and contribute, in particular, are really critical at home so parents are deeply interested in doing anything that they can do to help improve on those competencies. (Project manager)

However, others continued to express concern at the potential for a superficial interpretation of them.

If you were in a school where the key competencies were just the next thing that you had to show you had [delivered on] and you did what Alan Reid called "name and hope" planning. Where you looked at your existing plans and you whacked in the names where they seemed to fit best. Well nothing changed if you did that, but for people who engaged with them seriously they were enormously liberating and brought them a very

*different lens to interpret the curriculum and interpret their work.
(Academic consultant)*

This interviewee commented that it was important the key competencies were seen as relevant across a wide range of life contexts, and there were still some people who were wedded to a more narrow economic interpretation.

Not going down the neoliberal economic “more and better work skills” pathway is a plus I think. Except that’s still a felt tension for us because there are still people who understand that [pathway]. (Academic consultant)

Another person commented on the approach some schools had taken in getting staff to explore the key competencies in relation to themselves, and reflecting on their respective strengths and weaknesses. This approach was also referred to by teachers in one of the focus groups. A senior policy analyst, however, lamented the lack of national and international research on task design; supporting teachers to understand what it actually looks like when potentially discrete elements are brought together in praxis:

I’ve got a thing about task design and I actually believe that that’s the most forgotten activity. And I know it’s not our job in the Ministry to lead on that. I understand that we don’t really lead on learning-specific we’re a policy ministry so we do it differently. However, I think there is a weakness which comes through the international studies around the task design that teachers are doing. So therefore if that’s a weakness how then do teachers design an activity that is inclusive of the key competencies and the outcomes they want from the learning area. (Senior policy analyst)

There were a few comments relating to interpretations of particular competencies, often in relation to their interpretation in an individualistic sense, or whether they were seen as socially-constructed.

Managing self was an interesting one, ... I remember there were a lot of subtle nuances around Managing self. So knowing when to lead and when to follow and when and how to act independently, I don't think you'll find that in the first draft. ... These are where the kinds of debates were, is it just about me as an individual or is it about me and the way I act when connected with others? So they're quite subtle nuances but nevertheless they're really critical, because you might be able to manage yourself but if you can't do it in consideration of the context and the people that you're with then you're not fully [managing self]. (Senior education manager)

Another tension centred on the change from 'making meaning' that was used in the OECD's key competencies to 'Using language, symbols and texts'. An academic consultant felt this phrase implied the meaning of texts is already explicit and agreed by all, and it is just a matter of using the seemingly neutral and uncontested knowledge and skills in the ways that are valued and understood by the dominant culture. They elaborated on this point:

I think some people conflated meaning-making with understanding the stuff and said of "course that's what learning's always been about". And for some people I think meaning-making perhaps cued too much the 1990's curricula and the 'making sense of' debates around constructivism. But those semiotic dimensions of meaning-making and making meaning is something that is cultural and enculturated. You know that's so invisible to people whose culture is the mainstream culture. We just missed a huge opportunity there to try and make it be that not only the minority cultures actually think about how meaning is made in the world. Because for everybody else it just is, because they are so steeped in those cultural tools. (Academic consultant)

There was comment that some debates related to bigger educational and pedagogical issues that could not simply be resolved through careful, nuanced wording of the key competencies, highlighting the concept of the official and

interpreted curriculum. One interviewee questioned the theoretical basis of the key competencies, and how progression or development can be robustly demonstrated.

So in terms of a curriculum design given that we don't have an understanding of how they develop and we don't have an understanding of how you would have known that they developed, I worry that they remain an interesting thing. (Senior policy manager)

Another interviewee questioned the expectation that the key competencies alone would be able to influence the ways that people critically reflected and debated significant societal issues and that this was more a curriculum-wide issue.

Where does this problem reside? Does it reside with the key competencies or actually helping people to become more sophisticated and deeper thinking members of society. We can't make the key competencies turn people into what they're not. (Academic consultant)

Theme E: Diverse students, values and the curriculum

Data grouped under this theme related to interviewee comment in two key areas. Firstly, comment was specifically sought from interviewees on their thoughts on the diversity that exists within and between groups of students and how the underpinning values and emphases of the curriculum key competencies might align or conflict with this. The second area relates to how diverse values, attitudes and world-views are incorporated into curriculum contexts and the key competencies with a view to building greater tolerance and social cohesion.

8.8. Teaching to diversity

Interviewees shared their recollections of some of the issues raised at the time of the curriculum development, and their subsequent reflections and experiences. There was evidence of some quite different theoretical positions. Some interviewees saw

the key competencies and values elements as separate from each other, while others commented that all teaching was a value-laden act.

The following quotes, from individuals from the three different groups, each acknowledge the importance of values. The first quote speaks of values as distinct from competencies, and the second as values as an aspect of competencies. Of particular interest to this study is the first quote that maintains that values, but not competencies, differ across societies. The third quote maintains that the values that underpin the whole curriculum are western European, and that the children who don't share these values tend not to succeed in our system.

The [curriculum] values are an aspect of what you need to perform or act in society and they are a different conceptual thing from a competency.

The values guide how you think about things, how you feel about things, the priorities you actually give to things while you actually acting out a key competency in another context. It's quite a multi-layered understanding of how people operate, really. So it was always part of the picture but it wasn't a competency, and those values would differ from different societies, again in different contexts. Whereas the key competencies were basically the same in any society under any context.

(Policy analyst)

Well, key competencies are defined as incorporating knowledge, skills, attitudes and values so of course they have to have a close relationship to each other. But more than that, I think teaching is a value laden act, whether teachers acknowledge that explicitly or not. Because the purposes that you see for learning are underpinned by your values around what you think is important for kids to know and be able to do and so yeah they are inescapably bound together. (Project manager)

The values sat very much in a western European base and that's not surprising because the political people signing it off would have sat in that place. The majority of teachers sit in that place. I just find it really

fascinating that the learners that are not succeeding in the system don't.
(Educational consultant)

The notion of diverse students and values for those mostly associated with Bernstein's (2000) field of production appear to be understood mostly in relation to racial/ethnic cultures. Few people made comments on diversity beyond ethnicity. There were two comments that relate to the complexities of religious diversity; one referring to the implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum in Niue, and the other mentioning the lack of feedback from 'other social groups'.

I spent quite a lot of time Niue. Now one of my jobs was to implement the curriculum. So I actually got to work with this curriculum in depth and so that was, how I could see how all of it could play out in a totally different culture. How it could actually be worked through just like you've said, when there are tensions between groups and where in this case, a very strong religious community. So how did you take the key competencies and make them look like they belonged in a different setting outside New Zealand was quite a challenge but quite fascinating, really fascinating to do and that's hard work. (Senior policy analyst)

Certainly there was a bit of faith-based interest in it, I seem to remember, not a lot. Paul Morris [Victoria University theology professor] acknowledged that here was an opportunity for [that], as did the Catholic schools. So there was certainly the Catholic school interest and sadly I don't remember a lot of feedback from ethnicities across New Zealand which is a shame, or social groups. (Senior education adviser)

There was also one reference to the influence of the early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* and its emphasis on self and identity.

*I think the strength of the 5 is the fact that you can map them to the international thinking but equally importantly you can map them to *Te Whāriki* and so for learners in New Zealand it's the consistency and the*

continuity of what matters ... That sense of personal self and identity that is also strong in Te Whāriki. (Senior policy manager)

8.9. Teaching for diversity

There was comment from three interviewees on the importance of the key competencies in learning from and with diverse others.

In 'relating to others' we were really clear, as this is not just about social skills. It's about learning from and with others who have very different world views to yourself and that is clearly a competency. You have to be able to manage yourself to do that and you have to be able to clearly use language, symbols and text to share your ideas across and you have to be able to think in different frames. (Academic consultant)

This interpretation has implications not only for students but for teachers and schools in incorporating and recognising different world-views and value perspectives across the curriculum, and how the key competencies might be demonstrated. A further person commented extensively on the disjunct many learners face in values conflicts and differences in expected ways of learning in the home and school. The notion of different social codes is explored in depth by Bernstein (2000) particularly in relation to social class and the implicit and explicit ways of learning and demonstrating knowledge. In this comment, the interviewee talks about the role of education in broadening cultural perspectives and understanding different codes of behaviour.

I suspect that the shift from the culture of the home, to the culture of a school for a great many children, and I would suggest that socio economic classes factor in this just as often as ethnicity or cultural identification. They learn multiple codes of behaviour. Probably schools are more complicated than most because they're there for more often and the code changes more frequently. But that's actually part of what being educated is. If all of your education does nothing but reinforce a single cultural

perspective that you're living with from babyhood then I don't think education's done its job. Because if you're living as an adult in this country and you can't make those code switches you're not going to be employable, you're not going to have successful relationships, you're probably coming in conflict with the law. (Academic consultant)

One interviewee also reflected on their conversation with a prominent Māori academic about the risk of singularising Māori students' identities and limiting their world views.

I think that that's part of a whole bigger picture about responsive teaching. Understanding where young people are coming from and teaching according to that and valuing where they're coming from and just being aware of it. I think there's also a risk of being overly cultural responsive too. I remember [him] talking to me once when I was talking about competencies and so on, for school leavers and talking about the Māori perspective, he said, yes, but you don't just want limit to their background. (Policy analyst)

The role of education in supporting young people and families to not only be confident in their identities and sense of belonging, but to also see the importance of understanding a wide range of perspectives and ways of being and knowing is a key 21st century concept. This is reflected in the following comment:

We're wanting ... the families to make connections through the generations, but we also want them to be 21st century learners, and be creative, and innovative, and able to see things differently and to recontextualise and have different, forward thinking ideas. But not losing the firm foundation of knowing who they are and where they come from. And knowing what their ancestors did. And, that's a cultural, but it's also a family identity thing. (Academic consultant)

8.10. Understanding and valuing diversity in the New Zealand context

Despite these comments about the importance of incorporating multiple world-views and perspectives in curriculum and pedagogies, two people recalled the influence that key papers and political events (such as the Orewa speech) may have had on the level of engagement and critical debate in this area. The priority for one interviewee appeared to be the consistency and continuity with other jurisdictions and policy documents. Another argued that New Zealand took a different approach to the OECD.

There was no slavish adherence to what started with the DeSeCo work. I mean, we inherited a really big, good body of work that some other person in the world had done for us and then we adapted, we took it from there. [I also remember that [Senior Policy Manager] also fed back to OECD [on] some of the adaptation we had done and they were impressed with the addition of the sense of self and sense of identity and where you come from in the core. (Senior education manager)

Three people still felt that something had been lost in the process, and that it had impacted on the whole curriculum.

There was a follow up piece I think that Melissa Brewerton did, that was taking that international work and really looking at it in the context of the New Zealand curriculum but I'm not sure that it picks up on the different cultural perspectives quite the same. So what we've ended up, we've lost that distinction, that understanding that it's not universal in New Zealand for the autonomy and managing one's self and all of those sorts of things to necessarily reflect all cultural things. But it certainly does reflect what happens in education and education policy. (Senior policy manager)

While other individual and group identity markers and intersections with gender, ability/ disability, or sexual orientation were not specifically commented on, two interviewees reflected on the shifts in understanding the complexities of student

diversity and identity that had taken place since the curriculum was developed ten years prior, and how they would do things differently now.

We were attuned to diversity but really focusing on cultural diversity. I am sure we would have put, there would be other lenses on this now if we were doing this again. It is interesting, and I didn't realise that until you asked that question but I think that's absolutely right. (Senior education adviser)

It would be interesting to do a diversity audit now, wouldn't it? Well, I guess that's what you're going to do. Because I think if you look back it's clearly in the values and the principles, it is embedded in the competencies although you could say there might be some tension with some cultures about the way some of them are framed. (Senior education manager)

One interviewee felt that the inclusion of a separate languages learning area in the curriculum was a positive step in highlighting the central place that language has in cultural identity and expression, while another felt the overall curriculum still had a fairly Eurocentric orientation.

People were delighted that languages is there, just delighted, and that was one of the things that spoke to a whole lot of diverse people saying languages is there for the first time. Because of the 1st and 2nd language but just actually valuing a whole lot of people's languages by actually having it in here, that was quite a significant thing. (Senior education manager)

This is a certain kind of curriculum. I think that in many respects it is very good – in many respects better, a lot better, than what went before. But I feel slightly uncomfortable about its utilitarian bent as I see it, and a little uncomfortable about what I see as its rather Eurocentric view of what matters in education. (Educational consultant)

Designing and enacting a curriculum that is seen to be inclusive and responsive to the diverse range of cultures and identities that exist in a society is no small feat. As Nancy Fraser (1989, 1996, 2000) points out, it involves a close examination of the needs and rights discourses and how inclusive or exclusive these are, particularly within and between broader groups, and how resources might be more fairly distributed across groups to achieve greater equity. As Fraser and others (Banks, 2006) note, where this is not managed well, it can undermine individual expressions of identity as well as social cohesion, with minority groups in particular, competing for societal recognition and resources. In terms of interviewee comment on diversity and difference in relation to the key competencies and the wider curriculum, most comments related to ethnic diversity, and predominately Māori and to a lesser extent Pasifika students. This is perhaps unsurprising due to the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi to New Zealand, particularly for Māori, and that both of these student groups, as broad categories, are disproportionately represented in educational underachievement. They remain a government priority, particularly in relation to culturally responsive pedagogies. No comment was made by interviewees in relation to the diversity *within* Māori, Pasifika or other groups nor the potential inequities that can exist in relation to the intersections of socio-economic class, gender, disability, sexual orientation and identification with multiple ethnicities, as highlighted in the literature review.

Theme F: The Interpreted and Enacted curriculum

This theme groups comments made in relation to curriculum implementation from people in Bernstein's (2000) field of production. It seeks to highlight any differences in how curriculum is perceived, particularly notions of curriculum as *product* or as *process*, and opinions on the different interpretations of the curriculum by schools and teachers.

8.11. Balancing the permissive and prescriptive curriculum

A key feature of the 2007 curriculum was that individual schools, in collaboration with their local communities, would use the national curriculum to design a school curriculum that drew on local contexts and community resources. This way they could achieve the outcomes required in ways that were relevant and engaging for its young people. This required the school and community to have a deep understanding of curriculum, its messages, tensions and theories. Schools needed to be able to negotiate the vision they had for their diverse students, identifying shared values and responsibilities, and agreeing on what this might mean for teaching and learning. Interviewees from each of the three groups felt this complex process was not well supported as noted earlier, and guidance and resources for working with their wider community to develop the school curriculum was insufficient.

I think [socialising shifts in curriculum thinking with the general public] it's an area for development definitely, where the Ministry needs to think about, what our role is in that space. And I previously thought, it was largely supporting principals to work with their communities, but I'm not sure. I think we could do more around getting the paradigm shifts in the general public's head about education in their day and education in our day, nowadays, at the same time. Like, what are the shifts and what are the new tools and what are the new ways of thinking and what are the new outcomes, we could probably do a lot more in that space. And maybe the Ministry needs to be doing more on that with our communications people, which might make the ground easier for principals who are then working with their local communities. (Senior education manager)

Yet one person felt the degree of flexibility and guidance was appropriate, and while acknowledging there was debate on this aspect, saw that the ultimate responsibility for the enacted curriculum lay with the school and in its responsiveness to its unique community.

That's one reason why I think one of the most valuable pages in that curriculum statement is, designing your own school curriculum. Because that, the curriculum, whether it rightly or wrongly, whether it should have been there, which was a debate, what it does is make it quite firmly the schools responsibility to take everything in that document and make it appropriate for their individual needs and the diversity of students, the cultural needs etc. (Senior education adviser)

Throughout the elite interviews, individuals often reflected on the discussions and debates that took place, particularly in relation to the different ideologies, perspectives and worldviews that shape policy and practice, and then the degree to which these debates and issues had been understood and supported in their implementation in schools across New Zealand. Four interviewees referred to the tensions between having such a flexible, permissive curriculum and the high level of expertise and depth of understanding required to implement it effectively.

Would it be that teachers don't find the curriculum enough for the purposes of designing courses of teaching and learning? Yes, it gives them all the flexibility to tailor the actual curriculum they provide for those students to the local context the kids – and so on; but what if they're not really capable? What if they've not got lots of subject content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge? (Senior policy analyst)

Are they being well prepared in order to do what we're asking and I think we are at fault where our curriculum, whilst it's setting broad directions, it's not fit for purpose for the teacher of the day. And therefore I do think it's a real need to get in there around helping, I don't know; it's not helping teachers but showing teachers what that task design might be to achieve an outcome. (Senior policy analyst)

In relation to the key competencies within the revised curriculum, three people commented that they too, were on a journey of understanding, and that it is extremely difficult to predict how well-intended policy gets interpreted and enacted in schools when there are so many variables at play. One person felt the answer was

not in being more prescriptive as that also risks a surface level interpretation, but importance was placed on both the design of the document and in the quality of professional development support for schools. While a considerable amount of effort was put into case studies and resources that could be accessed online, the rapid pace and development of a large number of websites meant that navigation and location of resources for principals and teachers was potentially onerous and time consuming.

Schools have to go through their own journey of understanding that and we don't want to be too prescriptive in terms of the ways that people should do these things because sometimes that's when you do risk that surface level interpretation. (Senior policy analyst)

It does absolutely exist in a place and time, and it reflects those who have mandated its development, and it reflects for better or for worse those who implemented the development, and those on any reference group who have been looking for their story or their important stuff in there. And any curriculum is a selection of priorities; it's a selection of stuff. (Senior Education manager)

Well I think, I don't know whether it's a key learning from this but it's an important insight for us to acknowledge across the years of Tomorrow's Schools, that when you leave a 1000 flowers to bloom, some do, most don't. (Academic consultant)

Elite interviewees made mention of specific papers and documents that they believed influenced the design and direction of the revised curriculum, particularly the key competencies. These have been included in the next chapter, along with others that surfaced during the search process.

Chapter 9. Document Analysis and School Focus Group Interviews

Part A. Document analysis

9.0. Introduction

This chapter sets out the analysis of documents and followed by school focus group interviews. As discussed in the research methodology section, the final selection of documents from the large number of available policy papers, meeting minutes and discussion notes, was guided by the themes from the elite interviews and school focus groups. Where possible, official papers that appeared integral to the key competencies policy development process, and documents that were referred to by interview or focus group participants were included. In addition, other documents that contained additional information, alternative perspectives or involved in-depth discussion on a particular theme during the coding process were also analysed in detail. While some of the documents analysed encompassed more than a key competency focus, it was important to capture the wider context of the curriculum design process, and relationships between the theories and values that underpin the whole curriculum.

The table below lists the key themes that emerged from the elite interviews and school focus groups. Listed alongside each theme are the documents that have been analysed as containing content related to these themes, with further information relating to author, date and number of pages. In some cases, this information is not recorded on the document or elsewhere and it has been difficult to establish the purpose, audience and status of the document, or how or why it was commissioned. This situation gives credence to the argument that government policy is not

necessarily a neatly managed linear process, but one that involves different perspectives, debates and compromises, and at times protracted negotiations on resolving an impasse (Ball, 1994). Nonetheless, the final documents that have been included contain content that is particularly relevant one or more themes. All documents were sourced from the New Zealand Ministry of Education electronic or hard copy archives on the development of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) between 2013 and 2014.

Table 9.1. Documents used in the final analysis

Themes	Name / Description of Document	Author/s	Comments
The context of curriculum development	Curriculum Stocktake Report (September 2002)	Ministry of Education Internal Report Not stated	Publicly released on June 14 2003
Differences in educational ideologies	New Zealand Stocktake: an international critique (2002)	Joanne Le Métails (National Foundation for Educational Research, UK)	International reports commissioned by the Ministry of Education
	Report on the New Zealand National Curriculum (2002)	Sue Ferguson (Australian Council of Educational Research)	
What and whose knowledge is valued in the curriculum	The Shape and Scope of the Senior Secondary curriculum: a background paper	Rachel Bolstad New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER)	Commissioned by the Ministry of Education Comparative analysis and commentary
Understanding the intent of the key competencies	Reframing the Essential Skills Implications of the OECD; Defining and Selecting Key Competencies Project, Brewerton (2004)	Melissa Brewerton Ministry of Education	Publicly released
	Key Competencies Report August (2005)	Unravel Research	
Diverse students and the curriculum	Key Competencies in the New Zealand Curriculum: A snapshot of consultation (2004)	Justine Rutherford Ministry of Education	Publicly released
	Key Competencies: a theoretical Framework	Margaret Carr University of	Background paper prepared for the Ministry of

	(2004)	Waikato	Education
	Values – Revising their Purpose (2002)	Joanne Le Métais National Foundation for Educational Research, UK	Background position paper prepared for the Ministry of Education
	Proposed Priority: Affirming and Developing Student Identity	Author/s and date not stated	
	A Draft Analysis of Background Position Papers For Ministry of Education Reference Group For Curriculum Stocktake In Values, Skills And Attitudes: Cameron (2003)	Marie Cameron New Zealand Council for Education Research (NZCER)	
	Curriculum Marautanga and Notions of ‘Diversity in Education (2006)	Tanya Wendt-Samu Auckland University	Diversity audit
The interpreted enacted curriculum	Summary of Feedback on the Draft Curriculum (May 2007)		Summarises the analysis of the public feedback on the draft curriculum contained in the reports by Colmar Brunton and Lift Education, the two international critiques, recommendations from four New Zealand education expert reports, and the 772 short submissions.
	Commentary for Ministry of Education Reference Group Meeting, 1-2 March, 2007 on Reports Analysing Submissions to The New Zealand Curriculum Draft for Consultation, 2006	Graeme Aitken Faculty of Education Auckland University	Comment on the findings from public consultation on the Draft New Zealand Curriculum (2006)
	Implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum (2011)	Sandie Shagen New Zealand Council for Education Research (NZCER)	Synthesis of research on implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007)
	The Nature of the Key Competencies (2006)	Rose Hipkins (NZCER)	

Theme A: The Context of Curriculum Development

9.1. Learning from the enacted curriculum

Many of the elite interviewees commented that taking stock of the positive and less positive aspects and outcomes of the previous 1990's curriculum development process was seen as an essential starting point for the development of the subsequent 2007 New Zealand Curriculum, and the subsequent inclusion of key competencies.

The Curriculum Stocktake Report 2002 sought to capture the major educational, social, political and economic changes that had taken place since the 1990s curriculum was developed and identifying considerations for 'future-proofing' the next curriculum. The stocktake drew from a number of different national and international reports on New Zealand student achievement and social outcomes, and incorporated many of the findings of two international reports on the New Zealand curriculum commissioned through the stocktake. It is important to note that both ***The New Zealand Stocktake: An International Critique*** undertaken by Le Métais (2002) for the UK National Foundation of Educational Research (NFER) and the ***Report on the New Zealand Curriculum*** by Ferguson (2002) on behalf of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), focussed on the curriculum as intended and regulated rather than the curriculum as implemented. As discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.2, and in the stocktake report, there is always a significant number of stakeholders with different perspectives on both the purpose and outcomes of education, the values that underpin these and consequently, what constitutes quality. The *Curriculum Stocktake Report* noted that:

Assessing the quality of education policy is problematic because of the subjective nature of what constitutes quality; any definition of quality is related to the specific goals of a group. Additionally, tight specification of what constitutes quality can jeopardise the dynamic processes that achieving quality requires (Vedder, 1992). The information collected on

the quality of the curriculum is of an eclectic nature and reflects the different perspectives of stakeholders. (p. 14)

It is worthwhile noting that in the introduction to the stocktake report, there is some attempt to highlight the socio-cultural contexts in which the enacted curriculum takes place, and, aligning with Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogical device, recognition of the way curricula is influenced and interpreted as it is enacted and experienced in schools and classrooms.

National curricula are developed as 'intended' curricula, changed through regulation to 'planned' curricula, become 'taught' as they are interpreted, reformulated and internalised by teachers. Finally, curricula are 'experienced', 'learned', and 'internalised' by students (Harland, 1988). Curriculum reform involves reflection and change at all the different levels of curriculum, 'intended', 'planned', 'taught', 'learnt' and 'internalised'. (p. 10)

9.2. Bicultural and multicultural New Zealand

The stocktake report noted that since the design of the previous curriculum a number of societal changes had taken place and these would be important considerations in any revision that took place. They included wider consultation with Māori groups on their aspirations of education, and the need to acknowledge the uniqueness of indigenous culture, language and traditions; the increased diversification of New Zealand society, increasing globalisation resulting in greater recognition of social connectedness, and recognition of the importance of balancing the social outcomes of education with a focus on academic achievement, aligning with an international resurgence in citizenship and values education. One the stocktake's major findings was while there was persistent underachievement of Māori and Pasifika students in comparison to other student groups, within-group differences reflected a greater range, as highlighted by the following quote:

The range of achievement within any group is wider than the range of achievement between any two groups. (p. 5)

This finding is important, both in terms of any statements made in the official curriculum document that potentially homogenise an underachieving student group, but also how this might inform pedagogical responsiveness to the diverse characteristics and needs of students, including the impacts and intersections of social class, gender and other individual variables, as discussed in Chapter 3.

Other recommendations that emerged from the stocktake analysis signalled a need for greater coherence between those curriculum statements contained in English-medium documentation and those used by Māori-medium schools and teachers, particularly given most Māori students were in English-medium schools. This would establish the basis for a national curriculum that contained two connected, but unique, documents. The learning area statements should:

- *reflect the purposes of the curricula/ngā marautanga;*
- *are critical for all students; and*
- *better reflect the future-focused curriculum themes of social cohesion, citizenship, education for a sustainable future, multicultural and bicultural awareness, enterprise and innovation and critical literacy. (Recommendation 17, p. 8)*

The above quote makes specific reference to multicultural and bicultural awareness, social cohesion and citizenship; the complex and often tense relationship between these aspects is a recurrent theme in the data and a key tenet of this thesis, with the stocktake report recommendations aligning with many of the themes that emerged from the elite interviews. These included the need for a wider range of input into the curriculum design process; a more deliberate and planned approach to professional support for school leaders and teachers; a significant reduction in the number and focus of the essential skills to five essential skills and *attitudes* (which will eventuate as five key competencies), and to ensure an inclusive approach to values to more strongly underpinned the curriculum frameworks and support materials.

Theme B: Differences in educational ideologies

9.3. Balancing economic and social justice narratives

The stocktake report also referred to the political context at the time, as indicated in the quote below regarding the shift to an outcomes-based curriculum policy. Le Métais (2002) explained this further in her critique of the stocktake report, using Piper's (1997) framework to highlight how the notion of a better future for individuals and society can be examined from different positions or perspectives, and stakeholder groups can be in conflict with each other over different priorities for education.

Piper's (1997) framework examine[s] different curriculum positions or models with particular reference to their functions ... accreditation, accountability, excellence, teleological/instrumental (utilitarian, economic, functional), social cohesion (political and cultural) and social engineering.

Whilst each model has its supporters, some are mutually incompatible, at least where resources are limited. Educational 'consumers' (students, parents, teachers, trade unions and employers, society at large, the local community, and social, religious, political and other interest groups) have their own, sometimes competing, views on what should be taught in schools. (Le Métais, 2002, p. 5)

Le Métais (2002) argues that, in keeping with prevailing neo-liberal ideologies, 'Governments collect and publicise data to enable individuals to choose between schools within the "education market place" of public services' with the result that this commodification of public services raises the expectations of consumers". She believes that in order to informed choices, young people need to be able to critically evaluate the information they are being provided, and be able to assess the impact on the wider community of their own, and others' choices. She notes however that:

The evidence at present suggests that, especially in Western nations, individualism is running alongside (or, in some cases, supplanting) the sense of community. This is manifested by a 'democratic deficit', or disengagement from traditional forms of democratic involvement such as voting and public service. (Le Métais, 2002, p. 14)

Le Métais' (2002) observation aligns with a number of comments made by elite interviewees regarding the relationship between individualism and social cohesion and citizenship, and likely informed New Zealand's submission to the OECD DeSeCo project in 2001, highlighting what officials believed was an imbalance between the values and approaches of individualistic versus traditional collective cultures, such as New Zealand's Māori. Le Métais identified a number of issues for consideration by the curriculum policy group based on key themes. Included are those that specifically relate to this research study:

- *To what extent can schools overcome social and economic disadvantage?*
- *Does the grouping of students according to race, gender, family background etc. result in an (unjustified) assumption that the learning needs of those within each group are identical?*
- *What is the balance between instrumental and developmental education? How does this affect dispositions towards lifelong learning, as distinct from occupational (re)training?*
- *Does a curriculum whose primary focus is on measurable outcomes (implicitly) devalue what cannot be measured, and thereby diminish the attention devoted to these aspects of the curriculum?*
- *How are the higher order skills to be measured? (p. 19)*

These questions had particular implications for curriculum elements such as the essential skills and their subsequent replacement, the key competencies, and how they are interpreted as valued outcomes of the learning and subject areas and assessment criteria across schooling and qualifications frameworks.

Le Métais (2002) questioned the extent to which different forms of learning can be quantified, and whether an outcomes-based system explicitly values, and thus promotes, the teaching of aspects which can be readily assessed at the expense of higher order skills which are harder to quantify. Le Métais found that:

The New Zealand Curriculum (as described in the eight documents) seeks to meet the, sometimes conflicting, expectations of a wide range of stakeholders and provide a balance between the interest of individual students and the requirements of society and economy. In common with many other curricula, it is increasingly subject to pressures to demonstrate its effectiveness in terms of student learning outcomes. (p. 58)

Theme C: What and Whose knowledge is Valued in the Curriculum?

9.4. Valuing different kinds of knowledge and skills

A report commissioned by the Ministry of Education that contributed to the revision of the New Zealand curriculum, focussed specifically on the implications for senior secondary students. ***The Shape and Scope of the Senior Secondary Curriculum: A Background Paper*** (Bolstad, 2005) found that a key challenge in compiling the report was that, in many countries (including New Zealand) the national curriculum only applies up to the age of 15 or 16. Historically, primary education and the early years of secondary education have been viewed as education for all students, whereas senior secondary school had been focussed on only some students (namely, those headed for university). Bolstad (2005) describes the senior secondary curriculum in New Zealand as largely aligned to a traditional British colonial or Anglo-American model, based on a traditional framework of 'knowledge', including the division of knowledge into particular subjects and disciplines. The value placed on largely Western notions of knowledge, and how this is often informed by the perspectives and interpretations of those in power, is an important aspect of Bernstein's (2000) pedagogical device, particularly in relation to social capital and invisible pedagogies.

Bolstad (2005) notes, however, that there have been a number of changes that have impacted on the senior secondary school, such as school retention rates, tertiary education provision, assessment and qualifications frameworks and new ideas about knowledge and the future needs of society and the economy, that challenge these traditional views of knowledge and the secondary curriculum.

The idea that all learners should be encouraged to stay on through senior secondary school, rather than only those who are most academically successful and probably headed for university, is connected to ideas about knowledge and the future of society and economy. In particular, it articulates strongly with the idea that in the new 'knowledge economy', it is crucial to have a well-educated (and creative/innovative) population. (p. 13)

Bolstad's (2005) paper quotes Gilbert (2003) who does not argue that the traditional forms of knowledge that already exist in the established subjects and disciplines don't matter anymore. Instead, she sees this important knowledge as becoming the raw material, the resource, which students will evaluate, apply and use to generate new knowledge.

Gilbert acknowledges that changing schools to fit with views about a post-industrial "knowledge age", in a way that also incorporates the longstanding educational ideal of equality, and emerging values around diversity, will not be easy. It will require educators to dig up and examine some of the fundamental ideas that underpin school practice, including some that are so deeply embedded that they are almost invisible. (p. 14)

Bolstad (2005) draws on Le Métails (2003) and considers educational aims and objectives of secondary schooling fall into five main areas:

Common aims and objectives for secondary education

Individual/personal	<i>developing individual potential; character education.</i>
Economic	<i>employability or meeting employers' needs; productivity and enhancing the national economy, particularly in relation to international competitors.</i>
Social and cultural	<i>inclusiveness, developing a fair society, social justice; recognising the cultural and linguistic diversity of society; recognising bicultural heritage; promoting democracy or citizenship education.</i>
Knowledge, skills, standards	<i>raising standards; stimulating creativity; stressing the importance of mathematics and science; preparation for the Information Society.</i>
Extending learning	<i>raising participation in post-compulsory education; preparing for lifelong learning.</i>

(in Bolstad, 2005, p. 20)

While Bolstad (2005) posits that one way to view the curriculum is to see it as a tool for helping shape individual, group and national identity, she perhaps underestimates how difficult it is to balance a number of competing needs in terms of curriculum policy, particularly in responsiveness to diverse groups and individuals, social cohesion and economic well-being.

Several of the reports commissioned during the curriculum stocktake phase highlighted the need for policymakers to consider what the appropriate balance would be between individual, local and national interests in terms of requisite knowledge and skills, and how might this balance be achieved. Bolstad (2005) notes that several countries have approached this through either the establishment of common 'core subjects' or through the infusion of key competencies or essential skills. New Zealand's approach also includes an emphasis on the school curriculum, which was designed to implement the national curriculum through locally relevant and responsive contexts.

Theme D: Understanding the intent of the key competencies

9.5. The influence of the OECD

The Ministry of Education responded to a key recommendation from the Curriculum Stocktake to revise the 57 essential skills down to five. These were seen to parallel the five dispositions of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum, and work that was happening at the tertiary level based on the OECD's key competency work. A key paper that informed the direction for this work was ***Reframing the Essential Skills Implications of the OECD; Defining and Selecting Key Competencies Project, Brewerton (2004)***. The paper focuses on research into the nature and definition of key competencies and associated implications for teaching and assessment. In particular, it draws on the work of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Defining and Selecting Key Competencies project (DeSeCo). Brewerton (2004) uses both this work and New Zealand commentaries to propose a framework of key competencies to replace the Essential Skills. While Brewerton acknowledges that while the focus on competencies and generic skills usually emanates from economic drivers, she notes that:

New Zealand is facing many social challenges as we attempt to better understand and give effect to Treaty of Waitangi responsibilities, embrace and support the increasingly multi-cultural nature of our society, and address issues of equity and social justice. Recent international reports have challenged our ability to nurture our children and to educate certain groups in our population. (p. 1)

Brewerton (2004) introduces the term competency, to avoid a direct association with the OECD's use of 'competence', widely interpreted as 'to do something well' (i.e. a level of achievement). She posits that:

Competencies are performance-based and manifested in the actions of an individual in a particular context, and that ... Key competencies are

defined as those competencies needed by everyone across a variety of different life contexts to meet important demands and challenges. (p. 2)

Brewerton (2004) draws on Salagnik (1999, DeSeCo) to emphasise the requisite skills knowledge, attitudes and values necessary for effective participation that determine how well New Zealand and New Zealanders meet the challenges of a globalised knowledge society:

Much of the recent literature in this area has led to a conceptualisation of learning outcomes as preparation for life (including current participation), where the desired outcomes of education are broader than the acquisition of subject knowledge, and the acquisition of skills, competencies and attributes extends beyond the classroom. (Salganik et al., 1999, p. 41, in Brewerton, 2004, p. 4)

Brewerton (2004) notes that this new requirement of knowledge societies provides challenges for the education system, both in terms of the content of learning, and the structure of the national curriculum and qualifications frameworks. However, it also raises other questions about what are 'officially recognised' knowledge, skills and attitudes, and what are not. The paper notes Gilbert's (2003) proposition that teachers may be uncomfortable with an overtly instrumental focus on knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Many teachers have been reluctant to embrace the concept of the "knowledge society" and associated areas or types of learning may be the association of "knowledge society" with the idea that education is primarily to prepare people for work. The emphasis on education for the knowledge society may therefore be seen as part of a 'capitalist plot' to make education better serve the interests of business and the economy. (Gilbert, 2003, p. 26)

Brewerton (2004) cites the wide range of expert opinion that has contributed to the OECD DeSeCo project and therefore the robustness of its conclusions in 'identifying the key competencies needed by everyone for a good life and well-functioning

society'. She acknowledges, however, the challenges of the DeSeCo project's anthropologist Jack Goody to the 'universalism' underpinning the DeSeCo work. Goody (2001) questions whether it is possible to identify a set of key competencies/essential skills needed by every individual across different cultures. Brewerton writes:

This is a particular concern for New Zealand where recognition and support of cultural differences as expressed by Māori and Pasifika peoples in particular, is central to the well-being (and responsibilities) of New Zealand as a whole. (p. 7)

She suggests that 'If we understand that the ways in which essential skills are manifested in action will differ in practice in different social and cultural contexts, then we can still use a common language to identify the overarching types of essential skills while not pre-determining their exact expression in action,' and refers to the DeSeCo position:

That cultural differences did not preclude a degree of commonality in the competencies needed by people to operate in their societies, such as relating to others and cooperating [see discussion in Rychen, 2003, Chapter 3] and that the key differences may not be in the types of essential skills, but in the emphases given to those skills and the different balance between them in various cultural contexts. The interpretation of what actually constitutes 'relating to others' or 'managing conflict', for example, will vary between cultures.

The paper examines the debate about whether skills can, or should, be separated from knowledge, attitudes and values, but does not come to a clear conclusion. While a number of papers, including the DeSeCo project work, posit that all the components are needed for effective performance or meeting the demands of a task, how that task is designed, how the performance is evaluated and by whom, is central to the debate.

9.6. Social justice or social engineering

Other aspects raised in the paper highlight New Zealand's proposed reframing of the DeSeCo competencies to better reflect the collective, rather than individualistic values, central to a number of traditional cultures in the New Zealand, particularly those of Māori and Pasifika peoples. Brewerton (2004) also draws on some of the key themes that emerged from the reference group on attitudes and values, captured in Cameron's (2003) analysis. Brewerton refers to Quinlivan's comments that greater specificity in what key competencies might be prioritised might be better negotiated by individual schools and their communities. Brewerton discusses the strongly-contextualised nature of the key competencies, the specificity of what is to be demonstrated, and the difficulties in transferability across contexts. It is therefore interesting that she also states that OECD's alignment of key competency framework with their international assessments would be 'more directly useful for evaluating the effectiveness of New Zealand policy and practice' in this area.

The *Key Competencies Report, August 2005* sought to capture the understandings of a small group of teachers and parents on the key competencies, as a component of the draft curriculum. The researcher found that teachers were concerned about the increased workload by having to incorporate the key competencies into their lesson planning, and how the competencies would be measured and assessed. The parents interviewed had not previously heard of the concept of essential skills, nor key competencies, and were unclear why they had been introduced and what the perceived benefits were. They were concerned about the 'classroom-focussed' nature of them and wondered how the role of the family was recognised. The parents also commented on the environment that needed to enable these to be developed and how each school would achieve this. Along with teachers, they were uncomfortable with the term 'competencies' which they felt had associations with achievement or failure, and were concerned at how they would be measured. The group had the most difficulty with the concept of 'belonging', which was a key competency in the draft curriculum; they felt that it had, more than others, an implied element of judgement of what is socially acceptable:

What about the child who chooses to be apart? And is quite self-assured.

Who is to say what belonging is? (p. 5)

Interestingly, 'belonging' was drawn from Te Whāriki, the early childhood curriculum, and reflected socio-cultural views on the importance of building positive identities as learners. This suggests that there were potentially different interpretations and understandings by agents in the recontextualising fields which subsequently impacted on the visibility and recognition of different learner identities in the draft and final curriculum document.

While there was some comment about 'a creeping element of social engineering', both teachers and parents alike thought the concepts were 'good concepts'; that they could identify and relate to them, and that most of the important concepts were covered. People felt that parents and communities involvement needs to be emphasised and valued – people perceived the competencies of belonging, relating to others and managing self as joint responsibilities of parents, schools and communities.

Le Métails (2002) highlighted the tensions between the social justice narrative and the instrumentalist, human capital approach to education and thus curriculum design, and how this manifests itself in the role of curriculum elements such as the essential skills and competencies.

A growing trend is the focus on the development and assessment of key or essential skills in response to individual learning and economic needs. On the one hand, applied learning is intended to enhance the motivation, and therefore the achievements of less able students. On the other, it is argued that education should address society's need for citizens and workers who are well educated and have 'relevant' skills and 'appropriate' attitudes.

She drew attention to the difficulties in identifying and defining such skills, their ability to be current and relevant in later work and societal contexts, and the

potential negative effects of a shift from a more student-centred approach to learning and knowledge:

However, the 'human capital' view of education, which tends to see education in terms of an economic investment, has provoked criticism (Grace, 1990). First, some skills are ill defined and it may be impossible or premature to comment on the extent to which students have developed them during, or even at the end of, full-time education. Second, given the pace of change in terms of knowledge, technologies and global markets, even the best employment-related, 'relevant' learning is likely to lag behind what students encounter on leaving school. Third, critics argue that, by reducing the emphasis on knowledge and understanding, skills-based curricula are excessively instrumental and undermine students' appreciation of the intrinsic benefits of learning, a key motivator for lifelong learning. (Le Métais, 2002, p. 11)

These comments summarise a number of the different tensions in curriculum design and in particular, the key competencies as found in the review of the literature. In particular Bernstein (2000), Westera (2001), and Wheelahan (2007) discuss the negative impacts of market forces and invisible pedagogies on working class and minority student groups. Others, such as Takayama (2013) and Sjøberg (2016) note the significant influence of the OECD on individual countries' curricula and what gets valued in terms of key competencies.

Theme E: Diverse Students, Values and the Curriculum

9.7. Diversity in education

In *Key Competencies in the New Zealand Curriculum: a snapshot of consultation* (2004), Rutherford summarised some of the key issues and themes that emerged from early discussions and papers focussed on the concept of key competencies. Rutherford notes that Brewerton's (2004) paper became the starting point for these

discussions and includes references to different papers that were written in response to it. For example, Compton (2004) cited by Rutherford, (2004) argues that Brewerton's rewriting of the DeSeCo competency, "*Interacting in heterogeneous groups*", to "*Interacting in social groups, both heterogeneous and homogenous*", and describing 'groups' such as Māori or Pasifika,

Is not only untenable from a sociocultural perspective, but potentially damaging in that it denies difference. (p. 6)

Also included is the reference to **Key Competencies /skills and attitudes: a theoretical framework**, in which Carr (2006), drawing on Barbara Rogoff and Anna Sfard, highlights the culturally situated, intra and interpersonal nature of learning. Citing Rogoff (2003, p. 62), Carr writes:

Together, the interpersonal, personal and cultural-institutional aspects of (an) event constitute the activity ... Analysis of interpersonal arrangements could not occur without background understanding of community processes (such as the historical and cultural roles and changing practices of schools and families) ... (T)he distinctions between what is in the foreground and what is in the background lie in our analysis and are not assumed to be separate entities in reality. (p. 2)

Carr (2006) also notes that the OECD DeSeCo project, which informed the four competency clusters in the Brewerton (2004) paper, took a narrower view of the cultural nature of learning, arguing that it was mindful of its Programme for International Assessment of Student Achievement (PISA) projects which compared competencies across countries. Carr argues that not only is there a 'culture' of classrooms, but that 'relating to others' and 'respect will have considerable local variations, and that these may well change over time and space. She also argued the importance of a learner's multiple identities, including the identity of a successful learner, noting that the DeSeCo largely draws on behaviourist and cognitive views, and suggests that key competencies are more than 'metacognitive strategies and opportunities to practice in a range of contexts'. Carr cites Wenger (1998, p. 268)

who sees identity as ‘the vehicle that carries our experiences from context to context, and Holland (n.d.) who writes that:

[Identities] remain multiple, as people’s trajectories through figured worlds neither take on one path nor remain in the ambit of one cultural space, one figured world. Nonetheless, identities constitute an enduring and significant aspect of history-in-person, history that is brought to current situations. They are a pivotal element of the perspective that persons bring to the construal of new activities and even new figured worlds. (p. 4)

The two international critiques of the New Zealand curriculum as part of the 2002 stocktake found that there was insufficient guidance given for teachers on how to cater for the needs of a diverse student population (Ferguson, 2002; Le Métails, 2002). Both reports found a high degree of coherence between the New Zealand Curriculum Framework and the curriculum statements, with three exceptions:

The relatively low priority given to foreign language learning, which remains a non-statutory requirement; and the failure to follow through on the commitment to meet the needs of students of different social and religious backgrounds.

In addition, a tension arises between two principles: the recognition of the rights and needs of the Māori community and those of other ethnic groups. This tension is apparent not only in the inclusion statements but also in the representation (or lack of it) of the language, culture, context and learning styles of the different ethnic groups. (Le Métails, 2002, p. 58)

The stocktake report quotes Professor Mason Durie in emphasising that Māori students have specific rights and responsibilities as the indigenous people of New Zealand. In order for Māori ‘to live as Māori, to participate as citizens of the world, and to enjoy good health and a high standard of living’, education [and therefore the curriculum] must be guided by the principle of ‘indigeneity’ and ‘best outcomes’ for all students (Durie, 2001, p. 5), [and that] New Zealand’s national curricula,

therefore, must take account of the Treaty of Waitangi and recognise Māori as tangata whenua. Le Métais (2002) argued however, that:

The predominant position accorded to Māori culture tends to overshadow the position of the other cultures in New Zealand society. Whilst teachers are urged to make links with cultures in the local community as sources of knowledge and appropriate practice, this places additional demands on their time and, where teachers are unable to do so, there is a risk that 'multi-cultural' will be restricted to Māori and Pākehā. (p. 34)

According to Le Métais (2002), in most cases [the learning area] statements provide little direct guidance for teachers. Where examples are provided, they often related to Māori culture, and teachers are left to identify context, content and behaviours which reflect the 'other cultures'. In some cases, the curricular content may be unacceptable to some communities. Le Métais thus asks the question: Does the New Zealand curriculum treat groups of students (Māori, girls) as single, homogenous entities, thereby reinforcing stereotypes and failing to recognise individual needs, as well as the cumulative needs of students who belong to a number of disadvantaged groups? (p. 35).

9.8. Education for diversity

While there was a significant amount of discussion on the importance of recognising and responding to student diversity and multiple identities in national and local curriculum design in the early phases of the revised curriculum, this does not seem to be captured in the final document. This finding was also commented on by one of the elite interviewees. However, relying on a single document to change some fundamental pedagogical practices and discourses in schools would seem unrealistic. To perhaps reinforce this point, Le Métais (2002) asks in another paper on values in the curriculum as part of the early stocktake process; **Values – Revising their Purpose (2002)**, whether students are actually demonstrating the desired attitudes and values espoused in the curriculum at that time, given international and national comparative research noting a high prevalence of absenteeism, verbal intimidation,

physical violence, and suicide among New Zealand students. She argues that while it is important that community values are reflected in programmes, schools and students may also need to question whether these values foster personal, national and global wellbeing. The separation of values from the learning areas and essential skills raises further questions in terms of catering for diversity and difference in education. Le Métais cites Judith Chapman, UNESCO 1994, who states:

Values exist, [and] are found in and embodied in the whole curriculum. Values are not definable as though they were an autonomous element in the curriculum, as being in some way a separate subject, with its body of theory, cognitive content, typical activities, disciplinary procedures or criteria for success. (p. 60, in Le Métais, p. 6)

The points raised in the curriculum stocktake reports are revisited in several subsequent papers commissioned to inform the 2007 curriculum. One paper, ***Proposed Priority: Affirming and Developing Student Identity*** (author/s and dates unknown) contains a number of headings, quotes and discussion points related to identity and diversity. It makes specific reference to the notion of multiple identities.

Identity is complex and is the very core of who you are, it involves multiple identities – including, but not exclusive to, your gender, cultural heritage(s), ethnicity, socio-economic background, religion, sexuality, talents, giftedness, disability, special needs, your identity as a learner, collective identities (for example to your whānau, your iwi, your country – as citizens of New Zealand and the status of Māori as tangata whenua). Identity is not static, it is constantly evolving and developing and includes how you see yourself in relation to self and others and the world around you. (p. 1)

The paper also refers to the potentially inclusive or exclusive nature of curriculum in the ways that the content and messages are constructed, making visible the perspectives and knowledges of some groups, and not others. It refers to the substantial research literature in this area (e.g., Apple & Weiss, 1983) and asks what opportunity to learn might mean for some students whose ethnicity, cultural

background, sexual orientation or gender is excluded, undermined or diminished within the curriculum. Specific reference was made to the Ministry of Education's Best Evidence Synthesis project, in particular, the Responsiveness to Diversity Framework (2003), which constitutes difference and diversity as central to educational practice:

It emphasises the importance of cultural identity in education, but counters the stereotyping of individual by group affiliation, and demotes the diversity within individual students influenced by intersections of gender, cultural heritage(s), socio-economic background and talent.

At the level of individual learners, identity is far more complex, and it is responsiveness to that complexity in both individuals and groups that is integral to successful educational practice. (p. 7)

One of the key questions contained in this paper asked how might the system be driven by the learner and their identity rather than assumptions about what aspects of identity it is important to focus upon. Comment was made that it was important not to constrain what learners could become by the education system defining too rigidly what it thinks learners should be. This is an important point in relation to this thesis, as it raises the question of what ownership do students have in identity constructions, and their own personal values and perspectives. As discussed in the review of the literature, for some individuals, their choice to background, rather than foreground, particular aspects of their identity, can be seen by some as an act of betrayal (O'Regan, 2001; Rorty & Wong, 1990).

9.9. Understanding and valuing diversity in the New Zealand context

A number of these recurring debates surfaced in papers and reference group discussions when examining the relationship between the attitudes, values and the essential skills. In addition to the extensive literature review on values in the curriculum undertaken by Keown et al. (2005), discussed in Chapter 3, ***A Draft Analysis of Background Position Papers for Ministry of Education Reference Group***

For Curriculum Stocktake In Values, Skills And Attitudes: Cameron (2003)

summarised the reference group discussion. Twenty-one of twenty-two attendees contributed papers ahead of this meeting. Eighteen of these papers noted the complexity of identifying and negotiating diverse values and beliefs in education, and commented that decisions about curriculum skills and values must always follow from wider questions about curriculum purpose. Several also commented that skills, (and attitudes or dispositions) and values are interconnected, with skills deriving from values. Vanya Kovach's paper was seen to provide a useful distinction between the terms:

A value is something we think is good. An attitude is the disposition to pursue that good. A skill is the ability (or abilities) required to achieve that good. (p. 6)

Authors of ten of the papers emphasised that all curricula reflect the values and priorities of those who create them, and made the point that education is never culturally or contextually neutral but is inevitably both socially and culturally normative and regulative. One writer suggested that the whole notion of a national curriculum could be seen as contentious, querying whether the diverse needs and interests of New Zealand students can be met through a common curriculum. Arohia Durie (2003) identified tensions that exist between 'Māori valuing of indigeneity as a driving principle and non-Māori valuing of democracy as a driving principle, politically and socially. Durie also challenged the notion of the "knowledge economy" which accords higher status to curricula which are seen to have socio-economic utility (p. 4).

Kathleen Quinlivan considered that the values in the New Zealand Curriculum lack specific relevance to other aspects of the document and actual pedagogical practices; that they need to be better integrated into other curriculum statements and into schooling practices. She noted silences around valuing difference and diversity, and the need to move beyond narrow conceptions.

While some people in the group held the view that all cultures applaud the development of wisdom, illustrating this view with quotes from a range of cultures, other submissions questioned the notion of 'universal values' suggesting that *they*

are the constructed outcomes of processes of critical reflection and self-correction (p. 9).

[Kovach] points out however that any value may be interpreted differently. She gives the example of “respect” which can mean different things to different people. Do we mean earned respect, the respect that comes with status, or the respect that is due all human beings? And, she notes, different communities have different ways of expressing their respect. It is only when values are unpacked into attitudes and behaviours that differences become clear. General terms, she suggests, may give an illusion of universality. (p. 8)

9.10. The diversity audit

Of particular interest to this thesis are the ways in which diversity and identity have been interpreted and incorporated in the New Zealand curriculum, and the implications for key competencies. The diversity audit of the 2005 draft curriculum ***Curriculum Marautanga and Notions of Diversity in Education*** (Wendt-Samu, 2005) highlighted a number of contradictions and challenges in the way diversity was being interpreted in the New Zealand educational context. She noted that there were at least three ways that it was being used:

It is used as an adjective to describe contexts, and even the learners within these contexts, that are not the same, and are different, or heterogeneous, to one another. Another way that this term is used is as a prescription for education practice. That is to say, diversity in education is about effective teaching and learning practices for settings of diverse (adjective) learners. The third way that the term is used is as a social theory the belief that a certain type of schooling will play a significant role in increasing tolerance, and reducing prejudice, within wider society. This is education for the acceptance of diversity. (p. 5)

She drew on the Ministry of Education's Best Evidence Synthesis definition of diversity to help develop a framework of analysis, positioning it within broad socio-cultural perspectives and critiques of multicultural and diversity discourses, identifying potential indicators of curricula that are responsive to diversity:

Diversity encompasses many characteristics including ethnicity (and increasingly, multiple ethnic heritages), socio-economic background, home language, gender and sexuality, and special needs (including disability, and giftedness). Teaching needs to be responsive to the diversity and the diverse realities within groups, for example, diversity within Pakeha, Māori, Pasifika (the Pasifika 'umbrella') and Asian students who are arguably the most diverse 'ethnic' group categories by cultural and linguistic heritage. (Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 21, in Wendt-Samu, 2005, p. 3)

She noted that the position that the responsiveness to diversity framework of the BES programme takes is one which:

... rejects the notion of a 'normal' group and 'other' or minority groups of children and constitutes diversity and difference as central to the classroom endeavour and central to the focus of quality teaching in Aotearoa, New Zealand. (Alton-Lee, 2003, p. 3)

Wendt-Samu (2005) notes that according to Aitken and Sinnema (2005):

The application of the BES 'responsiveness to diversity framework' will challenge deficit thinking, as well as beliefs that more able students do not require special support when the needs of less able students are targeted. This framework will use pedagogical approaches that work to benefit diverse learners simultaneously. It will also avoid simplistic notions of identity and avoid ascribing generalised group characteristics to individuals from that group. (p. 17)

Yet the BES programme has sought to identify pedagogical approaches that have been demonstrated to be responsive and effective in terms of enhancing educational outcomes for large student groups, such as Māori learners, without necessarily examining within group differences, such as social class. Wendt-Samu (2005) examines some of the discourse associated with 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al., 1992) noting that in terms of diversity, socio-cultural approaches recognise that children come from different home, community and economic backgrounds where they learn and acquire different funds of knowledge. While she acknowledges the extensive research that demonstrates the almost exclusive dominance of white middle class funds of knowledge, she draws on McIntyre et al. (2001) to reinforce the dynamic, rather than static nature of beliefs and practices, and the diversity *within*, as much as between, broader groupings:

It cannot be assumed, however, that members of a group share a bounded and integrated body of knowledge and that these produce norms of behaviour that enable teachers to anticipate learner needs. Researchers and educators have examined diverse communities and their activities and realise that with all communities, these are constantly in transition. The meanings and forms of activity that exist in any community are always being contested and negotiated by its members. (McIntyre et al., 2001, p. 7, in Wendt-Samu, 2005, p. 5)

In order to establish strong connections between home and school funds of knowledge, it is more productive to describe the broader social, political and economic conditions that influence students' lives in and out of school. According to McIntyre et al., having a broader or

enlarged' socio-cultural perspective enables teachers and educators to understand the fluid and dynamic nature of students' experiences and the varied cultural practices in which they participate. (2001, p. 7, in Wendt-Samu, 2005, p. 5)

Wendt-Samu (2005) cites McCarthy (1994), who identified three different discourses that deal with inequality in school curriculum; cultural understanding; cultural

competence and cultural emancipation. The audit utilises all three overlapping discourses, but defines the term *culture* quite broadly.

Culture and its embodiment within an individual learner extend beyond cultural and ethnic groups, and include social groups with distinctive cultural features (that is, ways of being and ways of knowing, that are embedded in an individual. (p. 7)

Utilising the work of Zeichner (1993), Wendt-Samu (2005) refined his list of twelve elements of curricula to eight key indicators that would support effective and responsive pedagogical approaches for diverse learners:

1	<i>A strong sense of identity – of who and what they are, rather than who/what they are supposed to be</i>	IDENTITY
2	<i>The examination of individual similarities and differences between self and others</i>	INDIVIDUAL SIMILARITY AND DIFFERENCE
3	<i>The examination of similarities and differences between groups in wider society</i>	SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES WITHIN SOCIETY
4	<i>The inclusiveness of the knowledge, experiences and perspectives of others</i>	INCLUSIVENESS
5	<i>The recognition of and connection to learners’ home knowledge, languages and practices</i>	LEARNER FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE
6	<i>The use of culturally responsive pedagogies that draw on learners’ own rich funds of knowledge</i>	CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGIES
7	<i>The reflection of positive role models from diverse groups in society</i>	POSITIVE ROLE MODELS
8	<i>Appropriate systems of support in the pursuit of academic excellence.</i>	SUPPORT FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

(Wendt-Samu, 2005, p. 8)

Wendt-Samu (2005) noted that for indicators 2 and 3, that this could risk prejudicial ‘othering’. However, she argues that in order to understand one’s own perspective and any inherent bias and prejudices that perspective may be built upon, one needs opportunities to explore these in relation to others. Obviously such learning experiences require careful, skilful and sensitive facilitation on the part of teachers.

In the audit of the draft curriculum, both the indicators and McCarthy's three discourses were used to identify and record terms and phrases that could be interpreted as either being reflective of McCarthy's discourses and/or indicators of a responsive curriculum. Wendt-Samu and her colleague noted the dominance of the 'cultural understanding' discourse, to a much lesser extent cultural competency, and none which made the achievement of minority groups an explicit focus. In addition, there were a number of different terms used throughout the document. She notes that when the term 'culture' (or its derivatives e.g., cultural, bicultural, multicultural) that it was often used in sentences that anticipate

that the curriculum will enable students to 'affirm their identities', develop 'values ... based on 'cultural traditions' and contribute to the 'sustainable well-being of society ... culturally'. (p. 11)

Neither the ethnicity nor race was used and Wendt-Samu (2005) states that while race is arguably a very unhelpful term, ethnicity is not, and notes that the BES 'responsiveness to diversity' framework refers to 'ethnic' groups more so than 'cultural groups'. Wendt-Samu found that when diversity was used, it either referred to role of the curriculum to educate for diversity, i.e. as an expression of social theory or at least ideology, as a prescription for education practice (i.e. diversity in education) and the other occasions as adjectives. As a result of this analysis, she found that the front end of the curriculum emphasises the development of knowledge and understanding of others and oneself on the basis of cultural differences, affirming cultural identity and heritage. Importantly, Wendt-Samu found that while group cultures can be defined broadly (e.g., deaf culture, queer culture, working class culture) the way that it is used in the document appears to follow the more traditional interpretations and use of this term, and not so much the BES definition and application (p. 12).

Wendt-Samu's (2005) paper argued that the dominant cultural understanding discourse highlights McCarthy's arguments regarding the strength and weakness of such a curriculum, in that a curriculum that focuses on understanding cultural and social differences will not be able to address wider power relations in society.

More importantly, school-based curriculum planning is at risk of avoiding (albeit unintentionally) topics and units of work about social issues and socio-economic realities in our society that are difficult to deal with. Focusing on those aspects of culture that enable affirmation and celebration is much easier. (p. 13)

The audit found that in examining the messages the draft gives about ‘diversity in education, and education for diversity’ is that:

The type of culture that is to be celebrated and learned and understood is ethnic culture. Perhaps there needs to be opportunities to explore culture and ethnicity as concepts, in order for broader notions of forms of diversity (as in the BES responsiveness to diversity framework) to be taken into account. And that there is a rather confused, imprecise one [message] that does not distinguish a clear difference in these two new and emerging discourses. (p. 16)

The audit concluded with a concern that because teachers tend to go straight to the learning areas, the important theorised and principled front-end risks being overlooked, and subverts the intent and direction of the revised curriculum.

This paper highlights important discourses regarding culture, diversity, intersectionality and identity theories as discussed in Chapter 3, and is a key tenet of this thesis. Of particular importance is the finding that culture and diversity were interpreted in a range of ways in the draft curriculum, and focussed mainly on ‘education for diversity’, rather than a critical examination of the curriculum, and its messages and implications for diverse students; diversity in education.

Theme F: The Interpreted and Enacted Curriculum

9.11. Balancing the permissive and prescriptive curriculum

One of the purposes of 'Tomorrow's Schools', New Zealand's decentralisation reforms of the late 1980s, was to increase the amount of parental and community involvement and engagement with its local schools. Rather than being in a supportive role, often as fundraisers in traditional parent-teacher associations, the emphasis shifted to more of a partnership role.

While there appears to be a number of 'second-tier' guidance in the form of pamphlets and websites, the extent to which parents and communities should be involved in the co construction and negotiation of values and priorities of the school curriculum remains unclear in official documentation. The report on the draft curriculum captures some of this confusion.

The first draft of the revised New Zealand curriculum sought to address the recommendations of the curriculum stocktake report, through an extensive design and consultation process over several years. This draft was distributed throughout the country and feedback was sought through a range of mechanisms between August and November 2006. Two research organisations were contracted to compile and analyse feedback from the range of stakeholder groups via surveys and online questionnaires. Both long and short submissions were received on the draft. Over 10,000 written submissions were received. Feedback was further analysed independently by four educational professionals from different educational organisations. The 2006 draft was also reviewed by Le Métais (NFER) and Ferguson (ACER) who reviewed the previous curriculum as part of the stocktake process. A synthesis of these reports, *Summary of Feedback on the Draft curriculum*, was completed in May 2007.

Common themes across all the reports and captured in the summary report, was a largely positive response to the draft. Most of the recommendations from the stocktake had been incorporated, support for the general direction the curriculum

was strong and reflective of international developments in curriculum design. However, there were a few notable exceptions. References to the Treaty of Waitangi were seen as not sufficiently visible or embedded in the document and emerged as one of three key areas identified in the report:

The Treaty of Waitangi and, in particular, the absence of the Treaty of Waitangi and the related issues of te reo Māori, biculturalism and Māori concepts was the theme most commented on in the long submissions (66 of 168 submitters) and it was also mentioned by Le Métais (2007). There were also 337 written short submissions that commented on the Treaty of Waitangi and related issues.

The other two areas related to the place of *sustainability* in the curriculum, with some perceiving an overemphasis on economic concerns, with others suggesting it needed a stronger focus; and to the ‘*lack of clarity of the purpose, function and scope of the draft curriculum.*’ This last theme also relates to the section in the draft document entitled, *Designing a School Curriculum*, where it received the highest percentage of negative feedback on clarity and usefulness. There was also concern about the relationship between the significant themes and elements of the curriculum such as the principles, values and key competencies, and their implementation.

Many submissions expressed concern about the role of communities in curriculum design, and over the degree of flexibility schools have in designing their own curriculum. (p. 17)

Le Métais (2006) noted a significant conflict between maintaining the structure of the previous curriculum, such as the achievement objectives, and the competency-oriented focus of the new curriculum. She states:

There is a conflict between the stated aim to help young people ‘develop the competencies they will need for further study and lifelong learning, and the description of intended outcomes in terms of learning area achievement outcomes. (p. 24)

Aitken (2006), in commenting on the findings of public consultation, noted that the draft curriculum mixed a number of curriculum approaches, through the achievement objectives focus on outcomes at each level and the key competencies organised with a process focus and not defined by levels:

If as stated elsewhere in the draft, “a focus on outcomes provides clarity for curriculum design” (p28) it is difficult to understand why the key competencies and learning areas are treated differently. The point here is not so much whether curriculum should be organised according to an outcomes or process focus but rather that the inclusion of both within the draft created confusion.

Aitken (2006) refers to Burton et al. (2001) who, while noting that different curriculum approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive, conclude that “the more influences that the curriculum has been encouraged to satisfy, the more complicated (or possibly even confused) the vision will be” (p. 6).

Aitken commented further on the balance between greater flexibility and autonomy in local school and community curriculum design, and normative and continuous experiences expected of a public policy. He notes that while flexibility acknowledges teachers professional autonomy, sense of control and thus commitment and responsiveness to local needs and interests, it does increase workload as the use of pre-published resources decreases. Perhaps the most significant impact however, is on how it might impact on issues of equity and opportunity:

[Flexibility in curriculum design] presupposes expertise in the curriculum that may not be widely or evenly spread; and it may compromise entitlement as schools and individual teachers make idiosyncratic choices about what to teach. For this reason curriculum flexibility at the national level places significant pressure on curriculum design. (p. 1)

Aitken (2006) does not explicitly refer to the impact of a flexible curriculum on *how* teachers teach; their values and their subsequent interactions and assessments of diverse students, yet this, too, is dependent on critical approaches to curriculum

design and implementation. While acknowledging that there is not a linear relationship between design and implementation and that national policy, Aitken argues it is important to establish clarity and the essence of the curriculum because of the normative nature of expectations and obligations of public policy. Aitken further cautioned that the data indicating high levels of understanding of the draft curriculum needed to be taken at face value, given the substantial differences between primary and secondary sectors. In addition, he noted the concerns raised in a significant number of submissions that related to inconsistency of language, seemingly different theoretical positions and the lack of clarity on the relationship between the curriculum elements.

A report which captured some of the key findings and challenges of the actual implementation phase of the New Zealand Curriculum was ***Implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum: Synthesis of Research and Evaluation, Shagen (2011)***. As noted in the introduction, the revised New Zealand Curriculum was launched in November 2007, and schools were required to give full effect to the curriculum by February 2010. Their progress has been monitored using evidence reported by the Education Review Office (ERO), and research teams commissioned by the Ministry of Education to explore the process and stages of preparation. These included the Monitoring and Evaluation of Curriculum Implementation (MECI) undertaken by Auckland University, and the Curriculum Implementation Exploratory Study (CIES) undertaken by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER), in partnership with the University of Waikato. Shagen's (2011) paper synthesised the findings from these reports and other relevant documents, emphasising the important differences in purpose, methodology, sampling and timing of each of the reports, as well as their contributing writers and researchers. Shagen noted that an overall degree of consistency in themes arising. MECI found that while regard for the curriculum and confidence about implementation rose over time, there were differences between primary and secondary, with the former being more confident about their understanding and implementation. There were comments regarding the increased level of freedom, while others were concerned about the lack of prescription, preferring to have their task more defined.

9.12. Community consultation and collaboration

While the intent of the NZC is that students and families should have a say in the design of the school curriculum, this view was not always shared by teachers and principals. NZCER's national survey of secondary schools (2009) found much higher percentages of agreement among secondary principals that student voice was either very important or somewhat important than they did for secondary teachers.

Current NZ research about community engagement suggests that most schools are operating nearer the 'inform' end of the curriculum. (NZCER, in Shagen, 2011, p. 13)

Shagen (2011) noted across several reports that many schools were still not confident with engaging with their communities through consultation. The CIES report suggests schools may need to try and find a range of strategies before finding those that work with their communities, and when schools have consulted early and meaningfully in the process, they have seen large increases in community involvement. Consultation with families tended to be in the area of the school vision and values. Of particular interest to this thesis is the finding that in some of the MECI focus groups, teachers expressed concern with dealing with values in diverse, multicultural contexts. An example was given in one school where:

[The school] wanted students to be proud of what they do, but for some Pasifika parents, pride was regarded almost as a sin, and they wanted the children to be taught humility. (Shagen, 2011, p. 15)

This finding highlights the difficulties in generalising values and attributes at (ethnic) group level to all individuals within that group, let alone other intersections of gender, personality and other individual differences. Furthermore, it is difficult for schools to identify spokespeople to consult with, given issues with inclusive representation and discourse (Fraser, 1991).

Shagen (2011) reported that the ERO (2008) evaluation on schools engagement with parents, whānau and communities found that the most successful practices for

engaging families with schools were in schools with very diverse communities. Successful strategies were those that built relationships, enabled barriers to be broken down and gave parents confidence to become involved in their child's learning.

Shagen (2011) concluded that while consultation with students, parents and the community was common in the early stages (particularly when considering vision and values) this happened less when preparation moved on to detailed curriculum planning. There was suggestion that initial discussions were at the surface level only, and that understanding of the key competencies and principles remained vague. There was concern that teachers were much less likely than principals to recognise that the NZC was also about changing pedagogical practices and approaches in response to evidence on student learning. While there was a growing realisation that curriculum design and review was cyclical in nature, Shagen found from the analysis, that schools often talked about integrating the new elements into the learning areas, and very few direct references to school curriculum *design*. The second ERO report (August, 2009) stressed the importance of curriculum design and review as a cyclic process:

A critical driver in successful curriculum design and implementation and delivery is the effectiveness of the school's self review or inquiry process. Curriculum design and implementation is informed by ongoing inquiry into what is working and how well it is working for diverse students. (ERO, 2009, in Shagen, 2011, p. 20)

9.13. Interpreting the key competencies for diverse students

Hipkins' extensive discussion on *The Nature of the Key Competencies* (2006) forewarned a number of key issues relevant to this thesis. While Hipkins noted that the key competencies were potentially a richly productive, future focussed innovation, she believed much depended on how they might be interpreted and adopted by schools. She argued that teachers would need carefully considered

support and resources, including time for professional conversations and workable curriculum materials and examples:

They cannot be expected to change their practice until they understand and “own” the compelling reason for doing so.

The “message systems” of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment will need to be realigned, taking account of student-centred learning needs and the wider contexts implicated in learning for the ‘knowledge society’.
(p. 72)

Earlier in the paper, Hipkins (2006) asks the question “Do the key competencies reflect the diversity of New Zealand’s population?”, noting suggestions that the DeSeCo work was too focussed in Western European cultural values; that competencies reflect culturally determined values, and that in some cultures, co-operation is valued over competition. She also noted Rychen and Salganik’s (2003) suggestion that the differences may not be in regard to the types of generic competencies but rather the weight given to them, and drew on Keown et al.’s (2005) recommendation (see Chapter 3) that a ‘big tented approach in which overarching shared values are interpreted locally, as appropriate in different cultural contexts’. Hipkins concludes her paper with the following comments:

Teachers will need help to see how knowledge fits into the competencies, and will need reassurance that it is still valued, even as they learn to be more critical of the “one size fits all” model of traditional curriculum content, and more accepting of diverse ways of knowing. Interested members of the wider community will need to be supported to understand the changes, both in the interests of acceptance and sustainability, and because the current clear boundaries between school and the wider community activities will inevitably begin to erode. While the stakes are high, patience, power-sharing, and careful planning for implementation seems advisable. (p. 72)

This final comment reflects some of the key arguments of this thesis: the need for a critical approach to understanding how the key competencies are interpreted, by whom and their underpinning values and knowledge frameworks. The following section provides a small, but important vignette on how the key competencies and student diversity have been interpreted by two urban schools; one primary school for students in years 1 to 8, and a nearby secondary school catering for students in years 9 to 13.

Part B. School focus group data

The data on two school focus groups has been included to provide a small vignette of implementation in one primary and one secondary school. Given the unique contexts of New Zealand's 2,500 schools, it is neither possible nor desirable to draw any generalisations from the data. It may however provide an insight into whether Bernstein's (2000) fields of recontextualisation and reproduction are at play, as he also argues, is not necessarily deterministic and can be disrupted at different levels of the pedagogical model.

The two focus groups were conducted in 2013 (primary school) and 2014 (secondary school) respectively, seven and eight years after the revised curriculum was launched, but at a similar time to the elite interviews. The primary school focus group included its entire teaching staff and senior management; the secondary school; its heads of faculty and senior management.

Theme A: The Interpreted and Enacted curriculum

9.14. The recontextualisation process

It is interesting to note that both schools invested significant resource into the employment of a private professional development facilitator to support their understanding and development of the key competencies within the school curriculum. One was employed by the national primary teachers union to develop a

web-based resource on the key competencies, and the other, a professor from a UK university who was involved in extensive research on developing learning habits. It is difficult to determine how representative this level of investment was in relation to other primary and secondary schools in New Zealand, particularly as the significant number of small, rural schools can impact on the access to, and frequency of, external expertise and guidance.

9.15. Balancing the permissive and prescriptive curriculum

In the primary school, professional development included the whole staff, and it was stated that there was not one individual or group who led the process; in the secondary school, given the larger staff numbers, this process was led by the heads of faculty. They then led the inquiry process within their particular learning area/subject faculty. Participants from both schools commented on how much time and hard work was required over several years, and the ongoing nature of curriculum review. In each case, the schools started with their school vision and values, and then explored how this related to the key competencies. They each developed a key competency framework to underpin shared understandings and practices as part of their school curriculum. They commented that although it was a lengthy process, they felt a sense of ownership as a result. Comments from the primary school staff were as follows:

We started with the vision values, and then we built on the – through the headings of The New Zealand Curriculum, then we kept extrapolating out, so when it came to key competencies, we came up with our own competency wheels, and the way we were going to view the competencies. So we changed the way that looked. Basically making it ours, but we took quite a lot of time to do it. I remember a sort of a feeling of excitement ... We could interpret it our way. (Primary principal)

That's, I suppose a product of that, isn't it – it's like what does our school think, how is the teaching and learning happening in our school, how does that fit into these bigger pictures and this handbook yes, but that wasn't provided by anyone else except us. (Primary principal)

The secondary school focus group also talked about the importance of ownership how the curriculum is interpreted and enacted at an individual school and faculty level.

We had to look at how the values and visions and competencies related to our particular learning area. And I think we worked with HOFs [Heads of Faculty]. I think we worked at first with leaders and then with individual faculties to kind of own it, how it would look in our particular learning area. (Secondary teacher)

So there's more a sense of ownership isn't there, rather than a clip-on thing that you sort of add to teaching practices. And teachers have shared what they try, how they try different things so we'd share, we're in different inter-disciplinary groups and things like that so we each get to hear from each other. (Secondary teacher)

There was comment that this process allowed for greater cross-disciplinary conversations and connections, rather than continuing to make sense of things within traditional subject silos. This important aspect of local school curriculum design can help facilitate and surface shared and different understandings and beliefs about curriculum, teaching and learning practices, which may be different to those espoused by national curriculum policy documents.

I think that was one of the really good things about the new curriculum in that suddenly you felt linked to other subject areas instead of working in your own individual task; the fact that there were these kind of links were great. I was sitting down having conversations with people that I didn't usually [have these kinds of conversations]. (Secondary teacher)

9.16. Community consultation and collaboration

The primary teachers stated they looked to their immediate colleagues for guidance in understanding curriculum content, rather than subject-based learning communities. This may reflect the fact that they are required to teach all learning

areas, and are thus guided by the discourse and philosophy of the school, rather than a more discipline-based approach:

I think – mostly I've learnt from people here. Probably the way I teach fits into the culture of this school and this place. Which is important, I think, because it's more comprehensive across the school. (Primary teacher)

When I was a young teacher, most of my stuff probably came from the people that I was teaching with, rather than the books. 'Cause what really works is what people do. And for the students in that school. (Primary teacher)

The primary school teachers also stressed the importance of their wider community, of their interactions and discussions with parents and families, and how the school curriculum and practices needed to reflect this:

It actually helped us understand who we were – how we were ... How it was going to be a useful document for us, I think, more than just the other one. And for our community.

I'd been to a number of workshops on it, and hearing other schools saying, 'Oh we've actually got our curriculum in place, you know, after six months.' And I was really mindful in fact, we were going to have a curriculum like that, even if it took five years, we were going to actually end up with something that we all were part of, the community was part of, and it reflected our school. Which it does. (Primary principal)

Further comment was not made by the secondary focus group in relation to other discourse communities beyond the cross-disciplinary and subject associations they belonged to. This perhaps reflects the difficulties secondary schools face in collaborating with their communities on the complexities of curriculum coherence at an advanced interdisciplinary and qualifications level. However, it cannot be assumed from the lack of comment that this school did not consult with its parent and wider community over school curriculum design.

Theme B: Differences in Educational Ideologies

9.17. Balancing economic and social justice narratives

In general, comments in relation to the 2007 curriculum were largely positive from both the primary and secondary school groups, although some of the secondary teachers felt the document did not provide sufficient guidance for their particular subject area.

And it's a much more – for me it's a much more holistic document around the, around the whole child and what you wanted ultimately for ... and that was the starting place – which has been the way that we've always thought about our kids, and straight away so it felt as though this is really ... this is a good thing. (Primary principal)

In my subject area I think there was a lot of school time in both the schools that I worked in at that time, to talk about it and I think that teachers liked it. (Secondary teacher)

I just remember, you know, [they were] basically saying well, no, there isn't very much in there to tell you what you should be doing or how you should be doing it; if you need to, refer back to the old curriculum document. Which seems a bizarre way of saying we didn't really think it through. (Primary teacher)

Others felt that a single document couldn't hope to do all that and cited web-based subject associations and the online resources provided by the Ministry of Education.

But there is lots of online support and there's a whole website dedicated to case studies and the Best Evidence Syntheses documents and there's a huge amount of resources available. (Secondary teacher)

The previous comment potentially highlights different beliefs, expectations, and possible confusions associated with permissive curriculum policy frameworks, as

compared with syllabi and the more traditional prescriptive curriculum documents. This also aligns with some of the findings from the elite interviews and document analysis.

There was some discussion in both groups about how the design of the 2007 curriculum better reflected their potentially more holistic, rather than instrumentalist, philosophies about teaching and learning, although there was comment about some schools and teachers merely 'retro-fitting' the curriculum into existing practices:

*[Some teachers] said it felt more like something they'd had in the 1970's and 80's, and then that was lost with the **Tomorrow's Schools** and all that set of curriculum. So they felt there was some good returns, some good returns of freedom for teachers in schools to interpret as they saw appropriate. (Primary teacher)*

I was at a different school as well, and I remember it felt more like people were trying to show that they were already doing it without having to change anything. So all of it was like planning in reverse, it was like we do that and we do that and nothing actually changed. Particularly [the] 'thinking' [competency. I think the idea that we think about thinking or that people think in various ways was not very prevalent very much at that time. (Secondary teacher)

Theme D: Understanding the Intent of the Key Competencies

9.18. The influence of the OECD

There was comment on the influences on the curriculum, particularly in relation to the key competencies. Some teachers stated they were not aware that the key competencies had originated from the work of the OECD but this was probably a good thing because that's not how they interpreted them.

Having only known the key competencies in the curriculum, I wouldn't have necessarily associated to that ... [to the OECD] But in a way, I guess because we did so much work on what that was going to look like in our school, in a way, that probably took that all out. Because we came back to our school, and our community, and our kids. (Primary teacher)

Others, however, were aware of some of the instrumentalist and social justice debates surrounding the key competencies and their role in the curriculum:

And I also think that the, my own theory of education is that it's not about trying to get kids into the workplace, it's about kind of strengthening] society, [for a] democratic society and I don't think that the purposes of the OECD necessarily has that at the top. I think [they're] much more [kind of instrumentalist] about trying to, you know, [and] capitalist, I guess. (Secondary teacher)

9.19. Social justice or social engineering

Some teachers did not like the term 'key competencies', because they felt there was a binary operating; that one could be seen as either competent or incompetent, as opposed to continuous learning across a number of contexts.

I think the word 'competency' is interesting because it implies that once you've reached it you've got it – it's like being able to drive a car or prune a tree or something, it's a competency; whereas, you know, these science capabilities seem to be heading more towards kind of on-going development – you never actually get there, you're still always sort of learning so I think the word about competency itself – once you're competent, well, that's it, there's no more striving. (Primary principal)

When asked whether capabilities was a more acceptable term, some felt this could be interpreted in the same way, as capable or incapable. Questions on how the key competencies might be monitored or assessed generated quite extensive discussion

in both focus groups. In the secondary context, comment was more on how they influence and are influenced by, the disciplinary context:

That disciplinary stuff comes to the fore because thinking, like the thinking competency in science, how do you think scientifically, how do you think ... and literary, a student of literature – how do you think historically, how do you think as a geographer – they're actually disciplinary approaches; which – that's for me is what the competency is talking about. And that's where the subject specialist and the curriculum leadership really comes to the fore is what does that mean for us rather than labelling as personality traits. (Secondary teacher)

It would have been interesting to have heard more on how teachers help students see the commonalities and transferability of these competencies across learning contexts, as alluded to in the following comment:

Because they're not assessed – and the general consensus seems to be that they shouldn't be assessed – you just think, well, ok, I have all these assessments to do and key competencies, we'll kind of clip them on and give them a kind of passing acknowledgement. If they were embedded more in an inter-disciplinary sense. (Secondary teacher)

Another secondary teacher expressed concern about the validity of assessments where social and economic capital might be at play.

You're rewarding students for things their parents might have organised for them. Like you weren't acknowledging that somebody whose mother packs their school bag and drops them off at school is in a different situation than somebody who has to make lunch – you know, like so each – the challenge for each child is different. So I think a lot of us started to make the students write little things about how many credits they think they should get and why. (Secondary teacher)

There was some discussion on the influences of different teachers and how they interpreted different aspects of the key competencies. The primary teachers felt a 'top down' interpretation would not be a good thing, as there were benefits in having different interpretations in different contexts and by different teachers.

Cause thinking, for instance, or managing self might look different depending on who the staff that you have as well, you know, so as soon as it becomes stuck in something or constrained by senior leaders saying this is what it will look like, I think it's doomed. And I think it's more about the reflective cycle and the process of thinking about it regularly and genuinely reflecting on what you're doing. (Primary teacher)

This raises some questions, not only in terms of curriculum coherence and transferability of competencies, but also the risk of mixed messages about valued behaviours and attitudes from different teachers.

In the primary group, the key competencies appeared to be interpreted more in terms of general learning habits, with a more organic approach to social and emotional development, rather than any reference to developing specific discipline-related competencies. There was also comment about everyone being in the state of developing them as part of a life-long process and that they were more integrated into their pedagogical approach.

In the junior school it would be largely self-assessment on their learning habits. (Primary teacher)

My impression is that they are life skills and that they are really valuable and I think that even without consciously including in my planning ..., I'm utilising and thinking about them but at a more subconscious level. It's not, 'Oh, today I'm going to teach managing self ...' It just sort of happens, I think, in my teaching, I'm not conscious of it. (Primary teacher)

While this may have its merits, the literature highlights the importance of deliberate and explicit acts of teaching, especially for those students with less cultural capital

(e.g., Bernstein, 2000). Yet another primary teacher's comment may represent a more integrated approach, responsive to the needs of the individual.

And for us the way that we teach with our children is knowing them first, and building them up as individuals, social beings, and, and in there comes the learning. (Primary teacher)

Theme E: Diverse students, Values and the Curriculum

9.20. Diversity in education

When asked about student diversity and different value systems, there were differences in the responses between the two focus groups. The primary teachers talked about the extensive consultation with different groups in their school community to seek agreement on the valued outcomes of the school curriculum. These were largely in relation to the different ethnic groups that comprised their school population.

Well, we're all different individuals, we probably all interpret things slightly differently. Don't you think? And different cultures. (Primary teacher)

But the fundamentals around the social competencies, are basically when we did our parent meetings, and parent one-on-ones around when we were doing the curriculum. The fundamental things that came through from all our parents, where they wanted their kids to be happy and engaged, able to get on with others, tolerant of others. You know, all of those things. So there's some fundamentals that run across ... People, because they are about people. Values are about people. (Primary principal)

The reference to the 'social competencies' was of interest as it reflected one professional development provider's interpretation and translation of some key

competencies as 'social competencies' and others as 'cognitive competencies'. This highlights the influence of agents in the recontextualising field and their particular views on the ways knowledge is constructed.

In the secondary focus group, the discussion largely focussed on different conceptions of diversity and how some of their parents and students perceive this. There seemed to be a range of different views on this topic. Some felt that perceptions of the school as a 'diverse, multicultural school' were a distractor and based on quite superficial indicators of diversity, such as the relatively large numbers of different ethnic groups in comparison to other schools in the area, the different codes of dress, and the publicity surrounding the school's efforts in being more inclusive of gender and religious diversity.

But I think that kids sometimes feel like they're diverse because they're here or they're multicultural when in actual fact they're just kids in non-uniform. (Secondary teacher)

I think that the next step for us is to say well, how do we know we're diverse when we celebrate diversity; what's the stuff around the place that shows that. Is it a holistic diversity or is it just a few great examples? (Secondary teacher)

Both schools talked about the importance of their school culture, their responsiveness to diverse students and the relationship to the key competencies, particularly how this shapes how staff interact with their students, their parents and the wider community:

We find that when we have new people here. It does take them a while to understand how we operate with those, with the values and with the key competencies. That this is why the importance of the conversations we have as staff, for them to hear the language that we use, so that there's continuity for the students, no matter what part of the school they're in. (Primary teacher)

And we're models for our values and our key competencies, so it's upon us to behave appropriately. [Laughter] ... and apologise when we don't ...
(Primary teacher)

I think we are much more open to diverse approaches to being who you are; it not so much being cultural, or multicultural. I think that genuine difference here for me coming from here from a different school is the desire to genuinely know people, who they are, and that's the diversity; knowing you as an individual so we can help you be a good learner as opposed to promoting diversity as a new idea. (Secondary teacher)

One secondary teacher who was particularly engaged with the focus group discussion, given his own post-graduate study, commented extensively on the impact of identity and ethnic identity in relation to pedagogical approaches, and how approaches to discipline knowledge and pedagogy are located in western epistemologies:

I think for me for the kind of multi ethnic, culturally responsiveness dimension to this, again I have to look at it through a disciplinary lens. There's really interesting stuff about what is identity, what is one's ethnic identity, what impact does that have on their ability to think about the past; especially when you're discussing certain historical topics. So that's where the whole nature of historical thinking; is it an inherently Western idea. There's huge big debates that go on in the history academic community which are fascinating and have implications. I don't think I can get very deep with it without looking at what are people saying about difference and diversity and different cultures in relation to my learning area, how that difference affects their learning ...

This particular comment responds to a number of debates raised in this research; the different understandings and constructions of identity, and how this affects students understanding of, approach to and engagement with different types of knowledge, values and dispositions to learning.

9.21. Education for diversity

A further comment in the primary group extolled the advantages of an ethnically diverse school in understanding and negotiating different perspectives and practices. This was a key finding of ERO in relation to schools' collaboration with the local communities, as noted by Shagen (2011) in the document analysis.

I think we're quite lucky here 'cause we don't we have a dominant culture. We have lots of small groups, so ... And everyone feels part of the situation, and we can compare and talk about, 'How do you do it?' And, 'How do you do it?' There's not a sense of not having an opportunity to say. It feels a very shared experience. I can imagine in another school with a dominant [culture] it would be harder. (Primary teacher)

Yet in acknowledging and responding to the more visible differences between student groups, this may distract teachers from examining within-group differences and intersectionalities as highlighted by Burbules (1997), Crenshaw (1989) and Root (1996) in the review of the literature (see Chapter 3).

As a result of a series of parent meetings held by the school on the curriculum, the primary teachers found that parents were also keen to learn about other children's ethnic cultures:

Because our Māori parents – meetings, talked about wanting, you know, to understand other people's cultures, and wanting to understand ... I remember, one meeting I had in the staffroom and they wanted to know more about, to understand more about some children. And then it was, you know, from our other cultures, our understanding – you know, te reo and Māori culture. And so yeah, it was that cross-[cultural understanding] ...

But what's interesting, is outside of the school, like in council apartments [public housing estates] there is a lot of friction. There is a lot of racial tension between cultures and we at ... When the kids come [and] say, and

we get wind of it from time to time, when the kids come to school. But because we're constantly talking about people being different and celebrating that, we, in a way, we counter that.

Whether we like it or not, we've got lots of kids at this school who have different identities and that will surely be shaping how they interpret the world and therefore how they're making sense of our subject areas. So the question is from a key competencies angle, how are we responding to those identities appropriately I think in ways that people aren't having to sort of hide their identity or ... and that's really, really hard. But it's important. (Secondary teacher)

9.22. Summary

Data from the three sources; elite interviews with government officials and academic consultants who operated largely in Bernstein's (2000) field of production; the numerous documents that were artefacts from the production and recontextualisation fields; and the focus group interviews which were located in Bernstein's field of reproduction, provides rich insight into curriculum in action.

The data reflects the multitude of roles, perspectives and interpretations in the design and implementation of curriculum policy. Importantly, it emphasises the influence of New Zealand's socio-political history, and how individuals, organisations and events can influence conceptions of and responsiveness to, student diversity, particularly in relation to the valued attitudes and behaviours of the key competencies.

The following chapter examines the research questions in relation to what has been revealed through the data, and, through drawing on the literature, offer possible insights and interpretations on the key competency design and implementation process.

Chapter 10. Data Analysis and Discussion

If the culture of the teacher is to become part of the consciousness of the child, then the culture of the child must first be in the consciousness of the teacher.

(Bernstein, 1970, p. 68)

10.0. Introduction

An analysis of the data from the elite interviews ('interviews'), the various policy documents and discussion papers as well as the school focus group interviews ('focus groups'), has reinforced the notion that curriculum is never neutral; rather it reflects the historical, political, social and economic context in which it was developed (Apple, 2013; Ball, 2012, 2015; Kliebard, 1986; Ozga, 2000).

In this research, I examine the 2007 *New Zealand Curriculum* key competencies, a new concept in the curriculum. What and who influenced their design and subsequent implementation in New Zealand schools? Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogical device provided a framework to examine the nature of the discourse and the views of influential agents in the fields of production, recontextualisation and reproduction in the design and implementation of the key competencies. A particular focus of the research was on how cultural diversity and difference were conceived in relation to the key competencies. Fraser's 1989 focus on the inclusive versus exclusive nature of such discourse, alongside Burbules (1997), Crenshaw (1989) and Root's (1996) theories on intersectionality and expressions of difference (see Chapter 3) provided important critical lenses to determine whether some student identities and expressions of difference might be prioritised over others in the development of statements on valued attitudes and behaviours in the curriculum. In addition,

Fraser's examination of the recognition and redistribution debates in the era of 'identity politics' (Heyes, 2016) provided a further lens with which to examine the data.

10.1. Approach to analysis

As detailed in Chapter 7, data derive from three different sources: documents obtained from Ministry of Education archives; elite interviews with key policy officials and academics directly involved with the design of the key competencies and, in some cases their implementation in schools; and two school focus groups of teachers and leaders responsible for enacting the key competencies in their schools and classrooms.

Findings are compared across the three sources of data, using themes that emerged from deductive and inductive analysis. Areas of convergence and difference are noted in each theme. The discussion identifies and analyses the key influences operating throughout the curriculum design and implementation process, and how cultural diversity and difference were understood both at the time, and several years later. The six broad themes that emerged from the data are as follows:

- Theme A The Context of Curriculum Development
- Theme B Differences in Educational Ideologies
- Theme C What and Whose Knowledge is Valued in the Curriculum
- Theme D Understanding the Intent of the Key Competencies
- Theme E Diverse students, Values and the Curriculum Key Competencies
- Theme F The Interpreted and Enacted Curriculum

10.2. Theme A: The context of curriculum development

10.2.1. Reflections on past and present curricula development processes

Design and development of the 1990s curriculum, described by those involved in the elite interviews, aligned closely with Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogic device, in relation to the agents involved and processes and influences associated

with the field of production. New Zealand curriculum development has traditionally included a greater mix of government officials and academics in the field of production, and more 'fluidity' between the fields than Bernstein's model would suggest. This is perhaps reflective of relatively New Zealand's small population size and greater interactivity between agents than Bernstein's Britain. However, the 1990's curriculum development was perceived by several interviewees as a top-down process which involved a few policy officials and academic experts who worked in isolation to deliver a curriculum for schools and teachers to implement (Section 8.1). The result was a series of seven curriculum documents, one for each learning area, and released in succession with minimal attention to coherence or the cumulative effect of how these documents might be implemented. Four interviewees mentioned the subsequent anger of schools and teachers about this process; the feeling they had of being 'done to.'

In contrast, the development of the 2007 curriculum was seen as being more consultative and included more perspectives than those agents who, according to Bernstein (2000), typically influence the field of production. Comment was made that having to take account of a wider range of stakeholders was quite an adjustment for some ministry officials. The process reflected a different political climate, with a newly elected centre-left government taking a more hands-off approach and trusting the consultation process (Section 8.1).

Analysis of documents revealed that the ministry sought independent critiques from educational research organisations in the UK and Australia, as part of the stocktake process, and on the subsequent draft curriculum. Le Metais' (2002) critique of the stocktake paper reinforced Bernstein's (2000) and Apple's (2013) notion that perceptions of the quality and purpose of curriculum is about the ideologies and agendas of different stakeholders, and the respective emphasis placed on academic achievement versus social outcomes. Within New Zealand, the curriculum stocktake highlighted a number of societal changes to be considered in the curriculum review. Most notable were the increased diversification of New Zealand society; the importance of balancing academic and social outcomes; the need to consult more widely with Māori about their aspirations for education and the unique place of

Māori culture, language and traditions. Le Métails' (2002) analysis of the achievement data, highlighted a lack of equity in outcomes for different student groups and the interpreted nature of curriculum; how it is recontextualised to reproduce the practices, values and achievement bias of the dominant class, often the very things a revised curriculum is designed to disrupt (Olssen et al., 2004; Welner et al., 2008; in Chapter 5). Le Métails' (2002) paper also notes evidence that while academic achievement for Māori and Pasifika students is of concern, the 'range of achievement *within* any group is wider than the range of achievement between any two groups' (p. 5). She commented that the focus on improving outcomes for Māori had the potential to overshadow outcomes for other disadvantaged groups (Section 8.8). These findings focussed on the predominant discourse in New Zealand at the time; the relationship between ethnicity and student outcomes. This contrasted with research on socio-economic status and cultural disjuncts across a number of underachieving student groups (Marie et al., 2008; Harker, 2006; Wylie, 2001; in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.1).

Apple (2004) and Fraser (2000), commenting on the US context, argue that this shift in focus away from economic inequities and social injustices *across* groups of people can be linked to the rise of neo-liberalism and the fracturing of society along economic lines, with minority groups competing against each other for recognition and resources, rather than uniting to address such inequities. This potentially divisive outcome between what Fraser terms the politics of recognition and social justice, relates to another tension in the development of curriculum in New Zealand: the place and role that the Treaty of Waitangi played and continues to play in educational policy and practice for those students who identify as Māori, and those with other non-Māori identities.

10.2.2. Bicultural and multicultural New Zealand

Le Métails' (2002) stocktake critique makes recommendations for a curriculum that 'better reflects the future-focussed curriculum themes of social cohesion, citizenship, education for a sustainable future, multicultural and bicultural awareness, enterprise and innovation and critical literacy'. Analysis of the elite interview and focus group data revealed a range of understandings and perspectives on the themes, their

relationships, and what they might mean in practice. In the elite interviews and document analysis, there were a number of tensions in bicultural versus multicultural discourses, particularly in the meaning and emphasis given to each.

There was evidence that some ministry officials found difficulties in balancing the rights of indigenous Māori and the role of *tikanga* (language and customs) in the curriculum with the values and perspectives of other stakeholders. The Treaty of Waitangi plays an important role in the partnership between Māori and the Crown. Yet the relationship and balance between the Treaty and other principles of the curriculum, namely cultural diversity, inclusion and community consultation is unclear, not only in the curriculum, but potentially in wider New Zealand society (Bromell, 2008; Smits, 2011; Chapter 4). Some elite interviewees stated there had been a lot of debate regarding the meaning and emphasis given to biculturalism and multiculturalism following the stocktake (Section 8.2), with one academic consultant commenting that it was disappointing that this dialogue wasn't continued. This suggests that discussions in the field of production are important in surfacing different issues and perspectives, so that a degree of consensus can guide and support the implementation process.

Two senior ministry officials believe that politician Don Brash's Orewa speech impacted the degree to which these tensions were addressed in the final document. This speech, delivered by the opposition party leader in 2004, became a platform for a race relations debate in New Zealand. In particular, it surfaced debates around what some saw as the special privileges accorded Māori (Section 8.2). According to the elite interviewees, the government at the time, mindful of the political backlash, pulled back from several race-based initiatives (e.g., Closing the Gap, see Chapter 4), and directed that references to the Treaty be removed from the curriculum. While the Treaty was reinstated in the final document following public consultation, the opportunity to fully examine its relationship to the other principles and elements of the curriculum, such as the key competencies in relation to all students, was viewed by some interviewees as a lost opportunity (Section 8.2). Responses to the speech highlight the difficult and complex nature of curriculum design within complex political and societal contexts. They illustrate Bernstein's (2000) theory about how

various internal and external agents, and socio-political events influence and impact on policy framings and emphases.

The debates related to the Orewa speech echoes Fraser's (2000) discussion on the difficulty in recognising some people's rights over others as well as achieving the equitable distribution of societal resources and promoting social cohesion.

Furthermore, as Fraser discusses in her analysis of recognition versus redistribution discourses, and as some of the elite interviewees noted (Section 8.2), it can be difficult for ministry officials, and school leaders in their respective communities, to identify the degree to which the various interlocutors represent the full range of perspectives amongst groups, and where consensus might lie. Comment was made by two elite interviewees about the need to consult more widely in the future, beyond more dominant voices (Section 8.2). This is an important point, because of the status, roles, and access to social and economic capital different people have, and their subsequent ability to be heard. Different voices and perspectives emerge from the intersections of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation etc. as well as traditional and contemporary expressions of cultural identity and practice, as highlighted by Burbules (1997), Crenshaw (1989), and Song (2005) in Chapter 3.

10.2.3. Curriculum as process or curriculum as product

The data from the document analysis and elite interviews revealed different perceptions in the field of production, particularly regarding how a curriculum is developed and interpreted, and the respective balance between articulating social and economic agendas. While there was evidence of instrumental views of curriculum such as the early behaviourist theories of Tyler (1949) and Bruner et al.'s early work (1960) as discussed in Chapter 5; that 'you just had to get the right stuff into books and it would all happen', there was also explicit comment that the emphasis had shifted in the development of the 2007 curriculum to be about 'the process' (Section 8.3). This not only included the process of consultation with a wide range of stakeholder groups, but also the process of 'understanding' the curriculum, and its implications for the unique contexts of individual schools.

While elite interviewees and teachers from the school focus groups considered that widespread consultation took place as part of development, there was evidence (Section 8.3) to suggest that understanding the complex requirements of the curriculum, and in particular the implications of the key competencies for diverse students, was given insufficient support as part of implementation. Given the different interpretations of the curriculum in the production and recontextualisation fields by the different agents, it is not surprising that concern was expressed about variable understandings in schools, including their ability to consult with diverse community perspectives, including Boards of Trustees.

In the focus groups, both schools raised the importance of ownership; of how they made sense of the curriculum within their communities. Yet as Bernstein (2000) and Ball (2012) point out, the recontextualised and interpreted curriculum can have positive and negative outcomes. While both schools invested considerable time designing their school curriculum, and developed documents on how the key competencies would be implemented, there was comment from some focus group teachers and elite interviewees that not all schools spent time doing this and that for some schools, it was largely business as usual, despite the new curriculum. This suggests that, in keeping with Bernstein, the values and 'invisible' pedagogies of traditionally middle class teachers and school administrations could continue to be 'reproduced' in local schools' curriculum and potentially subvert the intent of the new curriculum policy.

Document analysis indicated that where schools were culturally diverse, as was the case for the two case study schools, they were more likely to engage in a consultation process with their local communities (Section 9.12). This highlights a greater awareness of diverse values and perspectives amongst the school community, and the need to examine and negotiate these values within the process of developing the school curriculum.

10.3. Theme B: Differences in educational ideologies

10.3.1. Balancing economic and social justice narratives

Recognition of different values and expectations of the education system to achieve wider societal goals is evidenced across the three data sets. The influence of economic agents in the field of production is illustrated in the importance given to the introduction of a curriculum element, key competencies, promoted by the supranational Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The key competencies were regarded by the OECD as a way of promoting the attitudes and behaviours important in the workplace and in wider society, underpinning economic prosperity. An analysis of the three data sources revealed discomfort by a number of people with an instrumentalist approach to curricula, and surfaced a number of the tensions highlighted by Benade (2011), and Olssen et al. (2004) in the review of the literature in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3. While some elite interviewees felt a balance was achieved between the economic and social outcomes sought from the curriculum, others were less positive. Two interviewees expressed concern about the influence that Business New Zealand and economic agents such as Treasury, had in the overall design of the curriculum (Section 8.4). There was comment by a senior research analyst that the social justice outcomes were less visible; that the emphasis on citizenship and equity had been 'ripped out of the curriculum'. This reflects the views of Welner et al. (2008), and Lopes and De Macado (2009) who argue that priority is often given in curriculum design to predetermined learning objectives and little attention is given to second order effects such as social justice and reducing social inequalities (Chapter 5, Section 5.1).

Document analysis revealed early debates and discussions during the stocktake process, potentially reflecting different educational ideologies (Section 9.3). In particular, the *Le Métais critique* (2002) questioned the balance between instrumental and developmental education and dispositions towards lifelong learning, as distinct from occupational retraining. This paper questioned whether curriculum outcomes that can be more easily measured devalue those which cannot; impacting on the overall coherence of the curriculum. Along with difficulties

establishing clear and explicit criteria for competence, as raised by Bernstein (2000), Westera (2001), Hutmacher (1997) and others in Chapter 6, Bernstein (2000) highlights issues with the 'interpreted' nature of competencies. He discusses the invisible and implicit pedagogies and middle class valued behaviours and attitudes of school-based learning, and how these impact task performance and the assessment processes by which competency is evaluated. Based on Bernstein's theory, the New Zealand curriculum key competencies would be weakly classified in terms of explicit criteria, and strongly framed in the interpretations of teachers and schools. There was a view expressed by one elite interviewee that one could separate values and competencies, thus taking a more universalist position; whereas other interviewees, several of the papers in the document analysis, and some of the teachers from the school focus groups all identified a number of differences in the valued behaviours and attitudes of groups and individuals.

In the schools' data, there were comments made about the 2007 curriculum as a return to the more holistic approach of the 1970s and 80s, and a strengthening of society; this was seen to be lost in the market driven accountability focus of the Tomorrow's Schools policy, and in some of the agendas of the OECD (Section 9.19). This aligned with Le Métails' (2002) observation that suggests, especially in Western nations, that 'individualism is running alongside, or in some cases, supplanting the sense of community'. Fraser (1989), and Benade (2011) in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3, argue that this increased emphasis on individualism and rights are part of a neoliberalist agenda and potentially erodes the sense of community and support for those more vulnerable.

There was also evidence to suggest that some teachers in the school focus groups were not aware of tensions that underpinned the 2007 curriculum, such as the origin of the key competencies, even though New Zealand sought to redefine these in less 'individualistic' ways through its submission to the OECD in 2001 (Section 9.19). This aligns with arguments made by a number of curricular theorists emphasised in the literature review (see Chapter 5) about the importance of schools and teachers understanding the different debates and tensions that inform the curriculum they are

required to teach so that they are supported to be more critical practitioners (Ball, 2012; Kliebard, 1986; Ozga, 2000; in Chapter 5).

10.4. Theme C: What and whose knowledge is valued in the curriculum

Closely related to the discussion above is whose knowledge is valued and visible in curriculum policy documents. The key competencies were designed ‘to integrate valued skills and attitudes within discipline specific contexts to facilitate more authentic contexts for learning in which to apply and critically evaluate knowledge’ (Ministry of Education, 2015). There were not consistent views on what this looked like in practice across the data sets. One elite interviewee commented that understanding how task design played an important role in achieving the desired outcomes was completely overlooked in supporting effective implementation of curriculum (Section 8.7).

Several elite interviewees commented that the emergence of the ‘knowledge wave’, potentially displaced the status and emphasis given to the ‘*what*’ of traditional western discipline knowledge in favour of ‘knowledge as process’; learning *how* to learn and *how* to access knowledge (Section 8.5). One interviewee expressed concern about some schools structuring the curriculum around the key competencies as the central concept, and argued for the central place of discipline knowledge. The question of how schools and teachers identified what knowledge and skills were valued in the workplace and wider society, as well as what was valued *within* diverse groups and communities, was problematic for several of the elite interviewees and was identified in a number of documents. Interestingly, research conducted as part of the consultation process indicated widespread support for key competencies by parent groups (Section 9.6). One elite interviewee questioned how well the complexities of the key competencies and their relationship to discipline knowledge were understood by parents and other stakeholder groups, or whether they were interpreted largely as social skills and everyday capabilities with which few would disagree.

This illustrates arguments raised by Gramsci (1970), and Bernstein (2000) about the value placed on common-sense or everyday knowledge and skills by different groups in society, as compared to the emphasis and status placed on Western academic discipline knowledge by more middle class groups. Different perspectives on what knowledge is of value highlight the tensions between the role of students' own 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al., 1992) and 'powerful' Western knowledge that is valued by wider society (see Wheelahan, 2007; Young, 2009; in Chapter 6).

In the analysis of documents, Bolstad's (2005) paper positions different types of knowledge as important in contributing to critical discourse; particularly the presumptions of status, and the accessibility of different types of knowledge for all students. For other interviewees, the dislocation of the key competencies from the learning areas (discipline knowledge) in the actual curriculum document was problematic as it reinforced the notion that the attitudes and values sit in isolation from discipline knowledge contexts (Section 8.5). These comments indicate document design is critical in how knowledge is perceived in the curriculum, and also its interaction with elements such as key competencies (Aitken, 2006; Section 9.11).

It was interesting to observe the different ways key competencies were interpreted in the school focus groups. The primary school's discussion largely centred on social skills and learning habits, with few references to learning area contexts. The secondary school teachers described the competencies as learning habits and understandings strongly referenced discipline contexts. The difference in interpretation appeared to be influenced by the framing of different professional development facilitators (Bernstein's recontextualisation field). One secondary history teacher spoke at length about the impact that diversity and world views have on how the key competencies are interpreted and valued by teachers and students (Section 9.21). Bernstein's (2000) notion of vertical and horizontal knowledge is important here. Bernstein highlights the different ways that knowledge is seen as either reinforced and refined across an increasing number of contexts, such as in the natural sciences, or expanded through the inclusion of alternative perspectives and challenges to universal 'truths', such as in the social sciences. One of the elite interviewees gave a specific example about the different ways in which Māori and

Pākehā (New Zealand European) might interpret evidence and knowledge according to their world view and how this can be difficult for some people to understand (Section 8.5). Burbules (1997) highlighted this point in his *Grammars of Difference* (see Chapter 3, Section 3.8) where he describes this as *difference beyond* [the comprehension of some groups]. As surfaced in the document analysis, Aitken (2006) argues that trying to incorporate all the different theories and perspectives on knowledge becomes problematic in a curriculum which is supposed to give guidance and a sense of cohesion for educators. Thus, the data revealed that the intent and/or outcomes of the key competencies were not particularly clear, and were open to a number of interpretations.

10.5. Theme D. Understanding the intent of the key competencies

10.5.1. The influence of the OECD

There were a number of documents – Brewerton (2004), Le Métails (2002), Rutherford (2004) – along with comments by some elite interviewees, that referenced the origins of the key competencies to the OECD and its definition and selection of key competencies project (DeSeCo). While comment was made by several elite interviewees that this work had a strong research and evidence base because of the collaboration of experts across a range of disciplines, including anthropology, sociology and economics (Section 8.6) the comments implied that there was universal agreement amongst the OECD experts group. My review of the literature relating to the OECD DeSeCo project revealed this was not the case. Anthropologist Jack Goody (1999) argued that it was not possible to identify shared values across diverse cultures and peoples (see Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3). The elite interview data suggests that some of the debates that took place between the OECD experts were replicated in the New Zealand context. In the field of production, there were different perspectives and interpretations amongst policy officials and academics. While one policy official argued one could separate values from the key competencies, another pointed out that New Zealand's submission to the OECD highlighted the individualistic interpretation of the key competencies and argued that for collective cultures, as in New Zealand's Māori, such an emphasis would be

incongruent with their values and practices (Section 8.6). New Zealand subsequently reframed the OECD key competencies in the New Zealand curriculum to reflect what they saw as a better balance between social justice and economic outcomes. One elite interviewee commented that the OECD's alignment of the key competencies with their international assessments would be useful in evaluating the effectiveness of New Zealand policy and practice; an interesting position given that the assessments are individual paper-based tests, and are deliberately context-neutral (see Sjøberg, 2016; in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1) and do not require interaction with diverse others.

The tensions between the social justice narrative and the instrumentalist, human capital approach to education and how it manifests through essential skills and competencies, was discussed at length (Le Métais, 2002). The primary school focus group indicated they were unaware that the key competencies originated from the OECD. They indicated this was probably a good thing as this [from an economic perspective] was not how they interpreted them (Section 9.19). The secondary group was aware of the origins of the key competencies. One teacher commented that their own theory of education was about strengthening a more democratic society. They didn't feel that the OECD had that to the fore, viewing the key competencies as being much more instrumentalist and 'about getting kids into the workplace' (Section 9.19). The differences between the primary and secondary groups perhaps reflects the secondary school's greater awareness of, and accountability for, preparing students for different pathways beyond compulsory schooling.

10.5.2. Social justice or social engineering?

There was discussion in the primary group about the term *competency*. It did not sit well with them. Several teachers felt that common understandings implied a binary of competent or incompetent. This did not account for the continuous and lifelong nature in learning how to *relate to others* or *using language symbols and texts* across a range of contexts and diverse peoples (Section 9.20). Some secondary teachers focussed on the importance of disciplinary contexts in relation to key competency development. There was one teacher who expressed concern about the impact of social or economic capital on the validity of judgements made. They gave an example

(Section 9.20) where a student's 'preparedness and organisation for learning' was the result of parental intervention and resources rather than a student's demonstration of a 'competency'. They compared this to students required to organise a number of siblings for school in the absence of parental support or resources; a well-developed organisational competency, but less visible or recognised by the school-based valued behaviours and attitudes. These examples illustrate arguments made by Bernstein (2000) and Moll et al. (1992) in Chapter 3, regarding how students' 'funds of knowledge' or expertise may or may not be valued in the school context.

The example highlights the issues related to assessment of competencies; what is valued and why, the contexts in which they are assessed, and by whom. Issues of equity were raised by some parents in a few of the research reports commissioned by the Ministry of Education, as part of the draft curriculum consultation process (Section 9.6). In the Key Competencies Report (2005, Unravel Research), the researcher found that parents did not understand why the key competencies had been introduced and questioned how they would be measured. They had difficulty with the term 'competency', and expressed discomfort in the value judgements being made with minimal information. One example was difficulty with the way 'belonging' was conceptualised as what was socially acceptable; a form of social engineering. While the concept of *belonging* came from Te Whāriki, the early childhood curriculum, and was grounded in socio-cultural theory and in the notion of positive identities, in the recontextualising field, interpretations may have differed. As Burbules (1997), Crenshaw (1989) and Root (1996) point out, identities are constructed and expressed in a multitude of ways. When the concept of belonging becomes a competency, it raises questions about who makes the judgement about what a person's identity is, and the 'positive' behaviours and values associated with it. These findings align with the concerns Watson (2010) expressed in reference to the Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence* key competencies, that the curriculum 'was less concerned with setting out what children were expected to know, but how they should be'. Watson questioned the values underpinning the key competencies and who decided what a responsible citizen was, arguing that they gave rise to 'not

unproblematic constructions of self-hood'. Belonging was replaced by 'participating and contributing' in the final set of five competencies in the New Zealand curriculum.

Consultation reports indicated that most people were happy with the general intent of the key competencies (Section 9.6). This suggests people interpreted them as personal and social skills; as achieving a better balance between academic and social outcomes and 'a return to the more holistic curriculum of the 1970s and 80s,' as one primary focus teacher reflected. Some of the elite interviewees commented that they were interpreted at quite a superficial level and perhaps issues that had surfaced at the policy level were yet to be recognised (Section 8.6). One academic consultant gave the example where 'meaning making had been conflated with simply 'understanding stuff' and argued that the semiotic dimensions of meaning making are cultural and enculturated, and largely invisible to people whose culture is the mainstream. Recognising that meaning is constructed in different ways; that responsible citizenship and the socially-sanctioned ways of 'participating and contributing' may be contested; and that there are differences in the ways that groups and individuals express their identities and their relationships with others, underpins the debates that surround cultural values, diversity and identity and their relationship to key competencies. In addition, in Muller's (2000) discussion of key competencies, he stresses the importance of students' ability to integrate and critique important discipline knowledge from their own perspectives and worldviews (Chapter 6, Section 6.6.1).

10.6. Theme E: Diverse students, values and the curriculum key competencies

10.6.1. Diversity in education

Cameron's (2003) analysis of commissioned papers on attitudes and values and the subsequent reference group, surfaced comments that greater specificity on which key competencies should be prioritised might be better negotiated with individual schools and their communities (Section 9.9). This presumes that school leaders and teachers have a deep understanding of the complex debates that they have not been

a part of in the field of production, and they have highly developed communication skills required to negotiate different perspectives, values and understandings in heterogeneous communities; issues and debates that international experts and government officials were not able to agree on. Sinnema and Aitken (2013) and Luke et al. (2013) (see Chapter 5, Section 5.8) note the variability of individual school capability in understanding the complexities of curriculum interpretation and enactment as a key tension in the debate between permissive and prescriptive curricula.

From analysis of documents and papers and elite interview comments, it was apparent that understandings related to cultural diversity in New Zealand education in the field of production continued to focus on differences in ethnicity, and principally between Māori and Pākehā (European New Zealanders). This is perhaps not surprising given New Zealand's obligations to the Treaty of Waitangi in educational policy, persistent underachievement of Māori students, and the subsequent emphasis on 'Māori achieving success as Māori' (Durie, 2001, as quoted in the stocktake report, Section 9.7). Yet the stocktake reported greater *within* group differences than between ethnic groups regarding student achievement. This key finding was not sufficiently highlighted in the 2007 curriculum, or supporting documents.

Two international critiques in 2002 determined there was insufficient guidance to teachers on how to cater for a diverse population. Le Métais (2002) noted that the predominant position accorded to Māori culture overshadowed the position of other cultures. She argued that while schools and teachers were urged to make links with cultures in the local community as sources of knowledge and appropriate practice, this placed additional demands on their time, and worried that 'multicultural' would continue to default to Māori and Pākehā. Le Métais found that guidance in the previous 1990s curriculum largely related to Māori culture, and that teachers were left to identify the context, content and behaviours which reflected 'other' cultures. She queried whether the New Zealand curriculum treats groups of students (Māori, girls) as single, homogeneous entities, thereby reinforcing stereotypes and failing to recognise individual needs and differences as well as the cumulative needs of

disadvantaged groups. These findings align with those of Benhabib (2002), and Taylor (1994) (see Chapter 3, Section 3.4) who note a reductionist sociology of culture; one that “risks essentialising the idea of culture as the property of an ethnic group or race ... [and] risks over-emphasising the internal homogeneity of cultures in terms that potentially legitimise repressive demands for communal conformity”.

In 2004, Compton challenged Brewerton’s rewording from heterogenous to include homogenous groups, and in describing ‘groups’ such as Māori and Pasifika, arguing that it was not only untenable from a socio-cultural perspective, but potentially damaging in that it denies difference (Section 9.7). These concerns echo those of Burbules (1997), Root (1996) Crenshaw (1989) and Song (2005) in Chapter 3, regarding different expressions of culture and intersections of identity, and the potential for cumulative disadvantage. Broad categorisations based on gender, ethnicity, disability etc. mask differences within groups and perpetuate traditional and emerging inequities. Fraser (1989) discussed the tensions between recognition of rights and redistribution. While the recognition of Māori as ‘tangata whenua’ (indigenous people of the land) and the special status accorded the language and traditional customs are part of the Treaty, how the country’s resources are redistributed to those most in need through social and educational policy design is difficult and contentious, as illustrated in the Orewa speech debates. A critical examination of the inclusive versus exclusive discourses, as Fraser suggests, would seem to have been important.

Wendt-Samu’s (2005) extensive diversity audit of the draft curriculum (Section 9.10), indicates the emphasis on ethnic culture to the exclusion of other forms of diversity and difference had continued. Wendt-Samu found ‘the type of culture that is to be celebrated is ethnic culture’ and suggested there needed to be opportunities to explore culture and ethnicity as concepts in order for broader notions of diversity to be considered. Earlier papers explored the relationship between student diversity and key competencies. In Rutherford’s (2004) summary of early consultation on key competencies, a reference to Carr’s (2006) paper highlights the notion that not only is there a ‘culture’ of classrooms, but that some of the key competencies will have considerable local variations and that these may well change over time and space.

Carr also argued for the importance of students' multiple identities, citing Wenger (1998), who sees identity as 'the vehicle that carries our experiences from context to context' (Section 9.7).

In elite interviewees' comments ten years later in relation to cultural diversity and the key competencies, few people made specific comments beyond ethnic diversity. One comment noted the impact of religious beliefs on how the underpinning values of the key competencies might be interpreted, and another highlighted the impact of socio economic factors comparative to ethnic or cultural identification in terms of any home-school mismatch. One senior education adviser summed it up by saying that at the time 'we were attuned to diversity, but really focussing on cultural diversity,' and felt that they were sure there would be other lenses applied if the work was done now (in 2013) (Section 8.10). This is possibly reflected in the school focus group comments as they were sharing their current understandings and perspectives in 2013 and 2014, several years after the curriculum was launched, whereas the elite interviewees were largely reflecting on what had transpired in the years leading up to the launch of the curriculum in 2007.

Regarding diversity, a few of the secondary school teachers challenged perceptions they had encountered about their school, such as whether they were more diverse because students didn't wear a uniform (Section 9.21). Burbules (1997) in Chapter 3, Section 3.8, notes however, choices about clothing can represent diverse individual identities on several levels. Another teacher challenged how holistic their approach to diversity was, or whether it was just a few visible examples around the school.

In the primary group, there was recognition of some of different ways people interpret things and that 'we're all different individuals and [from] different cultures.' Yet there was also belief in some universal values underpinning the key competencies; 'so there's some fundamentals that run across ... because they are about people. Values are about people'. This comment may relate to students' happiness, engagement and ability to get on with others. However it is also possible teachers' awareness of students' identity conflicts and potential inequities in gender, religious and sexual diversity may be less apparent. Regarding issues of diversity and

social justice, one elite interviewee questioned the extent to which the key competencies or even the school curriculum can develop young people who are more inclusive and tolerant and ‘more sophisticated and deeper thinking members of society’ (Section 8.7).

10.6.2. Education for diversity

There was elite interview comment that the key competencies ‘were not just about social skills; that they were about ‘learning from and with others who have very different world views, managing oneself in relation to that, and about thinking in different ways (Section 8.8). It is unclear however, how this understanding could be incorporated across the discipline contexts, given the separation of the key competencies from learning area objectives in the final curriculum document. How teachers were supported to understand and integrate these concepts into their teaching and learning contexts was not clear. One academic consultant indicated that the promised second tier support was ‘benignly inadequate’. Another paper by Le Métais on values in the New Zealand curriculum (2002), comments that New Zealand’s prevalence of absenteeism, verbal intimidation, physical violence and suicide in national and international data, and suggested that many students may be yet to demonstrate the desired personal, local and global values and skills regarding tolerance of difference and personal wellbeing (Section 9.8). This is of concern and potentially aligns with some cultural theorists (Banks, 2006; Dominelli, 2007; in Chapter 3, Section 3.3) about the importance of focussing on similarities as well as differences with a view to creating more social cohesion

An internal Ministry paper (author/s and date unknown), *Proposed priority: Affirming and Developing Student Identity* reinforced Fraser’s (1989) approach in analysing the inclusive versus exclusive nature of the discourse. The paper questions what the opportunity to learn might mean for students whose ethnicity, cultural background, sexual orientation or gender is excluded, undermined or diminished within the curriculum. While cultural and linguistic exclusion in education has long been an issue for Māori students, other identities and intersections are yet to be acknowledged, despite the Ministry’s *Responsiveness to Diversity* framework (no date) constituting difference and diversity as central to educational practice. One of the key questions is

how the system might be driven by the learner and their identity, rather than assumptions about what aspects of identity to focus on. This echo's concerns raised by Dominelli (2007) and Keddell (2007) in the context of social work, where they found evidence of a supremacy of ethnicity above all other factors operating in a client's life. This resulted in a lack of consideration of other issues such as socio-economic class and an appreciation of similar factors across vulnerable groups (Chapter 3). The Ministry paper cautioned that it was important not to constrain what learners could become by the education system [and individual schools and teachers] defining too rigidly what it thinks learners should be (Section 9.8). In efforts to be culturally responsive, some schools and teachers may be limiting learners' ability to understand and incorporate a range of perspectives and understandings into their learning. Several of the elite interviewees reinforced this, with one policy analyst reflecting on the advice of a prominent Māori academic about not limiting Māori students to their backgrounds, and another pointing out that part of being educated meant not just reinforcing a single cultural perspective (Section 8.8). It was worth noting that in the primary school focus group, comment was made about Maori parents wanting to learn about other cultures in their school community (Section 9.22).

In the primary school focus group, there was comment that there was not a 'dominant culture'; that everyone felt part of the school and were able to discuss different approaches to things. One teacher, commenting on racial tensions that existed in the community outside the school, felt that the school was helping counter this by talking about people being different and celebrating this (Section 9.22). While honourable in ensuring a more democratic approach to decision making, and celebrating different cultures and practices, comments echo the finding that ethnicity dominated the diversity discourse in New Zealand education. There was minimal comment regarding the other dimensions of diversity in either the elite interviews or school focus group discussions. The dominance or sidelining of perspectives on gender, sexual orientation, ability/disability, social class, and the representation of these by community leaders does not reflect the true range of views and inequities in a local community.

Fraser (1989) points out that the intent of recognising diversity is not to splinter society into an array of advocacy groups, but requires a critical examination of whose voices might not be heard and factoring this into an inclusive discourse. This approach is about school community consultation within local communities, and supporting young learners to think critically about a range of local, national and global perspectives on valued knowledge and behaviours for consideration in different learning contexts.

10.7. Theme F: The interpreted and enacted curriculum

10.7.1. Balancing the permissive and prescriptive curriculum

An important argument in Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogical device is how power relations impact on what knowledge, values and perspectives are included or excluded in the curriculum for schools. Bernstein argues that knowledge has historically been demarcated into 'singular' discipline fields, with equally exclusive discourses and perspectives. Over time however, these tight classifications have been weakened by the 'regionalisation' of knowledge; the recontextualising of knowledge into different fields of practice and application. As a result, the associated discourse becomes vulnerable to different ideological biases and power plays between singular and regional interpretations of knowledge. Bernstein argues that this is where the impact of instrumentalist and neo liberal discourses have impacted in terms of the perceived utility of particular knowledge. Yet in the school context, through weaker classification and differentiation of subjects, the potential for different forms of discourse and consensus is also made possible. In addition, the 'framing' of how knowledge, and valued behaviours and perspectives are conveyed and evaluated becomes even more important; namely, who has control of the pedagogic discourse. When it is strongly framed, the school and the classroom teacher control the interpretation of the curriculum for their learners, the rules for which may or may not be explicit, including criteria for success; where it is weakly framed, control supposedly rests more with the learner (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1.5).

The 2007 New Zealand curriculum is considered to be a permissive framework (ERO, 2012; Sinnema, 2016), with an emphasis placed on the local curriculum. Schools design how the curriculum is implemented in collaboration with the local community. One senior education adviser commented that the most valuable pages in the curriculum document was the section on designing your own school curriculum and it was the school's responsibility to make it appropriate for their individual needs and the diversity of its students. Others felt differently (Section 8.11). One senior policy analyst noted that while the curriculum 'gives [schools] the flexibility to tailor the curriculum to local contexts', they questioned what happens when teachers are not really capable of doing this. Bernstein's (2000) theory on classification and framing presents a number of risks for minority learner groups or learners who are not familiar with, or who resist, the valued knowledge and ways of being deemed important by the teachers and the school. Another policy analyst argued that 'while [the curriculum] is setting broad directions, it's not really fit for the teacher of the day'. They suggested that the Ministry of Education could be doing a lot more to help. This echoed feedback on the draft curriculum identified in the summary report (Section 9.11). Luke et al. (2013) in Chapter 5, Section 5.8, maintain that 'the official curriculum cannot by its very definition, contain and express, control and micro-manage what goes on in the classroom 'and that there has been insufficient research on the technical form of curriculum. This includes the coherence and effectiveness of the different types of structures and layouts that that curriculum writers, policy makers and educators draw on to help make important decisions that impact on policy implementation. They argue that in the case of ensuring equity for all students, and managing ideologies, assumptions and implicit values, this matters. In this research, given the different interpretations of *Cultural Diversity*, the relationship to the other NZC principles such as the *Treaty of Waitangi* and *Inclusion* and comments regarding the inadequate support for curriculum coherence and implementation, this too matters.

10.7.2. Community consultation and collaboration

Further supporting Luke et al. (2013) above, the summary of feedback on the draft curriculum (2007) noted the section on designing a school curriculum had the highest

percentage of negative responses in relation to questions about clarity and usefulness, and concern about the relationship between the different elements of the curriculum; its principles, values and key competencies. Submissions expressed concern about the role of communities in curriculum design and the degree of flexibility schools had in designing their own curriculum (Section 9.11).

These concerns may represent the views of traditionally dominant groups in society wanting to maintain control of the pedagogical device through what is valued in terms of knowledge, skills and behaviours, as Bernstein (2000) has argued, and see local responsiveness as a form of social engineering. They may represent the concerns of minority groups who want government to give a stronger policy direction on what takes place in schools, rather than leaving it to the discretion of individual schools and their communities. This is in keeping with the arguments of Root (1996) and Song (2005) (Chapter 3). They may represent those who have concerns about the divisive nature of promoting particular perspectives in a pluralistic society and the privileging of some rights and perspectives over others, through an exclusive, rather than inclusive discourse. Such concerns align with those highlighted by Banks (2006) and Fraser (1989). Finally, there are those who may be concerned with the focus on the local curriculum and its emphasis on local knowledge and contexts at the expense of a focus on 'powerful' discipline knowledge, and national and global knowledges and issues. These are the concerns raised by Muller (2000), Rata (2012), Young (2009) and Wheelahan (2007) (Chapter 6), particularly in relation to perpetuating inequalities for underserved student groups.

In Shagen's (2011) synthesis of the research and evaluation on the implementation of the New Zealand curriculum, it was found that teachers expressed concern in dealing with different values and perspectives in diverse multicultural contexts, and highlights the risks of over-generalising values and attributes at an ethnic group level.

In a paper that discussed the public consultation findings, Aitken (2006) noted that while flexibility in curriculum acknowledges teachers' autonomy, sense of control and thus commitment and responsiveness to local needs and interests, this approach potentially impacts on issues of equity and opportunity, in that 'expertise that may

not be widely or evenly spread ... and individual teachers mak[ing] idiosyncratic choices about what [and potentially, how] to teach'. For this reason, curriculum flexibility at the national level, places significant pressure on curriculum design. Aitken also noted that the more influences that the curriculum has been encouraged to satisfy, the more complicated (or possibly even confused) the vision will be, noting that the self reported high levels of understanding of the curriculum needed to be viewed with caution (Section 9.11).

Le Métails' (2002) report also found potential for conflict between the competencies for lifelong learning and the learning area achievement objectives. Yet for some elite interviewees the answer was not in a greater prescription of curriculum outcomes, because they felt that also risked surface level interpretation and potentially limited responsiveness to diverse student groups (Section 8.11).

10.7.3. Interpreting the key competencies for diverse students

The final sub-theme highlights the key competencies as a possible microcosm of the different debates about curriculum, and the valued knowledge and behaviours they promote. A key focus of this research is on how student diversity was considered in curriculum design and implementation in New Zealand schools and classrooms. The findings across the three data sets reflected Wendt-Samu's draft curriculum diversity audit, which found a conflation of diversity with ethnicity and potentially stereotypical and 'othering' of cultural practices (Section 9.10).

Hipkins asked in *The Nature of the Key Competencies* (2006), 'do the key competencies reflect the diversity of New Zealand's population?' Hipkins noted suggestions that the OECD's DeSeCo project was too focussed on Western European cultural values and an individualised, competitive-over-collaborative orientation, and drew on Strike's 1999 (see Chapter 5, Section 5.4.6) notion of a big tented overarching approach in which shared values are interpreted locally as appropriate in different cultural contexts. This overlooks the various arguments made by Bernstein (2000) and Fraser (1989), along with Crenshaw (1989), Root (1996), Song (2005) and Burbules (1997) in Chapter 3 regarding the nature of the power relations, and the inclusive versus exclusive discourse that takes place within national and local

contexts. Hipkins does, however, highlight the importance of supporting school leaders and teachers to understand the relationship between knowledge and the competencies, and in particular the shift in thinking towards diverse ways of knowing (Section 9.13). The data revealed that schools and teachers were not sufficiently supported to do this, either through awareness of the debates and papers that informed the design of the curriculum, or through carefully considered professional development support and resources via the recontextualising field.

While the New Zealand curriculum is permissive and potentially inclusive of a range of different perspectives and approaches via the school curriculum process, it relies on the ability of school leaders and teachers to become what Kliebard (1986) and Ozga (2000) (Chapter 5) regard as important 'critical practitioners'. This has implications for teacher education, professional development and others in Bernstein's fields of recontextualisation and reproduction.

Chapter 11. Conclusion

11.0. Introduction

This research sought to identify the influences on the design and implementation of the 2007 New Zealand Curriculum key competencies, and the implications of these influences on the interpretations of KCS for diverse students. In particular, it examined the interpretations of cultural diversity and student identity of the various agents in Bernstein's (2000) fields of practice, and the potential impact of these interpretations on curriculum design and delivery. The research focussed on the nature of the diversity discourse in educational policy settings; curriculum policy development processes and curriculum implementation in schools and classrooms. It sought to identify key papers, influences and events that may have shaped this discourse, and also to identify what influence groups such as the OECD, Treasury and employer organisations had on the purpose and valued outcomes of the key competencies.

11.1. Framing the research

The research is located in the New Zealand socio political and educational context, which, given its strongly bicultural focus, means that this research makes a unique contribution to the wider field of cultural and economic politics in education. I investigated the concept of the key competencies, a new curriculum construct in the 1990s with origins in an economic supranational organisation. I was interested in understandings about cultural diversity and identity and the implications of how the key competencies in the New Zealand curriculum might be interpreted for diverse students.

My research questions were:

- What (and who) influenced the design and implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum key competencies?
- What were the understandings about cultural diversity and identity at the design and implementation stages?

My methodological research question was:

- How does the concept of Bernstein's pedagogic device assist in describing the educational policy process of designing and implementing the key competencies?

Through inductive and deductive analysis of the data, Bernstein's (2000) theory of the pedagogical device was employed to identify some of the key influences and perspectives of agents in the different fields of practice associated with curriculum policy processes, i.e. the fields of production, recontextualisation, and reproduction respectively. While Bernstein's structuralist approach to the analysis of education policy processes was useful in identifying the different fields and influential agents, Nancy Fraser's (1989, 2000) work in the area of identity politics and discourse analysis allowed for a critical analysis of the discourse that took place *within* each field. Her framing of the discourse in terms of *recognition* and *redistribution*, allowed me to analyse how inclusive the discourse was, and whether it was focussed on rights and/or needs and equity. Through the use of three sources of data: elite interviews, document analysis, and school focus groups, I was able to identify some commonalities and differences in the interpretations of cultural diversity and identity in the New Zealand context, and how the valued behaviours of key competencies might be interpreted as a result.

11.2. The findings

11.2.1. What and who influenced design and implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum key competencies?

My analysis of the elite interview and documentary data indicated a small group of strategic and operational policy officials had been responsible for the curriculum design process. Specific people had been invited to participate in a number of meetings and to contribute various discussion papers and critiques. Those who were invited to contribute included academic and educational consultants from within New Zealand and from the UK and Australia, some of whom attended a number of meetings and discussion groups, and others who were invited to prepare papers on particular topics for consideration by the design group. Elite interviewees identified that the design group drew significantly on the work of the OECD Definition and Selection of Competencies project. In addition, those I interviewed also made specific reference to the involvement of Business New Zealand and Treasury. Possibly distinctive in the New Zealand context, some of those who were involved in design process were also providers of professional development, so were influential in the recontextualisation field.

Across the elite group, the documents and school interviews, there was reference to instrumentalist ideologies but it was difficult to determine the amount of influence this view had on the curriculum design process. One person was of the view that the curriculum could be read in a number of different ways, including from an instrumentalist perspective, but others felt that that there was not a balance between social justice and economic outcomes, including a lack of attention to citizenship.

In terms of what had influenced the design process, the consensus view across elite interviewees was that, in contrast to the previous curriculum development process, the government was perceived as less directive and perhaps more trusting of the consultation process than the previous government. Elite interviewees reported there had been extensive sector and public consultation with a range of stakeholders, which some officials had found difficult due to tensions arising from the need to

balance the different perspectives and expectations in the different public meetings and of different groups. It was difficult to identify what aspects of the curriculum were influenced by the public consultation process, as these were not specifically commented on by interviewees, or evident in documents sourced. There was evidence in the documents of general agreement by parents on the intent of the key competencies, although some had difficulties with the concept of 'belonging' and saw this as 'social engineering'. This feedback possibly influenced the ministry's replacement of '*Belonging*' with *Participating and Contributing*.

Another influence during the design process that two senior officials commented on, was a speech given by opposition leader, Don Brash in early 2004 to a Rotary club meeting, publicly referred to as the Orewa speech. They were of the view this had impacted on a number of government policies originally designed to reduce disparities between Māori and non-Māori. However, these were policies were interpreted by some members of the public as race-based, and the government subsequently needed to address the backlash through changes in policy framing. The Treaty of Waitangi principle was removed from the 2005 draft curriculum document. However, following the extensive public consultation process on the draft, officials had the mandate to reinstate it. It is possible that this sequence of events impacted on the coherence and interrelationship with other curriculum principles, but this is difficult to determine.

In sum, a small group of people ranging from Ministry policy strategy advisors, professional development providers and academics along with a number of international academics who prepared position papers for discussion by this group were directly involved in the field of production. The design process was also influenced by a politically-contentious speech, and public consultation which impacted on the draft version. However, it as a result of further public consultation that the decision to remove the Treaty of Waitangi principle was reversed. This emphasis on the collaborative curriculum *process* as opposed to *product* potentially influenced the high regard held for the curriculum document overall (Shagen, 2011).

With regard to who and what influenced the implementation of the curriculum, according to elite interview commentary, the implementation of the curriculum and key competencies was largely left to individual schools. Findings from the two schools revealed they had each employed an external professional development provider to support the implementation process and the providers' interpretation of the competencies was detailed in school curriculum documentation. The focus groups also mentioned using websites and other resources to support their implementation of the curriculum. The primary school teachers talked about consultation with their community on the curriculum in the early stages but it was not clear if this extended to detailed curriculum planning (see also Shagen, 2011). It is unclear how well the teachers, parents and boards of trustees understood the complexities of the key competencies and their relationship to traditional discipline knowledge and other knowledge and worldviews, or whether they were interpreted largely as social skills, as the primary focus group data might suggest. The primary school teachers indicated that they were not aware of the OECD's influence on the intent of the key competencies however one, and only one, secondary school teacher commented that the OECD had not had democratic ideals to the fore with regard to the key competencies. This teacher also discussed the relationship between the key competencies and his subject area in a manner in keeping with Bernstein's (2000) horizontal knowledge concept. This particular teacher was engaged in additional study so was potentially influenced by academics outside of the school setting. Overall however, the findings of this study suggest that teachers, professional development providers and resources from Bernstein's field of recontextualisation and reproduction influenced curriculum implementation within the school community, although not in the linear way that Bernstein's theory might suggest. The OECD's interpretation of the competencies evident as influential in the field of production, appeared to have less influence in the field of reproduction.

Document analysis revealed that the section in the draft document entitled *Designing a school curriculum* received the highest percentage of negative feedback from the consultation process on clarity and usefulness. Some academic consultants raised concern about the permissive nature of the curriculum and about what could

be taken from the self-reported high levels of understanding of teachers in primary and secondary schools. Aitken (2006) noted that expertise may not be widely or evenly spread and individual teachers make idiosyncratic choices about what [and potentially how] to teach. My research did not extend to analysis of lesson plans or observation of teacher practice so this cannot be commented upon. However, Aitken's comments would appear to support the notion that the key competencies were 'strongly framed' (Bernstein, 2000), in that they were influenced by professional development provider interpretations and then very reliant on the interpretation and implementation by school leaders and teachers.

11.2.2. What were the understandings about cultural diversity and identity at the design and implementation stages?

Reflecting on the design process, elite interviewees indicated it had been recognised that guidance in the previous curriculum had been largely related to Māori culture and teachers had been left to identify the context, content and behaviours which reflected other 'cultures'. Analysis of documents produced as part of the curriculum revision process revealed that in the early stages of the curriculum revision, while improving outcomes for Māori was seen as important, consideration of other forms of student diversity was also recommended. For example, the Le Métails (2002) paper had queried whether the New Zealand curriculum treats groups of students (Māori, girls) as homogenous entities, thereby reinforcing stereotypes and failing to recognise individual needs and differences as well as the cumulative needs of disadvantaged groups. Another paper that contributed to thinking about cultural diversity and identity in education was a paper entitled *Proposed Priority: Affirming and Developing Student Identity* (author and date not stated), that questioned the impact on students whose cultures, values and identities were less visible or marginalised in the curriculum. Hipkins (2006) noted suggestions that the OECD key competencies were too focussed on an individualised, competitive-over-collaborative orientation, and Carr's (2006) paper challenged the more narrow interpretation of culture taken by the OECD project team, highlighting the cultural nature of learning and different interpretations of the key competencies. Wendt-Samu's (2005) diversity audit of the draft curriculum highlighted a number of contradictions and

challenges in the way diversity was being interpreted in the New Zealand educational context. Wendt-Samu argued that the dominant cultural understanding discourse highlighted McCarthy's (1994) position that a curriculum that focussed on understanding cultural and societal differences will not be able to address wider power relations in society. The audit found that 'the type of culture to be celebrated and understood in the draft curriculum was 'ethnic culture', and suggested a need to explore ethnicity and culture as concepts; in other words, education *for* diversity. These papers raised some important concepts in relation to cultural diversity and identity in education, but it is difficult to identify what impact they had on the final design of the curriculum or supporting documents as few of the concepts or papers were referred to by the elite interviewees or school focus groups.

In the elite interviews, conducted in 2013, well after the launch of the final curriculum document in 2007, most references to students' cultural diversity were still in relation to ethnic diversity, and predominantly to bicultural differences. Two references were made to religious diversity, one to the importance of socio-cultural factors, and another to the role of education in broadening cultural perspectives and behaviours. Despite the evidence of the papers examining the implications of student diversity and multiple identities on curriculum and the key competencies, one of the elite interviewees reflected that the policy team were 'attuned to diversity, but really focussed on cultural diversity'. However, this person was sure there would be other lenses if they were undertaking the curriculum revision at the time of the interview. Indeed, the fore-fronting of cultural/ethnic diversity by elite interviewees does not imply that there was a lack of awareness of other forms of diversity; this just seemed to be the main association. This does raise the question however, in terms of the production of official document: What, if any, consideration was given to making more explicit other expressions of diversity and identity, and their intersections? There was no evidence from the elite or school interviewees that the diversity and identity papers were socialised beyond the field of production. Overall, there was evidence that broader understandings related to cultural diversity and identity had been examined in some depth by some academic consultants as evidenced by several papers, but this was not reflected in the elite interviews. In the elite interviews,

associations with cultural diversity were largely referenced differences between Māori and Pākehā worldviews, perhaps reflecting New Zealand's bi cultural foundations.

With regard to implementation, at the time of the school focus group interviews in 2014, the teachers seemed to have a relatively strong understanding of the different interpretations and intersections of cultural diversity and identity within their respective schools, and were keen to 'reproduce' what they saw were the inclusive values and practices that had become part of their school cultures. Whilst the primary teachers made few references to how these different perspectives and identities might influence their approach to the integration of the key competencies and learning areas, there were several secondary teacher comments that about the relationship between the key competencies, funds of knowledge and worldviews. There was comment from a secondary teacher about the inequitable access to resources and the importance of thinking carefully about the criteria for evaluating demonstration of the key competencies. In summary, focus group teachers demonstrated a strong awareness of the implications of cultural diversity and identity in their implementation of the NZC key competencies, despite little guidance from the official document. It is unclear where these understandings have been derived from but the finding supports Kliebard (1986) and Ozga's (2000) emphasis on the importance of teachers as critical practitioners in interpretation of the curriculum in meeting the needs of all their learners.

11.2.3. The methodological question

How does the concept of Bernstein's pedagogic device assist in describing the educational policy process of designing and implementing the key competencies?

I set out to explore if the concept of Bernstein's (2000) pedagogical device theory would assist in describing the educational policy processes of designing and implementing the key competencies. It subsequently provided a useful framework with which to identify and explain the different actors and fields involved in curriculum design and implementation as an aspect of educational policy. That is, its use prompted me to investigate what happened within each of the fields of

production, recontextualisation and reproduction, and how these impacted on the findings of this research – that is, the design and implementation of the key competencies as part of the 2007 New Zealand national curriculum. However, the field of production and its typical agents is perhaps less demarcated in New Zealand, given its relatively small population size, and potentially more informal networks and working relationships. Some of the people who participated in the field of production in this research would have more typically been associated with the field of recontextualisation, for example professional development providers. It is interesting to note that Bernstein's (2000) observation of an increasing influence of economic and neoliberal agents was at play in the New Zealand context. This was evident through some of the elite interview comments and references in a number of papers, particularly in relation to the OECD, and to the instrumental value of particular knowledge. His concept of vertical and horizontal discourses was useful in identifying, alongside Fraser's (1989) more nuanced needs discourse analysis, *whose* perspectives and worldviews were being included in curriculum policy design, *whose* were not, and who made those decisions. Through using both Bernstein's (2000) and Fraser's theories in combination, I was able to identify that at the time of development of the key competencies, much of the discourse centred on differences between traditional Māori and Pākehā perspectives, and to a lesser extent Pasifika perspectives. It was largely focussed on *recognition* of cultural differences between these groups, such as individual versus collective cultures, and less on a contemporary, inclusive and redistributive discourse. Minimal attention was paid to other perspectives or the intersections of these, particularly issues of socio-economic inequities across groups, which was also key aspect of Bernstein's work. According to Sadovnik (1995), Bernstein's theory of the pedagogical device was concerned with more than the description of the production and transmission of knowledge and values; he was concerned with its just consequences for different groups. His theory of classification and framing allowed me to analyse how the key competencies were being classified and framed by agents in the various fields. Findings from this research conclude that the key competencies were weakly classified due to the 'permissive' nature of the curriculum, and therefore had the potential to reproduce the valued behaviours and attitudes as determined by those in power. In addition,

educators were required to integrate a number of complex elements, such as the principles, learning areas and the key competencies without explicit guidance. The key competencies were strongly framed because the locus of control in the selection, sequencing, pacing and criteria is placed with schools and teachers. While the teachers in this case study revealed an awareness of, and potential responsiveness to, the diversity of students in their schools with regard to the recontextualisation or reproduction of inequitable pedagogies, this may not be the case in all of New Zealand's 2500 or so schools. Bernstein's theory helped emphasise that, despite the evidence of a number of papers highlighting issues with the diversity discourse, the agents and the implicit rules that determine whose voices are included in the fields of practice still dominated the policy process, whether intentional or unintentional. That said, Bernstein argued that the reproduction of the dominant discourse wasn't always deterministic. This was demonstrated by the more inclusive diversity discourse in the school focus groups, which focussed on all their learners.

11.3. Research limitations

While this research has produced some interesting insights in relation to culture, diversity and the curriculum key competencies, there are a number of limitations to its generalisability. These include the time frame within which the data were collected; the diversity of the participants and the perspectives they represented, particularly in the case of school-based participants; and my own researcher bias.

As discussed in the methodology chapter, the elite interviews were conducted some ten years after the actual events and are therefore vulnerable to the accuracy of the recollection of the individuals concerned. While the number of people interviewed assisted in cross-checking some details, as did the analysis of a number of official papers and discussion documents, there are likely to be events, discussions, papers and ideas that have not surfaced in the data that may have been significant to this research.

No policy officials who identified as Māori or Pasifika or other ethnic or social minorities were found through snowball sampling, however a number of discussion

groups and papers drew on Māori and Pasifika perspectives. Given Bernstein's (2000) observation that the field of production is increasingly influenced by agents outside of this field, it would have been useful to have obtained the perspectives of those who were not educators, but who were also closely involved. Representation of other diversity and identity perspectives in this research were minimal and this is a further limitation of the research.

Data from two school focus groups, one primary and one secondary, means that the capacity to generalise across teacher and school experiences and views is limited. Both schools were urban and both schools were quite ethnically diverse, which potentially influenced their ability to access external professional development, and their understanding of diversity issues. As there were senior management present in both schools, power dynamics were potentially at play. It was also known to a number of participants that I was employed by the Ministry of Education at the time of the discussions, and this may have also impacted on the thoughts and opinions they chose to share.

11. 4. Recommendations for a review: The implications

11.4.1. Wider consultation with minority groups

The implications of this research would be to ensure that any revisions to the New Zealand curriculum and/or its key competencies take greater account of the diversity of New Zealand's students, and their strengths and needs. This includes purposeful consultation with a wider range of minority groups, and how to support students' positive, multiple and dynamic identity constructions. This also means recognising the differences, similarities, and inequities that exist within and between broader groups. Focussing on similarities as well as differences between groups is important not only for social cohesion but for the more equitable redistribution of society's resources. This includes attention to human rights debates, and willingness to address some of the inequities and injustices that exist *across* ethnic groups such as class, gender-related and disability issues for greater social cohesion and inclusion. The approach needs to be careful not to reify one set of cultural practices over

others; potentially promoting an ‘othering’ discourse. All cultures have their strengths and weaknesses. Traditional cultural practices can be also be unjust and exclusive and should not be seen as sacrosanct (see Okin, 1999; Song, 2005; Deveaux, 2006; in Chapter 3). This is a particularly sensitive issue in government and public settings where a diversity of cultures and religions, genders, status, roles and responsibilities need to be respected. A closer, more critical examination of the diversity discourse and practices would enable government officials and educators to determine the extent of its inclusiveness.

11.4.2. The design of curriculum

Greater attention needs to be paid to the design of the official curriculum, making more explicit its underpinning theories and debates, and how the different complex elements are designed to inform each other to achieve the curriculum and pedagogical change desired. The intent of the key competencies within the New Zealand curriculum seems unclear in terms of actual attitudes and behaviours and what these look like in different contexts. This makes them vulnerable to different interpretations and ideologies on what should be prioritised, including those from more instrumentalist perspectives within the government sector and business sector, and school communities. It is unclear what the relationship between the curriculum principles, the learning areas, and the key competencies looks like in practice in schools and classrooms and for whom.

11.4.3. Education in diversity

Opportunities need to be provided for all students to learn about traditional and contemporary interpretations of the indigenous Māori culture and language alongside other perspectives, with a view to promoting critical and appreciative inquiry, respect for differences and connections through similarities. Given that New Zealand was the first country in the world to give women the vote, and one of several countries to legalise same sex marriage, it appears that we may have stalled on our responsiveness to ‘parity of participation’ for other identity markers, particularly in formal education. There are interpretations of the Treaty of Waitangi that could be seen as ‘exclusive’, prioritising those with very small traces of Māori ancestry over those without (Rata, 2003). There is also evidence of singularisation; that Māori

students may be expected to forefront this aspect of their identity over others (O'Regan, 2001). These interpretations raise a number of human rights issues. However, there are other interpretations of the Treaty that promote an 'inclusive' discourse. ensuring that all students have access to indigenous Māori culture and language, providing opportunities to appreciate and understand different *and similar* perspectives and knowledges that underpin New Zealand's cultural history and current society. For students of Māori heritage, access is particularly important as they may have few opportunities to engage with Māori culture outside the school setting.

11.4.4. The implementation phase

Greater attention needs to be paid to the implementation phase of curriculum to ensure that there is coherence of curriculum messages throughout the country. This includes closer monitoring of the potentially different interpretations of education policy by contracted and private providers, both onsite professional development, and that provided through websites. While a permissive curriculum can allow for greater responsiveness and tailoring to local school contexts and communities, it does require a high level of curriculum expertise and pedagogical practice to bring together complex curriculum theories and concepts. Due to its geographical and historical settlement patterns, New Zealand has a very high percentage of small rural schools. This can mean that access to high quality and intensive professional development opportunities can be limited. While recent policy developments have sought to develop clusters, or communities of schools for potentially greater economy of scale and collegial support, it is again reliant on the expertise, priorities and interpretations of those leading or contracting for staff professional development initiatives. Critical inquiry frameworks and careful discourse analysis of both official and school curriculum documents may be useful as a starting point to examine and clarify some of the assumptions and agreed understandings current school and classroom practices are premised on.

11.4.5. Further research preparatory to a review

While I was able to contact and interview a reasonable number of those involved in the field of production, there would be value in interviewing more teachers and even

students. The relatively small scope of the school-based interviews was a consequence of the time and resources I had as a sole researcher. It would be interesting to research with a greater number and variety of schools to better understand what patterns have emerged in curriculum key competency interpretation and implementation. For example, are there different interpretations between urban and rural schools, schools of different socio-economic status, and schools with relatively homogeneous and relatively diverse ethnic populations. It could also be worthwhile analysing the case studies and information on the various Ministry of Education websites in relation to student diversity and the key competencies. An important aspect for future research is the perspectives of students themselves. How have they experienced the New Zealand Curriculum key competencies? What are the values and perspectives they believe are being promoted? Do they feel that their own identities and perspectives are valued and included in the classroom and in the wider school environment?

Other perspectives that would be of interest are those of different employer and social entrepreneurs. While the influence of government economic agencies such as Treasury and Business New Zealand were highlighted by elite interviewees, it would be interesting to collect data from a range of different organisations and worksites on the relationship between the intent and valued outcomes of the key competencies and cultural diversity.

11.5. Postscript: OECD 2030 ideological shifts

It is interesting to note that there has been a shift in OECD education policy emphases as articulated in the OECD's Education 2030 (OECD, 2017) working group paper, when compared to statements in the OECD's DeSeCo documents (OECD, 2000-2003). Of particular interest is the redefinition of the 'growth' narrative:

The OECD is committed to redefine the growth narrative from economic growth to inclusive growth¹¹. The new narrative is placing “well-being” at the centre of our efforts. In the discourse surrounding “knowledge economies”, the demands on education systems have focused on equipping students with the knowledge and skills for economic growth (often represented by macro-economic statistics such as GDP), productivity and efficiency. Today, there is an increasing recognition that an economic narrative is not sufficient. We need a new narrative – going beyond economic growth – that can help shape a country or a region for better lives for individuals, for societies, and for environments. (para. 16)

In line with the OECD’s *Better Life* initiative, the OECD Education 2030 project supports redirecting global challenges towards well-being, citizenship, education for the common good, and the reaffirmation of the social nature of being a person. It challenges education systems that are narrowly focussed on excellence at the expense of the underserved and disadvantaged, reproducing social inequalities. Central to this shift in focus is the metaphor of a learning compass that gives guidance to learners on what might be a firm foundation “as well as help them to navigate the as yet unknown, whilst rooting them in cultural and individual identities” (para. 28).

While student agency is at the heart of this concept, as a process of developing ‘transformative competencies’ for 2030, the paper argues that it is critical that agency is understood in its complexity and depth, and in the context of social and cultural diversity. In keeping with Fraser’s (1989) ‘inclusive discourse’ theory, OECD Education 2030 emphasises the social and dynamic nature of identity construction, and stresses that student agency (and co agency) should be less about acting solely in self-interest, but more about operating ‘at the individual, collaborative (group) and collective (or societal) levels’ (para. 33). It highlights the critical cultural and

¹¹ The OECD’s Inclusive Growth initiative has pioneered analysis illustrating how increasing inequality has an adverse impact not only on social cohesion, but also economic growth, based on a multidimensional approach.

contextual factors that determine at what level and in what circumstances agency and co agency are appropriately exercised, as well the relationship of the individual to the group, arguing that ‘the degree to which harmony, compliance and conformity are valued above creativity and individualism’ are central to these differences (para. 37). Consistent with the recommendations of this thesis, the OECD working group suggests that ‘sensitive account needs to be taken of any cultural context within which [agency] will need to evolve, without necessarily adopting the view that any historical cultural view is incontestable’.

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Appendices: Information Forms and Interview Questions

Sonia Glogowski



Interview Information Form

Project Title: Understandings around the Curriculum Key Competencies at the (design) conceptualisation and implementation phases*

Purpose

This research is conducted as partial requirement for a Ph.D in Education.

What is this research project about?

This research is designed to find out the nature and content of discussions related to the key competencies that took place during the curriculum stock take and design phase that led to the 2007 New Zealand Curriculum. It also seeks to find out how schools have interpreted the key competencies when implementing processes and pedagogies related to their integration in school and classroom programmes.

What will you have to do and how long will it take?

Your participation will involve you in an interview of 30-40 minutes. The interview will be based on your recollections of the discussions and papers that were part of the Curriculum Project, particularly in relation to the Key Competencies and the role/s you played as part of it. The interview will be recorded, with your consent. If you are interviewed you will be provided with a summary of your interview for approval once the transcription process is complete.

What will happen to the information collected?

The information collected will be used by the researcher to write a doctoral thesis. It will also be used in articles and presentations arising from the doctoral study. Only the researcher, transcriber and supervisor will be privy to the researcher's notes, any documents you might provide and the audio-recordings. The researcher will securely store transcriptions of the recordings and copies of the documents and treat the material in them with the strictest confidentiality. No participants will be named in any publications. Every effort will be made to disguise participant's identity although it is acknowledged that those who were also close to /involved in the curriculum project may be able to identify particular participants.

Declaration to participants

If you take part in the study, you have the right to:

- Refuse to answer any particular question and to withdraw from the study up to 3 weeks after you have approved your interview summary.
- Ask any further questions about the study that occur to you during your participation.
- Be given access to a summary of findings from the study when it is concluded

You will retain copyright of raw data viewed or shared with the researcher as part of the research. The researcher holds the copyright of all analysis undertaken as well as the final thesis.

You will be notified how you can access a copy of this thesis once it has been completed. A digital copy will also be lodged permanently in the University of Waikato's digital repository.

Contact details:

If you have any questions or concerns about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Researcher:

Sonia Glogowski



Supervisor:

Bronwen Cowie

Director: Wilf Malcolm Research Institute of Educational Research

Faculty of Education

University of Waikato



Sonia Glogowski

Understandings around the Curriculum Key Competencies at (design) conceptualisation and implementation phases.

1. Reiterate informed consent details and check both parts have been signed.
2. Ask if there are any protocols (eg cultural) that the participant wishes observed during or following this interview.
3. Check voice recording device. Record name, date and time of interview.

Interview Questions:

1. Can you describe your involvement in the 2002-2007 curriculum stocktake/project process?
2. Why do you think you were invited to participate and what role/s did you undertake during your involvement with the project?
3. Can you recall who else was involved in the project discussions and what role they undertook (eg contributed particular expertise or represented particular perspectives)?
4. Were there key papers that informed the direction or philosophy of the notion of key competencies?
5. Can you recall what your thoughts on these were at the time?
6. Have your views/reflections changed in any way since?
7. Were there any areas that you felt less comfortable with or think required more discussion?

If so, did you raise these with others?

If so, what happened as a result?
8. Can you recall any major disagreements or extended discussion around any aspect of the key competencies?
9. Do you think the project tried to ensure that a diversity of views and perspectives were represented?
10. If so, how was this achieved?
11. How were barriers to participation addressed?

12. Do you feel there were any voices/perspectives that were 'less heard' or 'invited to speak' during the project discussions?

If so, why do you think this happened?

13. Were there any other perspectives that should have been included, but weren't?

14. How do you see the key competencies being interpreted/enacted at a classroom and school level?

15. Do you think all members of a school community (principal, teachers, parents/caregivers) interpret/value aspects of the key competencies in the same way?

16. If not, was this raised in the curriculum project discussions by yourself? By others?

17. If so, what was the result of those discussions?

18. What guidance are schools given around the interpretation of the key competencies?

19. Do you think the notion of different cultural interpretations of the key competencies is present in this guidance?

20. What are your thoughts on this?

Disclosure

The main focus of my research is to try and find out whether the idea that the key competencies might be interpreted differently by different cultural groups was a consideration during the curriculum project.

I also want to find out whether schools may have surfaced this in their discussions with their parent/whanau community.

Do you have any further thoughts on this?

Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

I will be writing up the notes from this interview and will be able to provide a summary for you to approve.

If you have any further questions you can contact me at the details provided on your information sheet. If you wish to contact my supervisor in relation to this interview or any aspect related to the research project, her details are also on your information sheet.

Thank you for giving up your time and agreeing to participate in my research project.

Focus Group Interview Information Form

Project Title: Understandings around the Curriculum Key Competencies at the (design) conceptualisation and implementation phases*

Purpose

This research is conducted as partial requirement for a Ph.D in Education.

What is this research project about?

This research is designed to find out the nature and content of discussions related to the key competencies that took place during the curriculum stock take and design phase that led to the 2007 New Zealand Curriculum. It also seeks to find out how schools have interpreted the key competencies when implementing processes and pedagogies related to their integration in school and classroom programmes.

What will you have to do and how long will it take?

You will be asked to participate in a group discussion with a group of your colleagues. This should take up to 40 – 50 minutes. The discussions will be based on your opinions and experiences regarding the implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum, in particular the Key Competencies, both in your school setting, and any additional experiences such as conferences or workshops where they were the topic of discussions or presentations. You will be guided through the discussions through a series of question prompts. There will be two researchers taking field notes and the focus group discussions will also be recorded as a back-up.

What will happen to the information collected?

The information collected will be used by the researcher to write a doctoral thesis. It will also be used in articles and presentations arising from the doctoral study. Only the researchers, transcriber and supervisor will be privy to the researcher's notes, any documents you might provide and the audio-recordings. The researcher will securely store transcriptions of the recordings and copies of the documents and treat the material in them with the strictest confidentiality. No participants will be named in any publications. Neither individuals nor the school will be identified.

Declaration to participants

If you take part in the study, you have the right to:

- Refuse to answer any particular question and to withdraw from the study up to 3 weeks after receiving the focus group transcript and approved your contribution
- Ask any further questions about the study that occur to you during your participation.
- Be given access to a summary of findings from the study when it is concluded

You will retain copyright of raw data viewed or shared with the researcher as part of the research. The researcher holds the copyright of all analysis undertaken as well as the final thesis.

You will be notified how you can access a copy of this thesis once it has been completed. A digital copy will also be lodged permanently in the University of Waikato's digital repository.

Contact details:

If you have any questions or concerns about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Researcher:

Sonia Glogowski



Supervisor:

Bronwen Cowie

Director: Wilf Malcolm Research Institute of Educational Research

Faculty of Education

University of Waikato



Understandings around the Curriculum Key Competencies at (design) conceptualisation and implementation phases.

1. Ask if there are any protocols (e.g. cultural) that the group wishes observed during or following this interview.
2. Reiterate informed consent details and check both parts have been signed.
3. Name tags for courtesy purposes only
4. Introduce researchers and their role in the focus group discussions
5. Check voice recording device and placement.
6. Check researchers have template for recording notes.

Focus Group Interview Questions

Roles and responsibilities in school curriculum design and implementation

- Were any of you given particular roles or responsibilities related to implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum in your school?
- What were these and what support or resources did you receive/use to undertake these roles?

Curriculum Change

- Do you recall what your initial thoughts were on the New Zealand Curriculum when it was launched in 2007?
- How was it different to the previous curriculum and what did you think about this?
- What are your views on curriculum documents – what is their purpose and who should design them?
- What would you put in a curriculum?
- Should it be for years 1-13? Why/ why not?
- How well do you think you were supported to understand and enact the changes required in implementing the New Zealand Curriculum?
- Can you recall what types of support was given (if any) and where this came from?

The design of the Key Competencies

- The Key Competencies were a shift from the essential skills in the previous curriculum. Do you know why these were changed and what are your thoughts about this?

- Did you know where the key competencies originated from and what are your thoughts about this?
- Were you aware of any work that took place to make them more aligned to the New Zealand context? What are your thoughts about this?
- How important are the key competencies to you and your beliefs about teaching and learning?
- Do you agree with the five that have been chosen- would you change any? Why?
- How much of a role do the key competencies play in your teaching?
- How well do you think the key competencies have been supported/enacted in schools generally?
- What are the reasons for this?
- Can you recall what types of support (if any) was given in understanding the key competencies and where this came from?
- What are your thoughts about assessment of the key competencies – the benefits? the risks?
- How does your school manage the development of the key competencies in students?
- Is this recorded/ reported in any way?

The Key Competencies and potential differences in valued outcomes

- Do you think there are different ways of interpreting the key competencies?
- How much of a role do you think context plays in how students might demonstrate/develop their competencies?
- Do you think that there may be differences in what people value as desirable attitudes and behaviours?
 - Teachers
 - Parents
 - Communities
 - Employers
 - Other?

- How have you or your school managed this?
- If you believe there are differences, how much do you think others teachers and schools are aware of them?
- How much support/ guidance do you think has been given in this area?
- From whom/where?
- Where/who do you go to for your support around understanding the curriculum/key competencies and why?
- What would you like to see more of / less of?

Closure

(Researcher to explain the focus of their research further)

- Any further questions or comments you would like to make?

Thank you so much for participating in this research.

(Refer participants to information sheet if any further questions/queries).