

Poetry in Motion

A study of poetry in the kindergarten settings of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Eileen Woodhead

A thesis
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of
Master of Arts
at the University of Otago
College of Education
Dunedin
New Zealand

2016

© 2016 Eileen Woodhead

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	vi
DEDICATION.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	viii
MĀORI WORDS	ix
ABBREVIATIONS.....	x
CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background to the research	11
1.2 Definition of cultural capital.....	12
1.3 Te ao Māori.....	14
1.4 The research setting	16
1.5 Outline of the thesis	17
1.6 Summary.....	19
CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction.....	20
2.2 Cultural capital and poetry.....	21
2.3 Educational context of the research setting – past to present day	22
2.4 Previous studies relating to poetry and children.....	25
2.5 Collections and anthologies of poems	26
2.6 Historical analysis of origins of poems	27
2.7 Summary.....	28
CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Introduction.....	29
3.2 Research questions	29
3.3 Research methods	30

3.4 Research design	30
3.5 Research site	31
3.6 Quantitative data	33
3.7 Qualitative data	34
3.8 Focus group interviews with teachers.....	35
3.9 Ethical considerations	36
3.10 Summary.....	38

CHAPTER FOUR – SIX CASE STUDIES OF POEMS

4.1 Introduction.....	39
4.2 Traditional karakia: ‘Ko te Kō a te Waimarie’	40
4.3 A poem from popular culture: ‘Let it Go’	45
4.4 A Froebelian tradition: ‘My Pigeon House’	52
4.5 Sociocultural influences: The New Zealand National Anthem	58
4.6 Fanciful fantasy: ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’	64
4.7 An enduring tradition: ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’	68
4.8 Summary.....	76

CHAPTER FIVE – POETRY AS A CONDUIT TO CO-CONSTRUCTION

5.1 Introduction.....	77
5.2 Poetry and science	77
5.3 Making sense of emotion.....	84
5.4 Humour: fun, laughter, silliness and the absurd	86
5.5 Poetry as a pathway to numeracy	90
5.6 Poetry and phonics.....	95
5.7 Poetry develops spatial awareness.....	99
5.8 Summary.....	103

CHAPTER SIX – HOW ARE POETS CREATED?

6.1 Introduction.....	104
6.2 What is poetry?.....	105

6.3	Creating original poetry	107
6.4	Poetry as a motivator	115
6.5	Poetic influences	117
6.6	Appropriation.....	120
6.7	Teaching resources	122
6.8	Summary.....	124
CHAPTER SEVEN – DISCUSSION		
7.1	Introduction.....	125
7.2	Defining poetry.....	126
7.3	Aligning with cultural capital	128
7.4	Te ao Māori as cultural capital	130
7.5	Traditions of poetry in kindergartens	130
7.6	Appropriation as cultural capital	133
7.7	A pyramid of poetry appreciation.....	133
CHAPTER EIGHT – CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS		
8.1	Introduction.....	137
8.2	Set one	137
8.3	Set two	139
8.4	Conclusion	140
TABLES		
	Criteria for the recording of poems in Table 1	141
	Criteria for the selection of poems in Table 2	141
	Table 1: Matrix of Recorded Poems	142
	Table 2: Top Twenty Poems.....	144
GLOSSARY OF POETIC TERMS		145
LIST OF FIGURES.....		150
APPENDICES		
	APPENDIX A: Information Letter to Parents/Caregivers.....	151

APPENDIX B: Consent Form for Parents/Guardians.....	153
APPENDIX C: Information Sheet for Teacher Participants	154
APPENDIX D: Consent Form for Teacher Participants	157
BIBLIOGRAPHY	159

ABSTRACT

Key words: poetry, kindergarten, Froebel

This thesis, 'Poetry in Motion', explores the ways in which poetry aligns to the cultural capital of kindergarten settings. The research also unravels the role and purposes of poetry for kindergarten children.

The research context is the kindergartens of the Napier Kindergarten Association, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand. Napier kindergartens are state funded to provide education and care for children aged two to five years, with qualified registered teachers. This ethnographic study highlights the links between poetry and the arts for young children. The rich interconnections that teachers and children have made between poetry and education become transparent.

The kindergarten movement in New Zealand owes its pedagogical origins to Friedrich Froebel in 19th century Germany. Cultural influences from America, Europe, Britain, Japan, and the indigenous Māori culture are evident in the poetry in current use. In New Zealand all early childhood services base their teaching on the national Early Childhood Education (ECE) curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education [MoE], 1996). This aspirational curriculum document reflects the bicultural commitment of New Zealand to value the partnership between the indigenous Māori people and others of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

One of the themes from this study is how teachers' own cultural knowledge and traditions influence the poetry they choose in their work with young children. Some warm provocations are offered to the wider early childhood world about how poetry could be cultivated. The study also identifies areas where further research is needed to understand the creative process of poetry writing for young children and teachers.

DEDICATION

In the past year, two baby granddaughters have arrived in our lives – Bailey and Eva. They bring sunshine and love and a visceral reminder of the purpose of this study. So I dedicate this thesis to Bailey and Eva and any future grandchildren that we may be fortunate enough to cherish.



Bailey



Eva

And of course a poem for them, one of my favourites, by Robert Louis Stevenson:

From The Railway Carriage

Faster than fairies, faster than witches
Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;
And charging along like troops in a battle,
All through the meadows, the horses and cattle:
All the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain;
And ever again, in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From the very beginning of this project, people around me have responded with a light in their eyes and a willingness to share something they know about poetry. This study would not have been possible if the children, families and teachers in the Napier kindergarten settings were not eager to open up about their experience of poetry and become involved. The 1960's popular song *Poetry in Motion* provided inspiration for the title of my thesis (Anthony & Kaufman, 1960).

My family members have been enthusiastic supporters of my work. My thanks go to my partner, Donal, for your listening ear and never-fading belief in me. My son Freddie introduced me to Pharrel Williams' rap and art creation 'Aerosol Can'. This poetry (suitable for an adult audience only) *Dong Dong, Diddy Dong Dong, Ring Bom, Bom Bom Bom*, has a captivating beat. It makes me smile and think of you, Freddie. April, my daughter, has introduced me to her extensive and eclectic music collection over the years. She has also delighted in pointing out when I sing the words to songs incorrectly. Teachers have loaned me precious books and shared YouTube sites that have excited them, such as Maya Angelou's 'Life Doesn't Frighten Me'.

I am truly appreciative of the support from the Napier Kindergarten Association for valuing this research project. I offer arohanui to Piripi Belcher, Papara Wano and Haana Wilcox, who were my encouraging and knowledgeable Māori advisors. And last but certainly not least I thank Professor Helen May, my academic supervisor, who understood my passion for this subject. Her in-depth knowledge of the history and spirit of the kindergarten movement has given me inspiration.

MĀORI WORDS

ako	to teach and to learn
akonga	teacher and learner
atua	Māori god
hauhake	harvest
karakia	prayer or hymn
Ko	traditional Māori planting stick
kohanga reo	Māori language nest
mana	integrity
Māori	indigenous people of Aotearoa
Māra Kai	traditional Māori vegetables
mauri	concept of life force
mihi	greeting or welcome
moteatea	lament
nga tikanga	Māori customs
oriori	lullaby
tamariki	children
tangata whenua	local people
Te ao Māori	the Māori world
Te Reo	language
whakatauki	proverb
waiata	song
whakapapa	genealogy
whānau	family

(Ryan, 1995)

ABBREVIATIONS

ECE	Early Childhood Education
EfS	Education for Sustainability
MoE	Ministry of Education
NZ	New Zealand
NKA	Napier Kindergarten Association
NZKI	New Zealand Kindergartens Incorporated

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

“The best poetry says something that lasts. It leaves a footprint deep in the earth of what it means to be human.”
(Styles, 2011:1)

1.1 Background to the research

The purpose of this project is to investigate how poetry might contribute to the lives of children, parents and teachers in the contemporary kindergarten settings of the Napier Kindergarten Association. Children attending these kindergartens are aged from two to five years. I have investigated what poetry might mean for these children and their teachers.

Integral to the study were the diverse cultural influences on poetry in these settings. This research was conducted from an ethnographic framework, which will be discussed in Chapters Two and Three. I have considered myself, as the researcher, as visible and valued – as a natural and active part of the research process. I viewed the kindergarten setting as a “community of practice” (Wenger, 1998). Through this lens I looked at both teachers’ and children’s constructions of poetry, which were shaped by their own heritage, upbringing, education and life experiences.

Little research on children’s poetry, in contrast to the broader topic of children’s literature, has been conducted in New Zealand (NZ). I wanted to know more about the role poetry has in the kindergarten context. Poetry, primarily an oral tradition, has a richly deserved place in early childhood education as arguably the most common and easily relayed literacy artefact (Opie, 1996). When read aloud, poetry is rhythm and music and sounds and beats, which can connect with children of all ages. The imagery, metaphor and symbolic language of poetry may allow children to deconstruct life experiences. Academic opinion suggests that engagement with poetry and rhymes is critical for early language acquisition and subsequent literacy (Adams & Hamer, 2003; Stewart, 2004; and Soryl, 2013).

In this research study concepts of what poetry is, and is not are explored. Joy, Styles and Whitley (2012) who are English writers, abandoned their attempts to narrow the parameters of poetry into a tidy definition, instead accepting a much broader inclusion, which included simple rhymes and of course music. This research in the NZ context has affirmed that view. However, by the end of the study I had formed a useful definition for poetry, which is presented in Chapter Seven.

Different genres of poetry are represented in this study. The genres of finger play, rhyme, verse poetry, free verse, waiata, karakia, whakatauki and songs, sometimes accompanied by music, throughout this study are included in this broader view of poetry for young children. The term 'poetry' in this context can be interpreted as encompassing all or any of these genres, which make up the poetry data for this study. Whilst scoping the direction of this study I was clear that it would not include categories of children's literature that were written primarily in prose. Almost all literature written for young children includes some poetic devices such as rhyme, repetition and alliteration. I made some arbitrary, but informed, judgments about what would be deemed prose rather than poetry.

The research study was shaped by the following questions:

In what ways does poetry align to the cultural capital in kindergarten settings?

What are the dominant and other traditions and purposes of poetry in kindergarten settings?

1.2 Definition of cultural capital

In order to embark upon answering these research questions I first had to establish what was meant by cultural capital. In the social sciences literature 'cultural capital' refers to non-financial social assets that promote social mobility (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2000). This research study explores questions of how the use of poetry in kindergartens is shaped by cultural capital and how that cultural capital may or may not manifest itself as a positive force for learners. Literature relating to cultural capital is discussed further in Chapter Two.

‘Cultural artefact’ is a term used in the social sciences for anything created by humans which gives information about the culture of its creator and users. Poetry can be a literary treasure or cultural artefact that reflects the language, values and world view of both the writer and the times in which it was written. Over time, styles of poetry for children have been chosen based on the social construct of childhood of the time, place and social settings (Styles, 1998). Notions of what childhood should be are socially constructed, as opposed to an objective truth or fact (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 2000). For example, childhood was often seen as a romantic construct during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Poems about nature, animals and gardens typify this period and the perceived innocence of childhood. These themes are evident in Friedrich Froebel’s *Mother Songs (Mutter und Koselieder)*, which were first published in 1844 and formed an important part of Froebel’s teachings. The place and role of Froebel’s *Mother Songs* over time are features of this study (Froebel, 1895).

Froebel is recognised as the founder of the Kindergarten movement (Liebschner, 1992). He established his first kindergarten in Bad Blankenburg, Germany, in 1837 (ibid). Joachim Liebschner, a Froebelian scholar, describes the *Mother Songs*:

The book contains fifty play-songs which aim at providing exercises for the body and limbs to be carried out by mother and child and at the same time it provides a symbolic introduction to the abstract values of life. Each play-song is printed on one page surrounded by pictures illustrating the song in many different ways.

(ibid:103)

The *Mother Songs* were popularised and translated into other languages including English. In some cases the lyrics were adapted and made more musically appealing (Van Norstrand, 1889; and Blow, 1895).

A vital component of children’s cultural capital is their opportunities to acquire a first and possibly, further languages. This research study considers current educational theories of language acquisition as an integral part of children’s literate cultural capital (Chapman et al, 2006). Such theories as recognised stages of expressive language development in the young child (Veltkamp, 1998; and Campbell, 2005) and teaching strategies such as

developing phonological awareness are relevant. Yolanda Soryl, a NZ based phonics teacher, recommends that young preschoolers are taught programmes that include the teaching and practice of nursery rhymes or other rhyming and alliteration activities. The enthusiasm for poetry and rhyme as a key tool for phonological development is evident in the writings of Hamer and Adams (2003) and Stewart (2004) – both writing about the NZ educational setting.

Current theories of neuroscience and brain development will be considered alongside reflection on how poetry is used. For example, neuroscience suggests there are optimal times for the developing child to have exposure to language and thus form neural pathways. “Early interactions don’t just create a context, they directly affect the way the brain is wired.” (Shore, 1997:18). Ways in which repetitive exposure to rhyme and poems at such time may be beneficial are explored in Chapters Four and Five.

1.3 Te ao Māori

A vital influence on this research was the place and status of Te Reo Māori in early childhood education in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Wally Penetito, an academic of Māori studies, stated: “If there is an emerging educational vision among Māori, it is the desire for an education system that enhances what it is to be Māori” (Penetito, 2002).

This was a dynamic and fast-evolving narrative. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, an academic of Māori studies, argued that British colonisation of the NZ education system resulted in the marginalisation of the Māori language (Simon & Tuhiwai-Smith, 2001). The first two Kohanga Reo (language nests) opened in 1982 beginning a movement by the Te Kohanga Reo Trust as part of a dynamic push for preservation of the Māori language (Smith, 2011). Later in 1989 a new Education Act acknowledged the principles of Treaty of Waitangi rights in education. Claudia Orange, historian and social commentator, describes this time of change:

The Act [Education] required state funded educational institutions, in consultation with their communities (including Māori), to draw up charters with mandatory goals. Under these, schools were to address ‘equity issues’, including the position

of Māori people within the education system. A separate mandatory goal called for the implementation of the Treaty of Waitangi through the provision of Māori language to those students whose parents requested it and bicultural curricula to all students.

(Orange, 2004:193)

One outcome of this government direction was the development and publication of New Zealand's first bicultural curriculum for ECE, *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa*, in 1996. This required ECE teachers to embrace Te Reo Māori and ensure that both of these official languages are visible in their teaching programmes. On the very first page of *Te Whāriki* there is a Māori whakatauki by Sir Apirana Ngata entitled 'E tipu rea'. This evocative and moving metaphoric poem encapsulated the spirit of this bicultural curriculum.

E tipu e rea mō ngā rā o tō ao
Ko tō ringa ki ngā rākau a te Pākehā
Hei ora mō te tinana
Ko tō ngākau ki ngā tāonga a ō tīpuna Māori
Hei tikitiki mō tō mähuna Ko tō wairua ki tō atua, Nānā nei ngā mea katoa
(Tā Apirana Ngata)

Grow and branch forth for the days destined to you
Your hands to the tools of the Pākehā for the welfare of your body
Your heart to the treasures of your ancestors as adornments for your brow
Your spirit to god, who made all things

This emergent emphasis on biculturalism had a powerful influence on the shape of poetry in NZ kindergartens. In the 1980s the NZ Department of Education began to run courses and published resources such as *Nga Tamariki Iti o Aotearoa: the first steps in the instruction of Māori studies for Preschool Children* (Department of Education, 1980). Jenny Ritchie, past kindergarten teacher and academic, has suggested that the Māori language is inherently poetic. She believes that poetic constructs are abundant within whakatauki, karakia and waiata (J. Ritchie, Personal Communication, 17th March 2015).

The English term ‘poetry’ is not neatly translated into the Māori language. Therefore, throughout this thesis the terms *whakatauki*, *waiata* and *karakia* should be considered synonymous with the term ‘poetry’. Hirini Melbourne (1949- 2003), who was of Ngai Tahu and Ngati Kahungunu tribal affiliation, asked the question in 1991: “What constitutes ‘literature’ in a culture that has traditionally been based on oral language?”

To help frame this study, the concept of poetry in Te ao Māori was accepted as oral expressions that may or may not have been documented and published in the written form. A further strong influence on the strengthening of Te Reo Māori has been the engagement with the Enviroschools programme (Enviroschools Foundation, 2011). This independent organisation has a philosophy of working in partnership with Māori. Three of the kindergartens in this research worked contractually with the Enviroschools programme. All six kindergartens in the study have been strongly influenced by the values of Education for Sustainability (EfS). I do not present myself as a person with in-depth knowledge in matters of biculturalism or Te Reo Māori, but rather as an early childhood professional who travelled the journey over decades with my colleagues to honour and embrace biculturalism. This study has highlighted the plethora of Māori poetry that is in use with *akonga* (teachers and learners) in NZ kindergartens in 2014 and visible in the six Napier kindergartens in this study.

1.4 The research setting

The research itself was conducted within the Napier Kindergarten Association (NKA), which is the umbrella organisation for sixteen kindergartens. Napier kindergartens are licensed and funded by the Ministry of Education under the NZ government. This funding is given on the contractual understanding that their services meet legislative requirements and implement the national bicultural NZ curriculum for all licensed early childhood services, *Te Whāriki*. This curriculum recognises Te Reo Māori and English as the languages of our dual heritage. Therefore, this study on poetry will come from the lens of acknowledging these official languages of NZ. There are goals set out in *Te Whāriki* that connect with the value of poetry for children, and these are explored further in Chapter Two.

In order to clearly view the smaller context of the of the Napier kindergartens, it is necessary to consider how the umbrella organisation of the kindergarten movement developed in NZ. In the remote rural context of Bad Blankenburg, in the German state of Thuringia, Froebel (1782–1852), a German scientist, philosopher and educationalist, encouraged children to be creative and expressive in their self-directed play (Liebschner, 1992). This radical experiment was closed down in 1852 in the aftermath of the failed Prussian revolution. Many of Froebel's supporters became refugees and thus the idea of the kindergarten spread across Europe, to America, parts of Asia and the Antipodes. Froebel's ideas first informed and prompted the establishment of the early free kindergarten movement in NZ (May, 2013). Free Kindergarten Associations were operating in Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland by the early 1900s (ibid). However, it was not until 1951 that the Napier Kindergarten Association was first established (NKA archives).

1.5 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. This section provides a brief description of each chapter and leads the reader through the progression of the thesis.

Chapter One: Introduction

Here, the context and parameters of the research, including the research questions, are explained. The aims and purposes are set out and the direction of the research is made clear. The limitations and boundaries of the study are also clarified.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In Chapter Two the literature review builds a theoretical framework for this study. It was useful to situate it in understandings of what has come before in both the NZ and global settings. The chapter identifies some significant academics who have written about children's poetry. There is also commentary on the anthologies and collections of children's poetry that have relevance to this study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

In Chapter Three the research questions are stated, along with an explanation of the theoretical frameworks that have underpinned them. The research design, ethical considerations and the way the data was gathered and analysed are explained and justified. This chapter provides a step-by-step explanation of how this study was conducted.

Chapter Four: Six Case Studies of Poems

Chapter Four is the first of three chapters that present the findings from this research study. In this chapter, six poems are presented as separate case studies. These six poems were identified from Table 1 (see References at back of thesis) as being of significance and representative of a range of genres. There is an examination of the cultural and historical origins of each poem and the poetic devices that are in use. Each narrative tells of how the teachers, children and sometimes families responded to the poems. The tensions that were evident in the responses to some of these poems are presented and discussed.

Chapter Five: Poetry as a Conduit for Co-Construction of Meaning

Chapter Five continues to present the research findings. In this chapter, poetry examples from Tables 1 and 2 (see References) are presented to overtly demonstrate how poetry supports children's development of numeracy, diction, phonetic awareness and the understanding of abstract ideas. The mechanisms of poetry as a tool for cognitive learning are discussed. The ways in which poetry intersects and complement visual art are also discussed. Vignettes of how poetry provides a pathway to emotional and spiritual wholeness for both children and adults are set out in this chapter. Links are made as to how poetry is a vehicle for developing an intelligent mind.

Chapter Six: How are Poets Created?

Chapter Six presents further findings from the research data. Five emergent themes are presented. This chapter examines the creative process of developing original poetry. There are insights into the mentors and poetic motivators who have shaped participants. The concept of creative appropriation is unpacked.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

This chapter offers a reflection on the research questions. It begins with an analysis of what poetry actually is in this context and is followed by a suggested definition of poetry for the kindergarten setting. There is an analysis of the ways in which poetry aligns with cultural capital in these kindergartens, including the way in which poetry aligns with the cultural capital of Te ao Māori. Some emerging traditions of poetry are discussed. An examination of the countries and cultures that have exerted influence on kindergarten poetry is offered. Themes that relate to the creative process are presented. Finally, a pyramid model of how children and teachers express appreciation for poetry is presented.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion and Recommendations

In this chapter there is a forward focus on ‘where to from here?’ in relation to the findings from this study. Some warm provocations for ECE practitioners are offered. These are presented as a set of suggestions for early childhood teachers and training providers. They relate to ideas for future self-review, training and ongoing professional development. Further to this, a set of recommendations for future research studies is made. These recommendations relate to the identified gaps of knowledge and understanding about poetry that have become clear from this study.

1.6 Summary

In this introductory chapter, the purpose of this research study has been explained and the context of the research setting described. The research questions have been presented along with some parameters for the study. Some historical background is given that suggests where poetry might be positioned in kindergartens, and the emergence and influence of biculturalism on poetry in kindergartens has been briefly explained. A definition for ‘cultural capital’, which is one of the main concepts of this study, has then been offered. This is followed by an introduction to the educational theories that underpin this study. At the end of this introduction, each of the eight chapters has been outlined and the shape of the thesis has been made clear.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature review

William Butler Yeats said this about poetry:

“It bids us to touch and taste and hear and see the world, and shrink from all that is of the brain only.”
(Cited in Kimbrough, 2014:5)

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter One the aims and scope of this study were established. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate what literature was available and how it might inform this research study. This literature review covers time frames from the inception of the kindergarten movement in the 1840s in Germany until 2014, within the context of New Zealand kindergartens. The review begins amidst the beginnings of the kindergarten movement in Germany and, in particular, the genres of poetry that relate to that time. Consideration is given to what literature has to say on the abstract concept of ‘cultural capital’ and its relevance to poetry. This is followed by literature that will substantiate the theories of language learning that were identified in Chapter One. I needed to identify literature that defines poetry, and moreover, what constitutes poetry for children. This includes the consideration of collections of children’s poetry that were likely to have been influential in kindergarten settings. A further aspect is a literary examination of the historical meaning of individual children’s poems and their potential links to cultural capital. The literature research then moves to position the relevant pedagogical frameworks that have shaped the historical kindergarten movement as well as the kindergartens situated in New Zealand in this project. This covers some historical background through to the contemporary setting; such as the evolving commitment to biculturalism in the philosophy of early childhood education. Literary insights relating to spirituality and their influence on poetry are also considered. Finally there is a consideration of contemporary research relevant to the research questions.

2.2 Cultural capital and poetry

Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist who was introduced in Chapter One, promoted the view that cultural capital referred only to the culture of the privileged class of society. He believed that education was the bridge that empowered the less privileged to attain such cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2000). In more recent times this model has been challenged, and theories of valuing cultural capital that pertain to a range of minority cultures have been posed. According to Morrow (2011) the major role of the education system is the cultural reproduction of the dominant culture. Bourdieu and Passeron show how education carries an essentially arbitrary cultural scheme, which is actually, though not in appearance, based on power (ibid). More widely, the reproduction of culture through education is shown to play a key part in the reproduction of the whole social system. Throsby, a contemporary Australian economist, writes about the need for economic investment in cultural traditions that are passed on to the next generation (Throsby, 2005). He defines cultural capital as an asset, which embodies, stores or gives rise to cultural value in addition to whatever economic value it may possess. He suggests that cultural traditions are not renewable resources. Both Bourdieu and Throsby make a connection between economic value and cultural capital in society. A group of NZ academic researchers used the terminology ‘literate cultural capital’ as a generic term referring to reading-related variables at school entry that are strongly linked to activities in the home that support early literacy development (Chapman, Tunmer & Prochnow, 2006). These discussions about cultural capital raised questions for me about how poetry might be situated in the kindergarten settings in this study. For instance – would poetry be something that is available to all regardless of social background or was it an elitist pursuit? Whose culture would be preserved and represented in the poetry in use at the kindergarten research sites?

I sought out the writings and wisdom of Morag Styles, who is based at Cambridge University in England and has established herself as a leading historian and writer on children’s poetry (Styles, 1998; Styles, 2011; and Joy, Styles & Whitley, 2012). These English academics identify the cultural influences that have shaped both the writing and English fashions relating to children’s poetry. Other literature that offered insights into

definitions of poetry was of the nature of inspiring quotations or aphorisms rather than research-based ideas. They were, however, helpful as well as enjoyable to read and consider. One such example is: “Poetry is the revelation of a feeling that the poet believes to be interior and personal which the reader recognizes as his own.”¹

As a clear decision was made to limit the research to actual poetry rather than the broader category of children’s literature, I have limited the literature research accordingly.

2.3 Educational context of the research setting – past to present day

Sources were located that detailed Froebel’s Mother Songs, translations and related explanations of Froebel’s work (Froebel, 1895; Goldammer, 1882; and Blow, 1895). The Mother Songs, a set of simple poems and finger rhymes were chosen by Froebel as a pedagogical resource to develop both language and moral values for the very young child. I was fortunate to access an historic printed Froebel kindergarten guide, which contained dozens of poems recommended for American-based Froebel kindergartens (Van Norstrand, 1889). Such books had modernised and popularised Froebel’s original Mother Songs for the American audience. This was further supported by a more recent academic account of Froebel’s work (Liebschner, 1992). I sought information relating to whether Froebel’s Mother Songs (nursery and action rhymes) were still evident today (Ouvry, 2012; Goouch & Powell, 2013). Helen May, NZ kindergarten historian, further illuminates the social context of kindergarten’s origins in her publications (May, 2013; and May, 2014). For further general background knowledge I looked to other histories of the NZ kindergarten movement (Fowler, 2008; Duncan, 2008; Kidsfirst, 2013 and May, 2014).

Kindergarten in the Air, ran from 1950 to 1964 in New Zealand (Downer, 1964). *Listen with Mother*, a NZ National Radio programme for young children, was broadcast in the early 1960s when rhymes, songs and stories were relayed over the airways. Amongst the historical archives of the Napier Kindergarten Association, there was a range of music sheets and handwritten poetry books dating back to the 1950s (Thomas, 1957; Rauden,

¹ Salvatore Quasimodo, www.brainyquote.com

1958; Stewart, 1959; and Northe, c.1960). This was significant material to access as it provided a window into the poetry choices of previous decades, many of which suggested wildly different values to racial and gender issues than the current day.

Historical records of the NZ kindergarten movement offer anecdotal evidence that Christianity was likely to have been a feature of the curriculum in the first half of the 20th century (Fowler, 2008; Hughes, 1989; Kidsfirst, 2013 and Lockhart, 1975). These religious values were to be seen in poetry and rhymes used with children. For example, this song was in common use in kindergartens of the 1920s:

Happy, happy birthday,
Happy year begun,
God who gives us birthdays,
knows them every one.

God is kind and loving;
He is sure to hear,
so we ask his blessing
for another year.²

Following on from Froebel, the kindergarten movement has been influenced by theorists such as Isaacs and Piaget, who promoted theories of cognitive development often referred to as ‘ages and stages’ (Curtis & O’Hagan, 2003). During the 1980s there was a significant shift in educational thinking to embrace sociocultural theorists such as Vygotsky, Rogoff and the Reggio Emilia movement (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Edwards et al., 1998; and Rogoff, 2003).

This shift was also evident in NZ education. Over this time there was a growing emphasis on embracing the dual cultural heritage of New Zealand and its implications for education (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2001; Penetito, 2002; and Orange, 2004). This shift is reflected in the fact that Māori whakatauki and waiata were becoming more visible and celebrated in the

² *Kidsfirst History*, 8 November 1923. Phillipstown Kindergarten, Christchurch.

kindergarten movement. For example, in comparison to the Happy Birthday hymn of 1923, teachers by the late 70s and 80s were more likely to be singing in Māori:

Ra Whānau ki a koe,
Ra Whānau ki a koe,
Nga mihi ki a (child's name)
Ra whānau ki a koe.

The essence of *Te Whāriki*, the NZ national bicultural curriculum, the final draft of which was published in 1996, has since, 2008, been mandated for all NZ Ministry of Education licensed early childhood centres. This curriculum statement takes a 'whole child' approach to the education. The framework is made up of five principles, which flow on to four strands or goals. I teased out some aspirational statements from the *Te Whāriki* goals that relate to how poetry may be used in kindergartens. These statements provided a sense of direction for the field observations and overall data gathering process. Would I see poetry used to achieve these aspirations in practice or not?

Over the 18 years since *Te Whāriki*'s publication, the early childhood sector has moved increasingly to a sociocultural model of teaching. The *Kei Tua O te Pae* series and *Understanding the Te Whāriki Approach* came into use to further guide teachers on sociocultural approaches that included the use of narrative documentation as a valid form of assessment (MoE, 2004; and Carr et al., 2013). Guy Claxton's ideas on dispositions of learning and the nature of intelligence are also relevant to this study about poetry (Claxton & Lucas, 2010). Publications such as these invite teachers to view the child as an equal partner in the process of learning. Such an approach is often referred to as co-construction of learning (Anning, Cullen & Flear, 2004). Links are made to the pedagogy of co-construction and how it relates to poetry in Chapter Five. In this chapter the concept of poetry acting as a conduit to the co-construction of knowledge is explored.

The Reggio Emilia philosophy speaks of the 100 languages of children (Edwards et al, 1998). *Te Whāriki* acknowledges the whole child with spiritual dimensions. In this study, notions of poetry providing the ephemeral emotions of happiness and pleasure will be explored. Literature that considered spiritual aspects of ECE was included in this study

(Pere, 1991; Bone et al., 2007; and Heald, 2008). Beverley Clark and Anne Grey refer to: “the Greek word *musike*, which encompasses rhythm, movement, poetry, dance, drama and all the temporal arts” (Clark, Grey & Terreni, 2013:1). They view these arts as a playful language which engulfs the kinaesthetic, linguistic, affective, visual and aural. I will be drawing on this lens throughout my research.

2.4 Previous studies relating to poetry and children

The NZ poetry collections and anthologies in general, have low-key introductions, speaking to the merits of poetry. The NZ, and indeed overseas, academic writing I located relates to older children in the compulsory sector of our education system and in one case children aged under two years. Academic writing that supports the use of nursery rhymes to promote phonological awareness for young children was identified. These writers were introduced in Chapter One: Adams and Hamer (2003), Stewart (2004), and Soryl (2013).

An article by Sally Bodkin-Allen, a NZ music specialist and early childhood academic, makes reference to the concept of appropriation in the use of songs written with Māori words set against the music of existing English songs (Bodkin-Allen, 2013). NZ based early childhood educationalist, Nathan Mikaere-Wallis suggests that children should be “bathed in music and waiata” in order to strengthen attachments in early life (McCaleb & Mikaere-Wallis, 2005:5). Additionally, Jo Jenks and Sally Peters write about the values of nursery rhymes as an effective way to promote numeracy (Jenks & Peters, 2000). An American student, Aninditu Basu, provided many provocations about poetry that focused on an older age group of children (Basu, 2002). Her thesis entitled ‘Full Contact Poetry’ included the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) in the pursuit of poetry. In 2006, Helen O’Neill published her doctoral thesis ‘Once Preferred, Now Peripheral: the Place of Poetry in the Teaching of English in the New Zealand Curriculum for year 9, 10 and 11 students.’ O’Neill explores the reasons why she believes poetry has become marginalised as a subject in New Zealand secondary schools. Her views come into focus in the discussion of teachers’ school experiences in Chapter Five of this study.

Two research projects that were relevant to my study were in progress during 2014. The ‘Memory and Poetry’ project is a two-year (2014–2016) interdisciplinary research project

investigating the experience of poetry learning. It is based at Cambridge University and led by David Whitley (www.poetryandmemory.com). The future results of this study, may provide insights into the processes of how children memorise poetry and other associated outcomes for learning. The second is a small study supported by the Froebel Trust and was based at Canterbury Christ Church University in England. The study enquired into the use of Froebel's Mother Songs with infants in British day care settings (Goouch et al., 2013).

A diverse range of academic viewpoints have been located, which have informed aspects of this study. These viewpoints point to differing ways children may benefit from poetry. However, specific academic research into poetry for kindergarten aged children was not found.

2.5 Collections and anthologies of poems

Froebel's Mother Songs were introduced in Chapter One as being a landmark for poetic traditions in the kindergarten movement. Collections of poems that are suitable for kindergarten aged children are prolific and freely available. Authors who appear repeatedly from nineteenth century poetry include Robert Louis Stevenson, William Blake, Lewis Carroll, Lord Byron, Edward Lear, Edgar Allan Poe and Christina Rossetti (Barnett, 1993; and Baxter, 2011). Collections from contemporary poets such as Spike Milligan, Michael Rosen and Quentin Blake were easily located and contribute to this research (Turner, 2006; and Quentin Blake, 2012). The Romantic period, 1780- 1850, produced children's poetry that explored the nature of the individual, celebrated the natural world and often presented the child as playful and innocent (Styles, 1998). In contrast contemporary children's poets such as McNaughten (1987), Milligan (2009), and Blake (2012) viewed children as more complex and played with their fascination for the ridiculous and the rude.

Wright (2008) offers a collection of poems from Asian, African and European cultures, written both in English and the language of origin. Iconic writer Margaret Mahy and other NZ writers are well represented in Smith and Vincombe (2012). Aulie et al. (1999) describes the Rudolph Steiner-influenced concept of 'Mood of the Fifth' or pentatonic,

from the Greek word *pente* meaning five and *tonic* meaning tone. It is believed that the pentatonic scale is the one that is easiest for small children and is most prevalent in well-known sung nursery rhymes such as ‘Lavender’s Blue’ or ‘Baa Baa Black Sheep’.

Collections of Māori waiata and English songs for ECE that were translated into Māori were found largely in the form of handwritten and informally published booklets (NKA archives). Later these songs and waiata were integrated and produced in CDs and books by specialist musicians such as Helen Wilberg, Linda Adamsen, Janet Channon, Wendy Jansen and Radha Sahar (Clarke & Wilberg, 1988; Nga Pihi series of Māori songs for children; *NZ Māori Song Book*). These shaped the pathway for Māori poetry to move into mainstream kindergarten usage. Additional reference books such as *E tu ake* (2011) and collections of Māori whakatauki were invaluable (Brougham & Reed, 1999). The publications of the EnviroSchool (Toimata) Foundation have made a significant contribution by presenting karakia, waiata and whakatauki that honour Māori perspectives (Enviroschools, 2011).

By gaining an overview of the poetry books and resources that are available for young children, I began to shape my expectations of the possible cultural influences that would be relevant to this study.

2.6 Historical analysis of origins of poems

The English academics Iona and Peter Opie, along with Morag Styles, are among the most renowned spokespeople on the subject of poetry for young children in the English-speaking world (Opie & Opie, 1997; and Styles, 1998). All have written on the subject extensively from sociological, linguistic and historical perspectives. I have uncovered a rich vein of writings that examine the origins of nursery rhymes and their evolution over the past three hundred years. This has included the writings of Harrowven (1998), Styles (1998) and Dolby (2012). They have deconstructed the meanings and cultural significance of nursery rhymes, from Britain, Europe and North America. These collections make intriguing reading and are of great relevance. Between the writers there is mostly concurrence on social meanings. However, some vary in their beliefs and understandings. It is useful to be reminded that just because it is published, it does not

necessarily make it factual, as interpretations of nursery rhymes are largely speculative. The one that illustrates this is the commonly held belief that ‘Ring-a-Ring o’ Roses’ relates to the Black Plague of 1664. Dolby (2012) refutes this and suggests it was not found in any anthologies before 1881 and states it is more likely to refer to dancing curtsies of the time.

It was important to examine the historical origins of Māori poetry, which has largely an oral rather than written tradition, that might emerge during the data collection in kindergartens. A valuable resource was located in the *Journal of Polynesian Studies*, which offers unique insights into the historical origins, meanings and influences on Māori poetry. These journals are produced by the Polynesian Society, which is a non-profit organisation based at the University of Auckland, New Zealand and was founded in 1892.³

2.7 Summary

This literature search has provided material that supports the academic concepts which underpin this study. The poetry anthologies for children were predominantly published in Britain, however, there was some material published along with informally published material in New Zealand. These anthologies also include material from Northern American and European origins.

Material linked to the 18th century German origins of Froebel’s kindergarten movement and the Mother Songs, which are a feature of this study, was located. This review showed that most in-depth analysis of children’s poetry is coming from the United Kingdom and America.

As Māori poetry is primarily an oral tradition it was more difficult to locate academic writings that relate to this topic. All the poetic features of language such as rhythm, beat, repetition, metaphor and symbolism are clearly evident in Te Reo Māori but may be presented in media other than written publications. Therefore, I needed to proceed with an open-minded and creative approach to further understanding Te ao Māori.

³ www.jps.auckland.ac.nz

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this project, it is intended to investigate the ways in which poetry contributes to the educational lives of children, parents and teachers in the contemporary kindergarten settings of the Napier Kindergarten Association. I wanted to enquire into what poetry might mean for them. It was also important to investigate the genres of poetry in use, the languages and global cultural influences. This project looks through the lens of the diverse cultural influences that have shaped poetry in the contemporary kindergarten setting. The aim was to seek evidence of how poetry is used when working with the bicultural early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 1996). This chapter provides a description of the research design, the research framework and context in which the research occurred. There are some statements defining the limits and scope of the project. The chapter finishes by describing strategies that address the identified ethical considerations and dilemmas.

3.2 Research questions

The overall design was to employ mainly qualitative modes of research, which would be supported by some quantitative data to represent baseline findings. A mixed-method design would provide robustness and complexity to the findings. The aim was to find evidence that would answer the following research questions:

In what ways does poetry align to the cultural capital in kindergarten settings?

What are the dominant and other traditions and purposes of poetry in kindergarten settings?

3.3 Research methods

An ethnographic approach is an appropriate fit for this social research topic. The purpose of the study was to understand how children and their teachers engaged with poetry “The stated aim of ethnographic research is to understand people, and why they do the things they do” (Aubrey et al., 2000:111). Ethnography is suited to this study of poetry and the role it plays in the lives of the participants. An ethnographic approach would also allow me to undertake observations in the research settings in a natural and connected way. A further reason for choosing ethnographic methodology is that it allows for a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection (Aubrey et al., 2000). It became clear that utilizing a mix of data types would be necessary to ensure this study was robust. A further intent that underpinned the research methods was an aspiration to respect the agency of the participants. The children and teachers were to be seen as active participants in the experience, i.e. the research was happening with them, not to them. The notion that children as well as adults are actors in society is presented in *Construction and Reconstruction of Childhood* (James & Prout, 1997).

3.4 Research design

To support the development of the most appropriate research design, I was further guided by the writings of Aubrey et al. (2000), Mutch (2005), Hughes & MacNaughton (2009). These guides for academic research deepened my understanding of researcher bias, ethics and overall methodology. They also assisted me to assess and plan for the benefits, limitations and pitfalls of different research styles. My understanding of broader issues relating to research writing was enhanced by reading a guide to postgraduate study in the New Zealand setting (McMasters & Murphy, 2014).

I aimed to collect data using methods that were likely to capture the social meanings of everyday, naturally occurring practice in kindergarten settings. In designing the methodology, there was consideration to collect information in such a way that I imposed a minimal amount of my own bias on the data. However, no researcher can be totally unbiased. To provide a baseline of information I utilised some quantitative data gathering. This complemented the predominantly qualitative data gathering.

In order to make the data collection and interpretation transparent and credible, I aimed to create ethnographies that were reflexive. Reflexivity refers to the researcher's aim to be aware of "how one's own history and position influence current decisions" (Mutch, 2005:224).

3.5 Research site

Napier Kindergartens are licensed and funded by the Ministry of Education under the NZ Government. There is a contractual understanding that their services implement the national bicultural NZ curriculum for all licensed early childhood services, *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 1996). An important component of this curriculum is the recognition of Te Reo Māori and English as the languages of NZ's dual heritage. This research was conducted within the services of the NKA): 16 kindergartens and one Parents as First Teachers (PAFT) programme. Six of these kindergartens were engaged as research participants.

There were between thirty and forty children enrolled in each of the six kindergartens, equalling 230 children in total. Each of the six kindergartens has a team of four to six teachers. The total number of teachers was twenty-seven. Whilst the research was conducted in the context with all of these children and teachers (akonga), not all of them were directly engaged in the research. The age of the child participants was between two and five years. The ages of the adult teacher participants ranged from twenty-four to sixty-five years. A group size of six kindergartens was chosen to allow for diversity of experience whilst remaining manageable for the size of this study. Each kindergarten community was recruited by a personal invitation from me. The first criterion for recruiting research participants was that they represented a range of sociocultural demographics as indicated by statistical facts captured in the NKA annual report for 2013. The second criterion was that the whole teaching team expressed willingness. Each of the teams who were approached expressed unanimous enthusiasm, therefore there were no exclusions. Research participants are defined as the children, teachers and families of each kindergarten setting.

I am employed full time in the role of Education Manager for the NKA. This role involves engaging teachers in professional development and overseeing teaching

programmes for over seventy teachers. For the purposes of this research, I made a clear differentiation between my role as Education Manager and that of researcher. Ethical approval was gained for this study and the supporting documents can be found in the reference section at the back of this thesis.

The NKA appointed an Advisor Mātauranga in February 2014, Piripi Belcher. To balance the limitations of my knowledge I was fortunate to be guided by Belcher on matters of Te ao Māori. In addition, I accessed additional perspectives on Te ao Māori from two Māori women of standing in the local area: Papara Wano and Haana Wilcox. These advisors have given their permission to use their names. I approached this study with a clear understanding that my knowledge of Te ao Māori was limited. It was important that any evidence relating to Māori poetry received adequate focus, albeit from a Pakeha researcher. Academic writer Linda Hogg provided me with guidance about conducting research with a Māori participant as a non-Māori researcher (McMaster & Murphy, 2014:Ch.15).

I planned and made two visits per kindergarten, totalling twelve visits across the six sites to capture this information, between September and December 2014. In some situations I returned for a brief third visit to capture additional details of data which I believed were significant, or to clarify some facts. Each of these sites offered different insights. During each of these visits I behaved as an ethnographic observer: as a researcher I strived to be naturally present as another adult in the setting rather than aiming to be completely unseen. Audio recordings, video recordings, photographs, photocopies of learning stories and book titles, and written observations formed the raw data gathered. I held discussion sessions with each team of teachers at a later date, after the visits were completed. Prior to these discussions I provided general feedback on my initial findings, inviting their insights and views. These included emergent suggestions that would later form Tables 1 and 2. In addition I drew their attention to a possible set of six case study poems that I had identified as being representative of a range of genres found in the raw data. These interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed. By providing this information in writing before my visits I was able to gather more detailed information and views from the teachers. Teachers were able to correct small facts and offer additional insights. After

the six meetings, Tables 1 and 2 were formatted after analysing the participant feedback. (see References pp. 143–145). Additionally, the feedback from teachers affirmed my plan to pursue a focus on the six identified case study poems.

3.6 Quantitative data

During the site visits, I collected a list of poems that were in regular, current use. The criterion for inclusion was that each poem's use was evident in three different ways, aiming to provide a triangulation of data (Aubrey et al., 2000:57). The various ways the poems were in use included recordings of recitations or singing, wall displays, narrative documentation such as learning stories and poem cards. This quantitative data was later presented in the form of tables and diagrams that defined where they were in use and their cultural origins. As stated in the introduction, this study focused on poetry, which included formal poems, rhymes, songs, waiata, karakia, whakatauki and chants. The rationale for including data as poetry was that it could be described as poetry rather than prose. Subsequently, even though rhyming language and other poetic devices could be found within children's narrative story books, these were not included in the data. This data collection resulted in six lists of various lengths, depending on the amount of poetry in evidence at each site.

The information then formed the basis of Table 1 – Matrix of Recorded Poems. From Table 1, similarities of content were ascertained across the six lists. Poems that were evident in Sections One, Two and Three of Table 1 were drawn to establish a new list. These poems then formed a new list of twenty, which became Table 2 – Top Twenty Poems. The list size of twenty for Table 2 was an arbitrary number designed to be manageable and yet large enough to demonstrate patterns. Table 2 then represented the most common poems to be found across the six research sites. Further to this, a diagram of cultural origins was established, using Tables 1 and 2, to form the diagram, 'Cultural origins of poetry in the Napier Kindergarten study', which will be discussed in Chapter Seven. The poems from participant kindergartens, which are later discussed or referred to in later chapters of this research study, can all be identified in Table 1. The two tables, Table 1 – Matrix of Recorded Poems and Table 2 – Top Twenty Poems, are located in the references section at the back of this thesis (pp. 142–144). This quantitative data provided

an informative and factual platform on which to build, with qualitative perspectives and understandings.

3.7 Qualitative data

The quantitative data provided some answers as to what poetry was in use and where it might have come from. The purpose of the qualitative data was to consider the answers to why and how this poetry was chosen and utilised. This section describes the nature of the qualitative methods used for this study.

To increase the validity of the data, multiple methods of collection of qualitative data were used (Aubrey et al., 2000). These methods included participant observation, field notes, interviews and the recording of cultural artefacts related to poetry in each setting. Also included was the data collected from a focus group of teachers drawn from the participating kindergartens. I undertook observations across each site to investigate the following questions;

What, if any, poetry is in use and what is the nature of it?

How are teachers and perhaps parents using this poetry with children?

What poetry artefacts are evident in the setting? (I intend to quantify and describe these artefacts.)

How are children responding to the poetry experiences? (I gathered narratives written by teachers and myself.)

Is poetry used with one age group or gender more than another?

Where are poetry experiences physically occurring in the kindergarten setting?

Is the poetry used exclusively in the English language or is poetry evident in other languages?

What part does Information Communication Technology (ICT) play in the use of poetry?

An analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative data resulted in shaping the thesis into sections in order to present and discuss the findings logically in a way that responded to the research questions.

3.8 Focus group interviews with teachers

A focus group is a well-established form of qualitative research methodology (Shamdasani & Stewart, 2015). They could be described as a selected group of people who gather together to collectively share their differing views, beliefs and perceptions. The focus group is run as a facilitated interview with the aim of gathering in-depth data from the group dialogue (ibid).

One focus group interview with eight teachers was held after the completion of the visits to kindergartens. This interview was held at the NKA Association offices away from the kindergartens. The participants of the focus group were recruited from the six participating kindergartens, and there was at least one representative from each site. The questions were aimed at finding out:

What do teachers believe poetry is?

What values do these teachers place on poetry?

Why do they choose particular poetry?

What may have shaped their views and emotions about poetry – positive and negative?

What views do they have about cultural relevance of particular poetry?

Has their use of poetry changed over their teaching career?

Whilst these questions, which the participants had already seen, formed the shape of the interview, the dialogue evolved and the discussions shifted on to related topics. Prior to starting the interview the participants were reminded of their anonymity in any writing that resulted from their comments. They were offered, and later given, an opportunity to view the written comments that related to their contributions and correct or withdraw anything they wished. This was also a useful process for ensuring accuracy and full informed consent. Particular care was taken with any material that would be considered

personal or sensitive. Corrections to the writing were made accordingly. These interviews were audio-recorded for ease of transcription. Focus group interviews were taped and later transcribed, to allow me to interview without the pressure of note taking. The material was then analysed to establish emerging themes. Following this process, these themes were connected by making links to relevant literature.

3.9 Ethical considerations

This research study was approved by the Otago University Ethics committee prior to the commencement of any fieldwork. Written consent to engage in this study was obtained from the General Manager of the NKA. Letters followed, which explained the nature and parameters of the study, to each participant teacher and each family enrolled at the research sites at September 2014. Individual consent forms were also distributed to participating teachers and families. After, these consent forms were completed and returned the research process began. (Information letters and consent forms can be found in Appendices A–D.) Participants were given the option not to engage with the study, and it was made clear that this would not be detrimental to them or their child in any way. No refusals to participate were received. In addition to this formal consent I approached individuals for specific permission when I planned to use photographs that featured them in the thesis or presentations related to the thesis.

Formal consent for involvement in the study from children was gained through their parents or guardians. In addition, as the researcher I asked a child's permission before photographing, filming or audio-recording them. I did this from an understanding that children have agency in the research project and that agency should be respected (James & Prout, 1997). Also, recordings were not made if I felt they would unduly intrude on their privacy or dignity.

In order to protect the identity of participants, a set of pseudonyms was developed. Each kindergarten was given the name of a NZ children's poet. The six poets names are:

- James K. Baxter
- Joy Cowley
- Edith Howes
- Margaret Mahy
- Hirini Melbourne
- Hone Tuwhare.

In the writing, these kindergartens are usually referred to with just the poet's name and the word 'kindergarten' is implied. This was done to avoid engaging the reader in excessive repetition of the word 'kindergarten'. On occasion a poem that was written by one these poets is referenced. In these instances care has been taken to avoid confusion. Each teacher and child participant who is referred to in the writing has been given a pseudonym. The pseudonyms were chosen to avoid any of the real first names of the teachers or children in this study.

Strategies were engaged to mitigate the possibility of confusion of my roles of Education Manager and researcher for the purposes of this project. Guidelines were followed to avoid any conflict of interest (Mutch, 2005). When recruiting research participants I made the separation of roles transparent. For instance, I scheduled research visits so they were completely separate from any other educational daily business. At the commencement of the visits and focus group interviews I declared and reinforced the nature of the visits or interview. A statement in the Teacher Consent form makes the distinction between my two roles transparent. I ensured there were no 'crossover' conversations during the research visits or focus group interviews. In my researcher capacity, I withheld any advice, guidance or judgment on teaching practices that I observed during my visits. I also took care not to 'lead' or artificially generate teaching activity that would otherwise not be visible in the kindergarten.

However, a closer focus on poetry was generated in the participant kindergartens over the period of the research study and beyond. Teachers shared that their consciousness around poetry had been raised. Some actions were evident as a result. For instance, one teacher established her appraisal goals around increasing knowledge of poetry. Other teachers

purchased books and put more poems on wall displays. Teachers commented that they felt elevated and affirmed that their work with children was being noticed and recognised. As an inadvertent result of my ethnographic approach, elements of action research evolved (Hughes & MacNaughton, 2009). This largely happened as a result of the raw data collection process but became evident after the data collection. Therefore, as the researcher I am confident that the validity of the data remains sound.

3.10 Summary

This study is underpinned by ethnography as the research methodology. The benefits and risks of taking an ethnographic approach have been considered. Subsequently, potential problems that may have been met during the research project have been identified and plans to address these risks have been established. Awareness has been raised regarding the limitations of the project. The cultural concerns of being a Pakeha researcher with limited knowledge of Te ao Māori commenting on Māori poetry have been clearly acknowledged. Other ethical considerations were identified and descriptions given of the appropriate actions that were taken to ameliorate any ethical dilemmas. The introduction, literature review and methodology chapters have laid the foundation for understanding the nature of this research study. The findings of this research study are now presented in the following chapters – Four, Five and Six.

CHAPTER FOUR

Six Case Studies

4.1 Introduction

Over the next three chapters – four, five and six, the data for this research study is presented. Chapter Four is the beginning of the data presentation. Table 1 Matrix of Recorded Poems, which was described in the previous chapter, provides a baseline record of all of the poems that were recorded as being in active use during the data collection period at the six kindergarten sites. Poems from each of these sites, which will be discussed in Chapters Four, Five and Six, can all be referenced back to Table 1.

Six poems were identified from the data as being of cultural significance and representative of a range of genres of poetry that was evident in this study. Each of the six was selected from the data recorded in Table 1, with the aim of showcasing characteristics of a karakia, a ‘pop’ song, a Froebel Mother Song, a hymn, an allegorical poem and a nursery rhyme. The six poems are:

- ‘Ko te Kō a te Waimarie’
- ‘Let it Go’
- ‘My Pigeon House’
- ‘The New Zealand National Anthem’
- ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’
- ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’.

These poems are presented as case studies in a narrative form. The story of each poem is told separately. The components of each of the six poems are analysed. Each narrative investigates the questions:

What are the cultural and historical origins of that poem?

How did children and teachers engage with the poem?

Is this poem used intentionally by teachers or children to achieve a purpose?

How have the children and teachers responded to the poem?

What poetic constructs and devices are in use?

Are there any tensions associated with the use of this poem in kindergartens?

The purpose of taking an in-depth look at these six poems is to discover how they align with the cultural capital of the kindergarten setting. Additionally, these case studies will feature some of the dominant roles and purposes of poetry in this setting.

4.2 Traditional karakia: ‘Ko te Kō a te Waimarie’

Ko te Kō a te Waimarie
Ko te kō a te waimarie
Penupenu te kō penu
E whakatauweruweru ki te mata o tēnei kō
Hua kuru ki te mata o tēnei kō
Hua kahika ki te mata o tēnei kō
Hua tītoki ki te mata o tēnei kō
Hua māpou ki te mata o tēnei kō
Hua kareao ki te mata o tēnei kō
Hua karamū ki te mata o tēnei kō
Hua karaka ki te mata o tēnei kō
Hua taro ki te mata o tēnei kō

Hua kūmara ki te mata o tēnei kō
Tēnei te kō ka heke
Tēnei te kō ka ngahoro
Tēnei te kō ka hāruru
Penu, penu, te kō penu



Fig.1 Child using the ko stick for māra kai planting

An explanation and interpretation of this karakia was provided by Piripi Belcher (P. Belcher, Personal Communication, 15 March 2015):

This kō is of success

Pierce, pierce, kō, pierce

Patterned the land with planting mounds by the way of this sharp point of this kō

By way of this sharp point has made fruitful:

Kuru, breadfruit (grows in the north Pacific, staple food, and reference to

Hawaiki)

Kahika (kahikatea fruit used a for food source)

tītoki (black seed used for oil)

māpou, red matipo (used in ceremony, leaves and berries medical properties, bark
dying)

kareao, supplejack (vine used for binding)

karamū (used in ceremony, leaves and berries medical properties, bark dying)

araka (orange berries, flesh edible, kernel processed, cooked and dried to remove
poison, a staple food supply)

taro and kumara (food sources)

This kō strike down

This kō be abundant

This kō resound

Pierce, pierce, kō, pierce

This karakia is appropriate to recite before planting and also harvesting of Māra Kai (traditional Māori vegetables). Piripi Belcher, Pou Whakarewa Matauranga, with the NKA, introduced this karakia to teachers from Joy Cowley Kindergarten. It focuses on the kō, which is a long wooden implement used to dig and plant. The kō is used in traditional Māori culture and is not in common use today. In this case study the karakia is presented in Māori with an English interpretation provided by Belcher. A vignette of how and why it was used by a teacher at Joy Cowley Kindergarten, and how the children responded, will be given. The pedagogical influences of Froebel, Te Whāriki and Enviroschools that contributed to this experience of teaching and learning will be discussed. Poetic aspects of this karakia will be considered. Some insights into the likely cultural origins of the karakia originating from both Māori and Pacific cultures will be

offered. This case study aims to illuminate how this karakia, as a form of poetry, aligns with the cultural capital in the kindergarten setting.

‘Ko te Kō a te Waimarie’ was adapted by Belcher from Best (1976:157) from notes of Tuta Nihoniho pertaining to the Waiapu District, Ngati Pourou prior to planting kumara, the karakia marere ceremony, and (Best, 1976:180) from Mohi Turei from East Coast, during hauhake (harvest).

Māra Kai (traditional Māori vegetables) are traditionally planted in alignment with the moon phases and seasons. This karakia is chanted in a rhythm that is sympathetic with the rhythmic action of using the kō (planting stick). Belcher believes this karakia could also be described as an incantation – summoning the ‘mauri’ or life force from the end of the kō to give strength to the plants. Belcher translated the karakia with the teachers and explained its meaning. He gave the teachers further details on the significance of each of the trees and plants in the karakia and their importance to traditional Māori as either a food or medicine source. He believes that one purpose of the karakia would have been to teach the next generation what they should be planting to benefit the whānau. Belcher believes that ‘Ko te kō a te waimarie’ would now not be heard in many parts of the country.

Kelly, a teacher at Joy Cowley, took this knowledge back to her kindergarten after carefully cultivating the plants – kumara, hue gourd, kamo kamo, and taro – from seedlings to a state of readiness for planting with the children. She aspired to use her new understanding of planting in sympathy with the moon phases and seasons.

Kelly explains:

Karakia, waiata and the Māori world are very much part of their world and are visible at our kindergarten. It was quite natural for them, and the children were very interested and gathered around. They knew and understood what my intention was.

Kelly invited the children to recite the karakia with her, and after a few repetitions they were joining in quietly. Later, one child was recorded chanting her own version of this

karakia, which sounded like a merging of ‘Ko te Kō a te Waimarie’, ‘Whaka pai nga enei kai’ (the food blessing karakia used daily at the kindergarten) and other ‘free-form’ Māori sounds. Kelly speculated that this child was creatively playing with the sounds of Te Reo Māori and internalising the contexts they would be heard. When Kelly introduced the kō, the planting stick, she unpacked its purpose and explained what the kō was used for in traditional Māori times. Some weeks later a child was concerned when a few plants were not doing well. Kelly asked if she would like to say the karakia again for the plant. They did this together and the plants later flourished.

It is useful to consider the pedagogical influences that have shaped the teacher’s intentions around this ako (teaching and learning) experience.

Māori perspectives and knowledge of the environment offer insights unique to the culture with the longest history of human interaction with this country, including Māori perspectives in our learning, enriches the process and honours the status of the indigenous people in this land.

Enviroschools Kit (Enviroschools Foundation 2011:5)

This meshes with aspirations set out in *Te Whāriki* (1996):

There should be a commitment to the recognition of Māori language – stories, symbols, arts and crafts – in the programme.

(*Te Whāriki*: 72, Strand 4: Communication – Mana Reo)

There should be recognition of Māori ways of knowing and making sense of the world, and of respecting and appreciating the natural environment.

(*Te Whāriki*: 82, Strand 5: Exploration – Mana Aotūroa)

Froebel established a vision for the education of young children whereby children would learn from nature and gain ‘unity of all things’. He encouraged teachers to take weekly nature walks, during which time any subject could be taught and the study of colours in different seasons and different times of the day.

The garden of the Kindergarten was not only a symbol, it was an essential means for the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of the child. Not

only were there flowerbeds, herb-beds, vegetable patches, fruit trees and bushes which were planted and tended by all, but each child had his own little plot of land for which he/she was responsible. To learn from the environment around the school was important, yet it was equally important to teach children to care for the environment. This was true of his (Froebel's) original school in Keilhau as well as the first kindergarten which he founded in nearby Blankenburg in 1839.

(Liebschner, 1992:39)

The pedagogical link between Froebel's vision for children in rural Germany in the 1800s is remarkably similar to the aspirations of *Te Whāriki* (1996) and the Enviroschools Programme. Children learning to plant and tend Māra Kai root vegetables whilst chanting 'Ko te kō a te Waimarie' in the cultural setting of their country would fit admirably with Froebel's educational concept of 'unity of all things'. I have analysed this poem and offer my own observations and comments from others as to the poetic devices used in this karakia.

When spoken, the karakia is recited with a certain rhythm, which resonates with the rhythm of the striking action of the kō (recording by Belcher, 2015). The refrain of 'Penu, penu, te kō penu' opens and ends the karakia. The 'penu penu' phrase could be described as an incantation (ibid). The stressed syllables on the repeated 'Hua' at the beginning of each line echo the repetitive action of the long kō being thrust into the ground. The phrase 'ki te mata o tēnei kō' is repeated like a drum beat throughout the karakia. 'Whakatauweruweru' could be translated as 'pattern' used in Māori in the context of weaving. 'Whakatauweruweru' is here used as a metaphorical and literal reference to make a pattern on the land. The kō is metaphorically given the symbolic power of fertility to bring abundance and a successful crop. In the main body of the karakia there are eight lines with a definite repeated structure and stressed beat pattern on each line.

During an interview, Belcher commented that the Māori language art forms of whaikorero (oratory), karakia, waiata, oriori (lullabies) and moteatea (laments) all incorporate poetic devices. He further commented that in Te Reo Māori a differentiation for the European concept of poetry is not made, as poetry is intrinsic to these art forms of language.

Within this karakia are implied references to the Pacific influences on Aotearoa. Kuru, (breadfruit) and taro are associated with Pacific countries. Ian Barber confirmed that kuru would be the Māori version of the Pacific name kulu for breadfruit (I. Barber , Personal Communication, 30 March 2015). He also confirmed that breadfruit would never have been grown in the temperate climate of NZ, but rather the reference in this karakia would have been likely to be a memory of planting breadfruit from Hawaiki. Cowan (1910) writes of a breadfruit tree being referenced in a tangi (lament) from the Arawa tribe of Aotearoa New Zealand, which refers to the breadfruit tree that shaded the house of the priest Oenuku in Hawaiki. He suggests that this is an example of how songs crystallise and preserve ancient incidents and ancient names. ‘Ko te kō a te waimarie’ offers an illustration of how poetry is used for the purpose of transmitting ancient knowledge through generations by way of the oral tradition.

Inspired by their deep held pedagogical beliefs, the teachers took this karakia into their kindergarten in the context of traditional Māori planting knowledge. The children engaged over time with an historic and authentic Māori poetic experience. Due to their prior Māori language experiences, the children responded readily and further experimented with the sounds of Māori language and freely played with rhyme and rhythm. The deeper knowledge inherent in the karakia, ‘Ko te kō a te waimarie’, was also transmitted to the adults in the kindergarten setting. If Froebel were to look into this 2014 kindergarten scene he would be likely to feel his vision for children to learn from and be at one with nature was being enacted 175 years later.

4.3 A poem from popular culture: ‘Let it Go’

Let it Go

The snow glows white on the mountain tonight

Not a footprint to be seen

A kingdom of isolation and it looks like I’m the queen

The wind is howling like the swirling, storming sky

Couldn’t keep it in, heaven knows I tried

Don't let them in, don't let them see
Be the good girl you always have to be
Conceal, don't feel, don't let them know
Well now they know

Let it go, let it go
Can't hold it back anymore
Let it go, let it go
Turn my back and slam the door
And here I stand
And here I'll stay
Let it go, let it go
The cold never bothered me anyway

It's funny how some distance makes everything seem small
And the fears that once controlled me can't get to me at all
Up here in the cold thin air I finally can breathe
I know I left a life behind but I'm too relieved to grieve

Can't hold it back anymore
Let it go, let it go
Turn away and slam the door
I don't care what they're going to say
Let the storm rage on

My power flurries through the air into the ground
My soul is spiralling in frozen fractals all around
And one thought crystalises like an icy blast
I'm never going back
The past is in the past

Let it go, let it go
And I'll rise like the break of dawn

Let it go, let it go
That perfect girl is gone
Here I stand in the light of day
Let the storm rage on
Cold never bothered me anyway

Let it go, let it go
Can't hold it back anymore
Let it go, Let it go
Turn my back and slam the door

This case study comes from contemporary popular culture. 'Let it Go' is the theme song to the movie *Frozen* produced by Disney Studios, Hollywood and released to cinemas in November 2013. Disney credits the storyline in the *Frozen* movie to Hans Christian Anderson, a renowned Danish children's story writer, who wrote *The Snow Queen* in 1844. The lead character in *Frozen*, Elsa, is based on the legendary Snow Queen. It is Elsa who sings 'Let It Go' as a solo. 'Let it Go' has enjoyed immense popularity with children worldwide (Wall, 2015:A10). During 2014, kindergarten children across all six research sites in the study were gripped by the power of this song. 'Let it Go' fits the description of a song that is equally a poem and in this section the poetic devices and qualities of emotion that it evokes will be considered. Ways in which the song provided inspiration for the dramatic and visual arts will also be discussed.

For the participants in this study, there was not an obvious connection between the *Frozen* movie and its hit song 'Let it Go, with the story that inspired it: *The Snow Queen*. The historical European heritage of *The Snow Queen* and similar fairy tales has had a significant influence on the children's play, and working theories of princesses, castles, magic and wonder. During the focus group interview, teachers related how Hans Christian Anderson stories were prevalent literature experiences for young children during their childhoods. These fairy tales have shaped and influenced an enduring NZ childhood culture of fanciful castles and princesses. For example, the poem 'There was a Princess Long Ago' also featured in the data collection in Table 1. It is interesting to note

that the illustration of the Snow Queen's dresses in the original publication is as ethereal and beautiful as Disney's glitzy gowns for Elsa and Anna. *Frozen* is a worldwide phenomenon and made \$1.7 billion at the global box office, the fifth-highest grossing movie of all time, and hundreds of millions more in sales merchandise (Wall, 2015:A10). Tony Wall, a writer on parenting issues for *The Dominion Post* newspaper, tells of how, as a parent, he was struggling to cope with his four-year-old daughter's obsession with Elsa and the 'Let it Go' song.

Wall pleads:

I need help, but where do I turn? One of the funniest things in YouTube is a Jono and Ben skit involving a *Frozen* support group riffing off an AA meeting. It turns out to be custard because the parents can't stop singing 'Let it Go'.

(Wall, 2015:A10)

Geraldine, a teacher at James K. Baxter Kindergarten, echoed this sentiment with the comment: "Let it Go – We are over it!" She light-heartedly expressed some frustration at the relentless passion the children have displayed for this song. Teachers commented that at any one point of time there are 'hit songs' with the children, and indeed adults. The 'Let it Go' song was prevalent across all six research sites, with both boys and girls won over – although it appeared to captivate more girls than boys. According to the teachers in the focus group interview, the popularity had run on well over a year and was still going strong in February 2015. Tui, a teacher in the study remarked: "Whoever Disney employed to write that song, they were on the money."

During the interviews all teachers were asked how they defined poetry and what they believed poetry was and wasn't. Most teachers were in agreement that the creative genres of poetry, poetry performance, song and music were interwoven and interconnected. Teachers at Edith Howes expressed an alternative view that songs were not poetry: poetry is spoken not sung. On this premise they rejected the idea that 'Let it Go' was a poem.

The refrain or chorus:

Let it go, let it go
Can't hold it back anymore
Let it go, let it go
Turn my back and slam the door

is repeated four times throughout the song and is the part most of the children remember well. Musically, it is dramatic, as the notes climb ever higher during this chorus. The use of simile features: 'the wind is howling like a swirling storm'. Metaphor features frequently, for example: 'frozen in the life I've chosen'; 'the past is so behind me buried in the snow'; and 'a kingdom of isolation, and it looks like I'm the queen'. Alliteration of 'here I stand, and 'here I stay' and 'frozen fractals' also generates emotive impact. The songwriter has used rhyming last words in couplet and quatrain sequences for example, 'anymore/door', 'seen/queen', 'small/all' and 'breathe/grieve'.

I wanted to explore the factors that move a child to want to recite, dance, act out and repeat a particular song over months and possibly years. Will they always remember this song into their adult years? My attempts to ask children what they loved about 'Let it Go' were not revealing. Some typical comments included: 'I really love Elsa'; 'I love Elsa's dress'; 'I know all the words to Let it Go'. The children were unable to express in words why they connected so strongly with this song. I asked children if they thought it was a happy or a sad song. All replies stated it was a sad song. One child delightfully renamed the song as 'Snow Globes on the Mountain Tonight' and insisted that it be called that.

Conversations with children did, however, elicit the mechanisms of how some of the children learned the words. The words to this song are long and complex, and contain ideas that are beyond the comprehension of most three- and four-year-olds. Modern technology and repetition come into play here. The children told me they learnt the words from repeated screenings of the *Frozen* DVD at home, listening to 'Let it Go' repeatedly on a speaker iPod system in the family car whilst driving, listening on a child's own personal iPod at home and watching and listening to 'Let it Go' on a father's laptop.

I recorded more than six examples from various research sites of children who could sing 'Let it Go' completely through with relative ease. Each child was self-taught from their

own personal motivation, i.e. no adult required or even suggested that they should do this. During my recordings, one child giving a rendition would seem to inspire others to also want to sing their version as well. I have been left with unanswered questions as to the reasons for these memory feats of recall in such young children. During the focus group interview, teachers theorised that the large motor actions of Elsa and Anna are cues for the children's recall as they sing and incorporate the dramatic gestures of their Disney heroines with near perfect imitation.

Children across all six research sites communicated their interpretations of the song through drama, voice, performance and visual art. All teachers interviewed were in agreement that the introduction of 'Let it Go' was child rather than teacher initiated. The children brought this interest to kindergarten from experiences in their home life. Teachers observed that the children came to kindergarten already knowing the words. These teachers, working in a model of co-construction (Anning et al., 2004), gave value to this interest and found ways to support their children to engage with the expressive arts through the medium of 'Let it Go'.

This song featured in karaoke performances at Hirini Melbourne. Karaoke is a regular fun event where children are invited to sing anything of their choice with a microphone and sound system to a group of their peers. Sam gave a complete rendition of the song with confidence and enthusiasm. His teachers then captured his learning in a narrative for his learning portfolio. In this setting, another child created a handmade book to celebrate her interest in 'Let it Go'.

At Hone Tuwhare kindergarten a teacher made the following observation in the text from a child's portfolio:

I have noticed that children's movies have a great impact on the children's learning. Frozen is a very good example. Since the hit of the movie, Sarah asks teachers to play the song 'Let it Go' all the time. She also loves dressing herself as Elsa and draws pictures of Elsa and Anna, the two princesses in *Frozen*.

At each kindergarten, girls identified strongly with the female character of Elsa. Blue and white floaty Elsa outfits were created by girls at the kindergarten, with assistance from

parents and teachers. The singing of this song merged with costume construction, drama, dance, and musical and poetic expression. Teacher Geraldine from James K. Baxter retells how the passion for ‘Let it Go’ flowed into visual arts work with the children:

We had one glove at kindergarten and there would be a brawl for it – used as a prop for the ‘Let it Go’ song. This led on to the children creating their own gloves from material. I had a cardboard hand that was used as a template to create their own gloves, and this led on to full-scale dress design using scraps of material (relating to the princesses’ dresses). We made a movie with each child singing ‘Let it Go’, dressed in their own handmade design. The whole kindergarten also watched that movie all the way through.



Fig.2 Child dressed in hand created ‘Let it Go’ costume

Across town a similar experience was happening at Joy Cowley. The following is an excerpt from a child’s portfolio, written at the kindergarten:

Wearable Arts at Kindergarten

Children have had an ongoing interest in the movie *Frozen*. They speak it, they sing it, they play-act it, but mostly they role-model Princess Elsa. Today the learning is visited. Everybody wanted to wear the blue dress and the long blue gloves that Elsa wore throughout the movie. During the last two terms the children have become designers and are often seen creating Princess Elsa’s beautiful dress. Yesterday Olivia designed her own gown and wore it with pride. Today Jessie and Sally worked together showing their skills as they turned their ideas into this amazing gown. Long rolls of coloured paper that were donated to the kindergarten provided the material, and of course sellotape was very useful as well. I noticed

that scissors were not required as they were able to tear the paper into the shape they required. Recycling at its best!

Similarly at Hone Tuwhare, Hermione tells of having a roll of sparkly sequined material donated, which resulted in child-led unique dress creations.

At Margaret Mahy I videoed an extended dance session, which had six girls theatrically dancing and acting out the Elsa story whilst reciting the quite complex lyrics of 'Let It Go', with complete accuracy and intonation. There is an element of a feminist irony in the girls' engaging in stereotypical 'princess-type play'. The words of the poem/song speak of personal empowerment, freedom and being true to oneself. The character of Elsa is portrayed as strong, at times sad, and with vast magical powers. When the kindergarten girls sing with a powerful demeanour, it is with an apparent understanding of this. Expressions of liberation and power come through strongly in these experiences for the girls.

Children discovered the song 'Let it Go' from popular culture experiences in their home lives. Teachers working in a co-construction model gave value to their interest and empowered them to engage fully across the expressive arts. Throughout the kindergarten communities 'Let it Go' generated a range of emotional responses. 'Let it Go' came from an American Disney creation and yet its roots are linked to a traditional European fairy tale. 'Let it Go' has swept through these kindergartens like a howling snowstorm, leaving a powerful teaching and learning experience in its wake.

4.4 A Froebelian tradition: 'My Pigeon House'

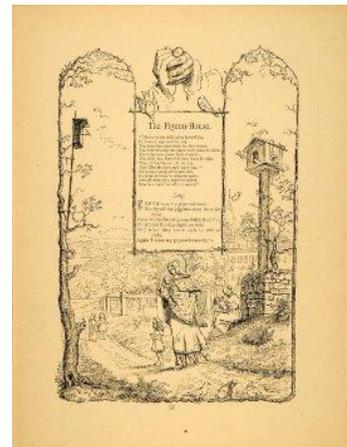
This version of 'The Pigeon House' is taken from the words that were intended by Froebel to be used as a 'Mother Song' with accompanying hand actions (Blow, 1895). These are the words that are written on the lithograph illustration and have been translated from the original in German:

The Pigeon House

What to the child gives inwards joy,
 He loves to represent in play.
 The dove flies away from his little home
 The child through the green fields loves to roam
 The little dove comes back at night;
 The child, too, keeps his dear home in sight.
 Then all the life and all the play
 That filled the long and happy day,
 All he has found, all he has seen
 He loves at home to rehearse again;
 In all these joys, together bound,
 Now in a varied wreath are wound.

Song version:

I open now my pigeon house;
 Out fly all the pigeons once more let loose.
 Away to the broad green fields they fly;
 They pass the day right merrily,
 And when they come back to rest at night,
 Again I close my pigeon-house tight.



**Fig.3 Froebel's lithograph
'The Pigeon House'**

This version of 'My Pigeon House' is used by Hone Tuwhare and the other kindergarten settings in current times (2014):

My Pigeon House

My pigeon house, I open wide,
 and set all my pigeons free.
 They fly all around
 And up, and down,
 And light in the tallest tree.
 And when they return from their merry, merry flight,

They close their eyes and say "Good night"□

Coo-rooh-coo-rooh coo-rooh coo-rooh

Coo-rooh-coo-rooh-coo-rooh

Good night!

Froebel's detailed lithographs illustrating rural life in the 1800s, accompanied by the words to Mother Songs, are found in publications supporting his educational theories (Blow, 1895 and Van Norstrand, 1889). These lithographs, such as the one pictured were designed to impart moral value messages. Originally Froebel developed 'The Pigeon House' as a lullaby and rhyme with illustrations of the finger, hand and arm movements, which are included at the top of the lithograph. The lithograph depicts a detailed scene with a dovecote, mother and small child whose eyes are fixed on the mother, and a titmouse hiding in a rotten tree stump. Froebel aims with this and other Mother Songs to provide children with "a symbolic introduction to the abstract values of life" (Liebschner, 1992:103). Froebel's thinking is further explained in a translation from his original accompanying explanation for 'The Pigeon House', directed to mothers and teachers:

The source of this joy is that the game helps him to stretch his own little life so that it may include something of the great life of Nature. The yearning to inhale the life of Nature awakens early in the human soul. The young child loves to take it in with long, deep breaths. Hence he longs to be out of doors, and especially to watch the quick free movements of birds and animals.

(Froebel, 1895:140)



Fig.4 Circle game at Hirini Melbourne Kindergarten, 2014



Fig.5 Kindergarten circle game in London, 1892

‘The Pigeon House’ is one of Froebel’s Mother Songs (Blow, 1895) that has made a unique and lasting contribution to the culture of kindergarten. It has provided a distinctly European, in particular, German influence. This traditional song gently imparts abstract values to children whilst allowing them the joy of imaginative play. Today’s children are able to internalise the abstract concepts of freedom and security through the media of music and movement as Froebel intended. ‘The Pigeon House’ epitomises the connection with nature and the outdoors that is the essence of the kindergartens’ pedagogy. The spirit of the original ‘The Pigeon House’ has been preserved across cultures, generations, place and time.

‘My Pigeon House’ (a similar version to Froebel’s ‘The Pigeon House’) was part of the repertoire of circle games in use at three of the research sites. This song is nearly always enacted as a large group circle game. At two kindergartens ‘My Pigeon House’ is sung and acted out in conjunction with a parachute (a large colourful circle of material) that each child, sometimes just boys, sometimes just girls or other ways to define the group are chosen to be pigeons. In time with the words ‘I open wide’, the chosen children duck under the raised arms of the children in the circle and fly freely, and often vigorously, off into the wider spaces. Cued by the words ‘When they return from their merry, merry flight’, the pigeon children fly back under the raised arms and crouch down on the ground to imitate sleeping pigeons. The version used in 2014 differs from the one published in 1844, and the two versions are set out below. This section showcases how one of Froebel’s classic Mother Songs has been adapted and has travelled through centuries and across countries to still have a cherished place in the modern kindergarten.

It is likely that this song existed in Germany well before Froebel, and there may have been versions sung across European countries and what used to be called the Prussian Kingdom prior to Froebel capturing it as a Mother Song. Definitive sources for the origins of this song before Froebel have been elusive.

The 2014 version is similar to Froebel’s 1844 version. The 2014 version uses the possessive title ‘My Pigeon House’ rather than ‘The Pigeon House’. Rhyming couplets: free/tree; flight/night; and around/down feature, and the use of repetition: merry, merry; and good night, good night are used for lyrical effect. Onomatopoeia features with the

repeated ‘coo rooh, cooroooh’ pigeon sounds. This sound is not evident in the original version but it does appear in later versions (Blow, 1895) as ‘softly coo’. The modern version is more focused on the large motor actions that accompany the song; it is all about these whole body actions and physical participation by the child. The original Froebel version was designed as an action rhyme with arm and hand movements, therefore the words reflect this.

At James K. Baxter ‘My Pigeon House’ is part of an annual ritual where the children walk to a large wooded arboretum owned by an elderly gentleman in the nearby community who has a passion for conservation and nature. The teachers emphasised that such rituals are an important part of their teaching philosophy. This outing to the arboretum was held in 2014 to celebrate the kindergarten receiving a Silver Reflection award from the Enviroschools Foundation. To understand the context for this experience it is relevant to consider the aims of this programme:

The Enviroschools programme aims to empower and enable individuals, families and centres to work together to create healthy, peaceful and sustainable communities. Building strong relationships is at the heart of this, as is fostering a culture of creativity and sharing.

(Enviroschools in the Early Years, 2011:15)

This is relevant as it underscores the kindergarten’s deep commitment to engaging with cycles of nature. ‘My Pigeon House’ was re-enacted under a stand of oak trees, set in acres of planted forest with a dovecote and lily pond close by. The atmosphere is reminiscent of the Froebel lithograph illustration for ‘The Pigeon House’. The parents of the children participated and enthusiastically joined in the singing of ‘My Pigeon House’. Many of these parents had attended the event in previous years with older siblings and regarded it as a well-loved family tradition.

A young teacher from Joy Cowley recalls learning ‘My Pigeon House’ as a child at another kindergarten, guided by a now-retired teacher from the Napier Kindergarten Association. She recalls huddling on the striped carpet floor, eagerly awaiting her turn to be a flyaway pigeon. Teachers Tui, Bella and Kelly remember ‘My Pigeon House’ from

junior primary school days. They relished the freedom of being outdoors in an open space, away from desks and pencils. Again, the anticipation and pleasure of waiting for their turn was fondly recalled. Megan remembers hearing it as a Playcentre child and doing a folk dance in the forest near the Playcentre. Mary recalls first learning 'My Pigeon House' from Mrs Bird a tutor at Wellington Teachers College in the late 1960s. Rebecca learnt this song from her tutor at Wellington Teachers College.

The following is a collation of emotions that 'My Pigeon House' evoked for teachers, both as children themselves and later as teachers:

- Sense of freedom – chance for a bit of carnage.
- If you got chosen to be a pigeon you were so cool.
- It evokes memories of my childhood and my school days and it brings me joy, and I hope to bring that joy for the children when I am doing it.
- For me it creates a sense of nostalgia.
- Feeling of belonging – of being part of the group.

Bella from Edith Howes spoke of how the pigeons (children) run away forever and she feels the need to say "You need to come back!" They want to fly free.

Circle games are a strong tradition in kindergarten teaching. They are often done outside, with the teacher both singing and guiding a large group of children. Teachers discussed how these are skills they learnt from older mentor teachers without the aid of electronic musical aids. They listed some of the other circle games they commonly use as 'In and Out the Dusty Bluebells', 'Hokey Tokey', 'Mairi's Wedding' (folk song), 'Frère Jacque' (folk song and dance), 'The Farmer in the Dell' and 'Sandy Girl'.

Geraldine recalls: "Right from my first year teaching I have always done traditional circle games – I was strongly influenced by kindergarten teachers of my mother's generation."

Circle games, which are mostly conducted outdoors in grassy garden areas, provide this direct link with nature. Furthermore, the subtle messages of caring for birds and being 'one with nature' are embedded in the song. Teachers identified the values of 'My Pigeon House' as learning cooperation, taking turns, following instructions, care and well-being

of birds, and having a calming activity. Tui felt the song had meaning for their children because their kindergarten was near the Botanical Gardens, which held pigeons. The philosophical approaches of Froebel, *Te Whāriki* and the principles of Enviroschools are embodied in these kindergartens, and each of these philosophies places a high value on building a connection with nature.

4.5 Sociocultural influences: The New Zealand National Anthem

The following are three versions of the New Zealand National Anthem:⁴

Thomas Bracken's version	Smith's version	Prof Karetu's translation of Smith's
<p>1. God of nations at thy feet in the bonds of love we meet. Hear our voices, we entreat, God defend our free land. Guard Pacific's triple star From the shafts of strife and war, Make her praises heard afar, God defend New Zealand.</p> <p>2. Men of every creed and race Gather here before thy face, Asking thee to bless this place, God defend our free land. From dissension, envy, hate, And corruption guard our state, Make our country good and great, God defend New Zealand.</p> <p>3. Peace, not war, shall be our boast, But, should foes assail our</p>	<p>1. E Ihowa Atua, O ngā iwi mātou rā, āta whakarongona; Me aroha noa. Kia hua ko te pai; Kia tau tō atawhai; Manaakitia mai Aotearoa.</p> <p>2. ōna mano tāngata Kiri whero, kiri mā, Iwi Māori Pākehā Rūpeke katoa, Nei ka tono ko ngā hē Māu e whakaahu kē, Kia ora mārire Aotearoa.</p> <p>3. Tōna mana kia tū! Tōna kaha kia ū; Tona rongō hei paku Ki te ao katoa Aua rawa ngā whawhai,</p>	<p>1. O Lord, God, of all people Listen to us, Cherish us May good flourish, May your blessings flow. Defend Aotearoa</p> <p>2. Let all people, Red skin, white skin Māori, Pakeha, Gather before you May all our wrongs, we pray, Be forgiven So that we might say long live, Aotearoa</p> <p>3. May it be forever prestigious, May it go from strength to strength May its fame spread Far and wide, Let not strife</p>

⁴ (www.mhc.govt.nz, accessed 28 March 2015)

coast,	Ngā tutu a tata mai;	Nor dissension ensue,
Make us then a mighty host,	Kia tupu nui ai	May it ever be great
God defend our free land.	Aotearoa.	Aotearoa
Lord of battles in thy might,	4. Waiho tōna takiwā	4. Let its territory,
Put our enemies to flight,	Ko te ao mārama;	Be ever enlightened
Let our cause be just and	Kia whiti tōna rā	Throughout the land,
right,	Taiāwhio noa.	Let envy and dissension
God defend New Zealand.	Ko te hae me te	Be dispelled,
4. Let our love for Thee	ngangau	Let peace reign
increase,	Meinga kia kore	Over
May thy blessings never	kau;	Aotearoa.
cease,	Waiho i te rongō	5. Let its good features endure,
Give us plenty, give us	mau	Let righteousness and
peace,	Aotearoa.	honesty
God defend our free land.	5. Tōna pai me toitū;	Prevail,
From dishonour and from	Tika rawa, pono pū;	Among the people of God
shame	Tōna noho, tāna tū;	Let it never be ashamed,
Guard our country's spotless	Iwi nō Ihoa.	But rather let its name be
name,	Kaua mōna	known
Crown her with immortal	whakamā;	Thereby becoming the model
fame,	Kia hau te ingoa;	to emulate
God defend New Zealand.	Kia tū hei tauira;	Aotearoa.
5. May our mountains ever be	Aotearoa.	
Freedom's ramparts on the		
sea,		
Make us faithful unto thee,		
God defend our free land.		
Guide her in the nation's van,		
Preaching love and truth to		
man,		
Working out thy glorious		
plan		
God defend New Zealand.		

The Māori and English words of 'God Defend New Zealand', NZ's national anthem, were displayed in all six research sites, along with evidence of regular use of the anthem in group teacher-led settings. Interviews with teachers elicited that its presence has been

on a rising trajectory for the past ten years, with the Rugby World Cup in 2011 being a significant influence. This poem could also be considered a hymn or karakia due to its references to Christianity. Teachers expressed differing personal views on the National Anthem, but all agreed it was an important icon of New Zealand culture, which children would benefit from learning about. This research brought some light to the emotions generated by the NZ national anthem and other national anthems. Its role in the kindergarten has gained momentum in response to the children's sociocultural backgrounds. The rising use of both Māori and English versions is congruent with the now established commitment to biculturalism in early childhood education.

Max Cryer, a New Zealand commentator on social history, notes that we gained 'God Save the Queen' by a form of 'osmosis' and that it was never officially claimed as New Zealand's national anthem (Cryer, 2004). In the 1870s a search for a national anthem that reflected New Zealand's distinct culture, but still acknowledged the British monarchy, was undertaken. The writer, Thomas Bracken, was of Irish heritage.

Some insights into the early origins of the Anthem:

Bracken's most important literary achievement was his poem 'God Defend New Zealand'. The first presentation of the poem with its music was on Christmas night 1876, at a concert in the Queen's Theatre, Dunedin. On 17 September 1877 Bracken relinquished the copyright of the poem to Woods, who undertook the publishing and promotion of an edition of the work. It was printed in London in 1878, and a Māori translation by T. H. Smith, recently retired judge of the Native Land Court, was supplied to Woods by George Grey. However, the work was not given equal status with 'God save the Queen' as a national anthem until 1977.

(www.teara.govt.nz)

'God Defend New Zealand' was written firstly as a poem by Thomas Bracken and then put to music by J.J. Woods (Heenan, 2004). Once it was presented with the music it was sometimes described as a hymn (a religious song of praise to God). The themes of war, peace, freedom and honour dominate the anthem. Cryer comments that the flowery Victorian language style that dominates the English version is not in common use today

but would have been expected in a national anthem written at that time (Cryer, 2004). The Māori version is not a direct or literal translation of the English version, but according to Cryer it expresses appropriate sentiments (ibid). The Māori language version was produced in 1878 by Thomas H. Smith of Auckland, a judge in the Native Land Court, upon the request of Governor George Edward Grey, and in 1979 this was back-translated into English by former Māori Language Commissioner, Professor Timoti Karetu (www.mch.govt.nz).

In the English version there are multiple sets of triple rhyming endings: boast/coast/host; hate/state/great; race/face/place; van/man/plan; and might/flight/right. There are also sets of triple rhyming endings: tangatā/mā/Pakehā; toitū/pū/tū; tū/ū/paku used in the Māori version. Metaphors are grand and abundant throughout the poem, such as ‘may our mountains ever be freedom’s ramparts on the sea’. There is a framework of repeated use of seven stressed beats to the line in both English and Māori versions. There are six syllables in the refrain of ‘God Defend New Zealand’ and in the version ‘Aotearoa’.

One teacher expressed the view that the national anthem is religious and does not resonate with her as an individual person and teacher. She commented that the religious aspect would also be sensitive to some of her parents and therefore she would be cautious about the NZ national anthem because they believed it conflicted with their religious beliefs. These concerns resonate with songwriter David Smith, who believes claims that the anthem violates Kiwi’s human rights (*Sunday Star Times*, 2014:A9). Smith has written alternative lyrics set to the existing melody that he considers more appropriate for a secular nation. *Te Whāriki* (1996) clearly sets out an expectation that differing cultures and children’s spirituality will be valued, but offers no views or guidance on religious matters. One way of describing spirituality is as a unifying feeling or ‘connecting force’ (Baker, 2003:51).

All teachers in the research study expressed a commitment to biculturalism and fully supported children learning the anthem in both English and Māori. Recordings provided evidence that the children master the words in the two languages with relative ease. Teachers attributed this to repetition, the use of an appealing musical CD, along with regular exposure to sporting heroes singing the anthem. Several kindergartens knew that

their local primary schools sing the national anthem regularly, e.g. at school assembly each week. They believe they are providing children with learning continuity by teaching it at kindergarten. One teacher expressed her dislike of singing the anthem with her children as she believed the words were not relevant to them and it was just ‘rote learning’. Another teacher disliked using the anthem as there were no actions to bring the song to life and encourage movement with the children.

Hone Tuwhare has a flagpole and they often fly the NZ flag in an intentional desire to generate a sense of patriotism within the children. They recognise that singing the national anthem further generates this sense of patriotism. Several kindergartens adopted the practice of children placing their arms around each other and swaying as they sang. Teachers considered that singing the national anthem brought about feelings of belonging, pride, identity and respect for both the children and adults. Teachers from Margaret Mahy shared an anecdote of Arabic immigrant parents becoming tearful whilst watching their child sing the NZ national anthem. Teacher Geraldine spoke of how she got a “lump in her throat” and went over “all goosey” every time the national anthem was played at her own children’s school events.



Fig.6 Children learning about ANZAC Day at Joy Cowley Kindergarten, 2015

Teachers from Margaret Mahy and Joy Cowley introduced children to the national anthems of other countries with the intention of broadening their working theories of what a national anthem is. Suzi, a teacher of Japanese heritage regularly teaches ‘Kimigayo’, the national anthem of Japan, at her kindergarten. ‘Kimigayo’ is known to

have the world's oldest lyrics as a national anthem. Suzi underpins this practice with the pedagogical belief that learning other languages in early childhood is beneficial.

In the research settings the NZ national anthem has gained popularity as a result of the strong rugby culture of NZ. Both versions of the anthem are usually sung on televised national and international rugby games and other sporting events such as Olympic and Commonwealth games. Teachers reflected on these sociocultural experiences for their children (Rogoff, 2003).

It is important to note that, unlike in some countries, the singing of the national anthem is not a civic requirement in NZ educational settings, but rather a cultural custom, which has gained traction in recent decades. Typically, at kindergartens, the anthem is sung during the rugby season, during teaching projects about International Sporting Events such as Olympics and Commonwealth Games, around ANZAC Day, and at end-of-year concerts for parents and whānau. Usually the first verse only, in both languages, is sung. At Margaret Mahy, teachers report that it is often chosen by children as one of their favourites during their leaving ceremony on turning five years of age.

Teacher Rebecca, born in 1950s:

I feel very close to it [the Anthem]. As a child at school it was sung every single day at school, with the flag flying. Very patriotic. Not hand-over-heart stuff like the Americans. Of course, we only had the English version; the Māori version came later. The words 'strife and war' – I think so much of my grandfather being in the war. That was my era. When I go overseas I feel that is my country.

In comparison, a younger teacher who went to school in the 1990s recalls only ever learning the Māori version of the National Anthem, not the English one, and now she feels an emotional connection to the Māori version only. The evolution of the NZ national anthem mirrors the country's journey to find its own identity and form a bicultural society that values both the English and Māori languages. These young children capably articulate the long and unfamiliar lyrics with apparent ease. The prominence of the anthem can be attributed to both children's interests generated from their home lives, along with the cultural heritage instilled in their teachers. NZ's sporting heroes have

contributed to the upsurge of rousing renditions heard regularly in kindergartens. ‘God Defend New Zealand’ generates emotion and opinion, including pride, disapproval, patriotism, and that ‘goosey’ feeling.

4.6 Fanciful fantasy: ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’

Puff, the Magic Dragon

Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea
And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee,
Little Jackie Paper loved that rascal Puff,
And brought him strings and sealing wax and other fancy stuff. Oh!

Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea
And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee,
Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea
And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee.

Together they would travel on a boat with billowed sail
Jackie kept a lookout perched on Puff’s gigantic tail,
Noble kings and princes would bow whene’er they came,
Pirate ships would lower their flag when Puff roared out his name. Oh!

Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea
And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee,
Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea
And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee.

Dragons live forever but not so little boys
Painted wings and giant’s rings make way for other toys.
One grey night it happened, Jackie Paper came no more
And Puff that mighty dragon, he ceased his fearless roar.

His head was bent in sorrow, green scales fell like rain,
Puff no longer went to play along the cherry lane.

Without his life-long friend, Puff could not be brave,
So Puff that mighty dragon sadly slipped into his cave. Oh!

Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea
And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee,
Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea
And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee.

The song ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’ was sung at three research sites. Each of these kindergartens own a book published in 2007, which is richly illustrated, with a CD version of the song, and it is commonly used for group-time experiences. The availability of this book has seen a resurgence of popularity of ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’ across each of the kindergartens.

‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’ was written by Leonard Lipton, a 19-year-old American university student, in 1959 and made popular in 1963 by American folk singers Peter, Paul and Mary, and the Australian group The Seekers. Leonard Lipton was inspired by the poem written by Ogden Nash, an American poet in 1936, titled ‘The Tale of Custard the Dragon’ (Untermeyer, 1966:166). Lipton appropriated Ogden Nash’s poem to write his own poem (Chelin, 2015). Great writing ‘stands on the shoulders of others’, as we see with the successful ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’. This poem and song won the hearts of teachers and parents one and two generations ago, and provided the impetus to pass on the magic to ongoing generations of kindergarten children. When children are motivated by imagination and pleasure they can master complex language and memorise lengthy lyrics. ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’ inspired children to imagine, feel sorrow, paint, and feel the happiness of a beautiful poem sung together with friends.

Most teachers in the research project learnt this song as children and young adults themselves whilst growing up in 1960s and ’70s NZ, and younger teachers also have fond memories of their parents and teachers playing it to them. ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’ is nearly always sung rather than recited; however, Lipton first wrote it as a poem.

Several teachers interviewed recalled ‘scandalous’ rumours from their youth suggesting that this song contained drug references. For instance, ‘Puff’ being a euphemism for

smoking marijuana, dragon meaning draggin' and the paper in Jackie Paper referring to papers for rolling marijuana cigarettes, along with the magical images having been inspired by hallucinogenic drugs. Most of these teachers found this conjecture amusing and it did not detract from their love of the song nor their view of it as a suitable song for kindergarten children. Chelin (2015) reports in a newspaper article that Lipton is asked on almost a daily basis: 'Is "Puff" about drugs?' Chelin claims that Lipton is and has always been vehement that 'Puff, the Magic Dragon' is not about drugs. Lipton is reported in the same article as stating:

My poem was directly inspired by a poem called 'A Tale of Custard the Dragon,' published by Ogden Nash in 1936. Pirates and dragons, back then, were common interests in stories for boys. The 'Puff' story is really just a lot like Peter Pan.

Ogden Nash's 'The Tale of Custard the Dragon' is of the genre of nonsensical poems. The poem is meant to be enjoyed at face value as well as having a deeper value message, in that Custard saw himself as a cowardly dragon, and was even teased about it by his friends. Custard was the bravest of them all when he defended his friends from the mean pirate. His courage was then acknowledged. An interpretation could be that the deeper meaning in the poem is that Custard didn't think he could be courageous, but he found out he could. Ogden Nash the author is well-known for his humorous poetry. Making up words and clever rhyme schemes makes the poems roll off the tongue. His sense of humour has been a source of enjoyment since 1925 when he published his first book. By the 1940s Nash was well-known for his whimsical style and, in particular, for his children's books. (Wikipedia, accessed 5/04/15)

Lipton has adopted the same whimsical approach in his creation of 'Puff, the Magic Dragon'. Both poems tell long stories involving fanciful lands and fanciful creatures that delight children, and both poems could be described as being allegorical. Lipton and Nash have used a similar poetic format. Lipton's rhyming couplets such as rain/lane, brave/cave, sea/Lee, more/roar mirror the rhyming couplets of Nash's poem. Both poems follow a pattern of four-line stanzas. The refrain of 'Puff, the Magic Dragon/lived by the sea/And frolicked in the autumn mist/in a land called Honah Lee' is repeated four times

throughout the poem, and are the lines most remembered by children and adults alike. There is liberal use of fanciful or magical imagery such as ‘painted wings and giant rings’ and ‘noble kings and princes’.

At Margaret Mahy kindergarten, four-year-old Jeremy developed a particular fascination for ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’. An audio recording was made of Jeremy singing all seven verses continuously, purely from his own recall. The song is played regularly at group times, and Jeremy can often be heard singing to himself and others in free-play time. This ongoing interest is child-led but well supported by his teachers. Jeremy told me that it makes him feel happy to sing ‘Puff’, that he learnt it at kindergarten and it was not hard for him to learn it. Teachers report that Jeremy utilises his expertise with singing ‘Puff’ to enter social groups. An example of this is told in a learning story where Jeremy strums an imaginary guitar (large, long blocks) whilst serenading two girls seated on either side of him, singing verses of ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’. His singing was a pathway to making friends. Jeremy’s teachers also believe that this repeated singing has a calming and centreing effect for him. ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’ inspired Jeremy to draw and then paint his own unique green dragon. His provocation was the illustrated book that was commonly used at his kindergarten. The 2007 book adaptation of the song’s lyrics by Yarrow, Lipton and illustrator Eric Puybaret is presented as a CD singalong book with vibrant full-page illustrations.

Children could memorise the words to this seven-stanza poem with ease, some coming in strongly with the chorus lines only, but many were recorded as being able to sing the entire song. Teachers thought that the strength of singing as a group, along with the CD, is positive in enabling the children to memorise the song.

Geraldine noticed that:

When we saw the book for sale we jumped on it, as it reminded us of our childhood. In this book version, it gives the story a happier ending, with a young girl seeking out Puff to become her new companion.

Frances commented:

The Peter, Paul and Mary song was an aural experience, not a visual one; the book only came out in recent years. So we created our own pictures in our head.

Anecdotes from two separate kindergartens were told about particular children becoming tearful as the song reaches the line ‘One grey night it happened, Jackie Paper came no more’.

Teachers were asked what emotions the story of Puff evokes for them.

Megan: This poem evokes a ‘lonesome’ feeling – the idea that nothing is permanent, but then there is hope.

Geraldine: I feel it is a sad story.

Amy: The emotion I associate it with is a whimsical feeling, fantasy, princesses and castles.

Teachers spoke of how parents enjoyed hearing ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’ sung at group times, and often quietly sung along. They believe, for parents, it is reminiscent of their own childhoods, and that they very much approved of it being shared with the next generation of children.

4.7 An enduring tradition: ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,

How I wonder what you are!

Up above the world so high,

Like a diamond in the sky.

When the blazing sun is gone,

When he nothing shines upon,

Then you show your little light,

Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

Then the traveller in the dark
Thanks you for your tiny spark;
He could not see which way to go,
If you did not twinkle so.

In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often through my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye
'Til the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark
Lights the traveller in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

Māori and Japanese words to verse one of Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star:

Tirama Tirama
Tirama tirama nga whetu
Kei te pehea ra koutou
Kei runga ake ra
He taimana to rite
Tirama tirama nga whetu
Kei te pehea ra koutou

Japanese version:

きらきら星 kirakira boshi
きらきら光る kirakira hikaru
小さな星よ hiisana hoshiyo
お空の上で Osorano uede
ダイヤのように daiyano youni

きらきら光る kirakira hikaru
小さな星よ Chiisana hoshiyo

Each kindergarten community in the study experienced the singing of ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ with great affection and respect. Teachers across the kindergartens made the impressive claim that almost every child could recite ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’, either before they arrived at kindergarten and certainly by the time they had left. They believe this simple rhyme brings joy, hope and wonder to each generation. This case study offers insights into how and why teachers use it as a teaching artefact.

This children’s poem is attributed to the English writer Jane Taylor and, originally called ‘The Star’, was first published in *Rhymes for the Nursery* (1806) in England. The tune is derived from the older, eighteenth century tune ‘Ah! vous dirai-je, maman’ (Styles et al., 2010:37). The French melody ‘Ah! vous dirai-je, maman’ was published in 1761 and later arranged by several composers, including Mozart, with twelve variations on ‘Ah vous dirai-je, Maman’.⁵ It is equally known and described as a nursery rhyme and features prominently in anthologies of nursery rhymes published in the English language. Its style and content reflects the emergence of the Romantic period of poetry for children, which highlighted nature and the innocence of childhood (Styles, 1998). It was identified as one of the Mother Songs that Froebel deemed as ideal for mothers to share with their young children (Blow, 1895).

Morag Styles singles Jane Taylor’s ‘The Star’ out for special praise:

The whole poem is worth scrutiny (not just the familiar first verse) as I believe it to be landmark in poetry for children. This is a flawless piece of nursery verse. There isn’t a spare word in this poem, which rings like a bell. ... Such a simple idea to explore the wonder of the night sky by focusing on a single star helping travellers find their way in the dark.

(Styles, 1998:94)

⁵ Opera online, accessed 16 January 15

Styles tell of how over a hundred years ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ ceased to be credited to its writer Jane Taylor and began to be presented as an anonymous nursery rhyme. This poem was written at the beginning of the Romantic era which was typified by a view of children as innocents (Styles, 1998).

Teachers were asked what feelings they had for this rhyme. A collation of these responses includes:

Everyone can sing it ’cos everyone owns the stars.

It gives a feeling of hope when you look up at the stars – it is heart-warming.

It always evokes happiness and magic. The stars in the sky – it is part of their world.

Classic.

This research study provided evidence of this rhyme sung with English, Māori and Japanese versions. Suzi, teacher at Margaret Mahy, actively teaches her children the Japanese version, usually in a group-time experience. She does this in the context of sharing other aspects of her Japanese culture and language with the children. Teachers noted that pre-verbal, very young children or children with special needs follow the actions as a pathway to learning the words.

Elisabeth explains: “The popularity of ‘Twinkle, Twinkle’ is because it is very achievable, even for the youngest child. The actions lead them through.”

Words and finger actions for the first verse:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,	(open and close fingers with each word)
How I wonder what you are.	(look up and tap head with a finger)
Up above the world so high,	(reach up to the sky)
Like a diamond in the sky.	(make a diamond shape with your hands)
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,	(open and close fingers with each word)
How I wonder what you are.	(look up and tap head with a finger)

Teachers across kindergartens recalled how when children were invited to sing their favourite song it was most likely to be ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’, followed by ‘Baa, Baa Black Sheep’ and the ‘Alphabet (ABC) Song’. I also invited children to sing rhymes to me during my data collection, and similarly ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ was often a first choice followed by ‘Baa, Baa, Black Sheep’ and ‘The Alphabet Song’. These three rhymes are based on the same tune and this may explain why children learn the others so readily from the starting point of ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’.

A recent English small-scale study investigated the use of nursery rhymes used by parents in homes (Pratt, 2012). The results ranked the following five as being most common:

- ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’
- ‘Baa, Baa, Black Sheep’
- ‘The Wheels on the Bus’
- ‘Row, Row, Row Your Boat’
- ‘Wind the Bobbin Up’.

‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ and ‘Baa, Baa, Black Sheep’, sharing the same tune, sit at the top of this list, mirroring the experiences of children in the Napier Kindergartens research. Interviews with teachers supported the idea that this nursery rhyme is possibly universal – it has been translated and used across the continents. Teachers who grew up in countries other than NZ: Japan, Taiwan, Brazil and South Africa, each learnt ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ in their own language as small children. Lan recalls learning the actions to this rhyme sung in Mandarin the same way as it is done with the English version.

Three of the kindergartens had a collection of poetry cards. These are collections of poems and nursery rhymes, such as ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’, often handwritten onto heavy card with and without illustrations. These were used as a literacy resource, which children could access freely to revisit or share with an adult reader in both the indoor and outdoor settings. At Joy Cowley these cards are lent to children to take home rather like a library book. Teachers noted that nowadays they are more likely to put a poem in the child’s profile book. However, they felt it would not get the same attention as

the poetry card sent home in its own handmade fabric bag. Other experienced teachers recall this lending of poetry cards as a common kindergarten practice in previous decades. These teachers were intentionally implementing a goal expressed in *Te Whāriki*: “Children develop a playful interest in repetitive sounds and words, aspects of language such as rhythm, rhyme and alliteration and an enjoyment of nonsense stories and rhymes” (Communication Goal 2).

The recitation of the Māori version ‘Tirama, Tirama, Nga Whetu’ alongside the English versions was a common practice at each kindergarten. I came across another Māori version as a poetry card. This version is not commonly used at any of the kindergartens. ‘Tirama, Tirama’ is a transliteration of ‘Twinkle, Twinkle’ rather than the Kapokapo word, which could be translated as meaning reach or hold (P.Wano, Personal Communication, 10th February 2015).

Kapokapo whetū iti
Hua ahau he aha koe
Runga rawa i te ao
Hei tiamana i te rangi
Kapokapo whetū iti
Hua ahau he aha koe

Ample examples of adaptations of ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’, or versions with completely new words set to the tune, abounded from the research data. The well-known nature of this rhyme has provided a platform for would-be poets to exercise their creative talents for a range of purposes. Here are two examples set to the tune ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’, that promote healthy eating messages:

Vegetables Are Good For Us – produced by the 5+ A Day programme

Carrots, celery and broccoli,
Vegetables are good for me.
For my snack and in my lunch,
Vegetables are great to munch.

Carrots, celery, and broccoli,
Vegetables are good for me.

Bell pepper, cauliflower, asparagus,
Vegetables are good for us.
In our lunch and on our plate,
Vegetables are really great.

Bell pepper, cauliflower, asparagus,
Vegetables are good for us.
Carrots, celery and broccoli,
Vegetables are good for me ...

The local singing librarian brought his guitar and his own made-up tunes to engage the kindergarten children. This is his fun version of ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’:

Twinkle, twinkle, gorilla star
How I wonder what you are,
Up above the world you swing
Like a great big hairy thing.

And finally, a time-honoured version that teachers have sung regularly since the 1970s. I noted how dated these words are as modern cars do not do function like this anymore.

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
Daddy (or Mummy) bought me a motor car;
Push the handle, pull the choke,
Off we go in a cloud of smoke.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
Daddy bought me a motor car.

Froebel’s original guidelines for mothers were to introduce rhymes with actions that firstly just use the hands rather than larger body movements. Froebel developed and published his set of Mother Songs in 1844, with illustrations and diagrams to teach mothers the actions. Froebel’s plan was for children to move from simple to more

complex movements. His reasoning was that the young child needed to experience the world through his hands in order to gain “unity within the whole” (Liebschner, 1992). The rhymes he chose also had a simple moral or value message embedded within the rhyme (ibid). These concepts have travelled through time and are further promoted by Ouvry (2012) as sound teaching principles for young children. Ouvry promotes the value of the child gaining a sense of their own interconnectedness.

Yolanda Soryl, a specialist teacher and advocate for teaching phonological awareness, urges teachers:

To ensure children are constantly exposed to and invited to join in with the reciting and reading of traditional and modern nursery rhymes, poems, limericks and stories containing rhyme. ... Ensure children can tell five nursery rhymes by heart. Choose these rhymes to recite again so they are well learnt.

(Soryl, 2013:28)

Teachers from each of the kindergartens in the research have attended professional development with Yolanda Soryl. During the interviews with teachers it was apparent that many had adopted Soryl’s message and quoted back vehemently that children should be able to recite five nursery rhymes before they go to school. A typical example of this belief is this quote from teacher Hermione: “If a child can chant five nursery rhymes at the age of seven, they are more likely to be able to read and write; they will have a better start”.

Additionally, teachers articulated the values of nursery rhymes such as ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ as developing first-sound recognition, rhythm, alliteration, enunciation, memory and fun as they played with words. Hermione also spoke of the intimacy and trust that is created when you share rhymes with one child or a small group of children. This positive finding resonates with the British study of rhymes used in daycare settings with infants (Goouch et al., 2013). Ministry of Education speech therapists supporting these kindergartens advocate reciting nursery rhymes to assist children with speech delays to accelerate their language acquisition (MoE, 2001).

This research in kindergartens supports the view ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ is an enduring landmark in poetry for young children. Its magical simplicity has seen it delight parents, teachers and children through two centuries. Although quintessentially English in nature, it lends itself to translation into Māori and international languages. Teachers value the combination of the easily memorised words and simple tune. From its familiar base, this rhyme has been appropriated to create new rhymes, which amuse, delight and inform. ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ holds the long-running title of most loved and known nursery rhyme, placing it deep in the heart of kindergarten’s cultural capital.

4.8 Summary

The six narratives presented as case studies provide vignettes of different dimensions of the cultural capital of the kindergarten movement. A traditional Froebelian Mother Song, ‘My Pigeon House’ has been reinvented in NZ. The NZ National Anthem sung in both English and Māori is evocative of patriotism in a country that increasingly identifies as a bicultural nation. ‘Let it Go’, the hit song from popular culture, dominated the screens and airwaves in 2014. This was a poem generated by Disney for popular culture and which has its origins in a Danish fairy tale from 1844. ‘Ko te kō a te waimarie’, a traditional Māori karakia, came into use through the kindergarten movement’s focus on environmental education and a desire to embrace Māori perspectives in a more genuine way. ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’ inspired by a previous poet has introduced the concept of creative appropriation to this study. ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’, a traditional nursery rhyme, which has experienced unprecedented success across the world, features dominantly in the kindergarten setting. Collectively, these narratives have allowed me to take the microscope closer and examine the meaning and significance of six differing genres of poems. In Chapters Five and Six, the lens widens to include a broader picture of how teachers and children select and use poetry with intent.

CHAPTER FIVE

Poetry as a conduit to co-construction

5.1 Introduction

This chapter takes the reader on a poetic journey through areas of subject knowledge and dimensions of what it is to be human: the need to laugh and the need to cry. Poetry offers a ‘shortcut’ to the essence of ideas and emotions. In this chapter, poetry is positioned as a conduit to co-construct meaning with children. The concept of co-construction requires both teacher and learner to have power and agency in the relationship (Anning et al., 2004). Each has their own previous knowledge and world view. Co-construction of knowledge requires teacher and learner (akonga) both to engage in an experience in order to form a shared understanding. There is implied equality to this relationship.

An analysis of the poetry detailed in Table 1 Matrix of Recorded Poems, along with qualitative information from this study about how these poems were used, led to a distillation of sub themes for this chapter. This analysis showed how powerful poetry is for both teacher and child as they learn about their world. Poetry enables akonga to grasp ideas more succinctly, and often at a deeper level than prose may allow. Poetry acts as a conduit to both factual knowledge and emotional intelligence. This fits well with the view of holistic learning expressed in *Te Whāriki*, that as learners we are not separated from our physical, emotional and spiritual being. I have teased out examples from the data that tell the story of how poetry has been used to enhance specific learning for akonga.

5.2 Poetry and science

Children learn to develop their working theories of the world. They learn scientific concepts such as how plants grow, what makes a rainbow, the seasons, the weather, insect life and how to protect our natural environment. Kindergarten children have learnt about science and nature from the earliest Froebelian kindergartens in Germany through to the present day. Poetry has always been a feature of this learning. Froebel was a scientist as well as an educationalist (Liebschner, 1992). For example, one of Froebel’s Mother

Songs, ‘The Weather Vane’ by Emilie Poulson (Blow, 1895), provides a simple explanation of how we read wind patterns. This Froebel lithograph from 1844 contains the original version of ‘The Weather Vane’, and beside it are the words of the later version adapted by Emilie Poulson.

The Weather Vane

This way, that way.
Turns the weather vane
This way, that way,
Turns and turns again,
Turning, pointing, ever showing,
How the merry wind is blowing.

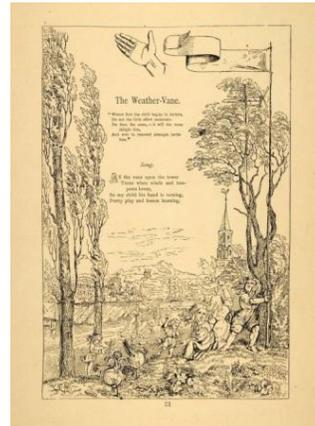


Fig.7 Froebel’s lithograph ‘The Weather Vane’

In the New Zealand setting an archival programme plan from 1939 titled ‘Spring, Plant Life’ was written by Joyce Barns for the Rachel Reynolds Kindergarten in Dunedin.⁶ At the Rachel Reynolds Kindergarten, each day’s planned experiences were meticulously recorded, complete with pedagogical explanations for why they were chosen. This provides insight into the educational thinking of this time period. In her 1939 plan, Joyce Barns offered the following rationale for singing such poems: “To give pleasure, to cultivate attention and memory, to develop the voice, to allow the expression of joy by singing together.”

The poem ‘Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary’ is suggested for three days of that week, no doubt to reflect the spring planting theme. ‘Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary’ is a popular English nursery rhyme. The rhyme has been seen as having religious and historical significance, but its origins and meaning are disputed. Some suggest that Mary is the

⁶ Reynolds Kindergarten programme fortnight ending 22 September 1939, Joyce Constance Barns’ scrapbook, fMS papers 9071 – ATL: New Zealand.

Scottish queen and the rhyme is an allegory about the Catholic Church of the 1700s (Dolby, 2012: 83).

Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary

Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells and cockleshells
And pretty maids all in a row.

On a simpler level, this rhyme engages children in the delights of planting and nurturing a garden.

Shifting our focus forward to 2014, kindergarten teachers still relish springtime as an ideal opportunity to share wonder and beauty with the children. ‘Daffadowndilly’ features in the teaching practice at Margaret Mahy, one of the kindergartens in the Napier study. This poem is recited and learnt often in springtime as a group learning experience. Copies of the poem accompanied by pictures of individual children holding daffodils were recorded in their profile books.

Daffadowndilly

She wore her yellow sunbonnet,
She wore her greenest gown;
She turned to the south wind
And curtsied up and down
She turned to the sunlight
And shook her yellow head,
And whispered to her neighbour;
‘Winter is dead’.

The author whimsically pretended the daffodil behaved like a person. This delighted the children of Margaret Mahy and helped them develop their working theories about the cycle of the seasons. It featured in A.A. Milne’s *When We Were Very Young*, which was

first published in 1924 in England. Are we looking at a valuable kindergarten tradition, or is this old-fashioned programme planning? This provocation will be revisited in the discussion chapter.

‘It’s Raining, It’s Pouring’ was sung by teachers and children at James K. Baxter in the context of a rainy day. The teacher chose a rhyme that was meaningful to the day and clearly helped children to make sense of the weather that was beating on the windows. Later in that session children were recorded chanting it to themselves as they played. This poem was also utilised by teachers at Edith Howes. Identifying the first letter sound in poems, for example the letter ‘I’, is a part of the daily phonics session.

It’s Raining, It’s Pouring

It’s raining, it’s pouring
the old man is snoring
He bumped his head
on the end of the bed
and he couldn’t get up in the morning

Understanding the mysteries of the natural world continues with ‘The Rainbow Song’. ‘The Rainbow Song’ is as an echo song, usually done as a large group activity with rainbow streamers as props.

The Rainbow Song

Take a little bit of red (echo)
Add a little bit of orange (echo)
Add a stripe of yellow (echo)
A little bit of blue (echo)
A bit of indigo (echo)

Don’t forget the violet
Then what do you do you know?
It’s a rainbow

A little bit of rain

A little bit of sun

When they come together they make rainbow fun

It's a rainbow (echo)

A wonderful, wonderful, magical, magical, colourful, colourful

Shining rainbow (echo)

‘The Rainbow Song’ was popular during the 1950s and 1960s and has been a favourite in kindergartens for decades. Whilst the author is unknown it features in several compilations of music for young children by musicians such as Linda Adamson and Helen Wilberg (Clarke & Wilberg, 1988). Children, over time, are drawn to the phenomenon of nature that is a rainbow. The song teaches the concept of a prism and the succession of colours in the light spectrum. Such experiences fit well with the *Te Whāriki* Exploration Goal 4: Children develop working theories about Planet Earth and beyond.



Fig.8 Child's artistic interpretation of 'Starry, Starry Night'

At James K. Baxter, Megan introduced Don McLean's 1971 hit song 'Starry, Starry Night' to accompany a study of Van Gogh's paintings: *The Starry Night*, *Field with*

Poppies, Wheat Field with Crows and *Boats at Sea*. The lyrics of Don McLean’s song were inspired by Van Gogh’s life and work. Van Gogh’s paintings were offered as inspiration for children to create their own work. Don McLean’s poem was played to the children during this experience. In addition Megan chose relevant lines from the poem such as: *Starry, starry night, / paint your palette blue and gray*, and transcribed these in print to display on the walls alongside the children’s art. In this way, art and poetry were woven together as a multi-sensory experience.

‘Pungawerewere’ was composed by the late Hirini Melbourne (1949–2003), a Māori composer and singer. Melbourne was from Tuhoe and Ngati Kahungunu tribes and has been credited as a significant figure in the revival of the Māori language (Wikipedia, accessed March 9th 2015). Whilst teaching resources usually offer the English translation, this hand rhyme is usually only sung in Māori.

Pungawerewere

Māori words	English words	
Pungawerewere	spider	(x3)
Mahia to whare e	making your house	
Haere atu hoki mai	go out and come in	(x3)
Mahia to whare e	making your house	
Hon hono tia ra	join the web	(x3)
Mahia to whare e	making your house	
Haere atu ki te piri	go out and hide	(x3)
Ko oto to whare e	your house has finished	

Finger and hand actions that kinaesthetically tell the story of the spider are an integral part of this song. There are parallels here to Froebel’s aspirations for his Mother Songs: to teach children about the natural world (Liebschner, 1992). The waiata ‘Pungawerewere’ also teaches children about natural science. The integration of hand movement aids memory of the rhyme as well as adding meaning to the words.

As with ‘Pungawerewere’ the English translation for ‘Waiata Mihimihi’ is made available to the adults but is not sung. ‘Waiata Mihimihi’ was included as part of the regular welcoming ritual at Margaret Mahy’s group time. The recorded version of this waiata at Margaret Mahy generated a calming and spiritual feeling. This gentle waiata embeds knowledge of some of the important concepts of tikanga Māori – honouring the Creator and Papatuanuku, and those who have come before us (Smith, 2011:46). This song is attributed to the Nga Pihi series with the contribution of Aunty Tawai Te Rangi, and was produced by Radha Sahar of Universal Music.

Waiata Mihimihi

Waiata Mihimihi

Te Tuatahi e mihi ana – ki te kai – hanga

(firstly, greetings to the Creator, hold hands up to the creator)

Te Tuarua e mihi ana – ki te papatuanuku

(secondly, greetings to Mother Earth, waving hands)

Te Tuatoru e mihi ana – ki to whare

(thirdly, greetings to the house, make shape of house)

Te Tuawha e mihi ana – ki to hunga mate

(fourthly, farewell to those who have gone before us, rest)

Te tuarima e mihi ana – ki te hunga ora

(hands out to welcome)

A Māori whakatauki was part of an Enviroschools display on the walls at James K. Baxter. The language form whakatauki is translated in English as a proverb. Some whakatauki, such as this one, could also be described as poetry. Here, a metaphor is presented as a way to give power to the notion that people are the kaitiaki, or guardians of our natural heritage.

Ko Tātou ngā kanohi ora

Ngā Kanohi o nga maunga

O ngā awa

O ngā papa pounamu

We are the living eyes
For the mountains,
The rivers
And the beautiful valleys.

These examples have showcased poetry as a powerful teaching companion. The poems describe how a rainbow is made and how a spider builds its web to catch prey. Other examples such as ‘Waiata Mihimihi’ teach the Māori legends of how we are created. Such examples show us how subject knowledge can be learnt through poetry. In the next section we explore how emotional intelligence can be nurtured through the vehicle of poetry.

5.3 Making sense of emotion

This section explores the more ephemeral emotional and spiritual benefits that poetry may bring for teachers, children and families. From an educational viewpoint, poetry is presented as a conduit for building emotional intelligence (Claxton & Lucas, 2010).

Teachers in the focus group interviews were unanimous in their belief that poetry could express emotions more succinctly and effectively than prose. They placed a high value on children expressing emotions and feelings as a way to learn empathy and to resolve strong emotions. Teachers themselves reached out to poetry to support and inspire each other in their daily lives and at times of personal hardship.

Poetry in this study was evident as a conduit for learning social awareness. For example, ‘E Tu Kahikatea’ was a waiata that was regularly sung at Hone Tuwhare, usually with children and adults standing with their arms around each other. It was sung on a regular basis and also on special occasions as an expression of the ‘oneness’ of the kindergarten community. This waiata generated a deep sense of spiritual togetherness.

E Tu Kahikatea

E tu kahikatea

Hei whakapae ururoa

Stand like the kahikatea (tree)

To brave the storms

Awahi mai awahi atu Embrace and receive
Tatou tatou e We are one together

NZ musician and ECE academic Sally Bodkin-Allen describes ‘E Tu Kahikatea’ in this way:

The words of ‘E Tu Kahikatea’ are particularly appropriate for young children as they describe standing tall like a kahikatea tree, and the underlying message is of supporting each other and becoming strong through that support.

(Bodkin-Allen, 2013:393)

At James K. Baxter and Hirini Melbourne Kindergartens, teachers had received poems written by parents and presented as artefacts to keep. One such artefact was a ‘wordle’, or digital compilation of words, that expressed the parents’ feelings and appreciation for their child’s time at kindergarten. Words such as: Kindy, Fun, Run, Skip, Stories, Friends, formed the shape of a hand. Children also drew on their understanding of poetry to express feelings. When Rita turned five and left Joy Cowley to go to school, she dictated this poem to her parent to be written on a card for her kindergarten teachers. In just three lines Rita had used the poetic devices of hyperbole (exaggeration for effect) and imagery. She then adorned the card with her own illustrations. Rita’s poem:

Dear Kindergarten,
I miss you and I love you
To the moon and back
fifteen times.

Rita’s experience here can be seen to meet an aspiration expressed in *Te Whāriki*: “Children develop an ability to identify their own emotional responses and those of others” (MoE, 1996: Well-being Goal 2).

Teachers sought poetry from books and the Internet when wishing to relay expressions of grief to others in their own and wider kindergarten worlds.

As teacher Megan explains:

Grief is so huge – grief is beyond comprehension to find the words – we tried and it did not seem enough. So we found a poem on the Internet about grief and found one that resonated with us, it said what we wanted to say.

Teachers, children and parents have all looked to poetry to help them express emotions. Poetry has provided an outlet for the emotions of togetherness, appreciation, love and condolence. Poetry in this way, acts as a conduit to build and strengthen social intelligence.

Humour features strongly in the spectrum of emotions expressed at the kindergartens. The next section examines the role of poetry and humour. To be human is to need to both laugh and cry. In the next section I discuss the role of humour in poetry.

5.4 Humour: fun, laughter, silliness and the absurd

“There are so many ways that humour works and it is tantalisingly hard to pin it down.”
(Styles 1998:108)

Each of the kindergartens in the research study owns and displays books by children’s poets who specialise in humour for children, such as Lewis Carroll, Spike Milligan, Colin McNaughten, Edward Lear, Quentin Blake and Dr Seuss. Teachers from Hirini Melbourne Kindergarten have a particular tradition of promoting humour as a teaching technique and social value. One perspective they articulated is that when children share a joke with the group there is a sense that they are ‘in with the group’; therefore they gain a sense of belonging and friendship. These teachers enjoy playfully testing children with a sense of the absurd, and at times, the suspension of reality. They believe that this type of dramatic play and associated wordplay extends children’s understanding of logic.

“Nonsense opens children’s thinking to explore what is real, what is not, and why,” explains Caitlin. This was similarly expressed by Felicity, who had included a quote from Dr Seuss in a learning story: “I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells.”

An illustration from the research data of poetry in current use is the first three verses of a nonsense song ‘Mr Clicketty Cane’, written by Peter Combe, an Australian children’s songwriter:

Mr Clicketty Cane

When Mr Clicketty Cane plays his silly game,
All the kids in the street, they like to do the same:
Wash your face in orange juice ! ! !

When Mr Clicketty Cane plays his silly game,
All the kids in the street, they like to do the same:
Wash your face in orange juice,
Clean your teeth with bubble gum ! ! !

When Mr Clicketty Cane plays his silly game,
All the kids in the street, they like to do the same:
Wash your face in orange juice,
Clean your teeth with bubble gum,
Fix the fence with sticky tape ! ! !

Children sing this with accompanying actions and revel in the silliness of it all. Teachers spoke of how children learn it is okay to get things wrong and take a risk when teachers use rhyme to highlight the ridiculous. This experience exemplifies the *Te Whāriki* goal for: “Children [to] develop an expectation that words and books can amuse, delight, comfort, illuminate, inform and excite” (MoE, 1996, Communication Goal 3).

Going back in time to 1957, this poem was found in a handwritten book of poems presented as a collection by a Napier kindergarten teacher. ‘Pockets’ (no author given) is another example of presenting the absurd to children as a way to test their emerging sense of logic.

Pockets

A lamb doesn’t have any braces
And rabbits don’t wear shoes
And a puppy doesn’t wear a cap
To leave behind and lose.

But I'm glad I'm not a rabbit
A puppy or a lamb,
But I've got trouser pockets,
Two real big pockets,
Two full-up trouser pockets,
And oh! How glad I am!

Teachers articulated that in some cases sharing poetry such as this light-hearted rhyme below, which was written by NZ children's poet Joy Cowley, develops a sense of humour that may not be evident in their home lives:

A peanut sitting on the railway track
Its heart was all a flutter
A train came roaring round the bend
Pip-pip peanut butter!

'Teddy Bears' Picnic' is a song consisting of a melody by American composer John Walter Bratton, written in 1907, and lyrics added by Irish songwriter Jimmy Kennedy in 1932. (Wikipedia, accessed April 4th 2015). This poem is based on the personification of teddy bears, giving teddies human characteristics and behaviours. It is an annual tradition at three of the kindergartens to arrive in the morning, with teddies having taken over the play area overnight – i.e. a suspension of reality. Children and adults spend the morning dwelling in this twilight zone of imagination and reality with the song 'Teddy Bears' Picnic' a strong and enduring favourite part of this tradition.

Teddy Bears' Picnic

If you go down in the woods today
You're sure of a big surprise.
If you go down to the woods today
You'd better go in disguise.
For ev'ry bear that ever there was

Will gather there for certain, because
Today's the day the teddy bears have their picnic.

(The first of twelve verses)

Amanda suggested that such rhymes as 'Autumn Poem' "stimulate the synapses". She was referring to, and acknowledging, the importance of the young child's brain development (Shore, 1997).

Autumn Poem

Oh, trees, you are so silly
You wear a lot, when it is hot
And nothing when it's chilly.

Teachers Rebecca and Bella were recorded singing a playful duet of 'Mister Caterpillar'. They bounced the lines of the poem between each other, leaving space for nearby children to sing the next funny line. This spontaneous performance was full of stage drama and style. 'Mister Caterpillar' is an echo song attributed to Helen Wilberg. This episode generated high spirits and laughter with the children, and as the researcher, I was left with the rhyme playing in my head for the rest of the day.

Mister Caterpillar

Who's that nibbling? (Who's that nibbling?)
At my door.
Who's the naughty fella? (Who's the naughty fella?)
Mister Caterpillar. (Mister Caterpillar.)
Oh, shoo, shoo, shoo! (Oh, shoo, shoo, shoo!)
Oh, go away! (Oh, go away!)
Oh, with a shoo, shoo, shoo, shoo, shoo.

The tradition of the limerick form of poetry derives from Ireland. I came across ample examples of the limerick form in anthologies and poem cards provided for the children. A

feature of the limerick is often laughing at the misfortune of others, and this anonymous one found at Joy Cowley is no exception:

There Was an Old Man from Leeds
There was an old man from Leeds,
Who swallowed a packet of seeds.
In less than an hour,
His nose was in flower,
And his head was a garden of weeds.

Humour demands of us some intellectual agility. Children need to work out what is normal before they can laugh at the absurd. Through poetry, children can suspend reality and imagine a teddy bear is a living thing. This gives pleasure as well as challenging the child's thinking. Funny poems offer the simple delight of playing with sounds and words in an expressive manner. Let's now consider how poetry might support children's learning with numeracy.

5.5 Poetry as a pathway to numeracy

Emerging numeracy is an easily understood aspiration for early childhood learning. The national curriculum *Te Whāriki* describes what is desirable for young children to learn about mathematics:

- Children develop skill in using the counting system and mathematical symbols and concepts.
- Children develop familiarity with numbers and their uses by exploring and observing the use of numbers in activities that have meaning and purpose for children.

(MoE 1996:78, Communication Goal 3)

What may be less clear is the effectiveness of using rhyme and poetry as a conduit to embed mathematical knowledge. Some early childhood academics reinforce the value of using rhyme as a mechanism for gaining mathematical knowledge (Jenks & Peters 2007). It is interesting to look back at the selection of rhymes and poems that have been

considered appropriate for kindergarten children to develop their numeracy skills since Froebel in 1844 through to current day. *Royal Gifts for the Kindergarten*, a Froebel handbook for kindergarten teachers written in 1889, contains numerous counting rhymes and poems that teach numerical awareness and sequential counting. The themes of the following three rhymes are all based on a romantic view of nature that prevailed in the European Romantic period of the mid 1800s (Styles, 1998).

The Little Chic-a-Dees

Ten Little Chic-A-Dees, clinging to a vine,
A speckled snake charmed one, and then there were nine.
Nine Little Chic-a-Dees, one without a mate,
A sparrow hawk caught one, then there were eight.

(p. 173, verse one of eight)

Counting

One, Two, Three,
Come to the woods with me.
Four, Five, Six,
We'll knock down cherries with sticks.
Seven, Eight, Nine,
To fill this basket of mine.
Ten Eleven, Twelve,
We'll all be as happy as elves.

(p. 179)

One Two Three!

One Two Three!
A bonny boat I see.
A silver boat, and all afloat,
Upon a rosy sea.

(p. 171)

Over a hundred years later, a scrapbook of rhymes from the 1950s held in the Napier Kindergarten Association archives was revisited as part of this study. This scrapbook includes the following rhyme (author unknown – which is probably fortuitous), complete with piano music and guidance for how it should be sung:

Ten Little Nigger Boys, went out to dine,
Choked his little self, and then there were nine.

Nine Little Nigger Boys, sat up very late,
One overslept himself, and then there were Eight.

Chorus:

One Little, Two Little, Three Little, Four Little, Five Little Nigger Boys
Six Little, Seven Little, Eight Little, Nine Little, Ten Little Nigger Boys.⁷

The rhyme continues through five verses of very unfortunate things sequentially happening to the nigger boys until there are none. The promotion of this rhyme as a suitable learning experience for young children is incredulous, and perhaps demonstrates the dramatic shift of cultural norms over the preceding sixty years of kindergarten life.

I identified four rhymes from the Top Twenty Poems list (see Table 2): ‘This Old Man’, ‘Here is a Beehive’, ‘Five Little Ducks’ and ‘Five Little Monkeys’, that specifically include concepts of number, and I will briefly discuss each of these.

This Old Man

This old man, he played one,
He played knick-knack on my thumb;
With a knick-knack paddywhack,
Give the dog a bone,
This old man came rolling home.

⁷ During the NZKI history project searches, photos and examples of the poem ‘Ten Little Nigger Boys’ were found in both Dunedin and Auckland archives (H. May, Personal Communication, 16 February 2016).

This old man, he played two,
He played knick-knack on my shoe;
With a knick-knack paddywhack,
Give the dog a bone,
This old man came rolling home.

(two verses of the complete ten verses)

‘This Old Man’ embeds notions of number for the child. The tool of rhyme is used as an anchor for memory recall: one/drum, two/shoe. The rhyme is usually accompanied by body percussion or instrument percussion, which further reinforces the rhyming words. At Margaret Mahy, teachers had a number apron that was used in conjunction with this rhyme as a visual reinforcement for number recognition. Similarly at Joy Cowley ‘Where is Thumbkin’ was a finger rhyme in regular use. This rhyme and finger play teaches concepts such as one- to- one correspondence and symmetry.

During ‘Here is a Beehive’ children may learn sequential counting and rational counting as they make a one-to-one correspondence with number name and the number of their fingers (Jenks & Peters, 2007).

Here is a Beehive

Here is a Beehive, where are the bees?
Hidden away where nobody sees,
Now they come creeping out of their hive,
One, two, three, four, five.

The other two, ‘Five Little Ducks’ and ‘Five Little Monkeys’, are finger/hand rhymes, which actively teach concepts of addition and subtraction.

Five Little Ducks

Five little ducks, went out one day
Over the hill and far away.

The mother duck calls quack, quack, quack, quack,
But only four little ducks come back.

(first verse of complete five verses)

Again the use of finger play instils the notion of five-minus-one-equals-four and so on, until no little ducks are left. Similarly with the finger rhyme ‘Five Little Monkeys’:

Five Little Monkeys

Five little monkeys, swinging in the tree, teasing Mister Alligator
You can’t catch me you can’t catch me.
Along comes Mister Alligator snapping hungrily
And snaps that monkey out of the tree.

(first verse of complete five verses)

The concept of five monkeys minus one equals four is taught through the humour, drama and chanting of the rhyme. ‘Five Little Ducks’ and ‘Five Little Monkeys’ are a platform for children to learn the mathematical operation of subtraction. Hermione, teacher at Hone Tuwhare, tells how she often uses finger puppets to further dramatise these rhymes and engage children visually. The majority of the counting rhymes in kindergarten use have origins in traditional English culture, and many have sustained over time. Teachers were motivated to include number finger rhymes that reflected the New Zealand context such as ‘Five Juicy Worms’, often recited with the aid of a fluffy kiwi bird puppet (an iconic NZ native bird).

Five Juicy Worms

Five juicy worms,
Wriggling along the ground,
Munching, crunching all the leaves they found.
Along came a kiwi, as hungry as can be,
SLURP!

(First verse of five verses until there are no kiwis)

The collections of children's books at each research site were rich in picture books that depicted rhymes with counting and mathematics operations (adding and subtracting). The daily use of these resources was an entrenched part of the teaching programmes. It is common practice for teachers to add counting in the Māori language to these rhymes whether it was written in the book or not.

Rhymes have been used as a mechanism to teach number knowledge and mathematical operations in the kindergarten movement from its beginnings in the 1840s through to 2014. The wording content in these examples is a reflection of the cultural norms and values of each particular era. We see the bicultural commitment of teachers demonstrated in their regular addition of Māori language with the counting rhymes. The content has also shifted from English settings to include content that reflects New Zealand's culture. The next section illuminates how poetry is equally as effective a mechanism for gaining phonological awareness.

5.6 Poetry and phonics

The research data included examples of how teachers are using poetry as a means to intentionally teach phonics. Two of the kindergartens ran phonics programmes, which they explained in their programme information. This refers to the intentional teaching of skills such as the alphabetic code, segmentation of syllables, alliteration and blending of sounds (Soryl, 2013). Teachers at the other four kindergartens also utilised poetry to advance phonological knowledge, informally, as part of teachable moments. The teaching teams who run formal phonics programmes maintain these involve authentic material and experiences that have sociocultural meaning to the children. This section details some of the diverse ways that poetry was used in conjunction with learning phonics, and comments on how children responded to these experiences. Paul Adams and Judy Hamer, writers of *The New Zealand Early Childhood Literacy Handbook* (2003), promote the use of rhyme as a way for children to hear and become conscious of the end-sounds of words. They promote competency with nursery rhymes as a pathway for literacy success.

I recorded a charming interaction between a parent and child and included it as an illustration of the technique of 'prediction of the rhyming word'. This kindergarten parent

and child, who were both born in Scotland, shared a rendition of ‘Wee Willie Winkie’. The mother sang in a lilting Scottish brogue, pausing and allowing her three-year-old to finish the last word of each line in a delightful duet. They then talked about how they sing this rhyme each night as a bedtime ritual.

Mother: *Wee Willie Winkie runs through the ...* Child : *town*
Mother: *Upstairs and downstairs in his nightie [sic]...* Child : *gown*
Mother: *Tapping at the window and crying through the ...* Child: *lock*
Mother: *Are all the children in their beds? It's past eight ...* Child: *o'clock*

The mother was proud to pass on this rhyme of Scottish origin to her own child. ‘Wee Willie Winkie’ was written by William Miller in 1841 and published in Scottish, with English versions appearing later (Dolby 2012:92). This nursery rhyme has a lasting tradition as a kindergarten favourite. It was included in an archival programme plan held by the Auckland Association from 1921.⁸

A recurring favourite rhyming game, which featured during several group mat times, is: ‘Widdily, Waddily, Woo, an Elephant sat on Wam’ (Sam). Teachers sang it while working with small groups to release children from the mat, e.g. to wash their hands for morning tea. This worked on two levels: the child next in line was full of anticipation of the rhyme for their name, and the wider group of children was also skillfully anticipating. Teacher Geraldine sometimes mixed up the sequence of children to make this even more challenging.

The ABC (‘The Alphabet Song’) rhyme features in the Top Twenty Poems list used across the kindergartens (see Table 2). Children delighted in singing ‘The Alphabet Song’. If invited to choose a song or rhyme this is repeatedly a go-to choice by the kindergarten children. As it shares the same tune with ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ – arguably the most popular nursery rhyme – it is not surprising that ABC is learnt so readily. Teachers reported that a cheerful rendition of the ABC song usually earns

⁸ ‘1918–1921 lesson planner in a 1916 diary’, Box 20, Auckland Kindergarten Association, NZMS1275, Grey Collections, Auckland Public Library

Kindergarten phonics sessions at Edith Howes included poems with rhyme that connect with the initial sound of the day. For example, E for elephant in the poem ‘An Elephant’s Nose’ by Aileen Fisher was read to the children.

An Elephant’s Nose

An elephant’s nose is the handiest nose, the handiest nose of all.
It curves and sways in the cleverest ways and trumpets a bugle call.
It reaches high in the leafy sky for bunches of leaves to eat.
And snuffs around all over the ground and dusts the elephant’s feet.

(verse one of two verses)

When reading the poem, the teacher paused and encouraged the children to join in. Choices included poems that are uniquely NZ in context, as well as historical poems and rhymes. For example, to showcase the letter sound A, the poem ‘Aroha is Love’ was chosen:

Aroha is Love

Aroha is love and when you give it away,
Give it away, give it away,
Aroha is love and when you give it away,
It comes right back to you.

Teachers in the focus group articulated their pedagogical beliefs about phonics and poetry. They believe that nursery rhymes, songs and poems may be used purposefully to draw the young child’s attention to the sounds of spoken language. Teachers suggested that manipulating the sounds of rhymes may help children to become more sensitive to the sound structure of their language. A range of phonics games, such as changing the rhyming words to well-known nursery rhymes, is recommended by Hamer and Adams (2003:106). The majority of teachers in the research project have attended professional development training with Yolanda Soryl, a New Zealand teacher and phonics specialist, and were enthusiastic advocates of her pedagogy. Teachers explained that rhyming poems

use word families and different vowel teams to make the same sound. These views are supported by the writings of Yolanda Soryl. I quote:

The ability to hear and generate rhyme is the strongest indicator of literacy success. Children who can recite a nursery rhyme at the age of three are better readers at the age of seven than the three-year-olds who could not, according to UK researchers Lynette Bradley and Peter Bryant (MacMillan, 1997). When children can hear rhyme, it helps them appreciate that words that have the same sounds usually have the same letters.

(Soryl, 2013:28)

Weak phonological awareness skills are highly predictive of later reading difficulties. However, such weak skills are usually remediable with appropriate training, according to Mark Stewart, a NZ educationalist (Stewart, 2004). He subsequently recommends that young preschoolers be taught programmes that include the teaching and practice of nursery rhymes or other rhyming and alliteration activities. Teachers in this study are choosing to use poetry in both their formal and informal teaching to advance phonological awareness. These teachers have explored their own pedagogy in relation to phonics. They choose poems that reflect the cultural heritage of the children. They use the poems in a way that makes meaningful links to the interests of the children. The next section continues to look at how poetry contributes to future success in literacy. Alongside phonological awareness, children also need to grasp spatial awareness if they are to later succeed in reading and writing (Hamer & Adams, 2003).

5.7 Poetry develops spatial awareness

Concepts of spatial awareness are abundant in rhymes and poems for young children. Spatial awareness in this context means that the child will understand his/her location and the location of objects in relation to his/her body. In understanding these relationships, children come to learn concepts such as direction, distance and location.

Froebel intentionally chose poems and rhymes for his Mother Songs which involved hand and finger actions. Froebel wanted the Mother Songs to cosset the child as well as provide

games for the use of the senses and the manipulation of the limbs and the body. The Mother Songs were accompanied by illustrations that included guidance for the hand actions (Liebschner, 1992:102). In this section I have focused on poems and rhymes which intentionally work with children’s spatial awareness. To illustrate how this works I have highlighted four examples evident in the kindergartens in the research study: ‘Rere Atu, Rere Mai’, ‘Wind the Bobbin Up’, ‘I Blew a Bubble’, and ‘Waddely Archer’.

Rere Atu, Rere Mai

Māori words	English words
Rere atu rere mai	Fly away, fly back
Taku poi rere mai	My poi, fly to me
Rere runga	Fly up
Rere raro	Fly down
Rere tika e	Fly straight along
Rere tika e	Fly straight along

(Source: NZ Māori Song Book)

This is a traditional Māori action song, which is sung with poi (a soft ball on a chord). Whilst the English translation is available, it is usually only ever sung in Māori. The purpose of this waiata is to teach the Māori traditional poi actions. As a bonus, this song teaches positional understandings such as up, down, back, along, which are essential understandings for later early reading and writing (Hamer & Adams, 2003).

I bring into focus two nursery rhymes that featured in the Top Twenty Poems list (see Table 2): ‘Wind the Bobbin Up’ and ‘Incy Wincy Spider’. These poems engage the child with prepositional words and concepts such as up, down, over and under, across and together. Before children can begin to shape and write letters they need to intrinsically understand the concepts of up, down, beside, left and right, bigger and smaller. Research supports the view that rushing through this stage of understanding is counter-productive to later literacy success (Connell & McCarthy, 2014). ‘Wind the Bobbin Up’ is a

traditional English nursery rhyme of the 1890s. ‘Incy Wincy Spider’ has no known author, but is thought to have emerged from America in 1939 (Dolby, 2012).

Wind the Bobbin Up

Wind the bobbin up, wind the bobbin up,

Pull, pull, and clap your hands.

Wind the bobbin up, wind the bobbin up,

Pull, pull, and clap your hands.

Point to the window, point to the door,

Point to the ceiling, point to the floor.

Wind the bobbin up, wind the bobbin up,

Pull, pull, and clap your hands.

Incy Wincy Spider

Incy Wincy spider, climbed up the spout,

Down came the rain and washed poor Incy out,

Out came the sunshine and dried up all the rain,

And Incy Wincy spider, climbed the spout again.

I now shift attention to rhymes that require the participant to ‘cross the midline’. Crossing the midline is an indicator of bilateral coordination, meaning the ability to use both sides of the body at the same time. This is an important skill for many of our daily tasks. For example, climbing stairs, walking, typing on a computer, riding a bicycle, catching a beach ball, climbing ladders and the like all require bilateral coordination, which is also important for the development of cognitive skills, such as the ability to read, write and learn. Both sets of skills utilise both hemispheres of our brain. Crossing the midline, a skill developed in infancy, may be an important precursor to a child’s ability to learn (Connell & McCarthy, 2014). The following two action hand and finger rhymes, ‘I Blew a Bubble’ and ‘Waddely Archer’, both require the child to ‘cross the midline’. Of course these rhymes are merely presented to the child as fun and silliness.

I Blew a Bubble

I blew a bubble; it wasn't any trouble,
I blew a bubble, as big as this.
Right in the middle, with his fingers all a-twiddle,
Sat an elf with a fiddle and a bright green hat.
He fiddled with his bow; he scratched his nose;
He poked out his tongue and the bubble went POP!

Waddely Archer

Waddely Archer , Waddely Archer
Doodely doo, Doodely doo,
Waddely Archer , Waddely Archer,
Doodely do, doodely do.

It's just a simple song with nothing much to it, I like the rest, but the part I love
the best is the:

Doodley, Doodley, Doodley, Doodley,
Doodley, Doodley do.
Quack, Quack!

(Helen Wilberg, *Sounds Forty*)

Fun interactive rhymes teach children to spatially orientate themselves in relation to their surroundings. Engaging in these experiences is highly desirable as a prelude to formal reading and writing. Traditional Māori poi waiata and other Māori waiata incorporate actions that teach spatial awareness. Poetic experiences in both the English and Māori languages offer the prepositional language that describes spatial awareness. Froebel's guidance to include hand and finger rhymes with the Mother Songs still resonates with this current pedagogy.

5.8 Summary

Throughout this chapter we see threads of continuity in the poetry chosen for children across hundreds of years. The cultural capital of British and European poetic traditions is dominant. However, equally strong Māori and NZ poetic traditions are establishing themselves in the hearts and minds of contemporary kindergarten children. Children are sharing poetry with adults whilst engaging all of their senses, often enjoying closeness and affection. We have seen how the metrical and lyrical forms of poetry assist the learner to assimilate, retain and recall knowledge. Poetry is assisting them to build their intelligence in an holistic way. Through poetry, child and adult together, co-construct working theories of their shared world.

CHAPTER SIX

How are Poets Created?

6.1 Introduction

This chapter paints a colourful picture of passionate poetic people who have influenced the kindergarten movement. Chapter Five showcased ways akonga engage with poetry to co-construct knowledge and make sense of their emotions. Some of the dominant traditions and purposes of poetry in these kindergartens have been discussed. Teachers and children worked with poems from their known repertoire and at times wrote their own. In this chapter we will explore how and why teachers and children build their reservoir of knowledge about poems. This will lead into the notion of developing ‘a poetic disposition’. In Chapter Six, I explore the influences that shape akonga to develop such a poetic disposition. For instance, information is included about teachers’ poetic and musical mentors during the course of their lives.

During the gathering of the data phase, it was important to find out what teachers actually thought poetry was or indeed was not. This chapter analyses some of their thoughts on poetry and poses the question: Did teachers in this study view poetry in a positive light or value its place at kindergarten? This was integral to understanding what role cultural capital played in their use of poetry. Subsequently, some of the poetic influences on teachers’ lives through family, schooling, poets, musicians and mentors are explored.

Examining the creative process of writing original poems uncovered the trend towards poetic appropriation. The concept of appropriation refers to the practice amongst poets of adopting or being inspired by existing poetry and/or music to create their own poetry (Bodkin-Allen, 2013). Some vignettes of how appropriation works are offered in order to shed some light on this practice in some kindergartens. This leads on to further understanding the creative process for teachers who actively write poetry. There are also some emerging insights into the creative process that children experience as poets. I discuss the role poetry might play in uplifting and motivating teachers in their daily work with children.

6.2 What is poetry?

In Chapter One, I suggested that attempts to define what poetry is may be an impossible and limiting task. As the research progressed it became more apparent that the teachers all held different, and in some cases contradictory, views of what poetry might be. It was therefore important to the data gathering process to garner some sense of how teachers view poetry both for themselves and for the children. In this section, I present teachers' views in two parts. Firstly, comments that 'define' poetry and secondly, comments on the 'value' of poetry. Further analysis of these ideas will continue in Chapter Seven.

Here is a collation of views in teachers' own words, which were expressed during the focus group interview and discussions held at each kindergarten site following my visits. These comments illustrate their perceptions of what poetry is or is not. It should be noted that some of these comments contradict each other.

A poem is something that is shared through the generations, around a fire, or on someone's knee – it is spoken but not sung.

A song is not a poem.

A song can definitely be a poem too.

Poetry can be read or sung.

Verbally painting a picture: A poem can paint a picture in just a few words.

A collection of words – one idea. Poems stir emotion and imagination.

A poem is [a collection of] words that are carefully chosen for their meaning, sound and rhythm.

A much shorter way of getting a message across than a story.

Poetry is a reflection of a place in time, in history.

The illustrations that went with the nursery rhymes were very appealing to me.

You carry it in your heart.

You put in things that challenge their logic.

Fun and enlightenment. The meaning behind a poem is not always obvious until you start unpacking it.

Poems are fun and rhyming and extend their language pool.

I was deflated the day a teacher told me that poems don't have to rhyme.

Doesn't it get on your stick when a poem doesn't rhyme?

In Mandarin language poems always rhyme and they follow a structure.

I grew up only knowing Brazilian poetry as a child.

These views provide contextual insights for the remainder of this chapter. Some of the conflicting views are further discussed in Chapter Seven. The following is a collation of teachers' comments, which were also captured during the focus group interview and discussions on site at kindergartens. These comments explain how teachers further define their views on the purposes and values of poetry:

It's part of the culture of your family.

My grandmother spent a lot of time teaching me nursery rhymes, and as I am a new grandmother, I want to do the same thing for my grandchild.

Poetry is way of passing on the culture. Poetry holds the culture and it is the adults' role to pass it on to the children.

It's relationship building – sharing something that is fun – you are instantly making a connection or sharing something from home – an instant connection – pleasure.

That intimacy – sharing a giggle or a one-to-one lullaby – soothing a child.

Entertainment.

Nonsense.

When I am playing around with rhyme and rhythm such as “Wibbly Wobbly Woo, an elephant sat on you”, I am teaching children phonetics in a way they can understand.

Poetry captures their imagination.

You can tell from the language used the time in history the poem was written.

I used to think poetry was ‘over there’ and now I see it as ‘right here’. I am using poetry every day in my work, now.

Some of the teachers acknowledged that their views on what poetry is have shifted according to experiences at different times in their lives. Other teachers commented on how their opinions were changing as a result of being involved with this poetry research, in particular the group interviews. The sharing and exchange of ideas in this way altered some of their long-held beliefs.

6.3 Creating original poetry

Episodes of children engaging in free singing or chanting were recorded at three kindergartens. Initially, these expressions sounded somewhat incoherent. After playing the recordings many times it became clear that these children were freely mixing the sounds and phrases of known poems and songs in a fluid way, at times using both English and Māori. Such an example was recorded at Edith Howes kindergarten where Edie sang her own made-up poem in an unidentified rhythmic tune:

Circle heart, circle heart, circle heart
Pancake, Pancake, Monster Jack
Why are you, eat your pancake
And you [sic] teeth will fall out – hah!

It is interesting to observe that Edie’s four-line stanza poem has a metrical pattern of nine beats to the first line, followed by three lines that each has seven beats to the line.

Observations of this experimentation with words and nuances of language led me to consider whether this was the emergent stage of creative poetry composition. These instances of free ramblings occurred in settings where the vibrant and theatrical expression of poetry was encouraged. This could be an area to be further explored, in order to deepen our understanding of children as poets.

On three occasions during the research study children gathered around the audio recorder (smartphone) listening to each other and vying for their turn to record themselves singing and mixing up their own words and tunes. There were similarities in this experience with slam style of performance poetry. Slam is where original poetry is recited and judged by members of the group (Kraynak & Smith, 2009). Each child's efforts motivated the others around to them to reach for the recorder and have a turn, creating a synergy of poetic expression.

At Joy Cowley, Simone recorded interactions she had with four-year-old Adam whilst together in the sandpit. Adam announced he knew a poem that his seven-year-old sister had made up and Simone encouraged him to recite it.

Bobby and Daddy are walking up a track.
One goes out and one goes back
Bobby and Daddy are walking up a track
One goes out and one goes back.

Adam has an older sister who writes poems, and is now beginning to make up his own emergent poems such as:

Juicy Little Ice Blocks,
Juicy Little Ice Blocks,
Juicy Little Ice Blocks

At Edith Howes and Hirini Melbourne kindergartens teachers were recorded chanting and singing rhymes that they adopted spontaneously whilst working with a child. The following three examples all occurred in an outdoor setting:

“Sun, Sun, Mister Golden Sun, Please shine down on me,” chanted teacher Fern, swaying with a small group of children in the hope of evoking the sunshine to come out. This was a fun made-up rhyme for just that moment.

Lucy improvised, working with a child at the water trough to the tune of Frère Jacques: “I like bubbles, I like bubbles, Ryan does too”.

Caitlin encouraged children jumping on the rebounder by singing a simple repeated rhyme personalised for each child: “Here comes Eddie with his stripy socks. Here comes Eddie with his stripy socks. Jump! Jump! Jump!”

Teacher Rebecca took the kindergarten Zebra (stuffed toy) on her holiday to Melbourne. Zebra was photographed sharing all the experiences, and Rebecca accompanied the photos with her original poem. Photographs and this poem were then shared in all of the children’s profiles.

Up in the clouds, on the Qantas flight,
A stop for coffee, what a delight.
Chocolate shop, friends, I stop to chat.
A busy tourist in the Yarra valley,
A thirst-quenching drink to fortify.
Melbourne is the place to fly.

Some further examples show how teachers wrote short original poems as a way of highlighting some learning that happened, and these poems then featured in the child’s learning profile. Two such examples are:

Up the ladder, across the plank,
Jump high in the air
And land first off the rank
and
Working hard, creative fun,
Glitter shimmers, in the sun

Rebecca, who is a teacher, explains:

At kindergarten I try to write my own poetry ... it comes easily to me. So it’s a joy and a passion and I wanted to extend that passion for the children. When I write cards to people I go to my poetry books for inspiration.

In addition to their own original writing, teachers drew on their knowledge and resources of poetry to quote poems that seemed relevant to a child’s experience at kindergarten. An

example of this practice was a verse from the poem ‘The Hippopotamus Song’, to capture the joy of muddy play in the sandpit that day.

Mud, mud, glorious mud,
Nothing quite like it for cooling the blood.
So follow me, follow me, down to the hollow,
And there let me wallow in glorious mud.

Megan shared that her creative process of poetry writing differs if it is for a child audience or an adult audience. She explains:

I turn to poetry if there is some bigger emotion that I can’t express any other way – if it touches my heart. Poetry for me is joy in language and a way of expressing my emotion. I was read to as a child and my dad wrote poems, so it has always been in my life. I can teach children that poems are a way of expressing emotion. When I write a poem it starts with a first line. I wrote a poem for the cleaner, while driving in the car, and by the time I had driven home I had the first few verses. I see the picture in my head like a movie and then I put the words to it. I don’t find it difficult.

At James K. Baxter the kindergarten cleaner was retiring after thirty years of loyal service, and Megan felt compelled to write a poem for him to honour his work.

Each night has seen a man,
Arriving with a smile,
A dusting cloth, a vacuum cleaner
And toys fixed once in a while.

It knows this man, like itself,
Holds such treasured memories dear,
For this man too, has seen these things,
He has been coming many a year.

And so it is only fitting
As this man leaves and says goodbye,

That this small piece of wood goes with him
As a reminder of days gone by.

(last three verses of seven verses)

Frances shared that the motivation for writing her own poems comes from her lifelong love of language. She enjoys playing with the ways words interact and sound together. As well as writing poems, she will often spontaneously make up songs and rhymes when the children are playing, such as: “Look at Tui swinging, swinging, swinging on the swing”.

Megan and Frances collaborated on writing a lively and amusing poem that told the story of how the scrap metal robot was created at James K. Baxter Kindergarten. These teachers wanted to involve the children in a recycling project to create some garden art



Fig.10 Recycled scrap metal robot at James K. Baxter Kindergarten

sculpture. They used metal items such as an unused metal watering can and taps for their design. Children and families were able to revisit this experience through this original poem:

Our Scrap Metal Robot

The junk was all piled,
On a mat on the floor
With glimmers of metal,
Catching light from the door.

The children all watched
As each object was shared,
While Frances sat silently
And quietly feared.

‘How will I get this home?,
What will Murray say?’
He has to put this together,
It’ll take much more than a day!

(first three of twelve verses)

For some teachers, writing original poetry may not be their specialty. Geraldine prides herself on her dramatic delivery of poetry. She undertook years of speech training and achieved awards for this at the highest level. Her creative channel is to bring poetry to life through her vocals and drama.

Haana Wilcox, who is of Māori heritage, worked with kindergartens as an Enviroschools facilitator. In October 2014, she was prompted to create an original waiata: ‘He Ata Ataahua’, for the kindergartens in the Enviroschools programme. They were also in the poetry research study. Here is her poem with both Māori and English versions.

Māori Waiata

He Ata Ataahua

Tēnā koe Ranginui

Tēnā koe Papatūānuku

Ngā mihi ki a tātou

Ngā uri katoa

Kei te whiti mai a Tama-nui-te-rā

Kei te tangi ngā manu i ngā rākau

Kei te tipu ake ngā huawhenua

– i roto i te māra kai

English Translation

A Beautiful Day

Hello Ranginui

Hello Papatūānuku

Greetings to all of us

Their descendants

Tama-nui-te-rā is shining

The birds are singing in the trees

The vegetables are growing

in the food garden

He ata ataahua tēnei	This is a beautiful morning
He rā ataahua e	– a beautiful day
He koa i roto i ahau	I have joy inside me (I'm feeling great)
Tika tonu taku ara	My path continues straight before me
He koa i roto i ahau	(my unlimited potential lies before me)
Tika tonu taku ara	

Haana explained that the reason she wrote it was some people see karakia in the same bracket as prayer, and they might be non-religious. She was looking for a way to mihi to the Atua (Māori concepts of Gods) in a non-religious way. Haana shared a childhood memory of her sister during the 1970s singing ‘Oh, what a beautiful morning, Oh, what a beautiful day’, which is a song from the 1940s musical *Oklahoma*, written in America by Rodgers and Hammerstein (Wikipedia, accessed April 20th 2015). Haana was driving to the kindergarten and it was a glorious day and she was singing the Oklahoma song: “I thought, this is ridiculous. There are no cornfields here! We need a mihi to the Atua that is our kaupapa.”

When asked how the creative process worked to create this waiata, Haana offered this explanation:

There are times in my life when things just arrive and I feel they come through me, not necessarily from me, for some purpose. Each of us is the pointy end of our whakapapa. When things simply arrive they have come through me from people who have come before. It was an intuitive process and I did not have to strive for it. It was not a conscious process, but an idea that flowed in the moment.

Kindergarten teams developed their own waiata as a part of developing their bicultural identity. The composition of this waiata was done by a Māori advisor from a local tertiary institute in partnership with the Hirini Melbourne teaching team. This waiata is sung regularly in Māori, and in particular, to welcome visitors. It is sung to the tune of the English nursery rhyme ‘See Saw, Marjory Daw’, which was first recorded in print about 1765 in England (Dolby, 2012:164). The appropriation of this well-known nursery rhyme tune ensured it was easily learnt and recalled. The result of this creativity is a marrying of

an old English tradition with the Māori language. This waiata is only ever sung in the Māori language:

Nau Mai, Haere Mai,
Ki te Whare Tamariki,
O te (name)
Nau Mai, Haere Mai.

The teachers at Joy Cowley kindergarten similarly developed their own waiata with the assistance of a different Māori advisor in the context of a residential professional development experience. This waiata could also be described as their pepeha (the way you introduce yourself in Māori). Kelly explained that it reflected the ‘place-based’ learning they were undertaking as part of establishing their bicultural identity as a kindergarten (Carr et al., 2013). Such an experience resonates with the *Te Whāriki* aspiration:



Fig.11 Bicultural experience at Joy Cowley Kindergarten

Children develop knowledge about the features of the area of physical and/or spiritual significance to the local community, such as local river or mountain (MoE, 1996: Belonging Goal 1).

Again, this waiata is only sung in the Māori language:

Ko Te maunga
Ko Te maunga tu toa
Ko te moana mārino

Hei Ha, Hei Ha
Ko te whenua ātaahua
Ko Pukekura, te maunga
Ko Tutaekuri, te awa,

Hei Ha Hei Ha!
Ko te whenua, Otatara,
Te whenua.

This unique waiata places value on the mauri or spiritual life force that all living things have and should be appreciated and valued (Pere, 1991:12).

Both teachers and children have drawn on their previous knowledge and experience with poetry and music to create their own poetry. For several teachers this manifested itself in the creation of spontaneous rhymes that enhanced the teachable moment. Three teachers created more formal poems, which contained more specific poetic structures, and then put their poems to use for a particular purpose. Appropriation was a feature of both styles of their poetry creation. The examples of children creating poetry took the form of free-flow chanting, as well as the creation of simple poems, which had identifiable poetic devices. The children's poems expressed meaning that was relevant to their world. They were motivated to express an idea or emotion. The next section looks more closely at poetry as a motivator.

6.4 Poetry as a motivator

During the field visits I observed examples where teachers were intentionally using poetry to provide inspiration for themselves and parents about their roles in the lives of children. Each kindergarten teaching team held values and beliefs, which they communicated to their learning community. Poetry was one mechanism they used to share these philosophical beliefs.

An example is this poem, displayed on a wall at Hirini Melbourne Kindergarten:

Our children are our hope and real salvation
Treasure them and love them as jewels of this Earth
Share with them the love of mind, body and spirit
So they too can grow upward, forever seeking the light
To become the tall trees of the forest like Tane Mahuta
Where they will find the peace and the freedom

In knowing where they belong.

(No author is attributed to this writing)

And across town at Joy Cowley Kindergarten, this poem by Haim Ginott (1975) is positioned behind the adult toilet door:

I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanised or dehumanised.

Neither of these poems follows a rhyming framework. However, there are poetic devices that mark them as poetry not prose. For instance, in the quote from Haim Ginott there is:

- Use of analogy of climate and weather
- Juxtapositioning of the words miserable/joyous; torture/inspiration; humiliate/heal
- Metrical form to the statements.
- Abstract views communicated in a powerful yet pithy manner.

At James K. Baxter, there was a further illustration of how poetry was used to inform and motivate teachers and parents in their work with children. This original poem, written by Megan, is part of an information flyer for parents explaining how the curriculum works at kindergarten. Her purpose for writing it was to elevate the value of play. She could find nothing already written that communicated this in the way she envisioned.

I tried to teach my child with books;
He gave me only puzzled looks.
I tried to teach my child with words;
They passed him by, often unheard.
Despairingly I turned aside,

How can I teach this child, I cried?
Into my hand he placed the key,
Come, he said, play with me.

Teachers have sought out or written their own poems to communicate their views about early childhood education. They have intentionally displayed these poems on the walls and in brochures with the explicit aim of motivating others in their learning community to both understand and uphold their values and beliefs. Poetry has been used as tool for motivation.

6.5 Poetic influences

During the research process, teachers talked about the influences that have shaped their own interest in poetry. Some mentioned their own parents, with fathers getting a frequent mention. Several teachers recalled a strong influence from one particular parent, and in some cases, grandparents.

Hermione:

I remember Mum and Dad chanting nursery rhymes with us in the car, or walking down to get the bus ... they are part of our culture and I want to pass them on to my own children one day.

Georgia:

One of my earliest memories as a child is of my dad reading something about snug as a bug in a rug, and an armadillo on a pillow. I remember my dad had the book called *The Prophet* by Kahil Gibran, and many of those poems I copied into my diary. My grandma introduced me to Pam Ayres and the poems now remind me so much of my grandma's sense of humour.

Teachers spoke of mentors who have shaped their appreciation of poetry. They credited influential kindergarten and schoolteachers who are now retired or have passed away, as well as tutors from training providers in New Zealand. Four teachers recounted the practice of handwriting their own book of poems, as required during their music and

literacy courses at colleges of education. They spoke of how doing this by hand meant the poems were remembered and the resource created then held special meaning for them. This practice was in place from the 1950s through to the 1990s.

Teachers spoke of how the plethora of commercially published and available books and CDs in the past two decades has made this practice now obsolete. Teachers thought about and named other influences on their own poetic consciousness over the course of their lives. Some, such as Rebecca, named an actual poem that strongly influenced their adult world view. For her it was Walt Whitman's 'I Sing the Body Electric'. They identified and named musicians and poets who have influenced them. The following list provides some insight into the poetic influences that have shaped this group of kindergarten teachers over the past fifty to sixty years. These musicians and poets are presented as a list in alphabetical order of their last name:

- Linda Adamson;
- Pinky Agnew;
- Pam Ayres;
- Tanya Batt;
- Janet Channon/Wendy Jenson;
- The Doors;
- Pink Floyd;
- Kahil Gibran;
- Sam Hunt;
- Bob Marley;
- Rod McKeown;
- Nga Pipi series of Māori songs;
- Apirana Taylor;
- Tessa Rose (Tessa Grigg and Brian Ringrose);
- Radha Sahar;
- Walt Whitman;
- Helen Wilberg; and

- Julie Wylie.

Dame Marie Clay (1926- 2007) who was a Professor of Education at Auckland University, a renowned literacy researcher and founded the Reading Recovery programme in NZ, was mentioned in the context of being a tutor who was inspirational for Rebecca when she studied to become a teacher. Both Mary and Simone recall being specifically taught about poetry and its historical background during their training in Wellington and Palmerston North, respectively. These teachers, Mary and Simone, found this very motivating, as they then had a better understanding of the rhymes. Stella, who grew up in Zimbabwe, recalls learning English nursery rhymes such as ‘Pat-a-Cake’ and ‘Old MacDonald Had a Farm’. Also, during her secondary education in Zimbabwe, Stella was taught classical English poetry.

The majority of teachers did not have favourable memories of poetry as part of secondary school English experiences. These kindergarten teachers found that the poetry presented was stuffy, hard to understand and not relevant to their lives. This resonates with the findings of O’Neill, who expressed her concerns about the way poetry is taught in NZ secondary schools (O’Neill, 2007). Kelly recalled studying in formal English the poetry form of cinquain (a verse of five lines that does not rhyme). The emotion she recalls is one of not feeling she was creative enough to write a cinquain. That perception about poetry has changed to a more positive one since she become involved in early childhood.

Simone explains her responses to poetry at high school:

The love of it dried up a bit at high school level when we had to dissect poems, and having to write poems that got a bit tricky. It felt like pressure: Does it have to rhyme? Is it terrible? Am I going to fail because I don’t believe I can write poetry?

Not all teachers felt this way. Bella fondly recalls being inspired by John Keats’ 1820 poem, ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ at high school. Other teachers spoke of teachers who had made poetry fun, particularly at Playcentre, kindergarten and primary school. Early positive experiences of poetry with parents or grandparents established an interest and love of poetry for these teachers. Not all experiences with poetry, throughout their

education, were positive, and in some cases it actually diminished their confidence and interest in poetry.

Engagement with music and poetry in teachers' personal lives was formative along with inspirational experiences in the education sector. Teachers detailed how learning about poetry as a specific subject whilst they were trainee teachers prior to the 1990s was beneficial to their teaching ability.

6.6 Appropriation

Appropriation is a term adopted during this study to refer to the practice of writers of poems being inspired by either the words of a previous poem or the music associated with an established poem or song, in order to create something new. Appropriation has emerged as a recurrent theme in this study. In this context, it presents as a positive concept and as a natural part of the creative process. In this section, examples that demonstrate the universality of appropriation amongst poets and songwriters are presented. Such cultural appropriation could be also be viewed in a negative way (Rodgers, 2006). In some contexts, especially legal contexts, appropriation would be viewed as plagiarism and possibly cultural dominance (ibid).

Megan at James K. Baxter developed a highly energetic hip hop dance routine to teach the children to perform along with the words of Pharrell Williams' hit song 'Happy'. During 2014, this song was at the height of its popularity, and was heard by the children in both their home and kindergarten settings. It is poignant to note that debate thrives in musical circles over whether Williams has plagiarised Marvin Gaye's hit song 'Ain't that Peculiar' to create 'Happy'. During 2014 it had been proven in an American court case that he had plagiarised Marvin Gaye's 1977 hit, 'Gotta Give it Up' to create Williams' hit 'Blurred Lines' (Wikipedia, accessed 28 May 2015). A more generous view could be to consider that Williams was inspired by others and merely appropriates rather than plagiarises the music and poetry of other artists.

During the research study, there was evidence of teachers adapting rhymes using the base of a well-known rhyme. Following is an illustration of how the rhyme, ‘Two Little Dicky Birds’ has been appropriated:

Two Little Dicky Birds

Two little dicky birds,
Sitting on a wall;
One named Peter,
One named Paul.
Fly away Peter,
Fly away Paul
Come back Peter,
Come back Paul.

This rhyme was first printed in *Mother Goose’s Melody*, 1765, in England (Dolby 2012:113). Hermione changed the rhyme to make it more culturally relevant to the NZ setting using:

Two little native birds,
Sitting in a tree;
One named fantail,
One named tui.
Fly away fantail,
Fly away tui
Come back fantail,
Come back tui.

Hermione uses finger puppets to further bring the rhyme alive. She explains the value of using both the traditional verse and then introducing her NZ native birds version: “The children have the element of expectation but I also like to coax them to think in a different way – to mix it up a bit.”

At James K. Baxter they sang an appropriated version of the original rousing gospel song ‘He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands’. This appropriated version was published by

Daria's Earth Day CDs, with the purpose of promoting sustainable living. The song is cheerfully preaching the guiding principles of the Enviroschools programme: to take care of the land and each other. The title of this version is only slightly changed to 'We've Got the Whole World in Our Hands':

We've Got the Whole World in Our Hands

We've got the whole world in our hands. (Repeated four times)

We should recycle now – all that we can

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle – all that we can

We should recycle now – all that we can

We've got the whole world in our hands.

(Two verses of six verses)

At Hone Tuwhare there is a long-standing tradition of singing the 'Pack Away' song as a prelude to the children taking responsibility for putting equipment away at the end of the kindergarten session. Many years ago, Tui appropriated the tune of 'Happy Birthday' to create the 'Pack Away' song. It has been sung daily ever since, accompanied by children clapping their hands and beating the rhythm on their knees. This rhyme is simple and successfully focuses the children for the tasks ahead:

It's pack away time right now,

It's pack away time right now,

It's pack away time right now,

Pack Away time right now!

Appropriation features in this section as a common creative tool. Some of the motivation for appropriation was to create material that better reflected the NZ cultural context, or to personalise a poem for a particular person, situation or message.

6.7 Teaching resources

Throughout this chapter the focus has been on poems that have been created by teachers and children along with life experiences that have influenced them. To complete this

picture we now consider the teaching resources that were found to be in use at the research sites.

There were many examples of poetry books in the children's library where well-known rhymes have been appropriated to create new ones. For example, a whole series of books based on the traditional English nursery rhyme, 'There Was an Old Woman Who Swallowed a Fly' was found. The format and tune was retained but the words significantly changed. Often the motivation for such appropriation is to create a new poem that better fits the cultural context of New Zealand.

Each kindergarten owned and displayed books that promoted the use of poetry for both adults and children. These were usually stored and utilised in several different places. On the children's bookshelves there were some dedicated poetry books as well as anthologies that contained both books and stories. From my observations, the number of such books easily accessible to children was limited. Poems were frequently recorded in children's profile books when there had been a poignant learning experience associated with that poem. Each kindergarten had an attractive and quite extensive range of beautifully illustrated books with accompanying CDs, such as 'Puff, the Magic Dragon', on an adult shelf, which were put aside for teacher-directed group times. Teachers also had small, and sometimes personal, poetry anthologies, which were found in the teachers' offices. These anthologies ranged from the *Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book* (1955), edited by Iona and Peter Opie, *This Little Puffin: a Treasury of Nursery Rhymes, Songs and Games* compiled by Elizabeth Matterson in 1970, through to the most recent purchase of *A Treasury of NZ Poems for Children*, edited by Paula Green and published in 2014.

Two of the kindergartens had attractive poetry cards displayed at children's level, in both inside and outside play areas. Children revisited the poems they knew, and recited them often, cued by an attractive illustration on the card; and sometimes adults actively read the cards with the children. Joy Cowley continues the long-established practice of sending poems home, similar to a book loan, in its own fabric bag. Mary believes that this provides a direct invitation for the parent to share the poem with their child. She believes this elevates the status of poems for the child and their family. One kindergarten had an extensive collection of handwritten poems and songs on poster charts. These were

predominantly used as props for group mat times. All kindergartens had attractive posters of poems with illustrations as part of their wall displays. Google and YouTube were common resources for children to find, with the guidance of a teacher, a favourite poem or song such as Pharrell Williams' 'Happy', or 'Let it Go' from the movie *Frozen*. Information Communication Technology (ICT) was prominent as contemporary resources for engagement with poetry both at kindergarten and home. For instance, iPods, iPads and iPhones were resources that children used in their home settings. Whereas, karaoke sound systems, laptops and data projectors were common ICT resources used at the kindergartens. ICT clearly has a part to play as a tool for the access, recall, enjoyment and memorisation of poetry.

6.8 Summary

Vignettes from this chapter, show that having a rich poetic repertoire emerges as vital for the instinctive promotion of poetry as a teacher. Teachers in this study have built their repertoire up from reading poetry, hearing poetry and music, experiences in their own families, and from professional teaching mentors. These teachers also embraced a bicultural world view of poetry. Children and teachers, who were imbued with poetry, were adept at using poetry spontaneously in their interactions and writing. A picture emerges of a community of learners that is sympathetic to creative expression and thus generating and encouraging further creativity with poetry.

For the teachers in this study, the trigger and pathway to creative poetry writing varied for each person. Teachers explained how their perceptions of what poetry is are not static, but rather shifted through a lifetime. Specific examples from this chapter demonstrated how cultural capital moves and merges to enrich poetry and poetic ideas. Appropriation was one of the vehicles for the merging of cultural capital. Examples of how poetry has a role in uplifting the spirits and motivation of teachers have been presented. Teachers drew on such poems that were insightful and pithy reminders of the moral, and philosophical messages they valued.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Discussion

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the findings from Chapters Four, Five and Six and suggest some insights regarding the research questions that have shaped this study. The research questions were:

In what ways does poetry align to the cultural capital in kindergarten settings?

What are the dominant and other traditions and purposes of poetry in kindergarten settings?

I begin by discussing how teachers viewed poetry and how they made choices about poetry based on social values that prevail at a particular time in their wider world. After considering all the aspects revealed in this study I offer a useful definition for poetry for the kindergarten setting. This definition is a way to crystallise some of the key concepts that have emerged from this study.

The ways in which poetry aligns with cultural capital in these kindergartens are made clear. This includes the ways in which poetry aligns with the cultural capital of Te ao Māori. A summary of the traditions of poetry in kindergartens is presented. Following on from this, reasons are offered for why these unique traditions should be preserved and treasured. There is a more global examination of the countries and cultures that have exerted influence on poetry in kindergartens. The practice of appropriation has emerged as a common theme in this study. The role of appropriation as a creative tool is considered, along with related issues around ethical practices. A summary and discussion of how poetry is used for specific purposes in the kindergarten setting follows. Finally, a pyramid model of how children and teachers express their appreciation for poetry is presented.

7.2 Defining poetry

An emerging theme from the research analysis is that the participants' views on poetry were not static. Teachers' perceptions of poetry waxed and waned throughout their lifetimes and were sometimes positive and sometimes not. Their stories told how exposure to pleasurable poetic experience in childhood built a lifelong poetic disposition. Later experiences built on or depleted that disposition. The findings presented in Chapters Four, Five and Six gave examples of how poetry that is considered suitable to share with children changes over time. The inherent values and messages teachers wish to impart to children shifts with society's social norms. From Froebel's time in the 1840s up until about the 1960s, overtly Christian messages were deemed not only acceptable but desirable in kindergarten settings. A significant shift in philosophical beliefs has been the implementation of early childhood as a bicultural experience, with mana given to the cultural heritage of Māori. Subsequently, Māori poetry, which was close to invisible in kindergartens before 1970, only became noticeable in the late 1970s. From 1980s onwards the NZ Education Department began to require and encourage teachers in early childhood services to actively include Māori language and culture in their programmes (Orange, 2004). Māori poetry now proudly sits centre stage in the kindergartens in this study.

Another illustration of changing social views is the pathway of NZ's national anthem, which featured in this study. From settlement and colonization from the 1840s, Britain's 'God Save the Queen' was adopted by NZ without question, or even a process as a colonial nation. In 1973, bilingual versions of a national anthem that represented the emerging identity and autonomy of NZ were formally adopted. This anthem, 'God Defend New Zealand' contains references to Christianity and war. In 2014, some New Zealanders questioned their commitment to those values, and therefore the suitability of the current national anthem. Some saw the need for an anthem that reflects the diversity of religious beliefs and inclusive character of NZ as a nation (*Sunday Star Times* 2014:A10). Teachers make decisions about the poetry they use in kindergartens based on the social beliefs and values that are dominant at that time and place. However, aspects of the cultural capital they align with shifts over time.

The contention over what is a song and what is poetry featured in the interviews and my research considerations. The blurred borders between song, music and poetry have been illustrated and considered. A conclusion from this study is that a poem can also be a song. Poetry traverses the media of written, spoken or recited, chanted, sung and rap forms. The inherent components of poetry are musical – there is metre, beat, rhythm and possibly rhyme (Styles, 1998). The majority of teachers in this study were in agreement with this view, and even those who initially disagreed began to rethink these boundaries. When some song lyrics are presented in the written form, it becomes clear that what you are looking at is poetry – whether it is said or sung. An example of this from the research is Don McLean’s ‘Starry, Starry Night’. Matthew Zapruder, writer for the *Boston Review*, in an online poetry forum, explains the difference in this way:

Words in a poem are set against the context of silence, whereas the lyrics of a song are set against music ... It seems absurd to me to contend that lyrics inherently have less literary merit than poetry, or are easier to create, or are less valuable in a cultural or human sense, and therefore somehow do not deserve the rarified title of “poetry.” But I also think the desire to consider lyrics as literature reflects some unfortunate and persistent biases that are detrimental to both poetry and song. This desire presumes that poems, because they are “literature,” must be serious ...

(Zapruder, 2012)

This study has demonstrated the way that poetry and music collaborate. Songs can be viewed as poems, and a poem can also be a song. Why does it matter? Because it changes the way a teacher or parent may view its value. The majority of teachers in this study expressed a strong preference for poems that rhymed. The evidence gathered in this study showed that non-rhyming poems were also in use. During the research process teachers have been challenged to rethink some of their perceptions of what might qualify as poetry. One notion of poetry that emerged from the interviews with teachers was that poetry was something that was hauled from dusty leather-bound books and that it was lofty, academic and not accessible to ordinary people. This resonates with Bourdieu’s view that the dominant class is the holder of cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2000).

Several teachers shared that their perception of poetry has changed as a result of engagement in this research study and they now see poetry as a contemporary experience, which is part of their daily teaching. Sally, a teacher at Hirini Melbourne, highlighted this shift with her reflective comment: “I used to think poetry was ‘over there’ and now I see it as ‘over here’, and I am using it every day.”

This heightened consciousness allows teachers to see that poetic form exists in the humblest rhymes. Their consciousness of the value of what they are co-constructing with children is raised and this may make for a more effective and satisfying teaching experience. As the threads of this study come together, with views from the literature, teachers’ views, and my research experiences, I now offer a useful definition of poetry for the kindergarten context:

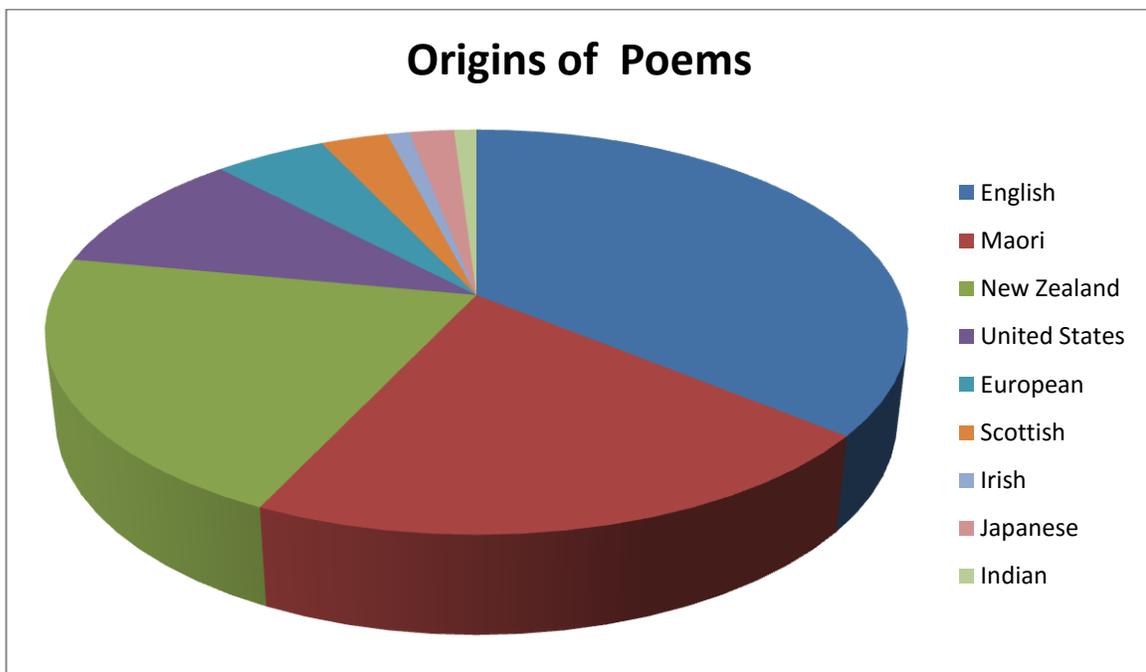
A poem is a set of words that are carefully chosen for their meaning, sound and rhythm. The purpose of a poem is to succinctly convey an idea or an emotion. A poem can be communicated in writing, by recitation, chant, song or rapping, with or without musical accompaniment and physical actions. Poetry carries the cultural heritage and values of people across place and time.

7.3 Aligning with cultural capital

One of the findings of this study offered a window in to the specific poetry that was in use during the data collection period of September 2014 to February 2015. This was captured in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 – Matrix of Recorded Poems, records a set of poems which were actively in use during the observations at each of the six sites. Each of the six lists contain poems that were ‘signature’ poems for that kindergarten only, along with poems that reflected popular culture and favourites for that setting. There was variance as well as commonalities across these six lists. After applying the analysis tool, which was explained in Table 1, a further list of twenty poems, Table 2, was created. Poems that were actively in use in two or more sites were moved to Table 2. In this way it is possible to deduce a list of poetry that was persistent across the six kindergarten sites. It was then possible to analyse a picture of cultural heritage from both of these lists. Half of the poems in the Top Twenty Poems list (Table 2) are traditional nursery rhymes that

originated from England. In Chapters Four, Five and Six there has been some exploration of the historical backgrounds to individual poems. It is also interesting to take a broader view of the global influences of this poetry. The diagram below visually depicts the countries and cultures that have been identified as contributing to the development of poetry in Napier kindergartens, in this study. This diagram captures the country origins of poetry that were ‘identified’ from all the poems recorded in Table 1 – Matrix of Recorded Poems, in this study. It is acknowledged that this may not be a definitive list of countries and cultures.

Fig.12 Global influences on poetry found in Napier kindergarten research sites in 2014



It is now useful to revisit Bourdieu’s notion that cultural capital inherently favours the dominant social class, which was presented in Chapter One (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2000). The diagram above depicts a shift and evolution of the cultural capital that is represented through poetry in these kindergarten settings. The green wedge represents original poetry written by non-Māori NZ writers. Whilst the red wedge represents poetry that is inherently Māori or English poems translated into Māori.

7.4 Te ao Māori as cultural capital

In Chapters Four, Five and Six, examples of differing forms of Māori poetry were presented. These included the language forms described in Māori as karakia, whakatuaki, waiata, pepeha, mihi and moteatea. Each of these language forms made use of poetic devices such as imagery, metaphor and lyrical forms. The findings drew out distinctions between authentic Māori poetic forms, for example ‘Pungawerewere’ and ‘Rere Atu, Rere Mai’, that were originally written in Māori and those existing poems that had been translated from English into Māori. In this study esteemed Māori poetry writers such as Hirini Melbourne were identified as contributing to poetry in use. Poems that are originally written in Māori, such as ‘Waiata Mihimihi’, hold Māori concepts as well as the language. Often such concepts are not easily translated from English to Māori, and vice versa. This was evident in the differing translations of ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’ into Māori. If poetry was originally written in Māori, teachers tended to use it only in that way in their interactions with children. If it was an English translation such as ‘Happy Birthday’/‘Ra whānau ki a koe’, then both English and Māori versions were used. Teachers articulated that their motivation for including the translated version was to be bicultural in their practice. This leads to some reflection as to whether teachers might seek out more Māori poetry that is authentically Māori to extend their bicultural journey. There may still be a place for translations and transliterations. Te ao Māori is an important and dynamic part of the cultural capital in these kindergarten settings.

7.5 Traditions of poetry in kindergartens

This study has demonstrated that the kindergarten movement has a history of poetic traditions. The merit of some of these poetic traditions has been unpacked in previous chapters and a conclusion is now reached that the continuation of them has educational benefits. One such tradition is that poetry happens in the outdoors as well as the indoors. Being outdoors facilitates the connection with nature that lends itself to freedom of expression. The outdoors also offers a degree of privacy and space for movement as an accompaniment to poetry. It promotes connection with nature and enables children to gain what Froebel described as ‘a sense of the unity of all things’ (Liebschner, 1992).

Some of Froebel's Mother Songs, in *Mutter und Koseleider*, still thrive in the contemporary NZ kindergartens in this study. 'My Pigeon House', 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star', 'Where is Thumbkin?' and 'Pat-a-Cake' are four such examples that were presented in previous chapters and can be found in the list of Mother Songs in Susan Blow's 1895 anthology, *The Songs and Music of Friedrich Froebel's Mother Play*. Froebel's original guidance to include hand actions and finger plays with poems still resonates with current educational thinking. Contemporary understandings of neuroscience now underpin the benefit of significant adults in the life of the young child sharing rhymes and poems along with accompanying finger plays and hand actions (Shore, 2007). These benefits encompass attachment, spatial awareness, speech development and phonological awareness (Adams & Hamer, 2003; Stewart, 2004; McCaleb & Mikaere-Wallis, 2005; and Soryl, 2013). For the older preschooler, poetry allows for rules of grammar and logic to be broken. The mechanisms of poetry and rhymes are critical tools for early language acquisition and subsequent literacy.

The findings revealed examples of where children memorised and recalled five, six or seven verses of poetry without difficulty. Such examples were 'Let it Go', 'Puff, the Magic Dragon' and 'The NZ National Anthem' (both English and Māori versions). The common factors were repetition, motivation and accompanying music. Teachers in this research offered theories that hand and body actions were powerful pathways for both memory recall and a way for children to initially learn a poem. They noted this was especially helpful where children were very young, had English as a second language or had a special learning need. In Chapter Five the learning outcomes of teaching traditional Māori waiata that included actions, such as Rere Atu, Rere Mai, were described. Froebel's vision of mother and teacher involving the child with finger and hand actions as they sang the Mother Songs resonates with the Guy Claxton's view of intelligence (Claxton & Lucas, 2010). Claxton, a British educational academic, gives emphasis to the importance of allowing physical activity for the learner as a pathway for learning and building intelligence. Claxton offers a quote from Jacob Bronwoski to crystallise this thinking: "The hand is the cutting edge of the mind" (Claxton & Lucas, 2010:51).

This study has considered other traditions that are cherished by kindergarten teachers, children and families over time. One such tradition is that poetry is often performed with aspects of drama and theatre. Kindergartens have a proud tradition of performing poetry as an everyday occurrence and to mark special events such as Enviroschools reflection days, Grandparent Day and Christmas celebrations. Circle games are part of another tradition that is treasured by kindergarten teachers and children. These include the words, music and actions of circle games such as ‘Ring-a-Ring o’ Roses’, ‘In and Out the Dusty Bluebells’ and ‘Sandy Girl’, which have been handed on from teacher to teacher over generations. Part of this heritage includes the knowledge and skills of the kindergarten teachers themselves, who have honed their craft from teachers who have come before. Ouvry, comments on early childhood teaching in the British context (Ouvry, 2012). She raises concerns about the potential loss of such teaching expertise and active engagement with children. She comments:

Although there is much more music available for children to hear, electronically, the important element of the personal transmission is missing. Does this matter? I think it does and neuroscience backs this up. Brains like to imitate! Some neuroscientists believe that the muscles that are employed by the adult to sing to the child are mirrored in the child’s throat, causing empathy of expression. It is important to keep music live and part of the relationship between adult, practitioner or parent, and the child.

(Ouvry, 2012:109)

Some classic kindergarten poetry traditions such as the ‘Teddy Bears’ Picnic’, written in America in 1907, and ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’, written in 1959, also by an American writer, withstand the test of time. From Froebel’s era, through the twentieth century and to the present day, poetry relating to the seasons has prevailed. ‘Daffodowndilly’ featured at Margaret Mahy annually in spring, not due to lack of imagination on the part of the teachers, but rather a desire to pass on through the generations an iconic poem written by English children’s author A. A. Milne. Part of kindergartens’ cultural capital is the legacy of people who have contributed to early childhood poetry and music. In Chapter Six teachers highlighted such people who have inspired them either by firing up their

passions or by writing and promoting poetry and music that they use in their work with children. Participants reported that as a result of involvement with this study they have developed a deeper consciousness of the history and value of kindergarten traditions.

7.6 Appropriation as cultural capital

American teacher Anindita Basu recognised the widespread practice of appropriation amongst poetic communities in her thesis ‘Full-Contact Poetry’ (Basu, 2000). She observed that poets read, write and appropriate from each other’s work. Richard Rodgers, a communications academic, groups cultural appropriation into the four categories of “exchange, dominance, exploitation and transculturation” (Rodgers, 2006:1). The political issues around cultural appropriation are too complex to properly address in this study. It may be that the examples of appropriation that have become evident in this study fit one or more of Rodger’s categories. A strong motivation for appropriation is that teachers are seeking poetry that has relevant sociocultural meaning for them (Rogoff, 2003). In Chapter Six there were illustrations of how teachers adapted traditional rhymes to include the names of NZ native birds so that it was more meaningful for the children. In examples from the findings, writers had utilised an existing piece of music and created their own words. This practice has led to an opulent cultural fusion; for example, the original Māori waiata, He Ata Ataahua, set to the tune of the Rodgers and Hammerstein music Okalahoma, which was discussed in Chapter Six. Haana Wilcox described in Chapter Six how we are all a product of what has come before: “We are all at the pointy end of our whakapapa.” She made the point that the culture and creativity that is within us has come from the past. When we consider appropriation in this light it can be seen more about honouring the influences on us than stealing from them.

7.7 A pyramid of poetry appreciation

This analysis of engaging with poetry on three levels is presented below in a pyramid diagram. The pyramid is another way to represent the levels of engagement seen in this research study. The stable base of the pyramid is ‘building a repertoire of poetry’ and this represents the majority of the engagement with poetry. The middle level is choosing

poetry for a purpose. And the third and top segment of the pyramid is ‘writing original poems’. Its place at the top of the pyramid signals that this type of engagement occurs less frequently.

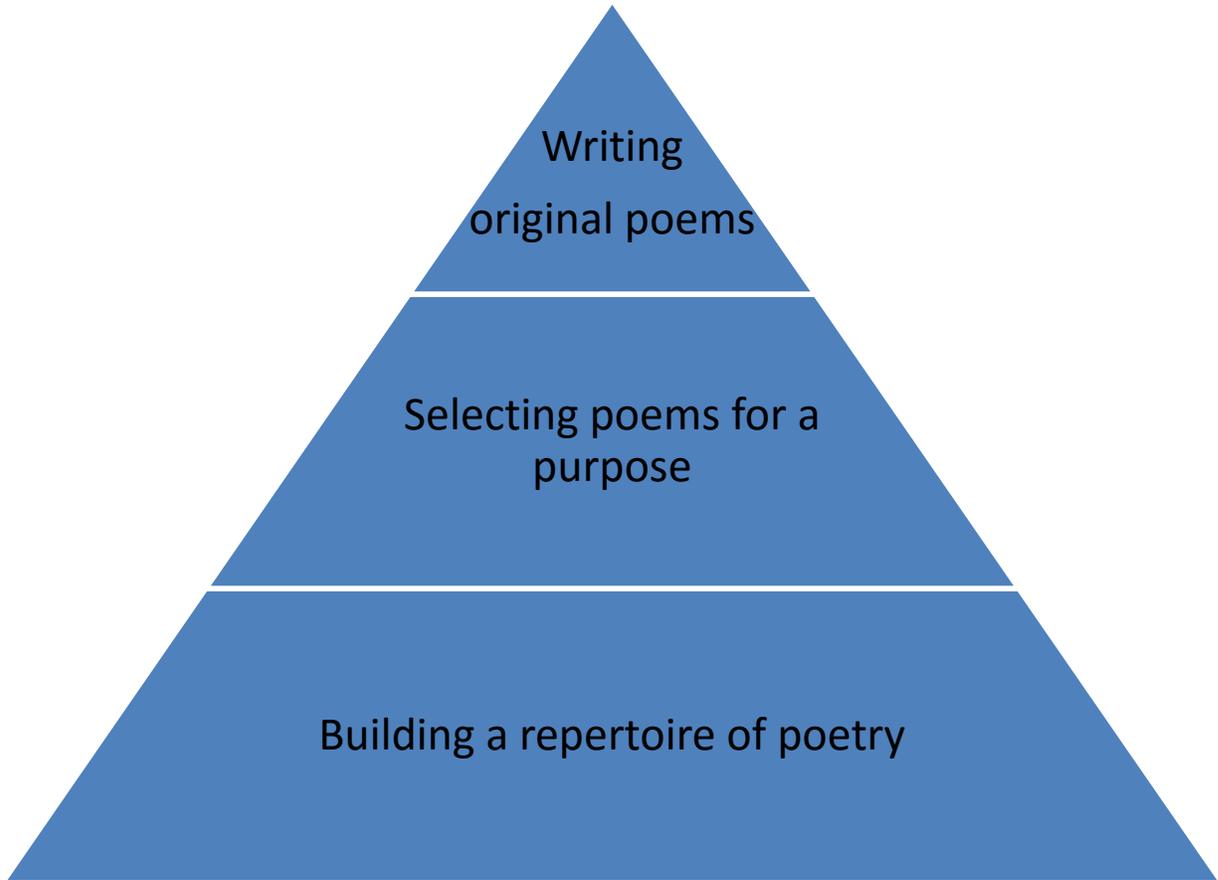


Fig.13 A pyramid of poetry appreciation

A pyramid of appreciation, which defines how children and teachers in this study appreciate poetry on several levels, has been constructed. Here, these three levels are discussed. On the first level, poetry is read, heard and performed to satisfy intellectual, emotional or spiritual needs. The revisiting of known and loved poems provides pleasure, along with feelings of identity, nostalgia or belonging. The sheer enjoyment of playing with the sounds, lyrics and accompanying music is satisfying in its own right. For many, poems paint a picture that captures the essence of an idea or a feeling. Participants attributed such engagement with poetry as adding to their ability to make sense of their world. For others, poetry provided emotional resolution.

The second level is having a repertoire of poetry that teachers and children know they can revisit, enjoy or use for a particular purpose. This happened by accessing familiar poetry collections, children's profile books, using the Internet, sound systems and in some cases handmade personal resources. This reservoir of known poetry was built up over time through previous experiences. Teachers shared how valuable this repertoire was as a tool to co-construct understandings of literacy, phonics, humour, numeracy, spatial awareness, nature and science. Teachers selected and sought out poems that would help them express their emotions to others in their community. Teachers intentionally placed poetry on the walls and in children's profile books, for the adult reader. Their aim was to elevate the mind of a parent or teacher to higher values when they may find themselves submerged in the mundaneness of daily responsibilities. At kindergarten, poems were chosen to impart value messages such as caring for the environment and caring for each other. Teachers recognised poetry as a powerful motivator.

On the third level, children and teachers engaged as creators of their own original poetry. In this study, teachers who actively wrote their own poems came into focus. These ranged from a quick, spontaneously composed rhyme through to longer poems that had more complex poetic structures. Prior to this study this expertise was not well-known and these poets were reluctant to acknowledge their poetry. This reluctance was not overtly articulated. However, requests to share their poems were typically met with shyness and humility. This has raised unanswered questions about how the kindergarten movement can further acknowledge and grow these poetic endeavours. There were examples of children orally composing their own simple poems to express emotion and gain pleasure from manipulating words. In other situations children manipulated fragments of known poems to create their own 'free flow' expressions. From analysing these verbal expressions more closely, I suggest that they were applying a set of internalised patterns of linguistic and musical knowledge that they had gained from previous experience. They then drew on these patterns to create their own poetic expressions, which initially sounded like several poems jumbled together. I suggest this process mirrors the one that babies and toddlers go through when they learn their first sounds and words, and then draw on those to form intentional short sentences (MoE 2000; Hamer, 2005). A great deal more investigation is needed to fully understand what happens in the formation of these

creative expressions. Further investigations are required to unfold the factors that would foster this higher level of creativity for both teachers and children. What is the best way to nurture a poetic community?

As this chapter comes to a close it is timely to reflect on the insights provided in response to the original research questions. A working definition for poetry in the kindergarten setting has been suggested. This research study has revealed a thriving poetic community. The role of poetry in this study was broader than just a curriculum tool; it was rather a life pulse that moved through the whole kindergarten setting. Some trends of pedagogy and practice have become more apparent. Cultural capital has been shown to be influential in the choices and preferences for poetry. For the NZ kindergarten setting, that cultural capital began and continues with enduring roots from other countries – predominantly Britain and Europe. Kindergartens are now increasingly immersing themselves in cultural capital held in the poetry of Māori – the tangata whenua of NZ. Alongside this a swathe of original poetry written by non-Māori New Zealanders became visible in this study.

I now take leave from my researcher role and shift my focus as an Education Manager to ask: ‘So, what do the findings from this research study suggest for early childhood practitioners?’

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

The impetus for undertaking this study has come about through my employment role as an education manager, providing pedagogical support and guidance for kindergarten teachers.

This research study has deepened my interest in poetry and convinced me that there is further potential for poetry. Early childhood teachers and training providers may choose to raise their awareness of a range of issues. This brief chapter concludes with two sets of suggestions for practice. The first set makes suggestions for professional development and dialogue that will deepen awareness of poetry's contribution to early childhood education. The second set identifies questions for further research study concerning poetry and teaching.

8.2 Set one

Poetry study in ECE under graduate teacher training programmes

Anecdotal evidence from this study suggests that the focus on poetry has waned in teacher education programmes for ECE teachers in the past decade. The intentional inclusion of poetry study in under graduate ECE teacher-training programmes could be reviewed.

Professional development for graduate teachers

Experienced teachers in this study have expressed a need for more opportunities to extend and share their poetry knowledge and confidence. There are possibilities for poetic communities to emerge amongst networks of teachers who wish to further their passion for all things poetic. Teachers would gain from professional development experiences that nurture their poetry skills and knowledge.

Poetry as a teaching tool

Chapter Five detailed some of the ways that poetry contributed to the development of intelligent minds. Poetry was visible as a powerful learning tool in the co-construction of subject knowledge such as science, numeracy, phonics and logic. Teachers are invited to find further creative ways in which they can build intelligent minds through poetic discovery.

Value poetry as a cultural artefact

Throughout this study, the notion that poetry holds the culture of children and their families across place and time was a recurrent theme. Teachers are encouraged to fully grasp the idea that poetry can be a portal to both understand and validate another person's culture.

Value traditions

This study has drawn attention to the relevancy of the Froebelian teachings of the Mother Songs and their values as a unique kindergarten heritage. Kindergarten teachers are encouraged to treasure these traditions of poetry whilst still remaining responsive to emergent interests. The mantle is now passed on to the upcoming generations of teachers to foster the traditions of Froebel's Mother Songs, teacher-facilitated circle games, poetry performances and the enduring practice of learning from each other.

Extend poetry collections for children

In Chapter Five the provision of poetry resources was discussed. Teachers may choose to undertake a self-review that considers how accessible poetry resources are to the children. Such considerations could include: increasing and broadening their collection of poetry resources, placing resources where children can make their own choices, and extending resources into a wider range of cultures and languages. Teachers may choose to consider the unique value of poem cards for use in their centres, as well as a loan system for poem cards for the child's home.

Māori translations

This study has shown that as teachers embraced a bicultural curriculum, resources became available which included English poetry that had been translated into Māori. This

had the effect of creating translations that may not be so meaningful in Te Reo Māori. A pleasing trend was that teachers were increasingly accessing more authentic Māori poetry that was originally written in Māori with Māori concepts. As a follow-on from this study, I invite teachers to consider and discuss the authenticity of the Māori poetry they use with children.

8.3 Set two

Suggestions for further research

In addition to the suggestions for teachers and training providers to consider I have identified four possibilities for further formal research studies.

1. 'Free flow' expressions of poetry

In Chapters Four and Six, incidents of children's 'free flow' poetic expressions were explained. There is a need to further investigate the factors that may promote or hinder such emergent creativity. More research is needed to understand whether these activities may represent a significant stage of abstract thinking and language development in young children. Research is needed to enquire whether such language activities might result in emergent poetry composition with the assistance of a skilled adult. Also, are such language activities an indicator of later literacy success?

2. Tangata whenua and poetry

The limitations of the knowledge and expertise of the Pakeha researcher for this study were made clear at the beginning of this thesis. There is a great deal more to discover about the emergence of Māori poetry in mainstream early childhood settings in NZ and beyond. Further research from a deeper Māori perspective would be enlightening and timely at this point in time. I suggest that this would ideally be undertaken by a Māori researcher with a strong interest in this area. Alternatively, such research might be undertaken by a team of researchers who are able to collaborate and work in partnership with Māori.

3. Poetry in multicultural languages

This study uncovered the use of only a small amount of poetry in languages other than English and Māori. It is likely that children and families from the wide range of cultures that are represented in kindergartens and the wider ECE world would enjoy and benefit from hearing poetry in their own languages. I would recommend further research to discover whether or not this is occurring successfully elsewhere. Additionally, further research to discover the factors that would support teachers to promote poetry in other languages would be desirable.

4. How are poets created?

This study identified that a small group of teachers functioned at the top of the 'Pyramid of Appreciation' and actively wrote their own poetry. By doing this they acted as literary role models to the children in their care. The poetry they wrote enriched the learning for the children and their families. It remains unclear what specific factors prevented or enabled these teachers to pursue poetry writing and performance. Some further research in early childhood settings would assist educators to better understand the climate that supports teachers to write and perform their own poetry.

8.4 Conclusion

I conclude this research study with a quote, written in 1882 by Baroness B. Von Marenholtz-Bülow, who was a strong advocate of Froebelian philosophy:

The entire kindergarten is poetry for a child. Both by the impressions of Nature and by the creations of the Beautiful in forms, in colours, and in sounds the sentiment of beauty is here called forth in a hundred ways.

(Von Marenholtz, in Goldammer, 1882:26)

TABLES

Table 1 and Table 2

Criteria for the recording of poems in Table 1

The term poem is inclusive of the concepts of poems, rhymes, poetic songs sung with music, waiata, karakia and whakatauki.

Matrix of Recorded Poems

The criteria for compiling this list of poems are that:

- each poem was heard and/or recorded by the researcher during a kindergarten session in the course of the data collection period from September to December 2014;
- there was also supporting written evidence of its use in the past year;
- teachers from that kindergarten were able to verbally affirm that the poem was in common use at that kindergarten.

The poems are listed under the names of the pseudonyms for each of the six kindergartens.

Criteria for the selection of poems in Table 2

Top Twenty Poems

The criteria for compiling this list of twenty were that:

- the poem featured in all or at least two or more kindergarten lists from Table 1;
- an aural observation or audiorecording was taken of a child, or children, reciting or singing it;
- there was a learning story (narrative documentation) or other written evidence within the past year or, for example, a weekly journal or wall chart that highlighted its use;
- teachers in the study verbally confirmed its use and familiarity in the kindergartens.

Table 1 – Matrix of Recorded Poems

James K Baxter	Hone Tuwhare	Margaret Mahy	Hirini Melbourne	Edith Howes	Joy Cowley
		SECTION	ONE		
Happy Birthday – Ra Whānau	Happy Birthday – Ra Whānau	Happy Birthday – Ra Whānau	Happy Birthday – Ra Whānau	Happy Birthday – Ra Whānau	Happy Birthday – Ra Whānau
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star – English/Māori	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star – English/Māori plus ‘Gorilla’	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star – English/Māori/ Japanese	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star – English/Māori Daddy bought a motor car	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star – English/Māori	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star – English/Māori plus ‘Gorilla’ and ‘Vegetable’
Let it Go – from <i>Frozen</i>	Let it Go – from <i>Frozen</i>	Let it Go – from <i>Frozen</i>	Let it Go – from <i>Frozen</i>	Let it Go – from <i>Frozen</i>	Let it Go – from <i>Frozen</i>
NZ National Anthem – English/Māori	NZ National Anthem – English/Māori	NZ National Anthem – English/Māori	NZ National Anthem – English/Māori	NZ National Anthem – English/Māori	NZ National Anthem – English/Māori
		SECTION	TWO		
Whaka pai nga enei kai – karakia	Whaka pai nga enei kai – karakia	Whaka pai nga enei kai – karakia	Whaka pai nga enei kai – karakia		Whaka pai nga enei kai – karakia
		Puff, the Magic Dragon		Puff, the Magic Dragon	Puff, the Magic Dragon
		The ABC Song	The ABC Song	The ABC Song	The ABC Song – & Number Song
	Incy Wincy Spider			Incy Wincy Spider	Incy Wincy Spider
	Five Little Monkeys	Five Little Monkeys	Three Little Monkeys		
Ring o’ Roses			Ring o’ Roses	Ring o’ Roses	
		Old MacDonald Had a Farm		Old MacDonald Had a Farm	Old MacDonald Had a Farm
		Jack in the Box	Jack in the Box	Jack in the Box	Jack in the Box
Five Little Ducks			Three Little Ducks		Five Little Ducks
		SECTION	THREE		
My Pigeon House			My Pigeon House	My Pigeon House	
Baa Baa, Black Sheep				Baa Baa, Black Sheep	
Princess Long Ago		Princess Long Ago			
			I Blew a Bubble		I Blew a Bubble
Roly Poly					Roly Poly
		I Have a Little Feather		I Have a Little Feather	
				Swing Poem by R.L. Stevenson	Swing Poem by R.L. Stevenson
		Wind the Bobbin Up – Japanese/English			Wind the Bobbin Up – Japanese/English
It’s Raining, It’s Pouring				It’s Raining, It’s Pouring	
			AEIOU		AEIOU
		Here is the Beehive	Pat a Cake	Pat a Cake	Here is the Beehive

Table 1 – Matrix of Recorded Poems (cont'd)

James K Baxter	Hone Tuwhare	Margaret Mahy	Hirini Melbourne	Edith Howes	Joy Cowley
		SECTION	FOUR		
Willowby, Wallowby, Woo	Fire Truck, Fire Truck	Hickory Dickory Dock	Waddely Archer	We are Done (Madden Bros)	Haere Mai Haana's waiata
If You Three Clap Your Knee	Bollywood Love Songs	Waiata Mihimihi	Jump, Jump Improvisations	Ten Balloons	Twirling, Twirling Leaves
Frère Jacques	A Ballerina Strikes a Pose – Series	Toru Nui Taniwha	Oh, Trees, You are So Silly	Teddy Bears' Picnic	Time Poem – for adults
Sandy Girl – circle game	Five Wiggly Worms	Five Little Kiwis Tried to Cross the Road	Ten Fat Worms	Sun, Sun	Haim Ginott – poem for teachers
We are the Living Eyes – Whakatauki Māori/English	Three adult grief poems	Kai in the Basket	One Little Elephant Balancing	Tena Koe – Hello to One	Original child's poem to kindergarten
What Does He Plant Who Plants a Tree?	E tu Kahikatea	Five Guitars	Nau Mai, Haere Mai (own waiata)	Haere Mai – phonics waiata	Autumn Poem
We've Got the Whole World in Our Hands	Two Little Dicky Birds, Two Little Native Birds	Mr Teddy Bear	In and Out the Dusty Bluebells	My Puppy	Ko te Mauna tu toa Pepeha – waiata
Robot Poem	Ka Kite, Ka Kite Ano	This Old Man	Rat-a-Tat-Tat	Mix a Pancake	If You're Happy and You Know It
Starry, Starry Night	Child's poem for teacher	One Little Seahorse	Oma Rapeti	Mister Caterpillar	Punga Werewere
Happy		Three Blind Jellyfish	Mairi's Wedding	Elephant Poem	Ma is White
		Birds on the Washing Line		Wee Willie Winkie	When I Was Four
		Daffodowndilly by A.A. Milne		Row, Row, Row Your Boat	The Ants Go Marching
		Haere Mai – Welcome Everyone		Humpty Dumpty	Rolling Like a Pumpkin Down the Hill
		A Little, Little Snowman		Polly Put the Kettle On	Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes – Mahunga ...
		Down, Down, Yellow and Brown		Georgy Porgy	Bingo
		Whisper to Me English/Māori			Kiwi Bird is Round and Shy
		Little Caterpillar, Crawling on a Leaf			Where is Thumbkin?
		I Can Sing a Rainbow			E Peke, E Peke
					Ko te ko a te Waimairie Hue – karakia

Table 2 – Top Twenty Poems

Top Twenty Poems in Alphabetical Order:	
1.	The ABC Song
2.	Baa Baa, Black Sheep
3.	Five Little Ducks
4.	Five Little Monkeys
5.	Happy Birthday – Ra Whānau
6.	Here is the Beehive
7.	I Blew a Bubble
8.	Incy Wincy Spider
9.	Let it Go – from the movie <i>Frozen</i>
10.	Jack in the Box
11.	Old MacDonald Had a Farm
12.	Pat-a-Cake
13.	Puff, the Magic Dragon
14.	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star – English and Māori
15.	There was a Princess Long Ago
16.	National Anthem – in English and Māori
17.	Ring o’ Roses
18.	This Old Man
19.	Whakapai Nga Enei Kai – karakia
20.	Wind the Bobbin Up

GLOSSARY OF POETIC TERMS

Accentual verse

Verse whose metre is determined by the number of stressed (accented) syllables—regardless of the total number of syllables—in each line. Traditional nursery rhymes, such as ‘Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake’, are often accentual.

Allegory

An extended metaphor in which the characters, places, and objects in a narrative carry figurative meaning. Often an allegory’s meaning is religious, moral, or historical in nature.

Alliteration

The repetition of initial stressed consonant sounds in a series of words within a phrase or verse line. Alliteration need not reuse all initial consonants; ‘pizza’ and ‘place’ alliterate.

Allusion

A brief, intentional reference to an historical, mythic, or literary person, place, event, or movement.

Anthropomorphism

A form of personification in which human qualities are attributed to anything inhuman, usually a god, animal, object, or concept.

Antithesis

Contrasting or combining two terms, phrases, or clauses with opposite meanings.

Aphorism

A pithy, instructive statement or truism, like a maxim or adage.

Assonance

The repetition of vowel sounds without repeating consonants; sometimes called vowel rhyme.

Cadence

The patterning of rhythm in natural speech, or in poetry without a distinct meter, sometimes called free verse.

Cinquain

A poetic form that employs a 5-line pattern. Earlier it was used to describe any 5-line form, it now refers to one of several forms that are defined by specific rules and guidelines.

Collage

From the French *coller*, meaning to paste or glue. In visual arts, a technique that involves juxtaposing photographs, cuttings, newspapers, or other media on a surface.

Concrete poetry

Verse that emphasises nonlinguistic elements in its meaning, such as a typeface that creates a visual image of the topic.

Couplet

A pair of successive rhyming lines, usually of the same length. A couplet is 'closed' when the lines form a bounded grammatical unit like a sentence.

Free verse

Non-metrical, non-rhyming lines that closely follow the natural rhythms of speech. A regular pattern of sound or rhythm may emerge in free-verse lines, but the poet does not adhere to a metrical plan in their composition.

Hymn

A poem praising God or the divine, often sung. In English, the most popular hymns were written between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries.

Hyperbole

A figure of speech composed of a striking exaggeration.

Lament

Any poem expressing deep grief, usually at the death of a loved one or some other loss.

Limerick

A fixed light-verse form of five generally anapestic lines rhyming AABBA. Limericks are traditionally bawdy or just irreverent.

Litotes

A deliberate understatement for effect; the opposite of hyperbole. For example, a good idea may be described as 'not half bad', or a difficult task considered 'no small feat'. Litotes is found frequently in Old English poetry

Metaphor

A comparison that is made directly, without pointing out a similarity by using words such as 'like', 'as', or 'than'.

Ode

A formal, often ceremonious lyric poem that addresses and often celebrates a person, place, thing, or idea. Its stanza forms vary. The odes of the English Romantic poets vary in stanza form. They often address an intense emotion at the onset of a personal crisis.

Onomatopoeia

A figure of speech in which the sound of a word imitates its sense (for example, 'choo-choo', 'hiss', or 'buzz').

Oxymoron

A figure of speech that brings together contradictory words for effect, such as 'jumbo shrimp' and 'deafening silence'.

Poetic license

A poet's departure from the rules of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary in order to maintain a metrical or rhyme scheme; can also mean the manipulation of facts to suit the needs of a poem.

Pun

Wordplay that uses homonyms (two different words that are spelled identically) to deliver two or more meanings at the same time.

Prose poem

A prose composition that, while not broken into verse lines, demonstrates other traits such as symbols, metaphors, and other figures of speech common to poetry.

Quatrain

A four-line stanza, rhyming ABAC or ABCB (known as ‘unbounded’ or ‘ballad’ quatrain).

Refrain

A phrase or line repeated at intervals within a poem, especially at the end of a stanza.

Rhyme

The repetition of syllables, typically at the end of a verse line. Rhymed words conventionally share all sounds following the word’s last stressed syllable. A ‘rhyme scheme’ is usually the pattern of end rhymes in a stanza, with each rhyme encoded by a letter of the alphabet, from ‘a’ onward (ABBA BCCB, for example). Rhymes are classified by the degree of similarity between sounds within words, and by their placement within the lines or stanzas.

Rhythm

An audible pattern in verse established by the intervals between stressed syllables.

Romanticism

A poetic movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that turned toward nature and the interior world of feeling, in opposition to the mannered formalism and disciplined scientific inquiry of the Enlightenment.

Simile

A comparison (see Metaphor) made with ‘as’, ‘like’, or ‘than’.

Slam

A competitive poetry performance in which selected audience members score performers, and winners are determined by total points. Slam is a composite genre that combines elements of poetry, theater, performance, and storytelling. The genre’s origins can be traced to Chicago in the early 1980s.

Stanza

A grouping of lines separated from others in a poem. In modern free verse, the stanza, like a prose paragraph, can be used to mark a shift in mood, time, or thought.

Syllabic verse

Poetry, whose metre is determined by the total number of syllables per line, rather than the number of stresses.

Syllable

A single unit of speech sound as written or spoken; specifically, a vowel preceded by zero to three consonants ('awl', 'bring', 'strand'), and followed by zero to four consonants ('too', 'brag', 'gloss', 'stings', 'sixths').

Symbol

Something in the world of the senses, including an action, that reveals or is a sign for something else, often abstract or otherworldly. A rose, for example, has long been considered a symbol of love and affection.

Verse

As a mass noun, poetry in general; as a regular noun, a line of poetry. Typically used to refer to poetry that possesses more formal qualities.

Adapted from the *Poetry Foundation* online

(www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/glossary-terms, accessed July 2015.)

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig.1 Child using the ko stick for māra kai planting	40
Fig.2 Child dressed in hand created ‘Let it Go’ costume	51
Fig.3 Froebel’s lithograph ‘The Pigeon House’	53
Fig.4 Circle game at Hirini Melbourne Kindergarten, 2014	54
Fig.5 Kindergarten circle game in London, 1892.....	54
Fig.6 Children learning about ANZAC Day.....	62
Fig.7 Froebel’s lithograph ‘The Weather Vane’	78
Fig.8 Child’s artistic interpretation of ‘Starry, Starry Night’	81
Fig.9 Froebel’s lithograph ‘Pat-a-Cake’	97
Fig.10 Recycled scrap metal robot at James K. Baxter Kindergarten	111
Fig.11 Bicultural experience at Joy Cowley Kindergarten.....	114
Fig.12 Global influences on poetry found in Napier kindergartens	129
Fig.13 A pyramid of poetry appreciation	134

APPENDIX A



Poetry in Kindergartens

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS ETC.

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

I would like to learn more about how poetry is used in Napier Kindergartens. *Specific* kindergarten, where your child attends, is one of 6 kindergartens that has been selected to participate in this project. I will be exploring what sorts of poems e.g. nursery rhymes, waiata, and finger play rhymes are used at the kindergarten and how children respond to them. I will be looking at the resources that support children to learn about poetry. I am very interested to look more closely at how poetry might benefit children's language development, their sense of identity and overall competency. I also want to find out if poetry helps children and teachers in other ways such as making people laugh, feel more peaceful or express their emotions.

I will be spending two mornings at your child's kindergarten to undertake observations and collect information. I will also be talking with the teachers about the project after the children have gone home.

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for Eileen Woodhead's Master of Arts Thesis, with Otago University.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

This research will be looking at what is happening generally across all areas of kindergarten life. Your child will not be particularly the focus of my observations. If I observe your child engaging with poetry in some way, it may be recorded by note taking e.g. a conversation about poetry or video or audio recording. Your child's first name will be recorded in my initial note taking. In the eventual writing about the research your child's name will not be used nor will they be identifiable in any way.

A summary of the research findings will be made available to you on completion of this research project in December 2015.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to give written consent for your child to participate.

There are no extra requirements of you or your child. The expectation is that your child will participate at kindergarten in the normal way and this research will not adversely affect them in any way.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned below will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least 5 years in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants, (including audio or video recordings after they have been transcribed etc.) will be destroyed at the completion of the research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Eileen Woodhead	and	Professor Helen May
Napier Kindergarten Association		Department of Education
Work Ph: 835 7890 ext 2		University Phone Number: 03 4793780
Email Address eileen@napierkindergartens.co.nz		Email Address Helen.may@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

[Reference Number 14/37]

(September 2014)

APPENDIX B



Poetry in Kindergartens [Reference number 14/37]

CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My child's participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw my child from the project at any time without any disadvantage;
3. Personal identifying information [e.g. video or audio recordings] will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;
4. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my child's anonymity.

I agree for my child to take part in this project.

.....
(Signature of parent/guardian)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Name of child)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

(September 2014)

APPENDIX C



Poetry In Kindergartens

INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

Dear.....

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

I would like to learn more about how poetry is used in Napier Kindergartens. *Specific* kindergarten, is one of 6 kindergartens that has been selected to participate in this project. I will be exploring what sorts of poems e.g. nursery rhymes, waiata, and finger play rhymes are used at the kindergarten and how children respond to them. I will be looking at the resources that support children to learn about poetry. I am very interested to look more closely at how poetry might benefit children's language development, their sense of identity and overall competency. I want to find out if poetry helps children and teachers in other ways such as making people laugh, feel more peaceful or express their emotions.

I will be spending two mornings at your child's kindergarten to undertake observations and collect information. I will also be talking with the teachers about the project after the children have gone home.

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for Eileen Woodhead's Master of Arts Thesis, with Otago University.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

This research will be looking at what is happening generally across all areas of kindergarten life. No particular child will be the focus of my observations. If I observe children engaging with poetry in some way, it may be recorded by note taking e.g. a conversation about poetry or video or audio recording. The child's first name will be recorded in my initial note taking. In the eventual writing about the research the actual child's name will not be used nor will they be identifiable in any way.

A summary of the research findings will be made available to you on completion of this research project in December 2015.

What will Participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to give written consent for yourself as a teacher to participate.

There are no extra requirements of you as a teacher. The expectation is that teachers and children will participate at kindergarten in the normal way and this research will not adversely affect them in any way. Participation in this project is unlikely to cause any discomfort or risk.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

Throughout my masters' thesis, neither the kindergarten's name nor any participants' names will be used. Pseudonyms will be used instead. Focus group interviews with teachers will be audio taped to ensure accuracy with what I report in my thesis. These tapes will be stored in a secure location for at least five years. My supervisor for this research will have access to all information/data that is collected along with the person employed to type verbatim what was said in conversations. This person will be signing a confidentiality clause in their contract.

The data I gather from our conversations will be used to report on the topic of *Poetry in Kindergartens* in my final thesis. The results of the project may be published and would be available in the Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand); every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned below will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least 5 years in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants, [*audio or video tapes, after they have been transcribed etc.*] will be destroyed at the completion of the research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

This thesis aims to give early childhood teachers and the wider education community a deeper understanding of the value of poetry in the kindergarten setting. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes discussion about perceptions of poetry and its use in kindergarten. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that the participant feels hesitant or uncomfortable they are reminded of their right to decline to answer any particular question (s) and also that they may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to themselves of any kind.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Eileen Woodhead	and	Professor Helen May
Napier Kindergarten Association		Department of Education
Work Ph: 835 7890 ext 2		University Phone Number: 03 4793780
Email Address eileen@napierkindergartens.co.nz		Email Address Helen.may@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

[Reference Number 14/37]

(September 2014)

APPENDIX D



Poetry in Kindergartens

CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;
3. Personal identifying information [e.g. *audio or video recordings etc*] will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;
4. During research related interactions, Eileen Woodhead's role of Education Manager will be completely separate.
1. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes:
 - *What do you believe poetry is?*
 - *What values do you as a teacher place on poetry?*
 - *Why do you choose to use particular poetry?*
 - *What may have shaped your own views and emotions about poetry- positive and negative?*
 - *What views do you have about the cultural relevance of particular poetry?*
 - *Has your use of poetry changed over your teaching career?*
5. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or

uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

- 6. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand)

I agree to take part in this project.

.....
(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....

(Printed Name)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

[Reference Number 14/37]

(September 2014)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, H. C. (1844). The snow queen. *New fairy tales*. Vol.1. Second Collection. 1845.
- Anning, A., Cullen, J., & Flear, M. (2004). *Early childhood education society and culture*. London: Sage.
- Anthony, M., & Kaufman, P. (1960). 'Poetry in Motion'. [Recorded by Johnny Tillotson]. On B-side *Princess Princess* [7"]. UK: London Records. (1960). Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poetry_in_Motion
- Aubrey, C., David, T., Godfrey, R., & Thompson, L. (2000). *Early childhood educational research: Issues in methodology and ethics* (1st ed.). London: Routledge.
- Aulie, J., & Meyerkorf, M. (Eds.). (1999). *Spendrift: A collection of poems, songs and stories for young children*. England: Wynstones Press.
- Baker, D. C. (2003). Studies of the inner life: The impact of spirituality on quality of life. *Quality of Life Research*, 12(Suppl.1), 55–57.
- Barber, I. (2015, March). Cultivating the past. *University of Otago Magazine*, 40(33).
- Barnett, R. (1993). 'I'm glad the sky is painted blue'. *Poems for the very young*. Wellington: Mallinson Rendel.
- Basu, A. (2002). *Full contact poetry* (Masters thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA). Retrieved from <http://www.mf.media.edu/pubs/thesis/basu>.
- Baxter, J. K. (1974). *Tree house and other poems for children*. Wellington: Price Milburn.
- Baxter, N. (2011). *Best loved poems for children*. London: Hermes House.
- Berk, L., & Winsler, A. (1995). *Scaffolding children's learning: Vygotsky and early childhood education*. Washington: NAEYC.

- Best, E. (1976). *Maori agriculture: The cultivated food plants of the natives of New Zealand, with some account of native methods of agriculture, its ritual and origin myths*. Wellington: Board of Maori Ethnological Research for the Dominion Museum.
- Blake, Q. (2012). *Quentin Blake's nursery rhyme book*. London: Red Fox.
- Blow, S. (1895). *The songs and music of Friedrich Froebel's mother songs, games and stories (Mutter und Kose leider)*. New York and London: D. Appleton and Co.
Retrieved from: <http://archive.org/details/songandmusicoffr028467mbp>
- Bodkin-Allen, S. (2013). Interweaving threads of music in the whāriki of early childhood cultures. In P.S. Campbell & Wiggins, T. (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of children's musical cultures*. USA: OUP.
- Bone, J., Cullen, J., & Loveridge, J. (2007). Everyday spirituality: An aspect of the holistic curriculum in action. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 8(4).
- Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. (2000). *Reproduction in education, society and culture*. London: Sage.
- Brougham, A., & Reed, A. (1999). *The Raupo book of Māori proverbs: Te kohikohinga whakatauki a Raupo*. London: Penguin.
- Broughton, W. S. 'Bracken, Thomas', from the Dictionary of New Zealand biography, Te Ara – the encyclopedia of New Zealand. Retrieved from:
<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/2b35/bracken-thomas>
- Bruce, T. (2012). *Early childhood practice*. London: Sage.
- Cambridge University Faculty of Education. *Poetry and memory: A longitudinal study by Cambridge University*. Retrieved from
www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/poetryandmemory
- Campbell, D., & Campbell, E. (2005). *Simply poetry*. Victoria: Tertiary Press.

- Carr, M., Lee, W., & Jones, C. (2004–9). *Kei tua o te pae: Assessment for learning: Early childhood exemplars*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Carr, M., Lee, W., Mitchell, L., & Soutar, B. (2013). *Understanding the te whāriki approach*. London: Routledge.
- Chapman, J., Prochnow, J., & Tunmer, W. (2006). Literate cultural capital at school entry predicts later reading achievement: A seven year longitudinal study. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 41(2).
- Chelin, P. (2015, April 3). The man who wrote ‘Puff, the Magic Dragon’ swears it is not about drugs. *LA Weekly*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.laweekly.com/music/L22/2100625230>
- Children’s Poetry. *Poetry Foundation*. Retrieved from
<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/children/>
- Clark, B., Grey, A., & Terreni L. (Eds.). (2013). *Kia tipu te wairua toi: Fostering the creative spirit: Arts in early childhood education*. Auckland: Pearson.
- Clarke, F., & Wilberg, H. (1988). *Sounds forty*. Wellington: NZ Playcentre Federation.
- Claxton, G., & Lucas, B. (2010). *New kinds of smart*. England: Open University Press.
- Colburg, M., Glover, A., Rau, C., & Ritchie, J. (2007). Indigenous peoples and perspectives in early childhood education. In H. Hedges & L. Keesing-Styles (Eds.), *Theorising early childhood practice* (pp. 137–148). Castle Hill, N.S.W.: Pademelon Press.
- Connell, G., & McCarthy, C. (2014). *A moving child is a learning child*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing.
- Corsaro, W. (2005). *The sociology of childhood*. England: Sage.
- Cowan, J. (1910). The breadfruit tree in Māori tradition. *Journal of Polynesian Society*, 19(2).

- Cryer, M. (2004). *Hear our voices, we entreat: The extraordinary story of New Zealand's national anthems*. Auckland: Exisle.
- Curtis, A. & O'Hagan, M. (2003). *Care and education in early childhood education*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Dahlberg, G., Moss, P., & Pence, A. (2000). *Beyond quality in early childhood education and care*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Del Vecho, P. (Producer), & Buck, C., & Lee, J. (Directors). (2013). *Frozen*. [Animated motion picture]. USA: Walt Disney Studios.
- Department of Education (n.d. c.1970s). *Songs and rhymes*, Department of Education: Correspondence School, Special Needs Section.
- Department of Education (1980). *Nga tamariki iti o Aotearoa – the first steps in the instruction of Māori studies for preschool children*. Wellington: Department of Education.
- Dolby, K. (2012). *Oranges and lemons*. London: Michael O'Mara Books Limited.
- Downer, H. (1964). *75-year history of NZ free kindergarten movement in New Zealand*. Wellington: New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union.
- Duncan, J. (2008). *Moving with the times. 100 years of the Auckland Kindergarten Association*. Auckland: Auckland Kindergarten Association. Retrieved from www.aka.org.nz
- Education Review Office. (2011). *Literacy in early childhood services: Teaching and learning*, pp. 22–3. Wellington: Education Review Office.
- Edwards, C., Gandini, L., & Forman, G. (1998). *The hundred languages of children*. London: Ablex.
- Enviroschools Foundation, New Zealand. (2011). *Enviroschools in the early years New Zealand*. Hamilton: Enviroschools.

- Farnes, F. (Ed.) (2009). *The magical world of Milligan*. London: Virgin Books.
- Finger plays and Songs recorded by Helen Wilberg and the 1982 Wellington Polytechnic Child Care Students.
- Fowler, M. (2008). *A proud heritage: A history of the Heretaunga Free Kindergarten Association*. Hastings, NZ: Michael Fowler Publishing.
- Froebel, F. (1895) *The mottoes and commentaries of Friedrich Froebel's Mother Play*. Transl. H. R. Eliot & Susan E. Blow. Reprint, New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1902.
- Ginott, H. (1975). *Teacher and child: A book for parents and teachers*. New York: Macmillan.
- Goldammer, H. (1882) *The kindergarten: A guide to Froebel's method of education, gifts, and occupations*. Two parts in one vol. Berlin: Habel.
- God defend us from our anthem. (2014, November 16). *Sunday Star Times*, p. A9.
- Goouch, K., Powell, S., & Werth, L. (2013, November). *Seeking Froebel's 'Mother Songs' in daycare for babies*. Paper presented at the TACTYC Annual Research Conference, International Convention Centre, Birmingham.
- Graves, R. (1960). *Penny fiddle: Poems for children*. London: Cassell.
- Green, P. (2014). *A treasury of New Zealand poems*. New Zealand: Random House.
- Hamer, J., & Adams, P. (2003). *The New Zealand early childhood literacy handbook*. Palmerston North: Dunmore.
- Hamer, J. (2005). Exploring literacy with infants from a sociocultural perspective. *New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work*, 2(2), 70–5.
- Harrowven, J. (1998). *Origins of rhymes, songs and sayings*. London: Pryor Publications.
- Heald, D. (2008). An inexhaustible web of meaning: The many dimensions of spirituality. *Early Education*, 44(Spring/Summer), 13–15.

- Heenan, A. (2004). *God defend New Zealand: A history of the national anthem*.
Christchurch: School of Music, University of Canterbury.
- Hughes, B. (1989). *Flags and building blocks, formality and fun. One hundred years of free kindergarten in New Zealand*. Commissioned by the NZFKU. Wellington.
- Hughes, P., & MacNaughton, G. (2009). *Doing action research in early childhood studies*. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- James, A., & Prout, A. (1997). *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood*. London: Falmer Press.
- Jenks, J., & Peters, S. (2000). *Young children's mathematics: A supporting document for the Making Things Count resource*. (Occasional paper no.8, Institute for early childhood studies, Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand).
- Joy, L., Styles, M., & Whitley, D. (2010). *Poetry and childhood*. UK: Trentham Books.
- Kidsfirst Kindertans. (2013). *Kidsfirst kindertans: 100 years young*. Christchurch: Kidsfirst Kindergarten Association.
- Kimbrough, S.T. (2014). *The lyrical theology of Charles Wesley*. Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press.
- Kraynak, J. & Smith, M.K. (2009). *Stage a poetry slam: creating performance poetry events*. Sourcebooks, Inc.
- Liebschner, J. (1992). *A child's work*. Cambridge: Lutterworth Press.
- Lipton, L., & Yarrow, P. (2007). *Puff, the magic dragon*. London: Macmillan Children's Books.
- Lockhart, P. (1975). *Kindertans in New Zealand 1889–1975*. Commissioned by the NZFKU. Dunedin.

- McCaleb, M., & Mikaere-Wallis, N. (2005). Relationship-shaping: Teacher consistency and implications for brain development. *The First Years: Nga Tau Tuatahi. New Zealand Journal of Infant and Toddler Education*. 7(2),1-10.
- McMaster, C., & Murphy, C. (2014). *Postgraduate study in Aotearoa New Zealand: Surviving and succeeding*. Wellington: NZCER Press.
- McNaughten, C. (1987). *There's an awful lot of weirdos in our neighbourhood*. London: Walker Books.
- Mama Lisa's World International Music and Culture. *Kids music around the world*. Retrieved from <http://www.mamalisa.com>
- Matterson, E. (1970). *This little puffin: A treasury of nursery rhymes songs and games*. (USA): Puffin Books.
- May, H. (2001). *Politics in the playground*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books with NZCER.
- May, H. (2013). *The discovery of early childhood education*. (2nd ed.). Wellington: NZCER Press.
- May, H. (2014). *People, places and play in the 'Child Gardens' of Dunedin*. Dunedin: Dunedin Kindergarten Association.
- Melbourne, H. (1991). Whare Whakairo: Maori 'Literary' Traditions. In G. McGregor and M. Williams (Eds.). *Dirty silence: Aspects of language and literature in New Zealand: Essays arising from the University of Waikato winter lecture series of 1990*, p. 129.
- Manatu taonga: Ministry of culture and heritage. *History of 'God defend New Zealand'*. Retrieved from <http://www.mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/national-anthems/history-god-defend-new-zealand>

- Markwardt, D. (2011). Oldschool: Inspiring courage and creativity. *Blood, imagination and intellect*. Retrieved from www.davidmarkwardt.com/blood-imagination-and-intellect/
- Milne, A.A. (1924). *When we were very young*. London: Methuen.
- Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te Whāriki: He whāriki matauranga mo nga mokopuna o Aotearoa*. Early childhood curriculum. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education. (2000). *Much more than words*. Reprinted in 2008. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Morris, B. (c.1970). Finger plays collected by Wellington Playcentre Association (Inc).
- Morrow, V. (2011). *Understanding children and childhood*. Centre for Children and Young People Background Briefing Series, 1. (2nd ed.). Lismore, Australia: Centre for Young People, Southern Cross University.
- Mutch, C. (2005). *Doing educational research: A practitioner's guide*. NZCER Press: Wellington.
- Napier Kindergarten Association. (2013). *Annual report 2013*. Napier: NKA.
- Nash, R. (2001). Cultural capital and competent children. *The First Years: Nga Tau Tuatahi. New Zealand Journal of Infant and Toddler Education*, 3(1), 13–16.
- NZ Maori Song Book. Retrieved from <http://www.folksong.org/nz> 2014, October 26).
- Nga Pihi Series. Maori Songs for Children. The *Nga Pihi* series was launched by Sir John Bennett of Te Kohanga Reo National Trust, New Zealand and recorded by Radha Sahar of Universal Children's Audio Ltd. (accessed 26/10/14)
<http://www.folksong.org/nz>
- Northe, L. (c.1960). Handwritten manuscript booklet with reference to Ailsa Martin record from 3–5. (Accessed in person from Napier Kindergarten Association Archives).

- Nursery Rhymes, Lyrics, Origins and History. *Nursery Rhymes, Lyrics, Origins and History*. Retrieved from <http://www.rhymes.org.uk>
- O'Neill, H. J. (2006). *Once preferred, now peripheral: The place of poetry in the teaching of English in the New Zealand curriculum for year 9, 10 and 11 students* (Doctoral thesis, University of Canterbury, Christchurch). Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10092/950>
- Orange, C. (2004). *An illustrated history of the Treaty of Waitangi*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.
- Opie, I. (1996). Playground rhymes and the oral tradition. In P. Hunt (Ed.). *International companion encyclopedia of children's literature*, pp. 173–86. London: Routledge.
- Opie, I., & Opie, P. (Eds.). (1955). *Oxford nursery rhyme book*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Opie, I., & Opie, P. (1997). *The Oxford dictionary of nursery rhymes* (2nd ed.), pp 397–8. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Ouvry, M. (2012). Froebel's mother songs today. In T. Bruce (ed.), *Early childhood practice: Froebel today*, pp. 107–121. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Paremata Playcentre. (c.1980s). *Rhymes, songs and finger plays of Paremata Playcentre*. Booklet.
- Penetito, W. T. (2002). Research and a context for a theory of Māori schooling. *McGill Journal of Education*, 37(1).
- Pere, R. T. (1991). *Te wheke: A celebration of infinite wisdom*. Gisborne: Ao Ako Global Learning.
- Pharrell Williams denies 'Blurred Lines' plagiarism claim. *BBC News*. (2015, March 5). Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-31746199>
- Pound, L. (2008). *How children learn*. London: Step Forward Publishing.

- Pratt, J. (2012). The importance of hand and finger rhymes: A Froebelian approach to early literacy. In T. Bruce (ed.). *Early childhood practice: Froebel today*, p. 95. UK: Sage.
- Reed, P. M. (1995). *The Reed dictionary of modern Māori*. Auckland: Reed Publishing.
- Reeves, J. (1962). *Blackbird in the lilac: Poems for children*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Reynolds Kindergarten programme fortnight ending 22 September 1939, Joyce Constance Barns' scrapbook, fMS papers 9071 – ATL: New Zealand.
- Rodgers, R. (2006). Cultural exchange to transculturation: A review and reconceptualization of cultural appropriation. *Communication Theory* 16(4), 474–503. Retrieved via DOI:10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00277.x
- Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Salisbury University. *Poetry for children*. Retrieved from <http://www.salisbury.edu/>
- Shamdasami, D. W., & Stewart, D. (2015). *Focus groups theory and practice*. (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Shore, R. (1997). *Rethinking the brain*. USA: Families and Work Institute.
- Simon, J., & Tuhiwai-Smith, L. (Eds.). (2001). *A civilizing mission: Perceptions and representations of the native schools system*. Auckland: Auckland University Press.
- Smith, B., & Vinicombe D. (Eds.). (2012). *Read me another one please!* Auckland: Whitcoulls Publishing.
- Smith, H. (2011). *E tu ake, Māori standing strong*. Wellington: Te Papa Press.
- Soryl, Y. (2006). *Phonics training manual*. Christchurch: Yolanda Soryl Literacy.
- Soryl, Y. (2013). *Developing phonological awareness*. Christchurch: Yolanda Soryl Literacy.

- Stewart, J. M. (1959). *When children sing and dance: 48 songs and tunes for kindergarten*. (Imperial edition, no. 806). Melbourne: Allan & Co.
- Stewart, M. R. (2004). Phonological awareness and bilingual pre-schoolers: Should we teach it and, if so, how? *Early Childhood Journal*, 32(1), 31-37.
- Styles, M. (1998). *From the garden to the street*. London: Cassell.
- Styles, M. (2011). *The case for children's poetry*. University of Cambridge. Retrieved from www.cam.ac.uk
- Taylor, A., Taylor. J. (1806). *Rhymes for the nursery*. London: Darton and Harvey.
- Teddy Bears' Picnic. (2015, July 20). Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teddy_Bears%27_Picnic
- Throsby, D. (2005). *On the sustainability of cultural capital*. Sydney: Macquarie University.
- Turner, S. (2006). *Don't take your elephant to school: An alphabet of poems*. Oxford: Lion Hudson.
- Twelve Variations on 'Ah Vous dirai-je Maman'. (2015, March 3). Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelve_Variations_on_%22Ah_vous_dirai-je,_Maman%22
- Untermeyer, L. (1966). *The golden treasury of poetry*. New York: Golden Press.
- Van Norstrand, F. P. (1889). *Royal gifts for the kindergarten: A manual for self instruction in Friedrich Froebel's principles of education. Together with a collection of songs, games and poems*. Chicago: Standard Pub. Co.
- Veltkamp, P. (1998). The pieces of the language puzzle. *Playcentre Journal*, 102, 5-7.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wikipedia. *Music of Oklahoma*. (2014, November 30). Retrieved from
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_of_Oklahoma

Williams, P. (2014, September 9). 'Aerosol Can'. Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzZK4al4dvA>

Winer, Y. (1979). *Of frogs and snails: Finger plays and action rhymes for children*.
Australia: Belair Publications.

Winer, Y. (1983). *Of beetles and bugs: Finger plays and action rhymes for early
childhood education*. Australia: Belair Publications.

Wright, D. (2008). *My village: Rhymes from around the world*. Wellington: Gecko Press.