Editorial

Curriculum research and "glocal" potential

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Curriculum studies is a field of educational endeavour that presents a wide range of issues and questions relating to curriculum. To answer these questions, a variety of research is undertaken, including theoretical and empirical examinations of curriculum-related problems and challenges, which may take the form of larger or smaller scale studies that canvas issues globally, nationally, or locally. Curriculum research is carried out by academics, teacher educators, educational researchers, and teacher researchers in schools and early childhood centres. Much, but not all, research that is published in *Curriculum Matters* is local in nature— concerned with illuminating curriculum questions and related practice challenges and the implications of these in particular educational settings. In recognising the varied nature of curriculum research, it is pertinent to consider how curriculum research informs practice in context and also the potential for it to make a contribution to a wider knowledge base by making global connections. The concept of "glocal" research provides a touchstone to consider how curriculum researchers can find the global in their own local experience and research, and how those researching across contexts and at national and international levels can achieve local relevance.

Ideas relating to the "glocal" and "glocalisation" emerged through the 1980s and 1990s as a refinement on the idea of globalisation (Robertson, 2012) and these ideas have been applied in a range of fields, including sociology, business, science, and education, as a way to understand the interconnectedness of local and global forces. The mantra "think globally, act locally" is an expression of glocal sentiments in popular parlance. In sociology, the concept of glocalisation supports research into the way in which "social actors construct meanings, identities, and institutional forms within the sociological context of globalization, conceived in multidimensional

terms" (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2006, p. 171). In business, the idea of glocalisation has been closely associated with and used to support marketing initiatives that adapt global knowledge and advertising of products to local contexts and for particular markets (Robertson, 2012). And in science, taking a global scientific issue and making it meaningful to people at a local level supports glocal science advocacy (Tagüeña, 2008).

Within a range of educational fields, ideas relating to glocalisation have been similarly applied to highlight and help make sense of the interplay between global and local educational issues. For example, research that provides international comparisons and is concerned with glocal influences highlights differences and similarities in particular national contexts, how global issues penetrate at the local level, and how context matters in trying to understand educational developments, including curriculum reforms (for example, Hollier, 2018; Lee & Gopinathan, 2012; Luk-Fong, 2005). In examining educational challenges that present at a local level, notions of the glocal, glocalisation, and glocality may help people make sense of problems relating to teaching, learning, learner achievement and experience, in relation to how people relate culturally and cognitively to one another and to the institutions they inhabit in times of change (Sarroub, 2008).

As signalled, curriculum research may focus on issues as they are manifested at local, national, or global levels. There is glocal potential in the capacity for curriculum research, at whatever the level, to find the local in the global and the global in the local. There is risk, though, in drawing attention to differences between locally and globally oriented curriculum research of creating a false dichotomy that positions local and global research as somehow oppositional, rather than interconnected. As explained by Sarroub (2008), "What is important about the concept glocal is that it offers a view of everyday life that does not dichotomize local and global particularities or imply a binarism of good and bad" (p. 61). It is the interconnectedness and interplay between global and local phenomena that provides glocal insights.

Thinking about the local nature of much of the research published in *Curriculum Matters*, which presents home-grown stories and which focuses on particular curriculum policies, requirements, design, or teaching and learning initiatives in specific contexts, suggests that this research serves an important purpose in illuminating the significance of contextual factors

and local variability in curriculum work. It also acts to support change in practice in relation to local curriculum design, teaching, and learning. For example, where researchers are also practitioners (who may be teachers in schools, teacher educators or tertiary teachers) and they adopt a "teacher as researcher" stance (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) and undertake curriculum research that addresses local questions or problems that they consider to be important, they have the potential to challenge the practice status quo, push back against power structures, and effect change in curriculum design and learner experience (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Zeichner, 2009). A challenge, though, for researchers who investigate specific, local and personal curriculum-related problems lies in their capacity to make connections beyond their everyday practice to broader national and global issues and thereby contribute to a wider, shared knowledge base and understanding of curriculum issues—that is, to achieve the global in the local.

More globally focused research illuminates broader, international concerns, such as a tendency towards curriculum policy borrowing and the cultivation of curriculum discourses across international boundaries. This research highlights concerns that many scholars and practitioners would recognise as shared problems or challenges relating to curriculum policy, interpretation, design and enactment, and provides theoretical perspectives to help make sense of broad curriculum developments and shared experiences. It highlights the bigger stories and issues that transcend local and national contexts. However, a challenge for those focused on broad, international issues is to recognise the importance of national and local contexts and to make connections that are meaningful at a local level and which do not assume an overly simplified, universal, or homogenising approach to addressing curriculum-related problems—that is, to find the local in the global

Recognising these dilemmas highlights the glocal potential of curriculum research. The concept of the glocal provides a view of curriculum research that transcends a global–local dichotomy, inviting curriculum researchers to achieve personal and local relevance while also making connections with and building on others' work in ways that contribute to a knowledge base and understanding that extends beyond specific sites, programmes, or projects. The work in this volume of *Curriculum Matters* illustrates in different ways the glocal potential of curriculum research, where engagement with global

curriculum issues is given local meaning and investigation of particular and locally grounded curriculum problems provides opportunities to highlight new understanding and thinking about issues that are relevant beyond immediate practice contexts.

This collection

The collected articles address a range of global, national, and local curriculum issues. The first two articles reflect global perspectives. *Shadow education* is an international phenomenon related to private and supplementary tutoring undertaken outside of mainstream schooling and is the subject of the first article. Young Chun Kim, Noel Gough, and Jung-Hoon Jung argue that shadow education is an increasingly visible part of the education scene, in a range of countries, but that this phenomenon is under-researched and should be an emerging and significant focus for research in the field of curriculum studies. Although outside of mainstream education, shadow education contributes to learning and achievement in relation to national curriculum and assessment structures and particular social and cultural learning. Drawing on scholarship in the field of curriculum studies, the authors suggest five key approaches to studying shadow education, to better understand the phenomenon itself and how deeper appreciation of the phenomenon might provide a more nuanced understanding of both shadow education and mainstream curriculum discourses. Shadow education is international and theorising this assists understanding of the local manifestations, similarities, and differences, of private and supplementary tutoring—suggesting a glocal connection.

Focused on another global trend, Anat Zohar and Rose Hipkins are interested in the growing international emphasise on pedagogical reform related to student-centred and inquiry learning. They consider students' higher order thinking capabilities and what they see as a "tight/loose" dilemma in these pedagogical reforms in both Israel and New Zealand. The tight/loose dilemma refers to comparative levels of prescription or control in national curricula and attention that is given to epistemic questions related to knowledge production and the nature and depth of thinking involved in teaching and learning different subjects. In highlighting a looseness in a lack of criteria or clarity about teaching for epistemic understanding in secondary teaching contexts and an associated challenge for implementing student-

centred pedagogies in ways that deepen learner knowledge and thinking, the authors advocate for greater support for teachers, to assist teachers to pay greater attention to epistemic criteria and better support student learning at school and classroom levels. A global development is made sense of in relation to local implications for teacher support and practice.

Other contributions focus on local and national curriculum issues and hint at ways in which understanding of specific, context-bound challenges also potentially illuminates and contributes to knowledge relating to shared global concerns and interests. Grounded in the New Zealand education context and based on national survey research relating to the teacher and librarian attitudes and beliefs about the role of library services, Lisa Emerson and co-authors address the undervaluing and underutilisation of school libraries and librarians in New Zealand schools. They invite educators and policy makers to reconceptualise the role of the school librarian, to go beyond the notion of librarians as a resource for curriculum support to see these professionals as integral to the delivery of a future-focused curriculum, where there is an emphasis on learners developing information and discipline literacy skills and knowledge. In this, they speak both to an international trend relating to declining use of school libraries and a challenge for schools and New Zealand's broader education system to address how schools can support the development of future-focused, knowledgeable, critically engaged learners and citizens. There is a glocal element to their interest and advocacy.

Whereas Emerson and her co-authors focused on nationwide surveys to provide a foundation for understanding a curriculum issue, the authors of the following two articles concentrated on individual teachers and what can be learned from paying attention to the experiences of individuals. Georgina Tuari Stewart presents an interview with a local adviser in bicultural curriculum and classroom pedagogy to illuminate possibilities for providing teachers with access to an alternative discourse from the standard or popularly understood Aotearoa New Zealand national history story; an alternative which challenges the undisputed and simplistic "truth" of the standard narrative. The interview provides impetus for reconsideration by teachers of what it means to be bicultural. Stewart emphasises that along with the acquisition of new knowledge and understanding there is an ethical obligation on teachers to accept the responsibility that comes with that knowledge to effect changes

in practice that re-energise bicultural education. In focusing on the case of one teacher in a specialised professional learning and development (PLD) programme for Teaching English to Speakers in Schools of Other Languages (TESSOL) teachers, Margaret Kitchen highlights how it is important to pay attention to teachers' own personal experiences and biographies to support their professional learning. A potential conflict between TESSOL teachers' own experiences of second-language learning at school and approaches to teaching and learning that are emphasised within PLD is drawn into relief. As the developers of professional learning curricula, teacher educators and professional learning leaders are challenged to rethink their pedagogical approaches to academic reading within PLD programmes. Both articles relate to very specific programmes or educational initiatives, but the implications drawn and the stimulation provided for educators to think differently about bicultural education and PLD transcend the specific local context and potentially contributes to broader, glocal debates relating to bicultural education and professional learning curricula and pedagogical practice.

Turning attention to the role of learning materials as an integral component of curriculum, Carol Mutch, Rosemary Bingham, Lynette Kingsbury and Maria Perreau consider the messages given to New Zealand children around the time of World War 1 through the *School Journal*. In examining whether and how the messages in the journal helped prepare children to be citizens of the British Empire and also sustained particular myths relating to Gallipoli and the forging of a national identity, the authors highlight the political role of the journal. They conclude by highlighting a need for educators to pay attention to the way that curriculum can be used for political purposes. This nationally located research contributes to a broader knowledge base relating to the political nature of curriculum. This article, along with others in the collection, provide a reminder that curriculum is not neutral and neither are teachers and the writers of classroom texts and learning materials—decisions are made by educators and resource developers, consciously and unconsciously, about what should be taught, what ideas ought to be emphasised, and the nature of the narratives that are constructed and sustained to shape learners' understandings of their world. Together, the collected articles show the interplay of curriculum issues on different locational scales and illustrate the broad glocal potential of curriculum research.

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Acknowledgement

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