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**Negotiating the dominant discourses of explicit instruction
and culturally responsive pedagogy in the Far North Queensland context:
a teacher's journey**

Thesis submitted by

Karen Maureen D'Aiitti
January 2017

For the Degree of Doctor of Education
College of Arts, Society and Education
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Statement of the Contribution of Others

The writing of this thesis has been my own accomplishment, but this would not have been possible without the kind assistance and thoughtful insights of many of my colleagues. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the patience and guidance of my two critical friends, my cultural mentorship group, my students, as well as the advice of Indigenous staff members at the campus where I worked. I would also like to thank Education Queensland and James Cook University for allowing me the possibility to carry out this study.

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To my husband, Omar, I feel enormous gratitude. Without his love, patience, unwavering support and kindness this study would have not been possible.

Lastly, to all of my family and friends who have offered encouragement, support and laughter in times of need.

Second Declaration

The research was conducted within the guidelines of “Research or Teaching Involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participants.” The research received ethical clearance from the James Cook University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval number H5237).

24/01/2017

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Abstract

This action research study took place in Far North Queensland, Australia focusing on my teaching journey, which took place in a grade 6/7 classroom with 20 Torres Strait Islander students over one school year in the subject area of literacy. The study documents my efforts to navigate and respond to two prominent teaching models – Explicit Instruction (Archer & Hughes, 2011) and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (DET, 2011; Perso, 2012), both of which inform policy statements in the area of study. Using a reflective journal, teacher observations, informal student dialogue sessions, yarning circles and student work samples, I endeavoured to adjust my practice to determine how best to meet my learners' needs. Through on-going critical reflective practice, engaging with two critical friends in conversation (Berry, 2007) and consulting with my cultural mentorship group, my teaching practice underwent transformation as a result of a change in my thinking. My overriding intention throughout this journey was not to simply accept imposed mandates, but rather to question by listening and responding to my students' voiced opinions about what practices best assisted their learning (Hattie, 2012). The current study revealed that if teachers are to acknowledge both the requirements of teaching explicitly and responsively, the documented model must be reconsidered, repositioned and readjusted. Five key findings were revealed as being important to students' needs in this study:

1. Students want to learn and the explicit model has to be adjusted for this to occur.
2. Students need to be recognised as English as additional language learners, with a focus on assisting them navigate not just the written, but more importantly the oral demands of the English language.
3. Students require teacher support in all aspects of English assessment.

4. Students want their teachers to reconsider and use reciprocal learning practices such as learning with their peers in English.
5. Finally, students wanted to experience success in English through the embedding of Torres Strait Islander perspectives.

From a teacher's perspective, the most profound discovery on this journey was a personal one, for I discovered a sense of self. That is, my own beliefs were challenged and ultimately repositioned as I learnt to focus upon my students' success, from their perspective, not mine. Despite the success I experienced in transforming elements of my teaching, I concede that not all aspects of my practice were able to be resolved. I refer to these points of seeking resolution throughout the study as 'tensions' (Berry, 2007; Sellars, 2014), which were ultimately the source of my growth and transformation. The results of this study, which essentially documents my development in working agentially and responsively in order to be an effective practitioner, are likely to be of benefit to students and their communities, policy makers, and especially to current and future teachers working in the Torres Strait. This study will be of significant importance to educators working in Indigenous contexts, especially in contexts where students, as representatives of their own communities, are typically expected to submit to nationalistic imperatives. These students seek teaching which fulfills student- and community-based, rather than state imposed, pedagogical requirements.

Keywords: action research, Explicit Instruction, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, Torres Strait Islander

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List of Abbreviations

Acronym	Name
AACTE	American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
ACARA	Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority
AR	Action Research
C2C	Curriculum into the Classroom
CA	Constructivist Approach
CRP	Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
CRT	Culturally Responsive Teaching
DET	Queensland Department of Education and Training
DI	Direct Instruction
di	direct instruction
EALD	English as an Additional Language/Dialect
EDI	Explicit Direct Instruction
EI	Explicit Instruction
ELL	English Language Learner
ESL	English as a Second Language
FNQ	Far North Queensland
HOC	Head of Campus
KE(s)	Key Element(s)
KLY	Kala Lagaw Ya
L2	Second Language
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PNG	Papua New Guinea
QLD	Queensland
QSA	Queensland Studies Authority
TS	Torres Strait
TSI (s)	Torres Strait Islander (s)

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Study

This Educational Doctorate action research (AR) study documents my journey as a classroom teacher in Far North Queensland (FNQ), where the majority of the population, outside of Cairns, is largely Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (TSI) (Caniglia, Bourke & Whiley, 2010). As reported by the Department of Education and Training, this region currently has the highest percentage of Indigenous students in attendance (DET, 2016). In an effort to improve the disparate academic standards of Indigenous learners in the area, in the past decade, there has been an overriding emphasis on 'teaching quality'. This emphasis on teaching improvement is usually represented by the term 'effective teaching' (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2000) (MCEETYA, 2000).

However, that which constitutes effective teaching has not only been widely argued in the literature of the field, but has also been vehemently contested in Australian education, particularly in the FNQ context (Nakata, 2001, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Pearson, 2011; Rahman, 2013). Some educators describe effective teaching in terms of teacher attributes, especially teacher behaviours and actions identified statistically as influencing student learning, particularly academic achievement (Hattie, 2004, 2012; Polk, 2006). Hattie's (2012) comments on effective teachers and teaching practice are extended to identify the need for teachers to make learning transparent by engaging with their students to determine which practices influence student learning. Through the many actions that signal excellent teaching, effective teachers primarily make an impact in the classroom by improving student outcomes.

Although Hattie's (2012) assertions are frequently cited in FNQ materials disseminated to schools, effective teaching is referenced beyond the specific practices of teachers and is referred to in terms of the actual teaching model a practitioner adopts. Three pedagogical models are commonly mentioned in association with effective teaching in FNQ. For teachers working with the science curriculum, this means implementing a constructivist approach (CA) to learning (Lattuca, 2006; Lida, Barrett & Long, 2012; Sanaa, 2006). Using this method, through a student-centred approach, learners actively construct their own meaning as they undergo new experiences with the facilitation of a teacher. Other educators, especially those specialising in literacy and numeracy, strongly maintain that a direct teaching approach such as explicit instruction (EI), direct instruction (di) or Direct Instruction (DI) is more effective (Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013; Pearson, 2011). In these pedagogical approaches, it is the teacher who controls the learning process, a process which is broken down into small steps offering substantial amount of support and guidance in order to assist students' acquisition of knowledge (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Lindsay, 2014; Rosenshine, 1987, 2008, 2012).

Finally, those that are concerned with the socio-political context of the learner contend that, for teaching to be considered effective, the learners' cultures, backgrounds and prior experiences must be embraced and embedded into all aspects of the learning sequence. More importantly, these cultural aspects should underpin the teacher's thinking (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Perso, 2012). Teaching in this manner is known as culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) (Osborne, 2001) or culturally responsive teaching (CRT) (Gay, 2010). In short, being a culturally responsive practitioner is about being mindful of students' contextual backgrounds,

especially as culturally located learners, and using this as a critical lens in promoting learning and improving student outcomes (Lewthwaite, Owen, Doiron, McMillan & Renaud, 2013).

Despite the movement towards CRT in FNQ, many schools currently experience an excessive and solely academic orientation to learning. That is, through the mandate of teaching explicitly, teachers are facing immense pressure to focus entirely on student achievement, especially in the disciplines of literacy and numeracy. This intense focus on assessment and student results is occurring at the expense of culturally located practices. These practices have become more of a superficial gesture than an embedded characteristic of learning. It has been acknowledged in the literature that little in the FNQ educational system has been achieved in embedding culturally responsive practices, and much more ought to be done to reflect the values of students and their communities (Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Nakata, 1994, 2001, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Perso, 2012; Rahman, 2013). However, tackling issues of cultural diversity and addressing gaps in academic achievement of minority students, ought not to be perceived as merely a regional concern, but also a global one. Some scholars (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Nakata, 2001; Osborne, 2001) state that Western societies have historically been and continue to be constructed within a framework of marginalisation and colonisation. As such, certain groups in society hold positions of power, and the battle between dominant and subordinate groups remains starkly prevalent, especially at the classroom level.

As an example of such dominance and subordination, Osborne (2001), a long-standing advocate for CRP in the Torres Strait (TS), condemns the inferior positioning of TSIs relative to their Western counterparts. He states such groups have continuously been pushed out of the circles of society, initially through slavery and invasion, and

more recently through the operation of legal systems, work places and educational institutions. Similarly, Nakata (2001), another prominent CRP scholar, is highly sceptical of the white man, whom he blames for controlling his thoughts. He asserts that, for emancipatory educational change to occur, teachers need to be willing to challenge the curriculum in its broadest form and adjust their practice accordingly, in order to meet the needs of TSI learners.

Nakata's (2001) challenge draws attention to the practicalities of how teachers should adjust their practice, especially within the boundaries of the presently mandated teaching models. As stated, current discourse in FNQ education is centred on 'teacher and teacher quality'. Presently, teachers are instructed to use CA, direct models of instruction and CRP as their teaching methodologies. Some curriculum documents such as The Arts or Science are grounded in a constructivist view of teaching. Programs such as Spelling Mastery (Dixon & Engelmann, 1999) and Elementary Math Mastery (Farkota, 2000) are administered using a DI scripted text approach. Despite the attention given to CA, di and DI, the dominant teaching methodology in the TS, as mandated by Tagai State College and in an effort to raise literacy and numeracy outcomes, is EI, based predominantly on the Fleming (2015) model. However, somewhat confusingly, is also the requirement for teachers to respond to Islander students responsively (DET, 2011; Perso, 2012; QLD Government, 2000).

Numerous conflicts arise from these contradictions, and in remote communities, teachers such as myself, face dilemmas in enacting such imperatives. How does one implement an EI model, whilst still adhering to the principles advocated for in a CRP approach? Is it at all possible to use these diverse teaching models together, and if so, what adaptations must teachers make for this to occur? Should practitioners be selective and choose the best elements of both teaching methodologies in order to meet the needs

of Indigenous students? Although these orientations are each prominent in the FNQ context, my previous experiences as a teacher suggested that I ought not to passively accept what is imposed, but instead question or problematise my teaching, and seek resolution through scrutiny of my own practice, as several scholars recommended (Berry, 2007; Lewthwaite, Doyle & Owen., 2014a; Sellars, 2014). As a reflective practitioner how can I enact EI with attention to culturally responsive practices? More fundamentally, why was I bothered by such imperatives?

In the section that follows I focus on my personal narrative, as this professional history provides the foundation for the critical nature of this research into my practice in this contested space. I make clear why I pursue answers to my query about 'effective teaching' as I seek to navigate the dominant and competing discourses of EI and CRP in the TS educational landscape. Specifically, this study focuses on my practice in the curriculum subject of English, and particularly, on the productive skills of writing and speaking, using the English Language for Learning (L4L) units and Big Write program (Andrell Education, 2017) mandated by Tagai College, and guided by the requirements of the Australian curriculum, assessment and reporting authority (ACARA, 2016) in the strand of literacy, using an EI approach.

1.2 My Personal Narrative

This introductory chapter highlights the unease I felt in my TS classroom as I considered the tensioned space between EI and CRP. Experiencing this dilemma and commencing this study was the result of specific and fated events in my life. Originally of European descent, I have had the fortune to travel, live and work overseas extensively. I have experienced a melange of cultures, and this has led me to reconsider

my socially constructed beliefs about what is right, and broadened my outlook on what is acceptable in the operation of schools and classrooms.

Over 15 years ago, I moved to the southern hemisphere with my husband and we started a family. We settled in New Zealand and I changed career from a tourism operator to an English as a Second Language (ESL) lecturer. During my university tenure, through workshops and contacts with colleagues, I became interested in the plight of Aotearoa, New Zealand's First Peoples, Māori. For the first time in my life I was compelled to consider the conflicts Māori had endured and the marginalisation they continued to face in contemporary New Zealand society, especially in the assumed and unquestioned orthodoxies of teaching practice. It became apparent to me decisions were being made about an orthodoxy of teaching practice that might be difficult for some, especially Māori, to navigate. Further, many decisions about Māori themselves, including educational decisions, were being made by Pakeha (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999).

Several years later and suitably qualified as a primary school teacher, I began work in a small, rural school in FNQ, Australia. Half of the students in attendance were Indigenous Australians of Aboriginal descent. Within a few months of my engagement I began to work with under-achieving Indigenous learners on a highly-structured DI reading intervention course, referred to as Making Up For Lost Time in Literacy (MULTILIT) (Wheldall, 1995), for one year. It was during this time that EI was endorsed unquestionably in the region as the preferred teaching method. I began to question whether this particular teaching style was in the best interests of the Indigenous students in the school. The imposition of this direct teaching model caused me concern for the duration of my stay in the community. In particular, the blatant disregard for my students' rich, cultural identities and the unquestioned presumption that everyone

should learn the EI way caused me great unease. This unease was heightened by the fact that few teachers appeared willing to take an alternative and critical stance on what I considered to be a highly contentious issue.

After having worked in the rural school for a few years, with my passion in working for the best interest of Indigenous learners ignited, I applied for and accepted a posting to the TS. I was under no illusion that my island life in an isolated geographical region of Australia would be easy, but as an experienced teacher I felt prepared for my new adventure. Despite my positive attitude and willingness to try all things new, the first six months of my teaching career in a TSI classroom were extremely challenging. I felt that the students had limited respect for me, with behaviour problems being a daily occurrence. It quickly dawned on me that I was just another unknown identity – simply another teacher from down south and that my teaching was ineffective in assisting these Islander students with their learning.

Returning to the mainland of Australia was not an option for my family. I had to make our island life work, and several dilemmas confronted me at this point in time. How could I possibly teach these students when student misbehaviour was such an issue? What was my response to the recently introduced Australian curriculum entitled Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C), and the imposed EI teaching that seemed so removed from my TSI students' lives? I felt that the students, all English as additional language/dialect (EALD) learners, were largely disengaged. Moreover, I was not convinced about the overriding message of EI, which was now considered the only way to teach in the strands of literacy and numeracy. I realised that the College was striving to improve student academic outcomes, but I questioned whether this was occurring at the expense of my students' cultural heritage? These initial tensions were the focus of conversations with my very experienced Head of Campus (HOC). My HOC's advice

was to prioritise behaviour expectations by establishing a positive rapport with my students. She emphasised that, since students were so accustomed to a high turnover of teachers, establishing trust was foundational to creating a positive learning environment.

Heeding this advice, I began to foster deep, meaningful, caring and genuine relationships with my class, as is commonly referenced in the literature on responsive practices (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Savage et al., 2011). I achieved this in a variety of ways: verbally telling my students I cared and then following through with actions; by always being readily available for their needs; by establishing ties with their parents; by involving myself in the community outside of work and by fostering a sense of collective pride in our classroom. Within a few months, I started to see change. The class was more settled and the students' attendance was consistently high.

Nevertheless, despite my successes, as the school year drew to a close, I was left grappling with an increased sense of unease. Knowing I would be teaching the same class the following year, I began to question even further the imposition of the EI model, which was dominating the educational terrain. Frustratingly, most teachers seemed so caught up in their teaching that they failed to question or challenge the EI imperative. Further, I started to question what exactly did responsive practices entail, and how were such practices to be considered 'culturally responsive' and not merely attributes of a 'good teacher?' What is more, I felt that my professionalism as a teacher was undermined, as decisions regarding best practice were made not by me but for me. I felt disempowered, and yet I was unwilling to reduce my teaching to one of conformity. I had chosen to work in the TS because I believed I could make a difference in my students' lives, but what I had not envisaged was 'how' exactly this difference would be measured. My teaching, it seemed, had been reduced to a production line of

mere numbers - the numbers being my students and their academic performance. The tendency towards the relentless pursuit of mandated assessment tasks and improved student outcomes began to trouble me. For the most part, the curriculum and the delivery of it was, I believed, disconnected from my students' lives. The acknowledgement of my students as individuals, possessing a rich and vibrant cultural heritage, appeared to be largely neglected. This was despite the message I was beginning to see as mere rhetoric: that teachers ought to respond to their students in a culturally responsive manner (DET, 2011; Perso, 2012; QLD Government, 2000).

As an experienced and passionate practitioner, I began to question these imperatives. I wanted to change the status quo and felt obligated to move towards what potentially could be. I wanted to re-ignite my teaching philosophy by making learning an enjoyable, worthwhile and memorable experience for my students, as Wisehart (2004) encouraged. But I had learned, through my first, largely ineffective, year of teaching in the TS, that this objective had to be achieved on my students' terms, not mine. I began to realise that for success to occur there had to be a shift in my teaching and in my classroom, and that shift had to commence with myself. No longer could my practice be teacher-directed. If I was to have any chance of success with my students, it had to be co-constructed. Also, at this point on my journey, I was confused about CRP. What exactly did it mean to be a culturally responsive practitioner in the TS, and what's more, what distinguishes such teachers from those teachers who are simply considered 'good' teachers? As such, I found myself faced with the dilemma of reconciling two seemingly opposed discourses - EI and CRP. The problem was exposed and my journey as an action orientated practitioner was launched.

1.3 The Study Context

This study was located at one Primary State Campus in the region of the TS. There are over 300 islands dispersed throughout the region in total, but only 17 of these islands are inhabited. The TS is located in the extreme far north of the state of Queensland (QLD) between the Northern tip of Cape York and the Melanesian island of New Guinea. It links the Coral Sea in the east to the Arafura Sea in the west. In the last census, it was noted that over 600 000 Indigenous people reside in QLD. Of that, 38 100 are TSIs, and 25 600 are believed to be of both Aboriginal and TSI descent (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

At the time of this study, there were approximately 200 students enrolled in the school, which comprised pre-prep to grade seven levels. All the students identified as being of TSI descent. In some cases, students also had connections with Papua New Guinea (PNG). For most of the students island Creole (YUMPLATOK) is their first language, followed by either English or the native island languages of either Kala Lagaw Ya (KLY) or Merium Mer.

At the start of this research I had been living and working on the island for one year. During that time, I had learned that island culture is embedded in everyday life. My curiosity and interest in this rich culture gave me further reason to embark on this research. Nakata (1994, 2011) stressed the need for practitioners to respect Islanders, their traditions and values, by teaching in a manner that honours their culture. In my view, this culture is the embodiment of who the Islanders are and how they operate, and had to be operationalised in my TS classroom if my students were to achieve success.

This professional doctorate study is an investigation into my EI teaching using my students' voices in the subject area of English. It does not seek to investigate DI

programs or di. While the College does presently use some DI scripted programs (Spelling Mastery) (McGraw-Hill, 2007) and (Elementary Maths Mastery) (Farkota, 2000), these programs, as well as the daily guided reading program, are levelled according to the students' academic ability. For this reason teachers teach a variety of students from across the school and not necessarily the students from their mainstream classroom (See Appendix A for a class timetable). Further, this study, for practical reasons is not a study of all aspects of the English program. Specifically this study examined the mandated English units, 'Language for Learning' units, supplemented by a Big Write program (explained in Chapter Four). For this reason, the foci of writing and oral communication were chosen because these were the two components within the English strand, that as a classroom teacher, I had full control over. More importantly, the skills of writing and oral communication were what my students wished to focus on, as will be evidenced in the upcoming AR cycles.

1.4 Research Questions

Policy statements in FNQ mandate that teachers will deliver instruction using an EI approach. Paradoxically, teachers in the TS region and in areas of FNQ are also being told that they must respond to their learners in a culturally responsive manner (DET, 2011; Perso, 2012; QLD Government, 2000). The questions that guided my research, consistent with the requirement of a Doctorate in Education, are pragmatic in nature. I wanted my practice to be more significant to my students. How could I as an effective practitioner navigate the curriculum imperatives and teach in a way that was both explicit, and yet responsive? Thus, my first research question was:

1. How can a teacher negotiate the pedagogical requirements of policy statements in FNQ? That is, how can a teacher teach in a way that acknowledges the requirements of both EI and CRP orientations?

The literature states that effective teachers take into consideration the prior learning, existing knowledge and cultural backgrounds of their learners and know their learners well (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2002, 2010; Nakata, 2001, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). Question two examined the daily principles and practices that a teacher can use to best meet the needs of TSI students. Thus, my second research question was:

2. What are the guiding principles and practices that effective teachers can adopt in their classrooms which will best meet the needs of their Torres Strait Islander students?

Tensions accompany the challenges and problems that teachers experience in their classrooms (Berry, 2007; Sellars, 2014). I anticipated that, as I navigated the curriculum documents and the dominant discourses of EI and CRP in my classroom, tensions would inevitably arise. This led to the final research question:

3. What pedagogical tensions does a teacher experience in a TSI classroom? How do such tensions influence her beliefs and contribute to adjustments in her teaching?

1.5 Study Significance

The primary school in this study is part of the Tagai State College Campus, which extends across the TS. All decisions regarding the educational needs of students are made at both a local (by Thursday Island Campus) and regional level (FNQ), whilst

still adhering to the educational demands placed on schools at the state (QLD) and national (Australia wide) level. These include the pedagogies to be used. In this study, I examined how I could address the dilemma of navigating the two dominant discourses of EI and CRP in my classroom practice. I wanted to determine if it was possible to teach using a CRP approach whilst still adhering to the principles of EI.

This study was carried out for a number of reasons. First, I was concerned that direct instructional approaches, providing limited references to local heritage and customs, may not necessarily be in the best interests of Islander students, due in part to their rich cultural backgrounds. For example, the content of the mandated Language for Learning texts was often disconnected from my students' lives. The curriculum was pre-determined and the reading texts pre-selected, eliminating the possibility for teachers, such as myself, to design more culturally sensitive lessons. Further, I was bothered by aspects of the actual delivery of the curriculum (sequential rather than holistic, choral responses, fast pace). Added to these tensions, and of central focus for teachers was preparing the students to successfully complete the mandated five weekly assessment task, which during my tenure on the island, predominantly comprised, within literacy, of a traditional written essay response based on the book studied. Second, by carrying out this study I hoped to clarify exactly how educators could best adapt their practice to meet the CRP needs of these students. Further, I was committed to questioning the political nature of the current educational system, as Mills and McGregor (2014) urged. As a passionate practitioner, I was unwilling to passively accept certain mandated curriculum documents and teaching methodologies as being in the best interest of my learners. Third, there is a concerning gap in the literature regarding the needs of TSIs. No classroom level educational studies enabling students' voices to be heard have been undertaken in this area of Australia (Barnes, 2000; Chiegeza, 2010). Only two

prominent scholars – Martin Nakata (1994, 1995, 1997, 2001, 2007, 2011) and Barry Osborne (2001, 2003) have spoken in a detailed fashion about the social, cultural and political ramifications affecting the educational outcomes of Islander students. Both scholars have repeatedly reiterated the need for significant change if the educational outcomes and experiences of TSIs is to ever improve. It is hoped that, through the investigation of my own practice, I will enable change for my own students and improve the availability of literature in the field.

Several parties may benefit from this research. Most teachers, typically from urban centres in Australia, come to the TS with limited or no experience of having worked with Islander students. To overcome this problem, teachers have to learn how to teach these learners. In my experience, this takes time. Further, I had learned that most teachers want to make a difference to their students' lives. Indeed, Hattie (2004, 2012) posited that not only do teachers make a difference, but they are the single most influential factor in determining student success. Such teachers regularly re-evaluate how they can be effective practitioners. They possess guiding principles that form the foundation of their practice and want the best outcomes for their learners. This research will hopefully clarify how teachers can address these pertinent issues in the very unique context of the TS. Furthermore, Tagai State College may also benefit from the findings of this research by reconsidering and changing current curriculum content and pedagogy to include more culturally relevant practices and by identifying other orientations of teacher practice that are of benefit to Islander students and their learning. Most importantly, it is hoped that TSI students and their communities generally will benefit from this study, for as Rahman (2013) reminded us "In recent years, Indigenous Australians have argued for their right to access an education that meets both their

personal and cultural needs” (p. 666). Clearly there is an urgent need for Indigenous voices to be heard.

1.6 The Structure of the Thesis

In Chapter One I introduced the study, narrating my personal trajectory with the aim of providing an insight into my personal origins, my teaching background and teaching philosophy, as well as the principles and practices that guide my work in the classroom. In this chapter I presented a reflection of the past year of living and working in a remote Australian community, the unease I experienced in this relocation and how this experience prompted me to embark upon this research. I explained the rationale of the study, which is to understand how I could best improve my practice to meet the needs of students in a TS classroom. I also provided the context of the study, at both a school and community level.

Chapter Two, the literature review, examines the complex and problematic nature of the definition of effective teaching practices. I give attention to the dominant pedagogical practices used in FNQ. Direct instruction approaches, EI and CRP are critiqued, compared and contrasted. In this chapter I argue for a possible re-think in how we teach Islander learners, especially considering the foundations of EI and CRP.

Chapter Three outlines the methodology, study participants, methods, data collection cycles, personal reflections and reasons for my research actions. I describe how I used AR in consultation with my critical friends, cultural mentorship group and students in my classroom to observe, gather information and adapt my practice for my TSI learners. This chapter discusses how I viewed my daily practice, the observations I made, the changes I implemented and the effect this had on my Islander students. This

chapter also describes how I analysed my data to act upon my findings and how I used this information to inform my AR cycles.

Chapters Four to Seven provide a detailed description of my four AR cycles. The first cycle, the reconnaissance of goals and means phase, (Elliott, 1991; Lewin, 1947) is an initial reflection of my teaching to determine the main concerns my students held about my EI practice. In cycle two, the preliminary exploration, I examined in more detail my students' identified concerns, in order to precisely determine how I could adapt my practice to be more responsive. In cycle three, the interrogation and enactment stage, I adapted the EI model to more responsively meet my students' needs. In this phase, I experienced a sense of achievement on my AR journey, as my students informed me that I had adjusted my teaching to more accurately meet their needs. In the final research cycle, cycle four, however, despite coming to resolution in my practice with my students, I experienced complete turmoil and arrived at only a partial resolution of practice. In this pivotal moment I realised that my endeavour to become a more responsive practitioner remained largely unnoticed by the Educational Department, as my teaching effectiveness continued to be determined solely by my ability to follow the mandated EI model.

Chapter Eight presents the findings to the three research questions posed in Chapter One. The implications of the study and possible future directions for research are also provided. This chapter documents my thoughts and continued frustrations as I return to teaching on the Australian mainland in an urban FNQ school.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter One the background prompting the current study was presented. Chapter Two provides an overview of the literature which informed the study. Specifically, this chapter explores my efforts to adhere to the principles of EI while adopting a CRP lens in my teaching. In section 2.2, the construct of effective teaching is considered. In section 2.3 the direct teaching models 'di' and 'DI' are discussed and critiqued. In 2.4 and 2.5, I examine the two main teaching approaches, EI and CRP, that are required to inform teaching in the TS. I examine the principles and enumerate the concerns that have been raised with each approach. Attention is given to studies conducted that are associated with both approaches, giving consideration to why this study is being pursued. Section 2.6 examines the Australian educational context and is followed by a discussion of the current TS schooling situation, in order to provide the reader with a comprehensive background and awareness of the attitudes needed when teaching in the TS. In section 2.7, the notion of tensionality, a construct central to this study, is discussed. Section 2.8 provides the conclusion to the chapter.

2.2 An Introduction to Effective Teaching Practices

Currently monopolising the educational discourse in Australia are discussions on 'teaching' and particularly teaching 'quality'. The term 'teaching' has been described as those actions that create and provide effective tasks that encourage learning opportunities (Smith, 2001). However, what actually constitutes 'effective' teaching is still open to debate. Indeed, as Watson, Miller, Davis and Carter (2010) acknowledged, an abundance of synonyms for this term can be found. More recently, the term has been interpreted in terms of teacher attributes or characteristics (Black, 2004; Bright, 2012;

Hattie, 2004, 2012; Polk, 2006), that promote student learning, especially student achievement. Others believed that effective teaching lies in the very teaching style adopted. Some researchers recommended a CA to learning (Clements & Battista, 1990; Gray, 1997; Lattuca, 2006; Lida et al., 2012; Sanaa, 2006), in which teaching is primarily informed by psychological foundations to learning, and learners construct their own meaning as they undergo new experiences with a facilitator. Other researchers and policy makers, including some in QLD, strongly opposed this style of teaching, maintaining that it is the teacher's duty to direct the learning (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Fleming, 2014, 2015; Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Lindsay, 2014; Pearson, 2011; Rosenshine, 1987, 2008, 2012; Rowe, 2006). These practitioners recommended a more behaviourist approach to teaching to advance learning. Others, including some educators in QLD, argued that effective teachers view learning as more holistic, and grounded in the social realities of students' lives. They stipulated that teaching and learning are culturally located and that the backgrounds, prior learning experiences and cultures of the students should be considered and utilised in order to maximise learning. When this does not occur, learning at school conflicts with that which is learnt at home and in the community. It is therefore not surprising that this view again draws upon a constructivist view of learning, but one which is strongly socially situated (Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Nakata, 2001, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Rahman, 2013).

It is clear that what actually constitutes effective teaching is both diverse and debated. As such, this literature review examines each of these aspects more fully, starting with 'effective' teacher characteristics.

2.2.1 Teacher characteristics

John Hattie has been a significant contributor to the conversation on effective teaching regionally, nationally and internationally. Hattie's (2004, 2012) meta-analysis on the influence of classroom teaching practices on student learning found that the most powerful factor influencing student achievement was a teacher's teaching. What, then, are the distinguishing factors of quality teachers and more precisely, quality teaching? What do effective teachers actually do, what are some of the valuable characteristics they possess and what behaviours do they practise?

Hattie (2004, 2012) distinguished between experienced teachers and those who are experts, identifying five major dimensions, or 16 attributes, that the latter group demonstrate. These include possessing strong curriculum knowledge so that teaching and learning occur at a deeper level; the ability to create positive, warm classroom climates that promote learning; the skill to effectively monitor student learning with the provision of constructive feedback; the demonstration of attention to affective attributes and the competence to positively influence student outcomes. Each of these elements will now be explored more fully.

First, in confirming the evidence provided by Hattie (2004, 2012) on the importance of knowing one's subject, Bulger, Mohr and Walls (2002) reiterated this imperative as being salient in influencing student learning. Further, Hattie (2004, 2012) asserted that expert teachers are able to connect new knowledge with past content and to other learning areas and students' prior experience, thus facilitating the learning process (Rosenshine, 2008, 2012). They ensure flexibility by adapting their lessons to the needs of their learners. Thus, knowledge of the subject area is inextricably linked to knowledge of how understanding can be linked to students' every day realities, a factor

Perrone (1994) deemed imperative. Smith (2001) acknowledged that knowing one's content area is an important factor in providing effective instruction, but this, he cautioned, ought not to be the single prerequisite. Effective teachers are also aware of teaching alternative or adjusted content to accommodate their students' needs.

However, not all researchers have agreed with these imperatives (Mills & McGregor, 2014; Rahman, 2013), maintaining that the very orthodoxy of schools and schooling is being disrupted by the intense focus on the acquisition of content knowledge quantified through continuous assessment and student achievement. Indeed, such an emphasis on knowledge assessed by standardised testing has increasingly motivated students to seek alternative forms of schooling, as Mills and McGregor (2014) found. Rahman (2013) contended that the tendency to focus singularly on academic achievement is impacting negatively on Indigenous learners. Indeed, it has been acknowledged that the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous student outcomes in Australia is widening (Lewthwaite et al., 2014b). Moss (2001) and Rahman (2013) both spoke of the 'concealed curriculum', which is often determined by the white, dominant culture to the detriment of Indigenous students, who view knowledge and learning from a different perspective. Similarly, some have said that the focus should be less on content and acquisition of knowledge and more on the child, in a holistic sense (Gay, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). Expanding upon this sentiment, Nakata (2011) stressed the need for teachers of Indigenous learners to not only embed Indigenous knowledge content effectively, but to also consider students more fully by embedding Indigenous perspectives into the learning, regardless of the challenges this may present for non-Indigenous teachers.

Noel Pearson (2011), a strong DI advocate and prominent Aboriginal Australian, espoused an alternative viewpoint of effective teaching, stating that it is determined by

the actual curriculum delivery. Pearson (2011) believed that the scripted content of DI programs can change an average performing teacher into one that is highly skilled, possessing an extensive repertoire of effective teaching strategies. Hattie (2012) rebuked such claims, maintaining that the script of DI programs undermines a teacher's capabilities. Pearson (2011), however, viewed such programs as valuable because teachers do not have to develop curriculum documents, for which they have no time. Hattie (2012) counterargued that effective teachers do not need to rely on scripts because they are adept at contextualising the learning to meet their students' needs, a view also held by Smith (2001). Extending on this point, Stein, Carnine and Dixon (1998) cautioned that the usefulness of such scripts depends on the actual strategies presented by the program developers. Contrary to these views, CRP advocates stressed not the content, nor the delivery of it, but that teachers possess a deep understanding of their students. They felt it was essential that teachers are informed by the prior knowledge, experiences and backgrounds of their learners. These prerequisites are then used as a foundation to inform future learning as is commonly mentioned in the CRP literature (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

Second, expert teachers are efficient operators at guiding the learning process through their classroom interactions. Hattie's (2004, 2012) research indicated that such teachers promote positive classroom climates and continually strive for academic excellence. Due to their expertise, expert practitioners are more adept at dealing with the intricate nature of classroom dynamics. Kohn (1996) and Wisehart (2004) both spoke of strong classroom climates in which students are involved in innovative learning practices, adopting critical thinking and in-depth discussion. Similar sentiments were shared by CRP advocates who believed such classrooms are essential in

establishing strong teacher-student relationships. In responsive classrooms learning is negotiated as teachers affirm rather than dismiss what students bring with them (Gay, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Rychly & Graves, 2012; Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

Third, as has frequently been identified in the literature on effective teaching practices (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Fleming, 2015; Hattie, 2004, 2012; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Rosenshine, 2012; Strandberg & Lindberg, 2012), expert teachers are also skilled at monitoring the learning process and they provide regular, constructive feedback. They anticipate potential classroom disruptions, focusing more closely on the learning. Their teaching experience ensures they are able to perform better than novice teachers because their teaching skills, through years of practice, have become automatic. It is precisely this automaticity which Hattie (2012) claimed enable expert teachers to concentrate on other areas of their practice, such as feedback.

Hattie's (2004, 2012) fourth claim was that expert teachers address their students' affective attributes. They possess a high level of student respect, are passionate and genuinely care about their learners' success. Care and respect are often recognised as imperative teacher attributes in teaching effectively. While many teaching methodologies have placed significant emphasis on these attributes, culturally responsive teachers have extended upon this sentiment. That is, responsive and effective teachers begin, first and foremost, with the learners, their homes, communities and cultures. Confusingly Hattie (2004, 2012) and Pearson (2011) both spoke of the imperative for teachers to promote a culture of respect, but then appeared to limit their focus to academic achievement. CRP experts, in contrast, focus more on the whole child and their identities. Such teachers focus on integrating home and school cultures so that learning becomes more than just a focus on achievement but more importantly affirms

the cultural locatedness of every child (Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Perso, 2012; Rahman, 2013).

Hattie's (2004, 2012) final assertion was that expert teachers are able to positively influence student outcomes by providing more challenging and problem-solving activities. They do not rely on busy activities, but involve students in deep and meaningful learning opportunities, by promoting purposeful understanding. Similarly, Hammond, Miller, Coleman, Cranitch, McCallum (2015) stressed the importance of students, in particular at-risk EAL students, having access to intellectually stimulating content. Further, such content ought to be delivered in a supported sociocultural manner that enables students to actively engage with the material presented to them. Hattie (2004, 2012) further stressed that expert practitioners equip their students with the confidence to actively monitor their own learning, placing strong emphasis on goal setting through self-regulated learning, providing stimulating tasks and clearly defined learning objectives so that they can improve student achievement. This is an attribute that Bulger et al. (2002) and Wisehart (2004) also stipulated as being of value. Further, expert teachers are relentless in their pursuit of the achievement of optimum student outcomes through the acquisition of knowledge. Bright (2012) spoke of effective teachers as being so focused on academic success, that if their learners fail, the teachers believed they too have failed.

Not all researchers, however, have determined student success as being underpinned by knowledge or academic results. Instead, some have measured knowledge in terms of life skills (Gay, 2010; Kuhn, 2007; Polk, 2006; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). Such scholars have demonstrated a preference for a disposition towards lifelong learning rather than momentary academic achievement. Nakata (2001), in his reference to Indigenous cultures, extended upon the sentiment of knowledge, condemning certain

types of knowledge which have been based on the knowledge derived from the colonisation era. Such knowledge, he claimed, needs to be rigorously contested if the positioning of Indigenous people is to be reshaped. Unfortunately, as Mills and McGregor (2014) lamented, knowledge demonstrated through academic performance is often favoured by stakeholders or those who have a vested interest in perpetuating the status quo.

The attributes of effective teachers and teaching are clearly hotly disputed, especially within the FNQ context. In considering this matter from an alternative viewpoint, there are those who argue that a teacher's effectiveness is determined by the actual teaching methodology a teacher adopts. This view, however, is also contestable because teaching methodologies vary greatly: from those that adopt a more facilitated (CA) or holistic approach (CRP) to more teacher led and controlled approaches such as EI or di. The current dilemma facing teachers in the FNQ context is the necessity to implement the mandated EI model whilst striving to teach responsively. Added to these tensions, teachers have to seek resolution of the data-driven achievement demands placed on them by policy makers at a school, local and national level, as Mills and McGregor (2014) cautioned.

In the sections that follow, I provide a deeper insight into the pedagogical approaches of DI/di, EI and CRP, as advocated in the FNQ context.

2.3 An Introduction to direct instruction models

Due to reasons explained in Chapter One, this study is not concerned with DI/di, but rather EI and CRP. However, given that the terms DI, di and EI are frequently misunderstood (Rosenshine, 2008, 2012), a section has been included in the literature review to provide clarity for the reader.

Two distinct terms 'DI' and 'di' are commonly referenced in the literature (Rosenshine, 2008, 2012). The former term DI using capitalisation, based on the work of Engelmann and Carnine (1991), authors of the book the 'Theory of Instruction' and their associates, refers to scripted models of instruction which was designed for a research study, Project Follow Through (Stein et al., 1998). The study was completed in the 1970s and was, arguably one of the largest studies of its kind, involving 200 000 children in 178 communities. The aim of the study was to establish which educational philosophies and programs could best improve the educational levels of disadvantaged children in grades kindergarten - three. From the extensive study, in which 22 different models of teaching were compared, it was found that the program which gave the best overall results was DI. Other teaching methods such as student-centred learning, cooperative education and teaching methods that focused more heavily on student self-esteem rather than teacher-led instruction were deemed to be less effective (Rowe, 2006; Stein et al., 1998).

DI comprises of explicitly teaching concepts and ideas, possessing a strong focus on curriculum and student assessment with the purpose of improving student achievement. Underpinning the theory of DI is that students are taught in small incremental steps to master curriculum content and the skills acquired can be applied to other learning areas (Liem & Martin, 2013). The nature of DI's highly scripted and controlled content mean that student misconceptions are avoided and learning can be greatly accelerated. Further, DI considers students' individual needs through differentiation of learning. Learners are taught at their instructional, not age level, and through regular monitoring, students can move groups as they master the course content. Throughout a DI lesson students receive extensive teacher guidance, using worked examples that have been meticulously designed to achieve academic success

This style of teaching is also believed to assist children in improving affective and behavioural outcomes (Liem & Martin, 2013). It has been acknowledged that this teaching model is particularly beneficial for those students who are performing below their grade average or students who have learning difficulties or special needs. Further, in terms of lesson delivery, due to the scripted instruction of delivery, DI has been considered to be useful to graduate or less experienced practitioners (Pearson, 2011).

The latter term, 'di' is commonly used to refer to the work of Rosenshine (1987, 2008, 2012) who Stein et al. (1998) credit as the researcher who introduced this teaching style into the literature. Rosenshine's (1987, 2008, 2012) use of the term 'di' refers to a specific set of instructional methods used by teachers to improve student achievement. In supporting Rosenshine's (1987, 2008, 2012) views, Clark, Kirschner and Sweller (2012) argued for explicit, direct instruction over minimal guidance. These authors stipulated that this type of instruction is particularly beneficial in teaching new concepts and skills. Underpinning the theory is that the learning is significantly broken down into small manageable steps, full guidance is provided and students receive on-going feedback.

Specifically, Rosenshine (2012) referenced ten principles of di based on the research of cognitive science, master teachers and cognitive support. In brief, the ten principles include: reviewing the previous lesson content, one of the aims of which is to attain automaticity. On this point, Rosenshine (2012) spoke in depth on how the cognitive function of the brain operates, in particular on short and long-term memory and how essential it is for students to be able to use their long-term memory to recall concepts and facts with ease. In brief, the long-term memory is the brain's storage place of learned material. For new information to be learned, it needs to be stored in this space. The working memory, otherwise referred to as our short-term memory, is the

limited mental capacity in which thinking occurs. It is now believed that due to the limited processing space available in our short-term memory, new information is lost within 30 seconds, if not adequately rehearsed. The working memory, however, can easily access any stored information in the long-term memory (Clark et al., 2012; Rosenshine, 2012).

Returning to Rosenshine's (2012) ten principles, he stipulated that learning should occur in small steps and vital that the teacher asks questions to include all class members, using extensive modelling throughout. 'Di' includes guided practice supported by frequent checking for understanding with expectations of a high rate of student success. Scaffolding, for example in the form of questions or perhaps a checklist, is essential to facilitate learning. Finally, Rosenshine (2008, 2012) asserted the need for students to have independent, as well as guided practice, both of which necessitate intense teacher monitoring. Rosenshine's (2008, 2012) tenth principle is based on regular work reviews.

Added to the confusion between the two terms 'DI and di', lies also some confusion between the terms 'di' and 'EI'. Rosenshine (2008, 2012) attributed such misunderstandings to the fact that such terms have a general and more specific meaning and are often used interchangeably. Such confusion is hardly surprising, given that authors Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) in their book about explicit teaching coined the two terms, naming their preferred teaching methodology as explicit direct instruction (EDI). Further, Fleming (2015) described 'di' as reading from a book and using the book as a means to teach children. EI, on the other hand, Fleming (2015) differentiated, is a specific template used by teachers to successfully teach children. Rosenshine (2008) himself goes on to conclude that the term 'di' has evolved over time to mean different things to different people. The general meaning of the term is teacher

led instruction. More specifically, however, as Rosenshine (2008, 2012) views it, 'di' is used to describe a set of teaching strategies used to teach higher order cognitive tasks.

To elaborate further, DI is used to describe programs such as Spelling Mastery (Dixon & Engelmann, 1999) and Elementary Maths Mastery (Farkota, 2000) and places more emphasis on curriculum design, being a scripted program which practitioners are expected to follow (Liem & Martin, 2013; Lindsay, 2014; Stein et al., 1998), whereas di is more a set of principles used by teachers to improve academic outcomes (Rosenhine, 2008, 2012; Stein et al., 1998). In regards to the former model DI, some argue that its scripted content is what distinguishes it from other direct modes of instruction because such programs have been rigorously researched and developed (Stein et al., 1998). These researchers critiqued other direct models of instruction which they contended are based on textbooks which are overwhelming in content and design. They compel students to rote learn concepts, rather than understand them. DI textbooks, on the other hand, have been meticulously designed and enable teachers to concentrate on the learning as the planning and worked examples have already been rigorously developed. A true DI model increases not only the quantity but the quality of student learning through the provision of vital background information which is clearly linked to new knowledge (Stein et al., 1998). According to these authors DI is a "comprehensive system of instruction that integrates effective teaching practices with sophisticated curriculum design, classroom organisation and management and careful monitoring of student progress" (p. 227).

2.3.1 Principles of Direct Instruction

First and foremost, DI is founded on the notion of explicitly teaching students by means of carefully designed texts which increase student learning (Liem & Martin,

2013; Stein et al., 1998). Major ideas are identified, so that content can be organised. The DI program developers advocate that by building big ideas knowledge acquisition will be facilitated (Kuhn, 2007). This aids the learner in achieving mastery of a particular concept or skill. Pearson (2011) maintained that the DI approach is a cogent teaching tool because it is essentially the very prescriptive content of DI that provides teachers with effective teaching strategies. A further tenet of DI is that it increases the quality of the learning by widening a student's background knowledge and linking this with new knowledge (Kuhn, 2007).

Second, DI is founded on teaching strategies that can be generalised and used in other areas. For instance, in teaching beginning reading skills practitioners can teach decoding skills which students can then use when faced with an unfamiliar or new text. The third principle is that intensive teacher scaffolding or support is provided. The curriculum materials used should provide support by including instructional tasks for students. As students' knowledge increases, less prompting and fewer cues are needed (Kuhn, 2007).

Integrating skills and concepts is the fourth principle of DI (Stein et al., 1998). By integrating knowledge students know when to apply such knowledge. For example, if a teacher teaches punctuation the children need to know when to use it (in writing and not just on a grammar sheet). The skills to be taught must be done so in a meaningful context. The last principle of DI is that of review. The review depends largely on the quality of instruction. For instance, if instruction strategies are a waste of time, reviewing the strategies will also be of little use.

Pearson (2011) confirmed the evidence for such prescriptive, instructional programs as being rooted in scientific theory. He attributed these findings to Engelmann

and Carnine (1991) who, in his mind, were the first researchers to provide a scientific theory of instruction. Pearson (2011), in his comments, also made distinct reference to remote communities. In his mind as many teachers in these areas are often graduates or are teachers with relatively little experience, such prescriptive programs are essential as they serve the need of giving low performing students the type of education they require. Furthermore, Pearson (2011) maintained that such prescriptive programs actually benefit the teachers themselves by equipping them with strategies to implement effective instruction, as well as eliminating the need for busy teachers to develop their own curriculum documents.

Pearson (2011) is so convinced of the effectiveness of DI that he named the 1960's failures governing different styles of instruction as a "monumental travesty" (p. 61). He explained that DI uses a diverse selection of examples that have been meticulously chosen and tested by the program developers. Positive examples are used which have only one distinguishing quality. Students are then expected to be able to generalise from the range of examples that they have been exposed to. When negative examples are given, these must be clearly demonstrated. Pearson (2011) argued that such sequential learning is beneficial for less advantaged children. He quoted the Heart and Riley Report that revealed a 32 million word deficit between children of impoverished families and those from more affluent backgrounds in the first three years of reading. Lindsay (2014) also identified with these views, maintaining that the philosophy behind DI is that if the child has not understood a concept the teacher has simply not provided the child with adequate instruction. He described this type of instruction as being a meticulously developed, very structured form of teaching that is brisk and involves on-going dialogue between the students and the teacher. It is rich in structure and uses a lot of drill and practice.

The next section of the literature review examines EI.

2.4 An Introduction to Explicit Instruction

Some researchers have asserted that, for teaching to be effective, it must be a direct mode of instruction (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Fleming, 2014, 2015; Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Lindsay, 2014; Pearson, 2011; Rosenshine, 1987, 2008, 2012; Rowe, 2006). The effectiveness of using direct models of instruction such as EI or di has been widely articulated in the literature and is currently mandated in many FNQ schools.

The origins of explicit teaching can be traced back to the United States. Researchers Archer and Hughes (2011), using the work of Engelmann and colleagues based most of their evidence on the efficacy of this model on the work of Brophy and Good, and the study Project Follow Through, previously discussed. Their remaining evidence derived from studies within Special Education, implying that this style of teaching is particularly beneficial for students with disabilities. Confusingly, Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) preferred the term EDI to talk about explicit teaching. Their discussion and interest in EDI centred on improving student outcomes on state tests. Clear is that the focus of such direct models of teaching is on improving student academic achievement through the effective delivery of the curriculum, but with such a vested interest in generating academic success, a reflective practitioner has to question the attention given to achievement, especially in considering that its priority might be at the expense of other imperatives. Indeed, Rahman (2013) argued that marginalised and Indigenous students are often disadvantaged by knowledge systems which rely solely on academic performance.

In more recent years teaching explicitly has become unquestionably endorsed as preferred practice in Australia, especially in FNQ schools where teachers are instructed to teach using direct approaches. Fleming (2015) described the focus of EI on improving student outcomes, working with a specific teaching template of 'I DO, WE DO, YOU DO and Plough back' (discussed in section 2.4.4). In the TS the delivery of the curriculum is predominantly using an EI approach, as mandated by Tagai College. This appears to have reached such an elevated status that it is currently viewed as the only way to teach in the strands of literacy and numeracy (See Appendix A for timetable). So, how exactly has this American style of teaching come to dominate the discourse of effective teaching in FNQ schools?

To comprehend the rationale behind the increasing popularity of this model, it is necessary to understand the driving force behind Australia's current educational policies. In recent years, as Sleeter (2012) explained, the neo-liberal paradigm has been thought to direct the thinking of state leaders, whose educational policies have been driven by an industrial model of teaching. In this model the teaching profession, rather than responding to the individual needs and personal growth of students, has been restricted to a myopic focus on increasing student performances in standardised testing, forcing students to either comply with the system or to fail (Mills & McGregor, 2014). Specifically, in Australia, current educational policies are strongly influenced by the Quality Education policy, *The Case for an Education Revolution in our Schools*, initiated by the Rudd Government (Rudd & Gillard, 2008). As part of this policy, three key initiatives for improving educational standards were established: improving teacher quality and performance to attain better outcomes; making schools more accountable for their performance and ensuring this information is publicly available; and assisting under-performing school communities to determine funding allocation. Students are

thus subjected to increased pressure to perform on standardised tests such as the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) and the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). Meanwhile, the teaching profession is increasingly regulated, as teachers face heightened scrutiny of their work and rising accountability for improving academic outcomes. Similarly, schools, in an effort to increase their funding, are also succumbing to the pressures of placing student academic achievement at the forefront of their agendas. In the process, as Mills and McGregor (2014) lamented, parents and students become the investors and outputs in a competitive marketplace.

Returning to the point in question - How did EI become endorsed as wide-spread practice in Australian schools, in particular in FNQ, especially in the light of the progressive attention given to the literacy curriculum in the past two decades? In response to the demands for achievement placed on students, teachers and schools to perform, as determined by the Rudd policy, there has been an overwhelming drive for student outcomes, particularly in addressing the achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, as documented in the MCEETYA report (2000). One could believe that the EI model, which has been lauded by some experts as being the most effective and efficient means to improve student outcomes (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Fleming, 2013, 2015; Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009) has become a silver bullet to solve all learning problems.

However, the question is whether or not such a policy, removed from any real learning context, is a justifiable means to determine how exactly the performance of students, teachers and schools ought to be measured. As Ball (2005) asserted, "Policy is something 'done' to people. Policies pose problems. Policy creates circumstances by which recipients are either advantaged or disadvantaged. We 'people' policy" (p. 21).

Is the Rudd policy in any way useful in assisting teachers to improve their practice? Do TSI students believe that their success should be determined solely by their academic performance? Is teaching explicitly, following a prescribed curriculum, serving the needs of Islander students? Is the implementation and enactment of the Rudd policy severely neglecting Islanders' learning needs, or should the parameters of education move towards a more culturally inclusive schooling model as suggested by MCEETYA (2000)?

The next section examines the principles underlying explicit instruction, drawing on Archer and Hughes's (2011) 16 elements.

2.4.1 Principles of explicit instruction

EI with its foundations deeply rooted in scientific theory is based on six principles (Archer & Hughes, 2011). First, teachers must use their time wisely in order to provide high quality instruction. In ensuring high quality instruction, the learning objective must be clear; prior learning needs to be activated; and the teacher needs to model in multiple ways, checking for understanding throughout the lesson. Second, EI encourages academic success and this is facilitated by making tasks doable. Student success is the underlying foundation of this approach and significant emphasis is placed on academic achievement through carefully sequenced tasks. Third, teachers need to cover a wide range of content and do so effectively. The premise is that the more content a child is exposed to, the more that child actually learns. Fourth, the teacher, as expert, must direct the learning using small instructional groups. EI does not necessarily promote interaction and learning between students, but relies upon the teacher maintaining control. Fifth, EI must be highly scaffolded. In this style of instruction there is no place for self-discovery, because quite simply the teacher imparts the knowledge

students need to know. The final element of EI is the assumption that diverse student needs are catered for because teachers of this approach use different forms of knowledge at varying levels (Archer & Hughes, 2011). In sum, these authors stipulated that the underlying premise of EI is that the sequential manner of the delivery of instruction is more significant than individual learner differences. In an EI model there exists the expectation that practitioners carefully consider what students need to learn. This is then delivered in small, manageable chunks and sufficient practice is provided which, according to the authors, facilitates the learning process. This is accompanied by regular checking for understanding, immediate corrective feedback and scaffolding. At the heart of this instruction style is great teaching, affording students' academic success.

In considering Archer and Hughes (2011) work in more detail, as is clearly explained in their book 'explicit instruction', the EI model comprises four components: I DO, the modelling and teacher-led instruction component; WE DO which is the guided or prompted practice; YOU DO – the unprompted practice; and the lesson closure. In commencing an EI lesson, the authors (2011) emphasised the need for teachers to gain whole class attention so that students do not miss vital learning opportunities. The learning goal should be clearly stated at the outset and students need to understand the lesson's relevance. To delivery an effective EI lesson teachers must have also considered the prerequisite skills students will need to complete the task.

The 'I DO' component is predominantly teacher-led, using modelling which consists of demonstrations in which teachers perform the skill to be used, and more importantly describe the process using a think-aloud tool. Students, at this point, are not required to perform the skill, but they may be actively involved through teacher questioning. In the 'WE DO', otherwise known as guided or prompted practice, the teacher scaffolds the learning using physical or verbal prompts. It is during this stage

that the teacher slowly relinquishes control of the learning. Archer and Hughes (2011) described the 'YOU DO' component of the model as unprompted practice. However, important to note that this does not mean that students work in isolation. Rather, the teacher is still monitoring and providing effective feedback to eliminate potential errors and misconceptions. The final part of the model, is called the 'closure' in which teachers, through questions, review the lesson and also preview the content of the next lesson. As EI is not a scripted program, unlike DI, careful consideration must be given to the lesson content. That is, practitioners must meticulously plan the lesson taking into consideration definitions, explanations, concept and skill development.

The next section of this literature review examines the EDI model put forward by Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) and is more closely associated with the work of Rosenshine (2012).

2.4.2 Principles of EDI

The organisation of Hollingsworth and Ybarra's (2009) book is presented in a different format to the previous authors discussed, and yet many of the principals that are evident within the EI model are also to be found in the EDI model. Rather than use the teaching template of 'I DO, WE DO, YOU DO and closure' Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009), in their overview, discussed the 'delivery of the curriculum, guided practice, lesson closure followed by independent practice'. The authors, Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) are the founders of the Dataworks company in America, a company that bases their approach on educational theory, cognitive research, direct instruction and classroom observations to improve student outcomes and aims to support practitioners and schools with lesson delivery and design by using specific teaching practices. EDI is deemed effective for a wide range of learners from low to high

performing, as well as those with special needs. Students are taught in their age based grade level class. EDI can be used by a variety of practitioners, regardless of their experience using extensive checking for understanding and classroom management techniques (Hollingsworth and Ybarra, 2009). As this approach is not based on a pre-planned scripted program with worked examples like DI, the checking for understanding strategy serves the crucial purpose of ascertaining learners' misconceptions with a view to correcting them.

To commence an EDI lesson successfully the authors stipulated the need for teachers to activate prior knowledge so that students can access the information they require from their long-term memory and place it in their working memory as Rosenshine (2012) too stipulated. That is, students are actively engaged in the thinking process. In some EDI lessons the teacher also explains why the skill is being taught. Teachers are urged to do this, because understanding the rationale behind the learning, as Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) maintained, is believed to promote motivation.

In the controlled part of the lesson, the teacher explains the skill or concept to be learnt. Unlike Archer and Hughes (2011), these authors extended the teacher controlled part of the lesson to include a demonstration to appeal to more kinaesthetic learners. Furthermore, they contended that the most salient element of any EDI lesson is continually checking for student understanding. This not only regulates the lesson pace, but also checks for misconceptions, serving as a clear indication as to whether the students are ready for independent practice, or require more instruction.

Throughout the lesson the teacher must continually verify that the students are learning using the 'Teach first, ask a question, pause, pick a non-volunteer, listen to the response, effective feedback strategy' (TAPPLE strategy) (Hollingsworth & Ybarra,

2009). Fundamental to this method of instruction is that the teacher actually teaches before asking students what they already know. This ought not to be confused with activating prior knowledge, which links new with existing knowledge. This step is followed by the teacher asking a question. It is significant that the question is asked of the entire class, rather than directed to an individual. The teacher then pauses, allowing students wait time to process information before picking a non-volunteer. Subsequently, the teacher listens carefully to the response. A correct answer means the teacher adopts an echo process, repeating the answer before checking with two further students. In this way, all the learners hear the correct response several times. If the answer is only partially correct the teacher either paraphrases or elaborates. An incorrect reply prompts the teacher to provide a few cues. Assuming the student still does not know the answer, the teacher asks exactly the same question to another two students, before returning to the previous student to reiterate the question (Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009).

The directed part of the lesson is followed by the guided practice in which the teacher slowly relinquishes control of the learning. Interaction between the teacher and the students increases significantly due to the substantial increase in checking for understanding. The most important aspect of guided practice is that the teacher works through the problems with the students step by step. Although the students initially imitate the teacher, by the end of the guided practice session they are working independently. To encourage participation by all learners the teacher needs to adopt a number of strategies such as choral responses, sharing with a neighbour, raising of the hand and summarising (Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009).

Prior to engaging in independent practice, the teacher closes the lesson. This may only last a few minutes, but as Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) claimed, it is regarded as an essential component, in which the teacher asks key questions pertaining

to the lesson content to summarise the main points. Correct answers signify that students are ready for independent practice, whereas incorrect responses prompt the teacher to modify the instruction and re-teach.

The authors (2009) described the final component of an EDI lesson as independent practice. In this section students are encouraged to work independently to ensure that they are able to automatically use the acquired skill. The teacher circulates, assisting individuals as required. If such practice takes place in class, it must be highly structured with regular teacher checking. Demonstration of the successful mastery of the taught concept or skill during the independent phase enables students to remain focused on and engaged with the task at hand.

2.4.3 Some initial concerns

Despite the fact that Archer and Hughes (2011) and Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) agreed on many aspects of this direct model, some differences between their models do exist. While the former spoke of a brisk pace, Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) described a pace regulated by students' responses in the checking phase. They also referred, to a small degree, to ESL learners (This is however, the main focus of their later publication, *EDI for English Learners*, 2013), and yet minimal mention of such learners was made by Archer and Hughes (2011). The fact that such learners receive little or indeed no individualised attention highlights EI's tendency to group students collectively, irrespective of their personal circumstances. This in itself is disconcerting, given that the current make-up of contemporary classrooms is now so diverse (Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford, 2014). Further, all of the authors discussed student success rate, but disparities between the two models exist. According to Archer and Hughes (2011) success rates ought to be around 95% of the class. Hollingsworth

and Ybarra (2009), on the other hand, stated that teachers should aim for an 80% student success rate, as any higher would be unrealistic. Rosenshine (1987) agreed with this latter stance. Further, EI should be delivered to small, heterogeneous groups, and larger classes should be broken down into smaller groups to facilitate this (Archer & Hughes, 2011). However, given the heavy teaching schedule and large classes many teachers now face, this may not always be feasible, or practical. Also, due to the fact that an EI approach breaks the down the learning into smaller steps, it has to be considered that this teaching style may be more suited to certain areas of instruction than others, an observation also noted by Rosenshine (1987).

Regardless of the advantages that teaching explicitly has, one would also have to question Hollingsworth and Ybarra's (2009) suggestions that EDI enables students to reach their learning potential in a multitude of ways. This implies a teaching style that is diverse to cater for a variety of learners. In an EI approach, this is definitely not the case. The teacher, as expert, passes on knowledge to learners (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009). This teaching style remains constant, guided by the content rather than by the diversity of student needs. What is strikingly apparent, in Archer and Hughes' (2011) book, is that no mention is ever made of the students as individuals who perhaps possess a first language that differs from the language of instruction. Yet it is clear in the literature that teachers faced with such students need specific teaching strategies to modify their teaching to ensure student success (Hammond et al., 2015). Given these considerations, how does the curriculum and a teacher's delivery of it impact on EALD Islander students who may arrive at school with an alternative view to learning? Further, do Indigenous learners' prefer to learn in a more holistic manner, as Barnes (2000) and Perso (2012) reported? How do they feel

about responding in choral unison, or being spotlighted through the TAPPLE or checking for understanding process?

The next section describes the John Fleming approach to teaching explicitly.

2.4.4 The Fleming model

Fleming, presently head of Haileybury College Berwick campus in Victoria and ex principal of Bellfield, a notoriously disadvantaged school, has a proven track record of improving student results through EI (Fleming & Kleinheinz, 2013). Fleming now works as an educational consultant throughout Australia and in particular has been working closely with many FNQ schools. Fleming's (2015) EI model of 'I DO, WE DO, YOU DO and Plough Back', advocates for a drastic change in how teachers of primary aged school children execute the curriculum in their daily teaching. In this section the model is discussed.

The theory underlying EI is that the learning must be made transparent to the learner (Fleming, 2015), a factor that Hattie (2012) also discussed. A successful EI lesson is the teaching of skills which is broken down into small steps (Fleming, 2014, 2015; Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013). Regular reviews are necessary and teachers also need to constantly refine the delivery of their own practice. In commencing an EI lesson, teachers are expected to use a warmer activity to engage students (See Appendix B). This may be an activity such as a PowerPoint presentation, which consolidates prior learning. The learning intention, or learning goal is clearly stated and the learning motivation is explicitly clarified. The former is referred to throughout the lesson. Similar to the model provided by Archer and Hughes (2011), Fleming's (2015) template consists of an 'I DO' phase in which the teacher, using modelling, a think-aloud process and checking for understanding explains the lesson's concepts. Following this section

students engage in the 'WE DO', in which they are provided with opportunities to practice the content taught. The 'YOU DO' stage enables students to work with the taught material independently. In the 'Plough Back', or review stage, students are asked questions to determine if learners have understood the lesson content. Fleming's (2014, 2015) philosophy is that the teaching must be heavily scaffolded with ample opportunities for practice. The 'I DO, WE DO, YOU DO model', in his mind is a filtering mechanism because it provides teachers with a clear indication of whether they can proceed to the next stage of the lesson, or whether they need to re-teach.

2.4.5 Studies examining the efficacy of explicit instruction

A review of the literature indicated that many studies have examined the effectiveness of EI, but most have been conducted outside Australia. The investigation of EI in Indigenous contexts is conspicuously absent, and no studies have been conducted in the TS. This is problematic given that these models are mandated throughout FNQ without exception. Interestingly, in most studies that have been conducted, the actual voices of students, especially ethnic minorities, have not been heard (Barnes, 2000; Chigeza, 2010). It is precisely this aspect that represents a gap in the literature.

Thus, both studies examining EI to which I have referred took place outside FNQ. The first is an Australian study using explicit teaching as part of an integrated year 8 English. The second is a New Zealand based study analysing the effectiveness of EI on second language (L2) learning.

The Australian study took place within the English department at the Francis de Sales College in the Adelaide Hills. The English Faculty perceived effective teachers to be teaching the required skill or concept in a variety of ways and breaking the concepts

down into smaller parts. Teachers were keen to know if independent success could be assisted by explicit teaching methods. Teachers initially questioned the usefulness of an EI approach and whether it was not merely a highly-scaffolded form of instruction that hindered individual reflection and learning (Kasprzak, 2010).

In this case EI was used to teach argumentative writing. During the explicit teaching process students in the treatment group were given written exemplars which they had to match on a marking rubric. Paragraphs within the essay were deconstructed and seven components of how to write an argumentative essay were identified. The non-treatment group did not receive the same level of explicit teaching and structure. At the end of the unit students were assessed on their ability to write an argumentative essay on the topic of whether or not Joan of Arc was a heroine or a villain, based upon a film they had watched (Kasprzak, 2010).

Although teachers were initially disappointed with the results of the study, which showed that the class who had received EI did not perform at a higher level to the classes who had not received EI, upon further examination it was revealed that the students who had been explicitly taught were indeed able to work more independently. Further, they were able to ask more higher-order thinking questions relating to symbolism, imagery and metaphor (Kasprzak, 2010). Despite the fact that the College's main objective of improving student performance was not met, the observations gained from the study reinforced the value of an EI approach. As Kasprzak (2010) pointed out, when students were focused, the classroom was peaceful and the teacher could promote deep learning.

Study two examined the effectiveness of EI on L2. The New Zealand research involved 94 participants, predominantly of Asian background, with an average of nine

years' formal English education. Practically all of those in the research possessed an upper intermediate or advanced level of English (Akakura, 2011). The research investigation assessed language acquisition in acquiring implicit language knowledge for comprehension and production. For the purpose of the study implicit language knowledge referred to the understanding or using of such language in a conversation, whereas explicit knowledge referred to the rules of how the language was used.

Two groups received three 60 minute lessons over one week. In the experimental group learners received EI through computer assisted language learning. The control group were taught using traditional methods. A pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test was delivered to establish accuracy levels on the acquisition of definite and indefinite articles in English (the/a/an). L2 learners were tested using four tasks which were a mixture of oral and written (Akakura, 2011).

On three of the four assigned tasks, the experimental group outperformed the control group. Task three was a grammatical judgement task in which participants had to judge 20 sentences for grammatical errors. In this task the experimental group slightly outperformed the control group (Akakura, 2011). Despite the mixed outcomes of the research study, Akakura (2011) supported the effectiveness of EI.

Notwithstanding the limitations revealed in both studies, it could be inferred that an EI approach plays an important part in the teaching of any classroom. However, some caution ought to be applied. First, both were relatively small scale studies. As a consequence, it is clear that further research needs to be conducted to determine the effectiveness of EI. Second, these studies concentrated on the sole disciplines of English and language learning. Third, neither of the studies discussed a teaching method in the light of the current study context – that is teaching in a way that is also culturally

responsive. While it could be argued that EI may be appropriate in some contexts, it may not necessarily be the most appropriate method of instruction across all subject areas, as Rosenshine (1987) admitted, or appropriate for learners of other cultures such as Indigenous students in the TS. If practitioners are to holistically and meaningfully embed TSI viewpoints into the curriculum, they can ill-afford to ignore the needs of their students. In examining such learners in more depth, it may be revealed that such teacher-centred classrooms may not be the optimum teaching approach.

In response to this gap in the literature, this current study is being undertaken from a teacher-student perspective and examines the two specific teaching models of EI and CRP mandated in the FNQ region. The voices of the students are not only heard, but are responded to through the process of critical teacher reflection and subsequent change in practice, as Berry (2007) and Sellars (2014) recommended. In this study, I aim to negotiate the pedagogical and political teaching landscape in the TS.

I now examine concerns which have been raised relating to direct teaching models.

2.4.6 Concerns about direct teaching models

Despite widespread support for direct teaching approaches, these teaching styles have been repeatedly challenged in the literature, particularly by those who support a more holistic approach to learning (CRP) or those who believe in learning through a more considered interaction between students and the experience, in an effort to promote students' construction of understanding (CA).

One of the underlying premises of EI outlined in the literature is that the teacher as expert provides highly scaffolded instruction (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Fleming, 2015; Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009). Similarly,

proponents of direct models contended that that the teacher must direct and control the learning (Clark et al., 2012; Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013; Lindsay, 2014; Pearson, 2011; Rowe, 2006). Advocates of CRP, however, do not position the teacher as expert but instead firmly believed that learning becomes negotiated through teacher facilitation (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). This subtle shift in teacher positioning means that the balance of power is more evenly distributed, whereas in EI classrooms, the teacher, as expert, dominates the teaching process and one could argue, that in the process the student voice becomes eliminated.

Those who prefer direct modes of instruction question the efficacy of models of construction such as CA. Rather than students constructing their own knowledge from experiences, Rowe (2006) contended that teachers need to play a crucial part by actively engaging with the child's current knowledge, challenging their misconceptions with a view to changing them. In operating under CA in the classroom, Rowe (2006) questioned how students can possibly manage misconceptions if they do not even realise their existence in the first place. Lida et al. (2012) disputed this position, claiming that constructivist teachers possess in-depth knowledge that they can use to easily clarify and eliminate such misunderstandings. Conversely DI researchers claimed that in DI scripted programs misconceptions do not exist because the precise nature of the scripted lesson content has been meticulously designed to avoid such misconceptions occurring in the first instance (Stein et al., 1998). CA scholars such as Clements and Battista (1990) and Gray (1997) demonstrated a preference for knowledge that is discovered and constructed, with the teacher guiding the students in the process. Poplin (1988) extended this sentiment by claiming that schools should encourage learners to make sense of learning through their personal experiences, rather than relying on the meanings others have previously constructed.

Direct approaches have been further discredited for their reliance on the 'drill and practice' method of learning (Kohn, 1996). Kohn (1996) felt that such learning hinders a student's imagination, and discourages independent critical thinking. Alternatively, students should be given interesting problems to solve, a comment also made by Hattie (2012). Gay (2010) perceived direct approaches to be devoid of purposeful questioning and critical thinking. She questioned these approaches' efficacy because she believed they disregard the whole child and instead focus purely on academic achievement. Gay (2010) was so convinced on this point that she vehemently refused to allocate grades in her classroom, stating that every child can succeed, but in their own right. Heward (2003) however, challenged these views, claiming that the very purpose of drill and practice routine is for students to attain mastery. In fact, it is through such repeated practice that learners are able to use such skills automatically, a comment language scholars Hammond et al. (2015) also emphasised as important for EAL students. Correspondingly, Archer and Hughes (2011) contended that when drill and practice is used correctly, mastery of basic concepts and skills can be achieved. This enables students to more easily access their short-term memory space when they are faced with tasks that require more complex thinking.

Explicit teaching practices, as several authors confirmed (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Fleming, 2014, 2015; Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009) place great emphasis on academic achievement and gaining knowledge of curriculum content. Frequently, as Nakata (2001) and Rahman (2013) criticised, such curricula are pre-determined and often value the views of the dominant culture. Rahman (2013) condemned mainstream schooling's inability to effectively adapt the curriculum to meet Indigenous students' needs and blamed the falling standards of Indigenous learners on this very factor. As such, it could be argued that when there is a

lack of attention to the context, through adopting a pre-determined curriculum and inattentiveness to students as culturally-located individuals, students' needs become entirely neglected. Proponents of teaching responsively argued that it is the very context - that is the students, their identities and past experiences - that forms the solid foundation for future learning to occur. In this manner learning becomes meaningful because it is relevant to students' lives (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Osborne, 2001, 2003). When the context is omitted, learning itself lacks a valid purpose. Kuhn (2007) also stressed the need for the relationship between the context and the learning to be considered more wisely. This is an important issue, she argued, as theorists now believe that there is a link between what is learned and student motivation. In essence, the subject material is important because it is the very subject matter that can motivate, or indeed demotivate, students' learning. Without consideration given to the actual learning context, students work in isolation and the learning becomes bereft of meaning.

Archer and Hughes (2011) stressed the value of EI classrooms as being highly structured and systematic. Primarily, the structures students are expected to follow are those decided upon by the school, with no thought given to the home structures of students. Learning is typically determined by the mainstream culture. By contrast, attention to the home environment is a central tenet for CRP teachers, as they seek to closely align school and home structures, and involve the community in the learning, or at least assist students in navigating the orthodoxies of the classroom environment (Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Osborne, 2001; Perso, 2012; Rahman, 2013). For instance, in the literature of direct teaching methodologies, minimal reference is made to ELL, EALD or ESL learners, and yet in culturally responsive environments, home language is both embraced and utilised in classroom practice (Bishop & Glynn, 1999;

Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010). Considering carefully the students' home structures and linguistic needs, learning becomes more relevant, accessible and meaningful. That is, teachers teach to the students' context and strengths, avoiding deficit theorising (Walker, 2010). As Barnes (2000) reported, in responsive classrooms, there is flexibility in learning and learners are given choices over the curriculum content. Kohn (1996) suggested teachers should focus on creating welcoming classroom climates, in which learning is negotiated, in-depth comprehension is encouraged; on-task engagement is high; and social skills and academic success are actively promoted. When practitioners do value what students bring with them into the classroom, learning takes place from an asset, rather than deficit perspective. By teaching in this manner, teachers become less focused on the actual content, as is the case in direct teaching models, and more focused on meeting their students' personal needs and strengths (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Rychly & Graves, 2012).

Extending upon such thoughts, many researchers believed that students should be involved in discussions about their learning and the purpose of it (Black, 2004; Gay, 2010; Kuhn, 2007; Lattuca, 2006; Sanaa, 2006). Learning, as portrayed by Gray (1997), is an interactive process requiring a student-centred focus. Such tasks require students to think reflectively and to engage in higher order thinking as they work through problems collaboratively with their peers, a position also adopted by Clements and Battista (1990). Kuhn (2007) put forward the argument that students need to question what it is they are being taught. In her opinion, the success of the learning task becomes apparent only when a student can recognise its value. In Kuhn's (2007) view schools ought to be teaching students to use their intellect, not only in school, but beyond, and thus she speaks of lifelong learning and life skills, a comment also made by others (Bright, 2012; Polk, 2006). Conversely, in more direct models of instruction, the content is pre-

decided; the decisions are made by the experts; teachers impart knowledge; and questions, for the most part, are generated by the teacher. As Nakata (2001) also admonished, in regards to Indigenous learners, the content has been decided upon by those who derived from the colonisation era, preferencing certain types of knowledge in the process. Perhaps, it could be argued that in the upper years of primary schooling, having mastered the foundational literacy and numeracy skills through perhaps a more direct approach, students ought to have more flexibility and more of a voice in what they prefer to learn (Refer to student needs in methodology chapters and specifically Table 5.5).

Further, direct teaching pedagogies fail to consider the ramifications of a student not being receptive to listening, as such ways of teaching are built on the very premise that the learner is disposed to sit and listen to the input provided by the teacher. If educators are to appreciate and demonstrate an understanding of the uniqueness and diversity of learners in their classrooms, it is imperative teachers accommodate the needs of learners who prefer to learn and be assessed in alternative ways. For example, some of Barnes's (2000) discoveries on his research on Indigenous students, included a preference for holistic learning and learning which was practical and contextualised, in addition to assessments based on assignments, rather than examinations. As Gay (2010) outlined, there has to be reconsideration of the more rigid parameters of direct teaching models.

EI is regarded as being of particular benefit for students who need to acquire basic skills and facts and indeed it has been acknowledged that direct teaching models are especially beneficial in assisting novices acquire new skills and concepts as the learning is broken down into small steps with ample guidance provided (Clark et al., 2012). As Archer and Hughes (2011) pointed out, EI is designed to accommodate

students with special needs. However, it is to be remembered that this is only one way to teach and as Rosenshine (1987) acknowledged, it may not be the most preferable approach across all learning areas. As Heward (2003) stipulated many alternative approaches exist and while approaches such as discovery learning and constructivist learning (Clark et al., 2012) too have been criticised, proponents of such approaches have equally contended that they too have a valid place (Gray, 1997; Lattuca, 2006; Sanaa, 2006). It is preferable that educators use a variety of instructional techniques and approaches, allowing students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in numerous ways (Hepple et al., 2014; Lewthwaite et al., 2013; O'Rourke, 2005). The disregard for learners' as individuals is a major flaw in teaching explicitly, because its emphasis is on content knowledge acquisition and achieving academically. While this is an important goal, others have contended that the emphasis ought to rest on the development of the whole child with more attention to student cultural identity (Gay, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). Through such practice the learning is no longer abstract in nature, but becomes a more tangible process which students can both relate to and engage with (Nakata, 2011). In addition, by valuing students as EALD learners and embracing their home language from a positive perspective, their language background becomes embedded into the learning. This can be used as a vehicle to promote deeper learning, as well as facilitate classroom communication and interaction (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010).

The current study aims to determine how such teaching practices can be implemented in the classroom, and to evaluate how they may meet the needs of TSI students. Confronted with the reality that direct teaching models are currently mandated throughout FNQ, and given the lack of prior research (Chigeza, 2010), it would seem appropriate that this study be conducted. Do Indigenous students in the TS want their

learning to be broken down, or perhaps they wish to learn more holistically (Barnes, 2000; Perso, 2012)? Do TSI students feel embarrassed by spotlighting, as perhaps Osborne (2001) and Perso (2012) suggested? Do such students appreciate their work being publically displayed in the classroom (Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013)? Moreover, there have been very few studies in Australia, and none in the TS, which have specifically captured students' viewpoints about practices to support their learning. Nakata (2001) claimed that if minority and marginalised students and their communities are no longer to be silenced, practitioners need to respond. The shameful status quo of what is dominating our current educational context, resulting in a fracture between home and schooling, needs to be challenged (Rahman, 2013). A one-size-fits-all teaching approach as an acceptable and equitable means to education must be investigated. In our present multicultural and global climate teachers need to respond to their students with an inquiring mindset and the roots of their response must unquestionably begin with identifying the learning needs of students as individuals, not as mere commodities or numbers to serve the educational hierarchies who seek to push their own agenda (Mills & McGregor, 2014).

The next section of this literature review examines an alternative approach to literacy, a Multiliteracies approach.

2.4.7 Multiliteracies approach

Given the current overemphasis on direct teaching methodologies in FNQ, one must also question why other approaches to teaching literacy are not endorsed? In the 21st century students are working and competing in an increasingly connected society, in which to achieving success, they need to be prepared socially, culturally, politically and technologically for inevitable future challenges. Perhaps, rather than enforcing EI,

which focuses predominantly on the written genre with scant regard to students' context of learning, policy makers ought to consider a Multiliteracies approach, as some experts (Hepple et al., 2014; O'Rourke, 2005; Unsworth, 2006) have suggested. In a world of global connectedness, with technology at the forefront, Multiliteracies has the capacity to extend the somewhat narrow interpretation of literacy, which presently includes reading, writing and to a lesser extent speaking and listening, to encompass a wider range of skills. For example, in a world of digital technologies, is it not essential that students possess the skills to communicate, not just using traditional modes of communication (reading books and writing essay style responses), but also have the skills and competencies to access texting, blogs, twitter, but to mention a few? This would enable learners to demonstrate their knowledge in numerous ways, inclusive of the diverse dimensions that Multiliteracies encompasses.

Teachers must now accommodate a variety of student needs in the classroom. They are faced with multicultural, ethnically diverse learners, including a diverse selection of English language learners (ELL), ESL and EALD students (Hepple et al. 2014). According to international evidence, such students in mainstream English schooling take, on average, five - seven years to achieve proficiency in academic English (Hammond et al., 2015). Indeed, Hepple et al. (2014) distinguished between basic English language skills of communication, which they described as being relatively easy to master, and the more complex academic English of the classroom, which requires time. In order for students to be academically literate, as outlined in the ACARA (2016) guidelines, teachers need to provide assistance in building learners' English language skills to access the 'general' curriculum in a mainstream classroom. To do this successfully learners such as EALD students need to understand how language works and possess the metalanguage to discuss it. It is vital that students have

an understanding of different genres, using a variety of language elements. They must have ample, repeated opportunities to process texts (Hammond et al., 2015) and be able to access and express their ideas in multimodal ways, as the language learners in Hepple's et al. (2014) study did through a Claymation based project.

Perhaps, given the diversity of students in today's classrooms, more emphasis ought to be placed on equipping general classroom teachers with the requisite knowledge and skills to be able to teach students whose first language is not English. On this point, authors Hammond et al. (2015) posited that many educators lack the confidence and knowledge in this particular area of practice. Indeed, Nakata (1994, 2011) stressed the need to teach English as an additional language. While many of the teaching strategies associated with EALD students suggested by Hammond et al. (2015), were strikingly similar to practices endorsed by EI experts (Archer & Hughes, 2011), other strategies such as 'real life' learning and 'scaffolded assessment' seemed to fit more easily within a CRP framework.

The next section of this literature review discusses a CRP approach to learning, the second main focus of this study and how this approach may be applied to TSI learners.

2.5 An Introduction to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Today's society is a global one in which people travel and migrate, borders shift and new countries emerge. Through technology people are more connected and inevitably this advancement in technology has impacted on our lifestyles in numerous ways. Bishop and Glynn (1999) commented upon the increasing difficulty experienced by marginalised, oppressed, colonised peoples, including many Indigenous peoples, to be heard. "No significant advancement is being made in addressing cultural diversity in

society because current educational policies and practices in most Western countries were developed and continue to be developed within a framework of colonisation” (p. 11-12). Changes to education need to occur to challenge this situation. Such changes include how practitioners, in recognition of and in response to multicultural and diverse student populations, approach and adjust their teaching, adopting responsive practices, as many scholars (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) have confirmed.

The development of CRP in formal education is evidenced in strategic efforts such as the ‘No One Model American’ document published in 1972 by the American Association College of Teacher Education (AACTE), which was produced with the aim of producing a better functioning society catering to difference through improved teacher education. As a result of the publication, three premises were highlighted in raising educational standards for students of diverse backgrounds. First, the value of diverse cultures should be recognised as important. Second, teaching in a multicultural manner promotes and protects cultural differences. Third, and by necessity, the teaching of diverse cultures should be included in teacher training courses.

According to the AACTE (1972) the document emphasised that effective teachers possess strong cultural knowledge and as such strive to acknowledge the diverse backgrounds and experiences that their students bring with them into the classroom. They ensure that their classroom materials and teaching methods are representative of classroom diversity, providing students with opportunities to connect classroom learning with their own lives, regardless of their cultural heritage. Further, in acknowledging and accommodating for the diversity of students’ cultural backgrounds, responsive practitioners also consider and reflect upon their own culture and how this may impact upon the interactions as they engage with learners in the classroom. In

short, effective teachers embrace culture in their classrooms and integrate culture into their teaching programs.

As stated, FNQ is home to many Aboriginal and TSIs (Caniglia et al., 2010). In the past decade, there has been an emphasis on improving teacher quality to enhance learner performance. As part of this effort to improve learner performance and increase student engagement, teachers are being encouraged to teach in a way that is also culturally responsive (DET, 2011; Perso, 2012; Queensland Government, 2000). Educators are being urged to equip themselves with cultural knowledge about their learners, in order to interact more successfully with them in the classroom. This, as asserted by Gay (2010), is essential if the perpetual cycle of student failure in schools is to be broken.

The next section examines the principles underpinning a CRP approach.

2.5.1 Principles of culturally responsive pedagogy

Education, as acknowledged by some (Mills & McGregor, 2014; Rahman, 2013) has been criticised on many levels as being nationalistic in orientation, often marginalising the interests and aspirations of local communities, especially those of Indigenous peoples. In response to such claims, many educators advocate for an accessible, inclusive approach to education, referred to as CRT or CRP. Osborne (2001, p. 61) defines the term CRP as:

...adjusting and readjusting teaching practices and the content of the curriculum in such a way as to assist students to develop appropriate classroom behaviour and hence improved levels of academic

achievement, because they build from existing skills and knowledge in ways with which they are at least partly familiar.

It is clear from this definition that CRP begins with the learner. It cannot be reduced to one specific teaching style, for as Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) commented, CRP embraces a variety of styles which are determined by the learners' specific needs. This culture-based approach to education is founded on the principle that learning begins with the individual and is socially constructed (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Rahman, 2013; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). The teacher uses this foregrounding to acquire a cultural knowledge base in order to deliver the curriculum in a manner that is relevant, accessible and stimulating.

CRP is also highly critical in nature (Osborne, 2001; Rychly & Graves, 2012; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) and consequently is a non-neutral, political endeavour, underpinned by a passionate desire to improve educational standards and to make education equitable. Responsive teachers who bring into question the mandates imposed on them by educational institutions and governing bodies stand at the forefront of CRP. In responding to their students and the communities from which they originate, these practitioners strive for teaching excellence that is grounded in student learning preferences. Responsive teachers critique and question as they endeavour to improve student outcomes. In assuming such a stance, such educators become the objects of scrutiny by the authorities they question. They do this because they passionately believe that being responsive is about giving their minority and marginalised students a voice. As student viewpoints are heard, respected and responded to, education becomes emancipatory. Such a critical stance towards education, Gay (2010) reflected, requires

acts of bravery, but as Nakata (2011) conceded not all teachers are willing, or indeed able to spout themselves in that position.

Consistent with the aspirations for CRP is the principle of belief, for at the very heart of this approach are teachers who believe in the success of their students. They care for their students as individuals and possess high expectations for them (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Savage et al., 2011). Such teachers affirm, rather than deny or ignore, what students bring with them into the classroom. As Walker (2010) explained, learning takes place from an asset, not deficit perspective. This does not mean that teachers engage in colour blindness (Ladson-Billings, 2005) or try to assimilate students into the dominant culture. On the contrary, as Gay (2010) pointed out, their differences are embraced and used as a foundation for learning. In the Australian context such perspectives, through the Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives into Schools framework, were stipulated to be taught to all students, as was stated by DET (2011). However, the QLD Government (2000), in their education review at that time, acknowledged that one factor hindering the successful implementation of cultural perspectives was that many teachers lacked an understanding of cultural awareness and possessed low expectations of Indigenous learners.

Taylor and Sobel (2011) admitted that the principles of CRP are numerous and complex. Learning becomes legitimised by acknowledging what students bring with them into the classroom. CRP is an inclusive approach to teaching in which students learn as a community and a sense of accountability is present. CRP empowers learners because teachers genuinely believe that their students will succeed. Teachers pursue excellence and possess high expectations of their students. CRP is life-changing, respecting the cultures and experiences of students. CRP is liberating in that it teaches students from ethnic backgrounds that their ways of knowing and viewing the world are

equally as valid as those which dominate mainstream society (Gay, 2002, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). In short, Gay (2010) summed up responsive teaching as “a means for unleashing the higher learning potentials of ethnically diverse students by simultaneously cultivating their academic and psychosocial abilities” (p. 21).

Having examined the principles of teaching responsively, the next section of this literature review examines, in more detail, what being a responsive practitioner entails.

2.5.2 Cultural responsiveness

Unlike EI, which is one teaching model with a prescriptive approach and content, CRP embraces a variety of teaching styles, including the use of a variety of culturally located materials (Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010). It is not driven necessarily by content and academic achievement, as is EI, but more by the personal needs of the learners. In short, being responsive is a philosophy, a belief that all educational practices are informed by a teacher's personal view of culture and the people they serve. Responsive teachers acknowledge the imperative of using their students' identities as a foundation upon which to build further learning. More specifically, CRP is based upon the need for practitioners to acknowledge this imperative and respond in such a way that not only embraces students but also their communities (Lewthwaite et al., 2013).

Many of the EI elements indicative of effective teaching are also considered to be essential to responsive approaches. However, being responsive to their identities means the students' prior learning and experiences are used and clearly embedded into learning (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001, 2003a). Australian researcher Perso (2012) described such teachers as being culturally competent. Cultural competence involves

teachers effectively and positively promoting and respecting each child as a culturally located individual. When practitioners are culturally competent, they also possess the skill of embracing and dealing with other cultures both sensitively and affirmatively. Cultural competence is the ability to view the world through an alternative, non-mainstream lens (Rychly & Graves, 2012). To be dismissive of students' rich cultural backgrounds would be oppositional to this teaching style, for the very foundations of responsive practices position the learner at the heart of learning.

Responsively minded educators strive to match school and home structures because learning does not occur in isolation, but manifests itself in students' homes and communities. Such teachers, as Perso (2012) claimed, value and respect the knowledge communities bring into the educational setting. Such sentiments are also encouraged by the QLD Government (2000). This view, as several scholars acknowledged (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011), also extends to valuing a student's first language and using this to facilitate learning and communication. In essence, the cultural make-up of the students ought to be mirrored in the way schools operate, as others suggested (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Osborne, 2001). By contrast, most mainstream schools tend to operate from the viewpoint of the dominant culture. As such Indigenous and marginalised students are forced to neglect their own identities in favour of the school's (Mills & McGregor, 2014; Rahman, 2013). In response, students can experience a loss of self as they grapple with the complexities of trying to navigate unfamiliar terrain.

Gay (2010) captured the essence of being responsive by stating that such teachers are critical insofar as they assume an active stance to do what is right for their students. Nakata (2011) further commented that responsive educators do not simply teach, but through critical reflection they consider if the curriculum documents and

mandated teaching practices they are faced with are in the best interests of the students they serve. They engage in controversial topics to bring into question what is, as Nygreen also (2011) explained. Acting responsively is also about adjusting such documents, and making them contextualised and meaningful. This adjustment of practice inevitably compels teachers to choose an adjusted, as opposed to a planned, curriculum (Aoki, 2012). It is about selecting which teaching style to adopt at any one given point in time. It is not a rigid, prescribed one size fits all approach, but a flexible, non-didactic, non-ethnocentric, responsive style favoured by practitioners who also comprehend how their own morals and values affect how they execute their daily practice. Primarily, being responsive is built on a strong teacher-student rapport, inclusive of authentic care and high student expectations (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Savage et al., 2011).

Embedding culturally responsive practices is no easy feat however, because such practices are not based on a prescribed approach, so the how of being responsive is often ambiguous, a factor Nygreen (2011), Parsons and Wall (2011) all commented upon. Gay (2010) cautioned that teaching responsively is not a quick fix remedy, but an approach that takes considerable time and dedication to master. When juxtaposed with EI, CRP becomes challenging in both theory and practice because these two teaching approaches bear very little resemblance each to the other. Navigating these two strikingly diverse approaches to learning is the present dilemma facing teachers of TSI students in the FNQ region.

2.5.3 Studies of culturally responsive pedagogy

Studies which highlight the urgency of embedding responsive practices at the classroom level, in Australia, are sparse. In fact, there are no studies that document a

teacher's practice in responding to either Aboriginal or TSI students' voiced concerns about what constitutes effective teaching practices. To demonstrate the importance of embedding cultural perspectives into learning, I refer to two international studies – the first a Canadian study in Inuit schools and the second a New Zealand study involving Māori.

To ascertain which aspects of classroom pedagogy most influenced how Inuit students learn, Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) investigated the perceptions of grades five to eight Inuit students residing in the territory of Nunavut in northern Canada. The Nunavut territory was established in 1999 in a bid by the Inuit society to become self-governing. Prior to this point, the education of the Inuit peoples, similar to that of other Indigenous peoples world-wide, was controlled by the dominant culture (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). Even though many of the school employees were of Inuit origin, the program of instruction and teaching pedagogies were based on southern models. Therefore learning was not contextualised, meaningful or particularly relevant. In an attempt to initiate change the Government of Nunavut pledged to recognise the significance of Inuit culture in education and embed it in Inuit schools, especially by enacting teacher practices responsive to Inuit students' needs.

Over the course of five years the researchers worked with three northern Canadian Qikiqtani schools, with the aim of embedding Inuit culture in the discipline of science. Three main priorities were identified: students' perceptions of working to an end; classroom interaction as having an impact on a positive learning environment; and the teaching practices which contributed to student learning.

The first theme indicated that students placed value on seeing a task through to the end, valuing perseverance more than assessing the final product. Learners gained

satisfaction simply by completing practical hands-on activities. This meant that effective teachers had to re-evaluate how they defined student success. The authors also discovered that effective teachers allowed their students to use their first language in the classroom to facilitate understanding. Rather than view this from a deficit viewpoint, language was embraced and embedded into learning. The second discovery concerned how classroom interaction impacted on student achievement. As non-native Inuit speakers, teachers relied on the support of the students and teacher aids. Effective teachers in this study viewed learning as reciprocal and dialogical. They actively used the experience and knowledge of other students to enhance learning opportunities. Furthermore, these teachers made use of local resources and the populace to promote learning and engage with their students. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, teachers adjusted their practice to meet students' needs and to improve student learning, realising that this was paramount to their students' success (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010).

This study started with an attempt to find out what Inuit students and their teachers perceived to be success in learning. The authors also documented teacher characteristics that contributed to successful learning as identified by Inuit students, including adjustment of teacher practice to respond to the needs of the Inuit culture in a bid to promote student success. At the heart of this process were teachers who believed that they could enact change by valuing their student relationships and culture. Further, the authors reported on the students themselves because in this study, the students became aware that they were able to actively contribute to their learning environment (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010).

The findings of this research strongly suggest that the preservation of the Inuit culture must commence with the implementation and embedding of Inuit perspectives in schools. To be effective this must be reflected not only at the operational and

managerial levels in schools, but also in the curricula and teaching practices that educators use in their daily routines, as Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) reported. The embedding of responsive practices at both the class and school level is non-negotiable in preserving and sustaining Inuit culture.

The second study I refer to is a New Zealand based study which attempted to address issues of inequality between Māori and Pakeha, New Zealand Europeans. Researchers Bishop and Berryman (2010) were concerned about the extent in which western culture prevails in New Zealand, revering dominant western practices while excluding Māori culture. Lying at the base of this global problem (Bishop & Glynn, 1999) is that the student population while becoming more racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse is confronted with a workforce of teachers that remains predominantly homogenous. Many practitioners, Bishop and Berryman (2010) claimed possess limited cultural knowledge and as such are unable to draw upon the cultural strengths of students, engaging instead in deficit theorising (Walker, 2010) to explain the existence of disparities in education.

The study explored students' responses to a large long-term professional development program entitled 'Te Kotahitanga', which focused on improving student outcomes for Māori through embedding more responsive practices. The 'Te Kotahitanga' is a New Zealand, Ministry of Education funded, kaupapa Māori (Māori principles and ideas) research and professional development project which took place over a seven year period. It was developed using the voice of Māori students, their families, principals and some teachers.

The 'Te Kotahitanga' program comprised of four parts. In the first phase researchers, who were external to the school, engaged in conversation with Māori about

their teachers, school attitudes and behaviours that make a difference to Māori achievement. Through the practice of story-telling it was revealed how teachers could potentially create a learning context to induce improved Māori outcomes. From this information the researchers developed an 'effective teaching profile' which was subsequently introduced into four schools with four teachers. Teachers were encouraged to reject deficit theorising and assume greater responsibility for the learning of their students through high expectations, managing the classroom and curriculum more effectively and providing more diverse learning opportunities. From this initial stage it was learned that teachers needed on-going support and that such a project had to be implemented at a whole school level, rather than just in a few selected classrooms (Bishop & Berryman, 2010).

In the second phase more practitioners and more support people were involved. The project now had an in-school coach model in three schools, two of which were secondary and one which was intermediate. In this stage Bishop and Berryman (2010) documented how the implementation of more responsive practices had benefits in terms of teacher satisfaction, practice, student behaviour and learning outcomes, but this did not necessarily result in an increase in improved academic achievement. The researchers concluded that to do this successfully, a professional learning community that specifically focused on improved students learning and achievement would need to be developed.

In phase three of the Te Kotahitanga project, twelve secondary schools of mixed demographic and social backgrounds became involved. Teachers in these schools were supported in implementing the effective teaching profile in their own classrooms. Within each school there was a facilitation team, support staff and the principal. The project involved an induction workshop followed by teacher observations, teacher feedback, group co-construction meetings and target shadow coaching sessions.

The induction workshop which was the first activity took place at a traditional Māori meeting place (marae) and focused on Māori students' expectations of schooling and teachers' discursive positioning of Māori. The goal of the second activity, the teacher observations, was to assist teachers in implementing the effective teacher profile successfully in their classroom. Activity three, the feedback phase, concentrated on providing teachers with detailed feedback, based on seven specific types of feedback, in incorporating interactions and relationships, as outlined in the effective teacher profile, into their everyday teaching. Of central importance was how teachers could develop caring relationships with Māori. In the fourth activity, which was a co-construction meeting, teachers engaged in a variety of problem-solving opportunities in order to collaboratively reflect on evidence and co-construct solutions aimed at improving Māori student achievement outcomes. The final activity comprised shadow-coaching sessions in which teachers were coached to reach their personal as well as group goals.

The researchers concluded that the Te Kotahitanga development process is a model used to create more successful power-sharing contexts. Through more culturally appropriate approaches such as the sharing of data, setting new goals to ensure caring teacher-student relationships and interactions, high student expectations at the expense of deficit theorising, teacher reflection of their own practice, lies the opportunity for Māori student achievement outcomes to be improved (Bishop & Berryman, 2010).

Despite the positive findings of both of these studies and despite widespread global support of culturally responsive practices, there are some who have raised concerns about the nature of CRP. For this reason, the next section addresses some of the concerns raised.

2.5.4 Concerns about culturally responsive pedagogy

Gay (2010) conceded that the facets and viewpoints of CRP are numerous and, as such, it is often misunderstood or simply not well known. Further, it is a relatively new construct, having only been in use in mainstream settings since the 1970s. In the past 20 years, as Sleeter (2012) lamented, rather than flourish, this frequently misunderstood pedagogy has been rejected and replaced by curriculum and pedagogies that instead favour standardisation. Sleeter (2012) went on to suggest that neoliberalism, which promotes standardisation, has impeded the growth of responsive teaching practices, and correspondingly contributed to its marginalisation.

Added to these contentions is the concern that CRP is a highly political, non-neutral endeavour. Education itself has a political agenda, as several scholars (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) have indicated. Mills and McGregor (2014) reported that socio-political and historical contexts influence educational policies, schools and curricular decisions. For example, as Sleeter (2012) discovered, in the United States teachers are experiencing difficulty in implementing responsive practices because they are faced with the pressure of standardised work and achieving high academic results. Such demands occur at the demise of a curriculum which is relevant to students. In further complicating this situation, teachers, themselves, are often monitored to ensure that they are delivering the appropriate curriculum and at a timely pace. Gay (2010), in opposing such practices, strongly objected to evidence-based data which is used by policy makers and politicians, preferring instead to focus on the child. She (Gay, 2010) maintained that assessment should not be based on standardised tests. The problem, however, is that policies, which impact directly on education, are often made by those who remain outside of the

realities of the classroom context, a factor considered to be problematic (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Mills & McGregor, 2014).

In combatting the political nature of curriculum documents, teachers need to possess a full understanding of the socio-political and historical complexities that have impacted on their contexts of teaching, as Nakata (2001) suggested. Similar sentiments were expressed by Bishop and Glynn (1999) who, in discussing the New Zealand curriculum, conceded that it is the so-called experts who decide what is taught, to whom and by whom. The fact that many teachers possess Eurocentric world-views exacerbates this problem, which results in practitioners, either consciously or sub-consciously, embedding their own cultural viewpoints or perceptions in their teachings. In this manner students do not fully engage in classroom interaction, but are exposed to knowledge that is selected by those who remain outside their own frame of reference. In essence, the large spectrum of knowledge students ought to be exposed to becomes considerably reduced and narrow.

A further challenge in enacting CRP in practice, Parsons and Wall (2011) conceded, is when teachers are faced with diverse ethnic groups. This is particularly contentious when teachers, who often originate from the dominant, more privileged mainstream society, do not fully understand their students or their needs (Bishop & Berryman, 2010). Their lack of knowledge, in turn, can lead to misunderstandings and cultural conflicts, which can impact negatively on students whose culture is different. Such ramifications can extend far beyond a student's academic performance (Taylor & Sobel, 2011). In overcoming such obstacles teachers have to address issues of inequality, examining their own biases and perceptions by engaging in discussion with their students. On this point Scherff and Spector (2011) referred to Bakhtin's excess of seeing – that is how we all view the world differently. The challenge for responsive

practitioners, Rychly and Graves (2012) advised, is in being open to diverse viewpoints and having the capacity to see the world through their students' eyes.

CRP is frequently referred to as a form of "critical pedagogy" (Nygreen, 2011, p. 61). It is emancipatory in nature because it empowers changes in classroom practices that support school success for those that have historically been oppressed or marginalised. It problematises, questions and challenges the status quo. In bringing about reforms, it is the practitioners themselves who are faced with the challenge of critiquing and engaging in controversial topics. This, Nygreen (2011) stressed is problematic as not all teachers are willing or able to initiate such change. Such avoidance or lack of cooperation can further fuel the beliefs of the mainstream society. Furthermore, the very political nature of how schools operate tends to perpetuate oppressive social structures and power relations, as Osborne (2001) and Taylor and Sobel (2011) stated.

Further, critical pedagogy is often problematic because it is not informed by rigorous praxis and empirical research, but instead is based on abstract theoretical beliefs. The 'Te Kotahitanga' program in New Zealand is one of the few programs that has been rigorously evaluated. Due to this abstraction, the application of responsiveness is often ambiguous. For example, Nakata (2001) questioned how teachers in the TS can challenge the political nature of the curriculum if they do not possess a full understanding of the socio-political and historical complexities that have impacted on the Islanders in the past? Critical pedagogy, Nygreen (2011) deduced, is about instigating change, but the skills teachers require to bring about change are often unclear. Educators, therefore, are often unsure about what it is and how they should teach. This is further obscured by the technical jargon used in the literature on critical pedagogy. Shoffner and Brown (2011) reported on the separation between CRP in

theory and CRP in practice and, like Sleeter (2012), cautioned that just because teachers may learn about culturally responsive practices in theory, does not mean they are able to successfully enact such theories in practice. Again, the Te Kotahitanga program in New Zealand is one of the few programs where specific and practical actions for teachers to enact to support student learning have been identified.

Despite this advancement, concerns about responsive practices have also been raised at a classroom level. Incorporating responsive practices, as Shoffner and Brown (2011) documented, is particularly challenging for beginning teachers who are simply trying to grasp the technicalities of teaching on a daily basis. Further, as others have found, one factor impeding its success is that it needs to be a whole school endeavour, rather than teachers working alone (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Osborne, 2001). Added to this is the challenge of sourcing appropriate, meaningful and relevant materials, as ethnic minorities are often simplified or even misrepresented in textbooks (Gay, 2010). Furthermore, curriculum developers frequently represent the views of the dominant culture, so if the curriculum is to be used as a means to foster and preserve the ideas of minority groups, it is essential, as Bishop and Glynn (1999) cautioned, that such groups become involved in its design and enactment.

Embedding cultural practices can be challenging for teachers to implement at the classroom level for a variety of reasons. Teachers must adopt a critical lens to be able to comprehend and empathise with their students' world views, which may not necessarily match their own. Teachers must teach to their students' strengths if they are to move past the limitations of difference. They must be able to work with and for their students, avoiding stereotyping and false assumptions (Gay, 2010; Shoffner & Brown, 2011). Furthermore, the transformative act of teaching can become problematic when teachers' and students' views on learning differ. In crossing the student-teacher divide,

it must be the teacher who takes the initiative (Shoffner & Brown, 2011). They have to identify and connect with their students. However, as both Gay (2010) and Osborne (2001) admitted, making strong and meaningful relationships takes both time and commitment.

One of the greatest challenges and concerns of schools wishing to implement responsive practices is changing the mindset of teachers who blame the low academic achievements of students on issues such as their race, language, background and socio-economic status. Walker (2010) referred to this as deficit theorising. Ladson-Billings (2005) described an alternative notion, colour blindness, which is the belief that education has no ties or connections with students' cultures whatsoever and all students, regardless of their ethnic background, should be treated in the same manner. CRP, by contrast, is founded on the notion that practitioners believe that all students can succeed, regardless of their heritage and their differences are utilised to promote learning opportunities.

CRP is challenging on many levels. Gay (2010) viewed implementing a CRP approach in the classroom as an arduous and on-going task. According to Rychly and Graves (2012), teaching responsively is a choice, driven by the desire to act, to create change for those who are disempowered, oppressed and marginalised. CRP is challenging because it takes time, a critical stance, perseverance and resilience to master. It is not an immediate solution to problems encountered in today's global education, but is a long-term solution to the issue of making education more equitable and accessible (Gay, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

The following section provides a brief background to the Australian educational context and in particular, the TS.

2.6 The Australian and Torres Strait Context

The TS is steeped in tradition and culture, which dictate the daily lives the Islanders lead. As part of their rich, vibrant cultures, the Islanders speak a variety of traditional languages, including Creole. In this section I provide a brief overview of the history of education, with specific reference to Indigenous learners as reported through the findings of the MCEETYA (2000) report, which examined culturally responsive schooling practices within Australia. The section concludes with how the comments raised impact upon the present educational TS context, which I contend is currently concerned more with affirming academic achievement than responding to students' cultural norms.

Nakata (2001), in retelling his own story as a TSI, explained that the TS islands first experienced drastic change with the arrival of the Europeans and their missionaries. Faced with the more traditional style of schooling which the Europeans brought with them, the Islanders, Nakata (2001) lamented, did not feel valued. Education was not only used as a tool to enact societal change, but functioned as a means of repression and implementation of authoritative rule. Not surprisingly, many Indigenous people came to devalue their own culture and education. Stemming from this student attendance in rural and remote schools deteriorated (MCEETYA, 2000). Further, both Nakata (2001) and Osborne (2001) condemned the educational system in which blacks and whites were segregated and schooling for TSIs abruptly finished in grade four, forcing youngsters prematurely out into the workforce. Added to these tensions, Osborne (2001) remarked, was that TSI Creole was derided as an inferior language and was even prohibited in schools.

The MCEETYA (2000) report's findings suggested the need to increase cultural significance in the curriculum; respond to different learning styles and build a strong community of peers in society. Similarly, in response to the newly initiated Australian curriculum, Nakata (2011) argued for the immediate inclusion of Aboriginal and TSI histories, stressing the need for educators of Indigenous learners to challenge and critique the curriculum documents and embed their content in a way that made learning more meaningful from Indigenous perspectives. Taylor and Sobel (2011) shared this sentiment. They believed that teachers ought to value and make use of their students' culture in the classroom. This should not be done superficially, but rather should be embedded in an all-inclusive manner. Moreso stated that, in embracing culture, practitioners needed to consider students' home language and how this can facilitate learning (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010). Consistent with this recommendation, the QLD Government (2000) strongly condemned Education Queensland's lack of policy regarding TSI as L2 learners, and yet over a decade later, Nakata (2011) is still urging for English to be treated as an additional language for Islanders.

In approaching education from a responsive perspective, in Perso's (2012) view, teachers needed to possess an alternative mindset. This is because Western education tends to revere acquired knowledge, whereas education for Indigenous peoples is about knowing, rather than knowledge acquisition (MCEETYA, 2000). Of importance is how a person uses their knowledge to benefit the community and become a successful member of society. Indigenous peoples view the connection between land, language and culture as inseparable, and this must be evident in school curricula. In progressing Indigenous education, there must be flexibility in how schooling operates.

In dealing with Indigenous and Western knowledge systems, some educators (Durie, 2005; Nakata, 2011, 2007; Yunkaporta & McGinty, 2009), described the

cultural interface, which is the contested knowledge space between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners. Durie (2005) believed operating efficiently at the interface allows both Western and Indigenous knowledge systems to interact in ways that can be advantageous. Nakata (2007, 2011) believed teachers operating in this space need to consider how they view their Islander students as learners. In improving academic standards Nakata (2011) passionately spoke about learners needing enriched learning opportunities, high order language and thinking skills, and an understanding of how others learn. One of the recommendations put forward by the MCEETYA (2000) report was to establish culturally inclusive schools with a culturally exclusive school curriculum; an emphasis on a safe, supportive learning environment and an appreciation of different learning styles. Similar sentiments were expressed by the educational review (QLD Government, 2000).

Nakata (2001) demanded that the curriculum and the educational system needed to be addressed. In bringing about change, teachers need to assume a more critical, reflective stance. If the voices of minority students are to be heard, the way Islanders have historically been positioned in schools needs to be rigorously contested. Pearson (2011), a decade later, shared many of these views. In reference to Engelmann's comments, he urged that the state of the present educational system be addressed as a matter of urgency.

These viewpoints bring into question the current focus of schools, particularly in FNQ, which, I claim, are being suffocated by the overarching emphasis on EI and obsession of producing high academic results. In the process, it appears that the whole child is being severely neglected. The current educational agenda is driven purely by the push for competitive student outcomes, in which students are rarely overtly valued for who they are, and instead are measured by the results they can achieve. Educators

face a dual challenge. On the one hand, they must master the content-orientated ideology of an EI approach and, on the other hand, they are being urged to embed the less pragmatic, pupil orientated approach of CRP. Needless to say, as teachers strive to reconcile these two pedagogical approaches, they are faced with tensions. In fact, Berry (2007) and Sellars (2014) maintained that teaching is fraught with tensions, as practitioners make choices about their daily practice. It is with attention to tensionality that I now conclude the literature review.

2.7 Tensionality

Berry (2007) describes “teaching as a risky venture with unknown outcomes” (p. 106). This is particularly the case in FNQ, where teachers are faced with two dominant, and yet apparently opposing, pedagogical mandates - EI and CRP. They are thus compelled to navigate a tensioned zone – a space which is both complex and rife with problems. Conformity of practice within the profession is now required in FNQ and consequently teacher creativity is severely restricted. The drive for teacher accountability and standardisation exacerbates the problem, as does the preoccupation with improved student outcomes which has become unquestionably enforced in recent years (Mills & McGregor, 2014).

In considering the term ‘tensionality’, this study aims to document the tensions which I experienced in the classroom as a result of working to adapt the planned curriculum, in order to create a curriculum experience responsive to my TSI students (Aoki, 2012). The planned curriculum is that decided upon by policy makers, governing bodies and stakeholders, either nationally, regionally or locally, whereas the responsive curriculum refers to the curriculum as enacted upon by teachers in their classrooms. In this tensioned zone, teachers grapple inner unrest, and this unrest becomes the means by

which teacher development is typically enhanced. Which aspects of the planned curriculum – including the mandated pedagogy - will they keep, omit, supplement, change or re-create? Such decisions depend upon a number of factors, including a teacher's philosophy, experience and knowledge, as well as the context in which the curriculum is being enacted. In using culturally located practices, including materials, Gay (2002, 2010) believed it is essential to question the status quo of the curriculum in order to meet student needs. Bishop and Glynn (1999) stipulated that the curriculum should be a negotiated one. Kuhn (2007) agreed with this position, and believed that being afforded this opportunity promotes a student's motivation and willingness to learn.

In teaching in the TS, it is impossible to ignore the context of learning. The very location forces teachers to consider the cultural interface - a complex and intricate space due to the chasm between Indigenous and Western knowledge. Nakata (2007) stated that it is inexcusable to simply place Indigenous knowledge in an educational system whose values have been determined by the dominant culture. It is far more satisfactory that Indigenous peoples shape their own identity, deciding how such knowledge is to be incorporated.

As a practitioner in this remote region how should I deal with these dilemmas? How do I enact the curriculum? Carr and Kemmis (1986) talked of the tensioned space between the curriculum as expected and the curriculum as expressed. In this tensioned space, alternatives exist. I ponder what my alternatives are and despite the fact that teaching has become highly tensioned, I make the choice to use the tensions that I face on a daily basis as a means to evolve professionally, and to become a more effective and responsive practitioner.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed the literature pertaining to the dominant pedagogical orientations required of a teacher to be a part of FNQ's teaching structure. That is, I discussed EI and CRP. I have outlined the principles of each approach. I examined how EI may be visualised in the classroom and what being responsive entails. I discussed concerns surrounding each method. In addition, I gave the reader a brief insight into the educational history of the TS. A section on tensionality has also been included.

Despite extensive research examining varying teaching practices and the concept of effective teaching, very few studies have been conducted examining the perspectives of Indigenous students in the TS. Specifically, studies examining students' voices are conspicuously absent from the literature. What does it mean to be an effective teacher of Indigenous learners in the TS as expressed by TSI students? How exactly should teachers in remote communities adjust their EI practice in becoming more responsive? Considering the large number of Aboriginal and TSIs that frequent schools in FNQ, the Australian education system has a vested interest to seek answers to these questions herewith as a matter of urgency. Further, as an action researcher, negotiating this complex terrain is motivated by my inner conviction to do what I feel is ultimately right for my students, who, I contend lack the power to oppose such mandates.

In the chapter that follows, Chapter Three, the methodology informing the current study is presented. In this chapter I discuss AR, the research paradigm, the study participants, the data collection tools, justification and analysis, as well as the research procedure. I consider and discuss the ethical and cultural implications of the study, and the study's benefits and limitations, before concluding with the study timeframe.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

As outlined in the previous two chapters, this study focused on my journey as a year 6/7 classroom teacher trying to negotiate the dominant policy statements informing pedagogy in FNQ. Specifically, this study looked at how a teacher can teach in a way that follows the requirements of an EI model, but acknowledges a CRP orientation. In this study I present the principles and guiding practices I adopted in my classroom which I felt would best meet the needs of my TSI students. As an action researcher, I sought to remain conscious of my sense of self in the classroom as I worked to adjust my teaching. Throughout the study I also explored the tensions I faced as a result of my attempts to navigate the pedagogical mandates imposed upon me.

In this chapter I outline the research methodology and the actions I took on this journey. In section 3.2 I begin by providing some initial insights into the theoretical foundations of the study. In section 3.3 I discuss AR, followed by an analysis of the research paradigm in 3.4. Section 3.5 discusses the study participants. In 3.6 I discuss the data collection tools used and provide justification for their use. Following this, I provide a brief section on triangulation (3.7), before outlining the research procedure in 3.8. Section 3.9 provides an explanation on the data analysis procedure. Ethical and cultural considerations are discussed in section 3.10. I situate the research in section 3.11, and discuss the limitations of the study (3.12) and timeframe (3.13), before concluding the chapter in section 3.14.

3.2 Research Questions and Qualitative Research

This research seeks answers to the following classroom practitioner focused research questions:

1. How can a teacher negotiate the pedagogical requirements of policy statements in FNQ? That is, how can a teacher teach in a way that acknowledges the requirements of EI and CRP orientations?
2. What are the guiding principles and practices that effective teachers can adopt in their classrooms which will best meet the needs of TSI students?
3. What pedagogical tensions does a teacher experience in a TSI classroom? How do such tensions influence a teacher's beliefs and contribute to adjustments in her teaching?

This study was carried out using a qualitative approach, which as Lichtman (2013) stated, is based on the researcher's own experience, knowledge and background. Central to this study was the decision to draw upon my 13 years of teaching experience, my professional knowledge and personal background to provide in-depth insights into my teaching and in particular, the choices I made in regards to my practice. As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) stated, qualitative research is concerned with studying and describing phenomena that occur in natural settings. In the case of this study, I describe my own practice in the natural setting of a school. In conducting qualitative research, the researcher seeks to understand the human perspective (Castellan, 2010). Throughout this study, I wanted to gain a clearer understanding of my students and their learning experience and the way in which I could impact more positively on that experience. Qualitative research is a subjective approach that aims to provide a complete and detailed description of a situation, in this context a detailed description of myself, my students, and the learning that occurred in the classroom, as I engaged in the four cycles of critical and responsive reflection.

In conducting a study using qualitative research it is the researcher who determines how data is collected and what type of information is gathered. Furthermore,

as pointed out by Lichtman (2013), it is through the researcher's lens that the study setting is perceived and observations are made. Therefore, it follows that the research is influenced by the researcher's own experiences, background and skills. This study was based on my experience in a TS classroom using my prior ESL teacher skills as outlined in Chapter One. I believe my previous teaching experience, in particular my ESL experience, provided me with the requisite skills to guide the study, especially given the fact that the participants speak EALD.

Castellan (2010) emphasised the need for the researcher's relationship with the participants to be based on trust, commitment and involvement. In this study it was fundamental that I established trust so that my students' responses would be open and honest. As this study took place over the course of one scholastic year, the involvement was on-going and required commitment from myself and my learners. The rapport I established with my students in this study was intense in nature as I worked collaboratively with them. On a daily basis, I attempted to adjust my EI practice to meet their needs more responsively. Further, as Castellan (2010) remarked, qualitative research liberates as it gives minority groups opportunities to be heard. Through this study I aimed to enrich my Islander students' lives by listening to their needs, responding and acting accordingly by adjusting my teaching. Lichtman (2013) described qualitative methods as iterative. As researchers conduct their research they will move back and forth as new patterns and interpretations emerge. Indeed, throughout this entire study, new or unexpected patterns influenced exactly how I advanced the research in each cycle. In some instances, satisfied with my findings, I progressed to another aspect of the study. In other instances I waited, heeding the advice of Hunt (2010), and reflected upon my actions before carrying out further investigation to attain more data.

Lichtman (2013) explained that such research is changeable in that it develops as researchers pose new questions which they attempt to investigate. In using this approach, researchers attempt to find out how their participants feel and think. Throughout this AR study this was achieved through conversation with my students about their perceptions of my EI teaching. Their responses guided the progression of each AR cycle. Qualitative research focuses on the whole, rather than the analysis of small parts. As such I reflected on the sum of my daily practice and posed thoughtful and meaningful questions pertaining to my teaching in order to meet my students' needs. This style of research also concerns studying a variety of data in natural settings. In this case the data sources comprised a reflective journal, teacher observations, student dialogue sessions, yarning circles (YCs) and student work samples. The purpose of using several data sources was to strengthen the validity of the results. Rather than analyse student behaviour in a variety of settings, this study focused on a singular setting – a primary school in the TS. By narrowing my research context, I hoped to provide a more comprehensive, in-depth analysis of one particular group of students. Qualitative research is concerned primarily with words, and this becomes evident by the inclusion of 'thick description' pertaining to myself, my participants and the school setting in the cycles.

The next section of this methodology chapter describes AR, which is the methodological approach employed in this study.

3.3 Action Research

Working in a highly-tensioned policy driven educational environment, I sought to question certain mandates imposed upon me, with a view to improving the learning of my Islander students. Carr and Kemmis (1986) viewed AR as a reflective and critical

enquiry, which enables teachers to analyse their practice with a view to altering or improving it. Through adopting this viewpoint, I was able to view my EI teaching from a more critical standpoint. Rather than passively accept management imposed mandates, I chose, as others too have chosen (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010), to problematise my teaching so that I could teach in a manner consistent with my students' beliefs and values.

Lacey (2006) remarked that one of the goals of AR is to initiate change, as teachers challenge their own beliefs, perceptions and, ultimately, their practice. AR empowers the researcher to question and critique. Through this study I learned to both question and critique, not merely what I was teaching, but, as Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) advised, also 'how' and 'why' I was teaching. My work became a sincere commitment to and collaboration with my students. As a result of this process, I could provide a rationale for the actions I took in the classroom and the decisions I made. McNiff and Whitehead (2005) spoke of the moral commitment with which such actions are imbued – that is there is a true purpose to the research project because the researcher is deeply reflecting on their practice. My aim in this study was to avoid deficit theorising (Walker, 2010) or colour-blindness (Ladson-Billings, 2005), and to teach using a critical lens by deeply reflecting on my teaching and listening to my students' voices to guide me in my endeavour.

It has been said that one of the limitations of AR is that it does not generate theories or conclusions which can be applied to other settings. However, Pine (2009) claimed the very fact that AR is context specific is, in itself, its strength. It acknowledges how humans act and interact and as such should be viewed within a specific context. In my case, how could I teach in a way that adhered to the principles of EI, whilst also acknowledging the requirements of a CRP orientation within a TS

setting? The main purpose of this study was that it would inform and hopefully change my practice, and ultimately my mindset, as I aspired to become a more effective, responsive teacher. I believed that although my professional doctorate would show evidence of my increased understanding of my personal practice, the outcomes of the research would also be of benefit to my colleagues, my employer and state and district policy makers.

Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) urged teachers to problematise their teaching. In doing so, as Nakata (2011) stated, they need to consider the broader social and political implications of their context and how this impacts on students. Teachers ought to question whose interests are being served. AR empowers practitioners to do exactly this. It enables teachers to challenge the norm – the curriculum, practices and routines embedded in schools – including the hidden agenda schools possess (Moss, 2001; Rahman, 2013). In adopting an inquiry stance, I chose to challenge the restrictive mandates imposed on me and my students, because I believed my learners deserved access to an equitable, responsive education process.

As Pine (2009) asserted, AR is a cooperative, shared and accessible means of analysis. It is cooperative as participants work together to achieve a common goal. I worked with my students – while attempting to follow the advice of my cultural mentorship group and critical friends - to adjust my EI teaching to meet my learners' needs. AR is shared, in the sense that it engages participants in a form of research with a view to changing it. In this study's case my teaching was adjusted to respond to my students' concerns as voiced in the conversations. It is accessible, in that it allows the participation of all people. By carrying out this study, I enabled all my students to take part and express their concerns. The research was conducted by myself in collaboration with my students, critical friends and cultural mentorship group. It was a study of my

practice and of my students with the purpose of enacting changes for my current learners and for future learners. Specifically, in acting in this manner I was heeding the advice of some scholars (Berry, 2007; McNiff & Whitehead, 2005; Sellars, 2014) who encouraged teachers to reflect upon their practice, change how they do things and be receptive to new learning. On this journey, I acquired new knowledge. Rather than ignore my findings, I embraced them and used this knowledge to progress the study, as evidenced in each of the four research cycles.

This study comprises four research cycles, within which specific phases of AR, as described by Elliott (1991) and Lewin (1947) are evident. Lewin (1947) spoke of AR comprising of “reconnaissance” (p 149), that is, coming to know or fact-finding. Unlike Lewin (1947) who limited the reconnaissance phase to fact-finding and positions it only in the beginning stage of the research, I extended the term reconnaissance, as Elliott (1991) did, to include analysis. With this in mind, I experienced reconnaissance in every single cycle of this study, as I analysed the data and came to new understandings.

Cycle one was an initial inquiry into the concerns my students held about my teaching. Having identified these concerns, cycle two was an exploration of each concern to determine, more precisely, how I could adjust my practice to meet my students' needs more responsively. Cycle three, the interrogation and enactment phase, comprised multiple stages of action in which I adjusted my practice to be more responsive. In this cycle, I experienced a sense of achievement, as my students informed me that I had adjusted my teaching sufficiently to meet their needs. However, in the final cycle, cycle four, the partial resolution of practice, I experienced complete turmoil, as I realised, that my adjusted teaching was of limited value in the view of the Education Department.

In this AR study, I aspired to adjust my EI teaching so that I would know when to proceed and when to wait in terms of enacting strategies for implementation to foster student learning. Hunt (2010) referred to this process as “active waiting” (p. 71), striking a balance between advancing the research and fully developing each step of the inquiry. I hoped that by careful reflection of my practice that the patterns which emerged would influence me in either moving the study forward or by pausing to refine my inquiry.

AR was the most suitable form of research methodology for this professional doctorate project because, like Berry (2007), I was reflecting, from a critical viewpoint, upon my practice as I engaged with my own students in my daily classroom. As I worked with my learners I watched many of the attributes associated with AR unfold. Faced with the dilemma of how to teach my students explicitly and respond to them responsively, I could not simply accept, without question, that I was being mandated to teach using the narrow-minded lens of a single teaching approach, in this case EI. Critiquing the curriculum and challenging how schools operate was something that Nakata (2011) said effective practitioners do well. Through reflective inquiry on my practice, I wanted to work with and for my students to improve their learning. I intended to view all that I did in the classroom from an inquiry stance, rather than simply go through the motions of teaching. It is through this rich form of reflective inquiry that my rapport with my students deepened, as they came to value my genuine attempts to adjust my teaching to meet their needs. This two-way trust became deeply embedded into the core of our everyday learning and it empowered the students, because it was precisely their responses, not my personal agenda, that guided the four research cycles. As a professional I believe AR afforded me this opportunity.

The following section describes the research paradigm underpinning this study.

3.4 Research Paradigm

This study was carried out using a transformative, critical paradigm. A paradigm, also referred to as a theoretical framework, impacts upon the manner in which knowledge is understood and critiqued, building the foundations upon which the research can subsequently proceed (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Pine (2009) described AR as a paradigm in itself. Such a paradigm is a means for conducting research, adopting a mix of research methodologies. It is built upon the principle that individuals or groups of people view reality in a specific context, and examines this context using varying research methods. AR problematises a situation in a recursive manner with a view to altering it in some way. The AR paradigm, as Pine (2009) suggested, is described not just as an inquiry of thought but as a journey of critical reflection.

This study was conducted adopting a transformative, critical lens. It was transformative in that I hoped to bring about reform in my classroom, by questioning the political nature of the current educational system in Australia, particularly in FNQ. I hoped, through on-going reflexivity, that I would change as a teacher – that was how I approached my practice and how I viewed my learners. I wanted to influence and ultimately change some of the learning experiences of Islander students. I envisaged that this study would bring about reform in schools, particularly in those which have a high enrolment of EALD learners. Creswell (2008), in talking about transformative paradigms, spoke of being aware that one adopting such a paradigm must be conscious of any macrosystem political agenda influencing the context of the study. In this study the political agenda was determined jointly by the state Education Department and by Tagai State College, and was expressed through specified curriculum documents which practitioners were required to use at the time.

This study was also underpinned by a critical pedagogy paradigm which Giroux (2010) described as a means of mediation. Those who believe in critical pedagogy act - even if the action disrupts the orthodoxy of what is. As Nygreen (2011) pointed out, one of the strengths of critical pedagogy is that it raises questions. It promotes emancipatory action and above all, it embraces change (Giroux, 2010). The fundamental foundations of education in the TS are those which have been imposed upon Islanders since the arrival of the Europeans and missionaries, as Nakata (2001) personally experienced. This study is my critical response to the TS situation. Driven by a critical pedagogic mindset, I challenge the current Rudd Quality Education Policy (Rudd & Gillard, 2008) with its attitude towards students as human capital, claiming that the needs of my Islander students are not being sufficiently met. TSI have, in the past, and continue to be marginalised and severely disadvantaged by the present educational system dominating QLD, which, as Nakata (2001, 2011) stipulated, is based on white, middle-class values.

Furthermore, critical theory challenges the norm and forces a reconsideration of new possibilities. Reflecting upon my daily practice and through conversations with my learners and colleagues, I hoped to re-think my practice, and in doing so adapt my teaching to more suitably meet my students' needs. Most evident within writing on critical theory is the emphasis on the idea of a growing awareness - of one's condition amongst individuals. On this point, Giroux (2010) spoke of Freire's awareness of freedom. Through becoming more aware of their practice, teachers can bring about change in order to improve teaching and learning. Subsequently, they can empower their students to question, rather than accept, mandated policies and authoritarian rule. It was precisely this consciousness as a practitioner that I felt was most evident in the conversational data presented in this study. I anticipated that it would be through the

medium of my students' voices that my teaching would be transformed and learning would thus become more visible in the classroom.

I now turn to the study's participants.

3.5 Study Participants

This study comprised primary school students, two critical friends and a cultural mentorship group.

Twenty primary school participants who were enrolled in my grade 6/7 class participated in the study. Sixteen of the students were enrolled in grade seven and the remaining four students were enrolled in grade six. The age group of these students ranged from 11 – 13. I had already taught 15 of these students for the entire duration of 2012. Four students joined me from another class in term one, when the school lost a teacher and classes had to be re-organised. One student was a newcomer to the school. Twelve of the participants were female, and eight were male. All of the students identified as being TSI, with a further 13 students having family ties with either Samoa or PNG. All of the students spoke Creole at home, with over half the students also speaking the traditional language of KLY.

My first critical friend, a colleague, has over 30 year's teaching experience and is a respected teacher in the eyes of the community. She has been living and working in the TS for several years. My second critical friend, my HOC, has been living and working on the island for many years. She possesses more than 20 year's of teaching experience and has a strong community presence in the community.

The cultural mentorship group comprises two community members, both of whom have worked at the school for many years in administrative roles. Both members

know the students well and are used to interacting with non-Islander teachers, offering support and assistance. Further, both workers consult with and are informed by the school Public and Community and Local Education Authority, two governing bodies who represent the school and the community.

The next section outlines the data collection tools used which are elaborated upon in the subsequent sections.

3.6 Data Collection Tools and Justification

The following data collection tools were used to carry out this study:

1. Reflective journal entries
2. Teacher observations
3. Student dialogue sessions
4. Yarning circles
5. Student work samples in writing in Big Write
6. Video Recording of own teaching

3.6.1 Reflective journal

Berry (2007) spoke of the role of journaling in becoming more aware of her own teacher identity through her doctoral study. My purpose in keeping a personal journal was to affirm my own self-identity as a practitioner through deliberate and purposeful documentation of my practice. As Wiseman, Conteh and Matovu (2005) explained, the journal is a research tool in which respondents keep a record of their activities and experiences and use this information to inform their practice. The journal reflections forced me to address my teaching concerns and reflect upon my own position as I navigated the dual imperatives of EI and CRP. It is through this process of reflection

that teachers can come to understand their practice and the decisions they make. In my reflections I documented my teaching, my conversations with students and colleagues, as well as the tensions I faced. I hoped to provide the reader with valuable insights into my classroom life, through the open and candid manner in which I wrote the reflections.

Hall (2008) described diaries (journals) as ethnographic studies in which the researcher, from an emic perspective, explores and reflects upon their surroundings. Ross, Rideout and Carson (1994) distinguished between the two sources of data, stipulating that diaries are more formally structured, whereas journals tend to be more widely used when participants explore their own perspectives of a situation. I hoped that by keeping an on-going journal I would be able to reflect upon my practice and use this reflection to attain clarity of vision and knowledge, as a means to improve or change aspects of my teaching throughout the study.

In discussing the potential advantages of journals Wiseman et al. (2005) noted that they are particularly useful as a research tool when changes are expected over time. As I conducted my study using AR over the course of one scholastic year I expected that I would make changes to the way I taught. Many of the potential disadvantages of using journals as a research tool: participant fatigue, lack of detail, and drop-out rate, were not applicable to this particular study as I was the sole person keeping a journal. As the single researcher, I strived to provide a comprehensive and descriptive journal as possible.

The journal entries in this study are organised into three headings: introduction, reflection and analysis. In the introduction I describe the topic of the journal entry being reflected upon. This is followed by my personal reflection of an element of my teaching, or a specific consideration in my classroom that was causing me concern,

which like Schoenfield (2003), I had chosen to notice. It is important to note that, in this stage of the inquiry, I did not start a particular course of action, per se, but rather used the documentation of my practice as an opportunity to critically reconsider my teaching, as recommended by Berry (2007). As a result of the reflections noted, in the analysis stage I documented what I had learned; the changes I could possibly enact; and my consideration of the next step. As is typical in the cyclical nature of AR, these patterns were repeated throughout the journal.

3.6.2 Teacher recorded observations and lessons

It was a College requirement that all teachers were observed by their HOC on a regular basis, with the aim of improving teacher practice. In this study I hoped to use the results of teacher observations, in the teaching of English, to become a more effective practitioner. After each observation feedback was given, the purpose of which was to facilitate discussion and provide ideas for improved future practice. With teacher permission, observations were video-recorded. Griffie (2005) outlined that video-recording a situation can give an in-depth, authentic account of a setting and provide information that may have otherwise been overlooked. By analysing my EI teaching in this manner, I hoped to be able to determine which of the responsive teaching strategies that I adopted were effective.

The teacher observations are divided into four sections: introduction, results, analysis and transformation. First, I provided a brief introduction to the lesson observed. Second, I presented the results which comprise of my HOC's feedback on aspects of my EI practice that I executed well, and a discussion of suggestions for future practice. In the analysis section, I considered the feedback given through further critical reflection

of my teaching. The transformation section was an extension of the analysis, in which I endeavoured to acknowledge the changes of practice I intended to make.

3.6.3 Student dialogue sessions

This study is primarily concerned with my students' needs. How did my students perceive my EI teaching and how could I adapt my interpretation of the EI model to meet their needs, while remaining cognisant of their rich, cultural backgrounds? To gain a deeper understanding into how my students learn, I engaged in frequent, informal dialogues sessions with them about the actions I took in our classroom. These open conversations provided me with some of the most compelling data in this study, with which to improve my teaching. It was vital that I listened carefully to the students' thoughts and opinions, before responding to their needs, rather than simply move ahead with the study (Hunt, 2010). Having opportunities to voice their concerns was of paramount importance, because it is precisely the problematic nature of the study, their concerns, that guided the research focus as is evidenced in the four cycles.

As well as talking to my students informally about their learning and my teaching, I hoped to gain knowledge by watching and listening to them in practice. Schoenfeld (2003) in referring to Mason's noticing, remarked that this is something that teachers do all the time in their daily routines. However, over time aspects of our daily practice become habitual. That is, they become automatic and as such devoid of stimulation. To improve upon our daily practice teachers should engage in deliberate noticing. By this Schoenfeld (2003) was referring to the purposeful act of looking for things in our daily practice. I believed that by making a focused effort to notice aspects

of my practice and to record them, they would provide me with valuable insights into the learning process.

Adopting a transformative, critical lens I chose, in working *for* my Indigenous students, to question my teaching, the curriculum and imposed mandates. In adhering to the ethical principle of reciprocity, my aim was, through my students' voices to improve my teaching in a manner that my students deemed purposeful to them. I believe that the dialogue sessions provided a platform for my students to openly discuss my EI teaching and the curriculum in a safe environment. In respecting the ways Indigenous learners value and work with teachers (Barnes, 2000) the fact that I had already been the class teacher for one year, assisted greatly in the trust and openness we shared. I made it explicit to the students that each time we engaged in student conversation, that I needed them to be as honest as possible, that there were no incorrect answers and that all responses would be considered and they could ask questions, if they were unsure. I reiterated, in adhering to the principle of 'equality' that all viewpoints would be documented and valued and that their answers would not impact, in any way negatively upon our classroom learning, ensuring transparency of the research. Added to this, was that students knew that they could withdraw at any time, without having to provide a reason for doing so.

In adopting Lichtman's (2013) 3 C analysis, I adapted how I approached the student dialogue sessions, ensuring stronger power of student voice. For example, initially, when we commenced the dialogue sessions I believed that the students would respond individually to the questions posed, but what I discovered was that they wanted to share and compare their answers with each other. In meeting this need, I changed how we engaged in conversation and these sessions became foremost of an 'exchange' of information and open discussion.

I now discuss YCs which were used to elaborate upon the findings of the student dialogue sessions.

3.6.4 Yarning circles

YCs, also known as dialogue circles (Queensland Studies Authority, 2010) (QSA) or sharing circles, are an adaptation of the focus group (Rothe, Ozegovic & Carroll, 2009). They have been used by Indigenous people for centuries, serving the purpose of passing on and preserving knowledge, in a culturally respectful manner. Such a process allows those involved to share and exchange ideas. Communication within the circle is expected to be honest, in order to provide the interviewer with rich data that acknowledges the cultural background of the participants. The YCs in this study served several purposes. Above all, these discussions elaborated upon and provided clarification of the findings revealed in the student dialogue sessions. In addition, they enabled the more reserved students in the class to be heard, as they were conducted with fewer participants.

In conducting YCs, as outlined by the QSA (2010), there are certain norms and rules to be respected. First, the participants sit in a circle with a facilitator. However, no hierarchy exists. An instrument is passed around the circle in a clockwise motion and only the person holding the instrument is permitted to speak. It is expected that the participants will engage in deep listening. If participants have questions, they must wait until they have the instrument in their hand. Questions are expected to be open-ended. The ambience of the session is one of calm, and it is based on mutual respect. Participants must be given time to respond. If used effectively, such open communication can add richness and deeper understanding to the learning environment

(QSA, 2010). I hoped that by working with my students in this manner, I would gain a better insight about their needs as learners.

The student dialogue and YC sessions are organised around the following headings: introduction, results, analysis and transformation. In the introduction, I briefly outline the concern to be investigated. This is followed by the results section in which I present the results which emerged as I engaged in conversation. In the analysis section I aim to make sense of the patterns which arose by considering the findings through my own critical consideration (Berry, 2007). The transformation is an extension of the analysis section, demonstrating the imperative of adjusting my EI teaching practice as a reflective practitioner (Sellars, 2014). By making my own teaching transparent, a platform for improved teacher practice was identified and change was initiated.

3.6.5 Student work samples in writing using Big Write

As part of our English language unit, teachers were expected to use the Big Write Program (Andrell Education, 2017) on a weekly basis in a 45 minute lesson, following the EI template of 'I DO, WE DO, YOU DO and Plough back'. The Big Write program which has its foundations in oral language, is a writing program using oral skills, games and activities to teach the specific writing skills of vocabulary, connectives, openers and punctuation. Student work samples are presented and discussed in this study prior to the commencement of the program and towards the end of the scholastic year (Refer to the relevant sections in the AR cycle chapters and additional samples provided in the appendices section).

3.6.6 Video recording of own teaching

Towards the end of the year I analysed my own teaching to ascertain if my explicit teaching practices, as mandated by Tagai College and based on the College

checklist template (See Appendix B again) had become more responsive. This analysis was founded upon my new understandings of responsive practices as outlined in the literature (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Perso, 2012). Did I simply adhere to the EI teaching template, or did I deviate from it in my attempt to embed more responsive teaching practices?

3.7 Triangulation

This study employed a variety of data sources (triangulation), as I sought to ensure better reliability, confirmability, transferability and validity. Triangulation is the term used when data are compared and contrasted by using different research methods (Piggot-Irvine & Youngs, 2011). By combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and empirical materials, a researcher can hope to overcome weakness or intrinsic bias and any associated problems that may arise from single-method, single-observer, and single-theory studies. Frequently, the purpose of triangulation in specific contexts is to confirm findings through the convergence of different perspectives. The point at which the perspectives converge is seen to represent reality. In this study, I wished to confirm my findings by using several data collection tools - a reflective journal, teacher observations, student dialogue sessions, YCs, student work samples and an English unit. I believed that by offering more data from a variety of sources that the evidence provided would be more trustworthy and valid. By using several data collection tools, I envisaged that re-emerging patterns across the tools would become apparent.

The next section outlines the research procedure.

3.8 Research Procedure

As this research is predominantly concerned with 'best' teaching practice, based primarily on my students' voiced concerns, I began the study by documenting my reflections, in my journal, of my previous school year. The purpose of this reflection was to position myself clearly in the study. In this part of the journal I described the failures and successes of my first year of teaching in the TS. I outlined my initial positioning of EI and CRP, and the tensions I was facing in my daily practice. The following journal entry, at the outset of the 2013 school year, documented how I began to navigate the tensioned space between EI and CRP. Subsequent entries captured my reflections of practice and continued to highlight the tensions I was experiencing. Unwilling to rely on my own perceptions of my teaching, I also sought advice from my experienced HOC. Through mandated teacher observations, my HOC gave me constructive feedback about my EI teaching, and this provided me with important information pertaining to the needs of my Islander students. Some of the observations were video-recorded, and my HOC composed a checklist of effective EI teaching strategies I used that were deemed relevant and useful to my students' needs.

The main data source in this study was my students, and its acquisition took the form of dialogue sessions. These took place in class time. During these sessions students were asked to answer questions in the form of a tick/cross, yes/no or short answer response. Discussion was openly encouraged. By proceeding in this manner, I hoped to give every child a voice, rather than allowing discussions to be dominated by the more confident speakers. As an additional source of data collection, I organised YCs with my students. YCs, I believed were a more culturally sensitive way to engage in dialogue, and enabled me to clarify the responses generated in the dialogue sessions. The YCs comprised small groups of approximately seven students. These sessions took

place in the school library, as this was a peaceful setting that I hoped would encourage students to share ideas.

I began my AR plan by considering the tensions that I faced as I conducted my daily classroom practice. I did this through reflection and through talking to my students, two critical friends and a cultural mentorship group. These tensions were then documented. I envisaged a solution to the problem. I acted. I observed. I evaluated the outcomes of the solution and based on student feedback and my own reflections I modified my practice, plan or ideas. I did not teach purely for the sake of teaching, but instead I took decisive and informed action. Sometimes, I waited to reflect upon my actions, as Hunt (2010) advised. At other times I progressed the study to respond to another of my students' concerns.

3.9 Data Analysis

For my data analysis, I used Lichtman's (2013) three Cs analysis of coding, categorising and concepts. I present the analysis of each data collection tool below.

Journals: In each journal entry, I analysed paragraphs of texts which were subsequently coded using one or two words. Each code represented a main thread of the ideas I had chosen to consider for reflection. These codes were transformed into the following categories: challenge, tension, adjustment, success, concern, teacher identity, context of learning, responsive practices and cultural interface. In moving from the category to the concept, I further analysed my reflections to identify the common idea or thought presented (See Appendix C). These key concepts, it emerged throughout the four cycles, supported much of the data collected in the student conversations, work samples and writing samples.

Observations: Two observations were used in term one and one in term four. Given the structured mandated nature of the observations I was able to immediately code and partition the data into two categories – positive feedback (PF) and discussion (D). The key concepts which emerged from these two categories were the specific comments made by my critical friend pertaining to my strengths and weaknesses as an EI practitioner (Refer to Table 4.1 in Chapter Four). This feedback, alongside the feedback provided by my students, was used as crucial evidence to adjust my teaching to align more closely with my learners' needs. In analysing the final observation, the additional concept of tension was evident, as I came to understand the unresolved issues of working in the cultural interface, balancing the EI model with responsive practices.

Student conversations (dialogues and YCs): I began my data analysis using codes and categories, in order to organise the students' immediate, broad concerns (identified throughout the study as KEs) in cycle one. Each key element identified, while commonly being in the subject of English, represented a diverse array of concerns which my students held about my teaching. For this reason, in analysing the KEs, I further broke down each into a subset of categories (See Appendices D and E). From these new categories, as shown by the example provided, specific, more detailed concepts arose. This information enabled me to address specific elements of my teaching as I progressed through each of the four AR cycles.

Writing samples: The work samples provided were analysed at the sentence level, using codes to identify common errors, which represented a specific category within writing (e.g. SP = spelling, O = openers). The patterns (concepts) which emerged from analysing students' writing samples provided me with key areas on which I needed to focus my teaching, in order to improve writing standards in the subsequent cycles (See Appendix F).

An overview of the data collection tools is presented in Table 3.1 and the data analysis overview is presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1
Data Collection

Research Question	What data?	How to collect data?
How can a teacher negotiate the pedagogical requirements of policy statements in FNQ? That is, how does a teacher teach in a way that acknowledges the requirements of EI and CRP orientations?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Classroom noticing of teacher practice and student behaviour 2. Evaluation of EI strategies 3. Evaluation of CRP 4. Student feedback 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflective journal 2. Teacher observations and HOC feedback 3. Student dialogue sessions 4. YC
What are the guiding principles and practices that effective teachers can adopt in their classrooms which will best meet the needs of TSI students?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student feedback 2. Effective teaching strategies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student dialogue sessions 2. YC 3. Teacher observations
What pedagogical tensions does a teacher experience in a TSI classroom? How do such tensions influence her beliefs and contribute to her adjustment in teaching?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher observations of tensions (class level + school level + regional level + national level) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflective journal

Table 3.2
Data Analysis

Stage	Procedure
1	Using Lichtman's (2013) 3Cs coding, category and concept analysis, I analysed my journal reflections at the paragraph level to identify my key concerns. Many of the concerns identified, as is evidenced in the four research cycles, supported the data which emerged from engaging with my students in conversation, who, I discovered, held similar concerns to my own.
2	Using Lichtman's (2013) 3Cs analysis, feedback from my HOC in three teacher observations was coded and categorised into positive feedback and discussion for improvement of practice. From this feedback, I was able to identify specific elements of my teaching that required adjustment to meet my learners' needs.
3	As I engaged in informal discussions with my students, using Lichtman's (2013) 3Cs analysis, key concerns arose (5 KEs) as being of most concern to my students. In the four cycles these concepts were analysed in further depth through further dialogue. New codes and categories were created as I began to explore the data and subsequently adjust the minutiae of my teaching.

3.10 Ethical and Cultural Considerations

Within research that involves others, there is always the potential risk of abuse of the participants involved. As scholars Lichtman (2013), O'Toole and Beckett (2010) recognised, this is particularly so when the researcher holds a position of power. Sellars (2014) cautioned that the researcher, due to their position of power, has an obligation to ensure that research procedures are not abused. In teacher-student relationships, an imbalance of power exists. In carrying out this research I needed to demonstrate that my participants would suffer no harm, and document how they would be protected. An

application to the Human Ethics Committee at James Cook University (JCU) was made, in order to gain ethical approval for the study to take place. In this application, I explained the proposed research methodology, the estimated number of participants and how I would gain consent from the students, their families, my critical friends and the cultural mentorship group (See Appendices G – L). JCU requires that researchers consider the cultural norms and practices of the group under study. This project approval was granted on 18th September 2013: Ethics Number 5237 (See Appendix M). In addition, a separate application for ethics clearance was made to Education Queensland. The approval was given on 19th July 2013, conditional on the JCU ethics approval (See Appendix N). I was also required to negotiate access to the study. This involved asking my HOC for permission. In turn, my HOC approached the Tagai executive who, through my own HOC, granted permission to proceed with the study. Because the research dealt with TSIs, the my HOC also presented it to the school committee board for approval. As the study involved children, permission was also needed from the parents of each child, as well as from the children themselves.

In gaining parental consent, my HOC and cultural mentorship group suggested that I approach the parents and families directly, rather than post the consent forms. It was felt that, as I knew most of the parents and families from having taught their students previously, this would be the most diplomatic and efficient manner in which to proceed. My HOC suggested that parent interview day (This is when the parents come to the school to discuss their child's academic progress) would be a suitable time to do this. By talking to the parents and families in person I was able to explicitly and succinctly talk about the study in an open and candid manner. McNiff and Whitehead (2005) warned researchers not to make false promises and to be clear about the study's intentions. Furthermore, I needed to be fully aware of and sensitive to how the Islanders

were represented in the study. In this regard, I needed to be clear about the project aims and how the participants could potentially benefit from the research. In heeding the advice of the researchers and in respecting the fact that parents and families speak EALD, I did not use superfluous or technical jargon in my explanations of the research. In addition, I encouraged the parents and families to ask questions and I stressed the open-door policy process in my classroom to all of the families and parents involved. With this understanding, the adults knew that they could come into the classroom at any time and observe the conversations I held with my students. McNiff and Whitehead (2005) spoke of researchers acting in good faith. By this, the authors are referring to trust and respect. By approaching the families in this manner, I felt that the values of respect and trust were being upheld

Researchers need to be mindful and respectful in their approach in dealing with participants (McNiff & Whitehead, 2005). In dealing with Indigenous learners, I was careful to be respectful of their cultural heritage. I needed to emphasise that taking part in the research was voluntary and that participants could withdraw at any time. To protect my students' confidentiality, I did not share their views or their work with others, and drew from the research of others to inform my practice. In providing anonymity, as Lichtman (2013) suggests, I did not disclose any of my participants' names but used letters as a means of identifying students on work samples. All of the data collected was kept in a secure box in the privacy of my own home. The video-recordings of my teaching were only shared with my HOC. The video was set up at the back of the classroom to ensure that the students' identities remained protected. One concern raised by the Education Department was that the study might infringe on my students' time. In gaining permission from the Education Department I had to prove that the research would take place in class time and that the study would be more a

reflection of my teaching, rather than a reflection of the students' work. In considering the research results, O'Toole and Beckett (2010) discussed the delicate issue of access to intellectual property. As part of the agreement between myself, my students and their families I promised that I would share the results of the study with them. It is my intention, upon completion of this Doctorate study, to disseminate the results, with the assistance of my HOC, to each family involved. In this way I will be able to inform my participants of the study's outcomes.

In conducting this study, I endeavoured to adhere to the five principles of ethical research: reciprocity, respect, equality, responsibility and survival and protection. I hoped to have demonstrated reciprocity, mutual exchange, by improving my teaching to benefit my students' learning, with a focus on trying to preserve their culture. I showed respect to my students and their communities by truly listening to what they had to say, and then acting upon those responses. This view was central to the study. I upheld a sense of equality by valuing my students' viewpoints, and by not imposing my personal views on them. I made a conscious to engage my students in mutual, sharing of ideas and opinions. I demonstrated responsibility by making sure the research was transparent and would in no way harm the participants. My subjects were not asked to be involved in extracurricular activities, as this study was more an examination of my teaching effectiveness from the point of view of my students. As such, it took place in class. Finally, in adhering to the principle of survival and protection, I did not in any way discriminate against my learners. The research was voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any given time. I endeavoured to listen to my students' voices to make the learning visible and to respond to my learners' needs.

In carrying out this study I also referred to the principles of data collection underlying literacy at the cultural interface. In guiding my reflective practice I adhered

to the principle of mutual respect. In considering my own knowledge system of how I view the world I endeavoured at all times to recognise the validity of the TS knowledge system, the expertise and alternative beliefs embedded in this system. I worked with my established cultural mentorship group to ensure that the information from the study was used in the most suitable and culturally sensitive manner. In addition, in this study I ensured that my own students were active participants. By listening to the voices of my students I endeavoured to act upon their suggestions, making the learning more transparent, as Hattie (2004, 2012) urged. I believe that by sharing my findings with the community, future educational policies in the region could be altered to more adequately suit the needs of such learners. As well, I wished to maintain the element of human dignity. That is, I wished to uphold the strong bond between myself and my students. While I readily admit that some of my European-based worldviews may have contrasted starkly to those of my learners, I did not, in any way, undermine my students' personal integrity and cultural identity. I did this by being honest and open in my approach and by being accepting of and responsive to the feedback my students gave to me. Durie (2005) spoke of the discovery of new knowledge at the interface. In carrying out this research, new knowledge has emerged – knowledge that is based on my worldview and the worldview of my students. I envisage that the knowledge which has arisen from this study will contribute to the existing field of knowledge in the literature surrounding Indigenous learners.

The next part of the chapter situates the research.

3.11 Situating the Research

Despite the fact that numerous studies regarding Aboriginal Indigenous learners have been reported in the literature, there have been no studies published examining

Islander learners' perspectives on learning and pedagogy in the TS (Barnes, 2000; Chigeza, 2010). For this study, the locale of the research is central to addressing the research questions. This study is exclusively focused on TSI learners and the unique setting in which they live. Culture plays a significant role in the daily lives of the Islanders. Teachers in this region are required to teach predominantly using an EI approach. At the same time, teachers are expected to teach in a way that respects and acknowledges the island culture (DET, 2011; Queensland Government, 2000). This study aims to examine how the needs of TSI students can be met through exploration of my own teacher practice.

3.12 Study Limitations

Due to the unique setting and participants involved in the study, I envisaged a number of possible limitations.

1. The sample size used in this study was relatively small. Throughout this study there were 20 students enrolled in my class.
2. Due to the transient nature of students on the island, some student movement was inevitable. This meant that one student involved in the study was not present for the entire duration of the academic year. This was a factor over which I had no control.
3. The research took place in a very remote and unique setting. Whilst the results of the research will be of benefit to several parties, I should point out that they cannot be extrapolated to all primary schools within Australia, due to the unique lifestyle that the Islanders lead and the influence of culture in their lives. Life on the islands contrasts starkly to life on the mainland. In addition, life between each of the island clusters also differs. However, this study could be

used as a starting point for other practitioners to engage in research in the area and build upon the body of professional knowledge.

4. As this study was qualitative in nature, concerns surrounding qualitative research have to be considered. Most importantly, the reality of events in qualitative research is constructed by the observer (myself), and the interpretations made are based on the researcher's own experience and background (myself). In addition, the less formal style of presentation of qualitative than quantitative research may cause concerns.

3.13 Study Delimitations

Being a non-Indigenous person and due to personal preferences, certain delimitations exist.

1. As part of my data collection, I wished to conduct regular YCs with my students. This was a new concept to me and, as a non-Indigenous person, I felt it was one that I needed to learn. Despite receiving assistance from my cultural mentorship group, I did struggle at times with finding the time to organise these sessions within our class learning time.
2. This study did not seek to use empirical test scores such as NAPLAN to demonstrate progress in students' academic achievement. By way of contrast, in this study I was primarily concerned with representing my students and giving them a voice as a first critical step in adjusting my approach to employing EI methods in my practice.

3.14 Study Timeframe

I carried out this study on a part-time basis over four and a half years, because I worked full-time as a classroom teacher. In mid-2012 I undertook a refresher course in research (ED5190), because it had been several years since I completed my Masters research. Alongside this course, I began reading to prepare for my literature review. The following year, 2013, I completed my introduction, continued my literature review integrating classroom practice with theory. In the same year, I commenced and completed my data collection. My third and fourth years (2014, 2015) were dedicated to data analysis, completion of my methodology chapter and data collection cycles. I completed my research in 2016, prior to submission in early 2017.

3.15 Conclusion

In this chapter I explained my research methodology. I discussed why I chose a qualitative research study. I explained what is meant by AR and why I chose it as my preferred research methodology. I explained the concept of AR as a research paradigm. I provided the reader with a clear outline of the research procedure. I outlined my data collection tools, and I provided a justification for their use. I presented the participants and instruments used in the study, as well as outlining the ethical and cultural implications. To complete this chapter, I situated the research before discussing the study benefits, limitations and timeframe.

The next section of this study, Chapters Four to Seven, present the data results and analysis associated with the four research cycles. Cycle one was an initial investigation into my practice in order to determine the main concerns my students held about my teaching. Cycle two was a preliminary investigation into these concerns to decide, more precisely, which elements of my EI teaching demanded attention, in my

students' eyes. In cycle three I interrogated the EI model and adjusted it through multiple stages of enactment, to meet my learners' needs more responsively. The final cycle explored my partial resolution of practice as I came to understand that, despite the fact that my students were satisfied with my adjusted practice, my efforts to become a more responsive practitioner, in the view of the Education Department, have largely been ignored.

Chapter 4: Data Results and Analysis: Cycle 1

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter Three the methodology for the research was described. The chapter outlined the research questions and the methodological approach undertaken. Specifically, attention was given to why an AR approach best suited the current research project, and how this research would be actioned. The following chapters, Four to Seven, present the study's four research cycles.

Cycle one was an initial inquiry to identify what my students perceived to be the problematic nature of my teaching in the TS. In this first cycle, through critical self-reflection, I determined my students' concerns, using the four data sources of journal reflections, observations of my practice, student dialogue sessions and a YC.

Lewin (1947) spoke of the "reconnaissance of goals and means" phase (p. 149) in the beginning stage of an AR research inquiry. That is, the researcher comes to know or understand the goals of the research and how they may be addressed. By the closure of cycle one, I came to realise that the concerns identified by my students had to be the driving force of the study in the subsequent cycles, because my main goal on this journey was to ensure that my students were experiencing literacy teaching practices in a manner that acknowledged and embraced their learning requirements, rather than in a manner that dictated how they ought to learn. That is, how could I, as a reflective and responsive practitioner, respond to the concerns raised in the highly-tensioned zone between the curriculum as planned and the curriculum as lived (Aoki, 2012)? It is through this AR project that I aimed to more comprehensibly understand my own practice within the specific context of the TS, and thus be in a position to modify my teaching to align with my students' needs. As Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010)

emphatically stated, in being responsive, practitioners that are teaching in settings where nationalistic imperatives drive and dominate professional action, have to adjust their teaching.

4.1.1 Organisation of cycle one

The initial research cycle consisted of six stages of data collection and analysis. At the inception of my journey, I began by critiquing my teaching, documenting reflections of my practice and the tensions I faced in journal entry one. Using McNiff and Whitehead's (2005) advice, I drew up a list of 'why' questions to assist me in determining a suitable starting point in identifying the dilemmas which confronted me in my classroom. Through this line of questioning I reflected upon how I presently viewed, what I perceived as the two opposing models of EI and CRP (See Appendix O). I came to realise that, in being responsive, my performance of the mandated EI had to be adjusted. This was because in its current form, EI was not serving the needs of my students. Effective, responsive teachers, as perceived in the literature (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Perso, 2012), do not proceed in their practice without due thought. Rather, they adapt their teaching, finding alternative ways for their students to work. Clearly, I had to view the EI model more flexibly.

Scholars Berry (2007), and McNiff and Whitehead (2005) advised that action researchers seek out a critical friend to provide an alternative perspective to assist in validating the research findings. For this reason, my second data source involved my first critical friend. Specifically, I engaged in conversation with her to determine her thoughts regarding the EI model and how she approached the mandate of teaching explicitly. I also included a reflection of my friend's teaching and a subsequent discussion about her practice. This is documented in journal entry two. Seeking the

guidance and advice of a more experienced colleague was pivotal to the study, in order to enable me to see an alternative view of explicit teaching, and how I could potentially use this information to inform my own practice.

My third source of data collection was in the form of two teacher observations which were conducted by my second critical friend, my HOC. The overall purpose of providing these lessons as additional evidence was to ascertain how effectively I executed the EI model from an external perspective and a representative of DET; to tease out facets of teaching quality that were salient to the needs of my TSI students; and to strengthen the study's findings by seeking an unbiased viewpoint, as McNiff and Whitehead (2005) urged.

The main focus of this research was my students. Given this, it was paramount that I engaged in conversation with the students themselves. Therefore, my fourth source of data collection occurred through whole-class student dialogue. In this initial cycle my aim was to decipher which areas of my English EI teaching my students were most concerned with, and to use this evidence to guide me in cycle two. This was followed by my fifth data source, a YC, in which I explored the concerns identified by my students more deeply. I sought student input as a final and valid data source, because my goal in this inquiry stage was to determine the concerns my students held about my teaching and use these as a foundation for potential adjustments, as is ironically endorsed by the Education Department (DET, 2011). I was aware that these data sources, especially the views of my students and the commentary of my second critical friend, might expose aspects of my practice that I had perhaps not considered in my personal reflections. Hattie (2012) urged teachers to make learning visible. It is through the medium of these dialogue sessions that I aimed to make the learning and, more significantly, my teaching visible, so that I could adjust my teaching accordingly.

Cycle one ended with my sixth data source, journal entry three, in which I discussed the five data sources collected. In this reflection, I presented my thoughts pertaining to my action plan for cycle two, in which I considered how to begin my investigation of the KEs identified. To clarify cycle one, I illustrate the six stages in Figure 4.1.

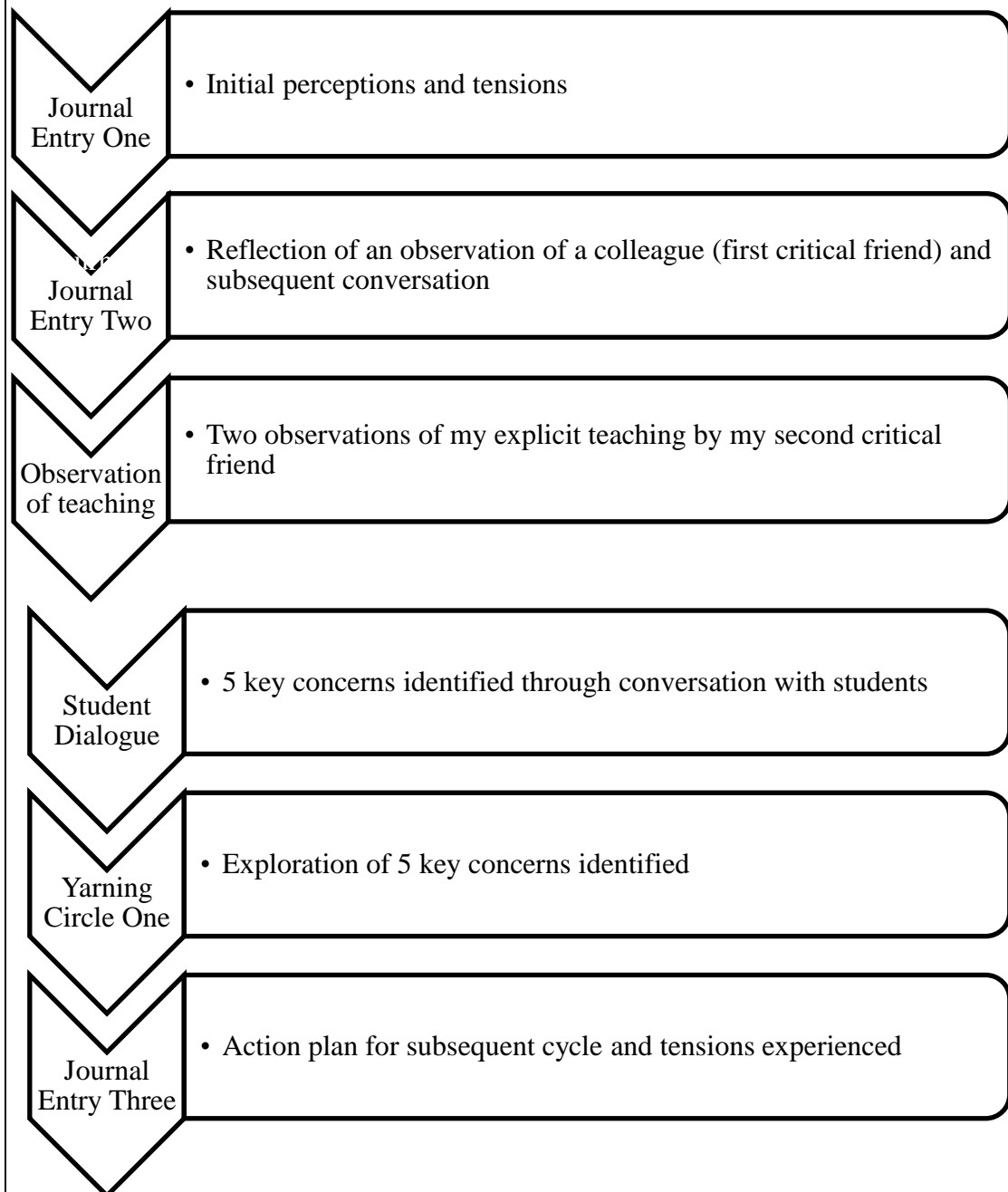
Figure 4.1. Six Data Collection Stages in Cycle One

Figure 4.1. The figure presents an overview of the six stages of data collection undertaken in cycle one, the reconnaissance of goals and means phase.

4.2 Journal Entry One, Initial Perceptions and Tensions

Lacey (2006) stipulated that AR begins with the researcher thinking about their situation with a view to changing it. Therefore, journal entry one was significant because in this entry I began problematising my teaching by deeply considering the situation I was facing in my TS classroom. Rather than passively accepting the EI model, I deliberately chose to question the restrictive mandates I faced. I was driven by my own desire to teach as my students wished to be taught, and to use my professional knowledge and worldly experience. I did this by documenting my own perceptions of the EI model in relation to the CRP orientation and the tensions which arose from within. My reflective writing is presented as was documented at the time, as a first-person account with only some references presented at that time as well. Further references have been added to draw explicit attention to the scholarship in this area.

4.2.1 Reflection – a challenging year

I am nearing the end of my first-year teaching in the TS. What a year it has been! The first six months were the most challenging and stressful of my teaching career. Frequently, I felt like an outsider, unsure of the norms in the new, unfamiliar surrounds of my students. This unfamiliarity conflicts with my otherness (from down south) which clearly was not fitting in with my students' social reality. Many initial tensions in my classroom concerned behaviour management. I recall finding my class extremely difficult to control, and I felt that a lot of learning time was wasted on mundane and trivial matters, not related to actual learning. I seek advice from my HOC. She suggests, as I embark upon the journey of being a reflective teacher, I need to focus on building strong relationships with my students, a central component of effective teaching in the CRP literature (Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Taylor & Sobel,

2011). Gradually, throughout the year, as I gained my students' trust and respect, classroom behaviour began to improve.

The conundrum presently facing teachers in FNQ is how to teach explicitly, and yet at the same time, how to adhere to the principles of CRP. How disparate these two models of teaching actually are causes me enormous concern. In scrutinising my own teaching, it is unclear what exactly constitutes responsive practices in this remote region where students speak several languages and EALD. Presently, I feel that the 'how' of being responsive is somewhat of an enigma. It is something I clearly want to do, but there is limited guidance on how to do this successfully, especially given the intense emphasis on the EI model which draws little attention to its delivery with a CRP consideration. This emphasis is occurring at the expense of culturally located practices. I question how I, as a white practitioner, can assist and affirm the values of my Islander students. I suspect that the mandate of being responsive is more of a superficial gesture and is something that teachers are permitted to do, as long as it fits in with the demands of teaching explicitly. In the process, I feel that my identity as a teacher, who above all wants to respond to my learners' imperatives – academically, socially and perhaps politically - is being severely threatened. Who is making these decisions about EI on my behalf? Perso (2012) spoke of a culturally located pedagogy. In being responsive I refuse to accept the mandate that this direct teaching style is in the best interests of my culturally located learners. I dislike this tacit assumption that there is a single, superior way to learn and I sense, through student conversation, that my students feel this way too.

Another persisting tension in my classroom has been the English curriculum which, I feel, is undoubtedly overwhelming in volume, content and language. In considering the curriculum from my learners' perspectives, I realise the many

challenges they face. The expectancy is that the students will cover a significant amount of content. Hammond et al. (2015) discovered that covering significant amount of content was a tension experienced frequently by teachers of EAL students. Further, in discussing content, Perrone (1994) spoke of effective teachers who carefully consider the topic relevancy, but the English curriculum I am mandated to teach bears little relevance to my TSI students' lives. What is more, their identities are largely ignored through the delivery of the curriculum using the EI model. These tensions are heightened by the actual language of the curriculum itself which, I have discovered, *prima facie*, is often too challenging for my EALD learners.

I am also troubled by the unrelenting persistence on student assessment and the focus on data, as Mills and McGregor (2014) also conceded. I feel that students are being commodified, used as pawns to serve a political agenda, but whose agenda, I ponder, is being served? I hear many teachers, in my school, voicing similar concerns, but I question why few are willing to challenge these mandates. However, my own dissatisfaction and passion are too strong to sit idly by. I have to give my students a voice because I strongly believe that the system, which is currently excluding so many of them, needs to be questioned. My students need and have a right to access a curriculum which reflects their personalised needs and values.

4.2.2 Analysis – choosing to act

This initial reflection provides the foundation for deeper considerations which become the focus of my analysis. As I look back upon this journal entry, how I navigate the space between EI and CRP emerges as of central importance. As Berry (2007) affirmed, teaching is fraught with tensions and balancing these two, what I perceive to be oppositional models of instruction, is a tension I face daily. I hope that exploration of

these dilemmas will enable me to clarify elements of my teaching in the same manner that identification of tensions enabled Berry (2007) to refine her practice.

It seems the teaching expectation in the TS is for practitioners to uncritically adopt an EI approach, and thus the EI model becomes imposed on the students they teach. I feel extremely uncomfortable with this imposition because I feel that I am not being sincere to my learners. I feel that my judgement, passion and creativity to make professional decisions is being severely restricted. I feel a sense of despair as the drive for data increases, and similarly to Wisehart (2004), I question its underlying purpose. Has anybody actually asked my learners what they want? Do they appreciate the fast, sequential pace of EI? Do they benefit from working individually, as is the EI norm, and how do they feel about assessment which is frequent within explicit teaching (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009)? Perhaps, as Osborne (2001) suggested, my students want to work in an alternative, unhurried manner? Perhaps, they wish to work with their peers? Further, in being responsive I have a moral obligation to my students to consider my sense of self. How effectively do I execute the EI model? Perhaps I need to reconstruct my own teaching?

As well as the EI mandate, there is the clear message that teachers in the TS must treat their students responsively (DET, 2011), and yet as an experienced teacher I feel a sense of incompetence. As Nakata (2011) expressed, I'm expected to be cognisant of my students' cultures and what this implies for my teaching and their learning, but I am not totally confident about how to achieve this. Similar to Parsons and Wall (2011), I'm struggling to comprehend and embed this responsiveness. Is it a set of rules to be followed or routines to be adhered to? Is it a particular way of doing something? Why have these responsive and supposedly endorsed practices not been made explicit to me? What does being a culturally responsive practitioner in the TS actually entail? I consider

Gay's (2010) words – being responsive is a long-term commitment, and I recognise the arduous task that lies ahead.

Reflecting on the year that has passed, it is clear that I cannot passively accept the mandate of teaching explicitly, because in doing so I will only reinforce the current educational agenda which permeates the TS region (Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001). I want to challenge the prevailing view that all students, regardless of their cultural heritage must be taught explicitly and uniformly. In my view, I can ill-afford to teach blindly using the prescribed curriculum and EI model, if I am to experience success. Through a strong student-teacher rapport, as is indicated in the literature (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Rychly & Graves, 2012; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) I have to consider the cultural needs of my learners and how this may impact upon their learning, as Nakata (2011) and Osborne (2001) have frequently urged. This will inevitably mean realigning my interpretation of the EI model to make learning more accessible to my students, embracing my students' unique backgrounds and viewing my teaching through my students' eyes, as indicative of responsive practices (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Rychly & Graves, 2012).

My sense of profound unease is clear from this initial analysis. I cannot accept this is simply the way we teach here. In being responsive I feel obliged to determine this for myself through critical exploration of my teaching, while using my students' needs to guide my inquiry. Having begun my journey of reflection, it seems a natural and timely progression to advance the study by seeking the advice of a more experienced colleague. To this end, I consult with my first critical friend.

4.3 Journal Entry Two, Introduction

My beliefs are that the mandated EI model, because of its prescriptive nature, fails to meet the full learning needs of my Indigenous students. That is, there is a mismatch between teaching as prescription and learning that requires a more responsive approach. Keen to seek the advice of another teacher, I engaged in professional conversation with a colleague, who offered to be my first critical friend on this journey. One of the many advantages of having a critical friend, as Berry (2007) asserted, is that they can assist in affirming our own beliefs. Concerned with teaching explicitly and somewhat perplexed about how to embed responsive practices, I asked my friend for assistance to ascertain if we share similar or contrasting opinions. I wanted to know how she approached her EI practice and were there elements of her teaching that I could apply to my own classroom? Following our conversation, I was invited to observe my friend's teaching, and thereafter, we engaged in a further conversation about her practice. Journal entry two, therefore, encapsulates my critical friend's own concerns regarding the EI model and my own reflections of her teaching.

4.3.1 Reflection - observation of a colleague

Susanne¹, my critical friend, reveals that she also has major concerns with EI. She is an experienced and well-respected teacher – in the eyes of colleagues, children and community members - who has been living and working in the TS for several years. By far, Susanne's greatest concerns include the lack of cultural references in the curriculum, a comment also made by others (Nakata, 2011, Queensland Government, 2000). She is also deeply disturbed by what she refers to as “the narrow-minded viewpoint that teachers are supposed to teach using only the EI model of instruction”,

¹ Pseudonym

that excludes exploratory methods of teaching or learning cooperatively. In particular, she feels that the rigid nature of EI “does not cater for the needs of Indigenous learners who benefit from more practical, hands-on activities”. Susanne also comments on assessment procedures which she sees as “inappropriate, considering the diversity of students in our classrooms, especially in regards to the nature of classrooms in southern QLD schools, for which assessment items appear to have been developed”. She too has “the sense of teaching to the test” and reassuringly, like myself, remains dismayed by “the huge data focus”. The use of “predominantly pen and paper styles of assessment”, she says, “automatically excludes many learners”. Despite these dilemmas, when I actually see Susanne teach I am amazed to what extent she is able to adjust her EI practice to address some of her concerns.

The lesson observed was an early grade math lesson, with 20 students divided into four rotational groups of five. Group one worked individually on a number finder activity; group two created an animal tangram of their choice; group three worked with a teacher aid on a time game and group four worked with the teacher doing number placement. The teacher was using an EI approach for her group rotation.

4.3.2 Analysis - adopting an alternative viewpoint

It was clear from this observation how well Susanne had established class routines. It is widely acknowledged in the literature that effective teachers are organised and possess clearly defined boundaries, learning goals and daily procedures (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Bulger et al., 2002; Fleming & Kleinhenz, 2013; Hammond et al., 2015; Hattie, 2012; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009). The students knew exactly how rotations worked and transitioned smoothly from one activity to the next. Behaviour problems were not apparent and no one interrupted the teacher during her explicit teaching time.

Tasks were personalised (different levels of work, varied activities) and were pitched at the right level, making them doable, a strategy deemed as a vital component of effective teaching by Bright (2012). Every activity allowed every child to succeed and this, I feel, contributed greatly to the sense of a warm and caring classroom environment which Bishop and Glynn (1999) and Kohn (1996) reported. The aspect of this observation which impressed me the most was how my critical friend taught explicitly. Contrary to the perception that practitioners ought to follow the EI model sequentially (Archer & Hughes, 2011), my critical friend alternated frequently between the I DO and WE DO parts. In our follow up conversation Susanne explained she does this to incorporate teaching in different ways to cater for diverse student needs.

I reflect upon the observed lesson for several days. Sellars (2014) described reflection as an intentional act that teachers use as a tool to improve their practice. Through the act of reflecting, I have learned some initial strategies that I can implement in my own classroom. I am extremely relieved to discover that I am not the only teacher who has concerns about the EI model. Talking to my critical friend and watching her teach has provided some insight into how I may begin to address my students' concerns. Although the thought of adjusting the EI model initially seemed daunting, and in part impossible, my critical friend made me realise that it is achievable. I not only can, but I must adjust my interpretation of it. Further, it is possible, as my critical friend has demonstrated, to change the class dynamics (for example, through cooperative learning groups), and still teach explicitly in part. In doing so home, community and school structures can be more evenly matched, as several scholars (Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Osborne, 2001; Perso 2012; Rahman, 2013) suggested. This can assist, I believe, in creating a warm, positive classroom ambience (Kohn, 1996), respecting the learning preferences of my students. Perhaps, my students want to work with their peers in

English, just as they do in their daily lives. My colleague has also made me realise that regardless of a child's academic level, success is possible. However, success, she cautions, has to be determined by the students, not imposed on them by their teachers or by policy makers. Students have to be involved in their learning decisions, a point also raised by others (Black, 2004; Kuhn, 2007; Lattuca, 2006; Sanaa, 2006). In extending upon this sentiment, advocates of responsive teaching also stress the need for communities to be a part of this decision-making process (Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Nakata, 1994). I wonder to what extent I could involve the community into our learning?

Equipped with the knowledge of having observed a more experienced colleague, especially one who places her students first, this experience has provided me with renewed energy and confidence to challenge and adjust the prescribed EI approach. This adjustment is absolutely necessary. Although the EI model is to be followed per se, I now realise that I need to view it as more of a guide to delivery of instruction, while keeping my Indigenous students and their needs at the forefront of my mind. With hindsight, I think I may have been somewhat misguided. That is, in my eagerness to improve my execution of the EI model, I failed to consider what really matters – my learners. In teaching responsively, my teaching must become a sincere commitment to my learners by prioritising their needs, for, as is commonly acknowledged (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) this principle sits at the heart of responsive practices.

4.4 Critical Friend Conversation and Observation – Introduction

I am dubious about the EI mandate. Nevertheless, having watched my friend teach, I now seek an alternative viewpoint to my own EI teaching by approaching my second critical friend, my HOC. Specifically, my HOC observes two of my explicit English teaching lessons and provides me with feedback about my execution of the EI model. I present her analysis as it was provided to me after my observations, one earlier in the year and one several months later. These are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1
Observations One and Two

	Observation One, topic – plural endings in English	Observation Two, topic – proofreading skills
Lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I DO – regular/irregular plural nouns • WE DO –using the interactive whiteboard recognise the plural noun form in sentences, change the singular to plural • YOU DO – gap-fill activity with choice of apostrophe (previously learned) or plural ending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I DO – correct spelling, punctuation and grammar by proofreading a text • WE DO – as above with a different text using editing symbols • YOU DO- edit passage independently
Positive feedback (PF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class quiet, focused • Clear boundaries provided • Wait time given • Followed the EI model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EI evident • Learning intention clear • Differentiation catered for • Students engaged • Task level appropriate with good extension activity
Discussion (D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children sometimes noisy • Avoid disruptions • Instructions too brief • Use think-aloud strategy • Independent task too difficult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More teacher modelling needed • Use checking for understanding • Get children to repeat • Include all children • Too much teacher talk

4.4.1 Analysis – of practice

From these observations, my critical friend has heightened my awareness of my own teaching, and in doing so has enabled me to view my practice from an alternative viewpoint. Despite my perception of my EI execution, both through my HOC's written

feedback and the accompanying collegial conversation around my teaching, I am surprised to learn that there are many elements upon which I need to improve.

Most of her comments pertain specifically to the EI imperative and how well I comply with this mandate. Despite the rather restrictive assessment, I question why the students were sometimes off task and noisy. Why was behaviour disruptive? Were the students disengaged, and if so, what was the reason for their disengagement (Black, 2004)? Perhaps the topic was irrelevant (Perrone, 1994), or maybe my pace was too fast (Osborne, 2001)? Possibly, due to my learners' EALD needs, the language was too challenging (Nakata, 2011)? It was evident from the comment "brief instructions" that students did not always know what to do, yet effective teachers provide instructions which are clear and concise (Hattie, 2012; Lewthwaite et al., 2013). Possible shame or embarrassment could have prevented the students from seeking further teacher clarification. This prompts me to consider relationships and how I need to know my students well, as many responsive scholars have advocated (Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Nakata, 2011; Perso, 2012). Clear from my HOC's perspective is the need for me to use the think-aloud process, a strategy which is emphasised in the EI literature as a vital component of teaching (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009). I realise that I rarely use this strategy, and yet this vital step serves the purpose of explaining the process as you go through it, making the learning transparent (Hattie, 2012). The feedback also stipulates that the independent task was too difficult. It is imperative that the task is pitched at the right level (Bright, 2011), or there arises the possibility, as was the case in this particular lesson, that the students simply give up.

The second observation provides evidence that there has been a shift in my practice with more students on task, but I am questioning whether this has anything to do with my adherence to the EI model, or perhaps other, more broader influences.

Despite this improvement, there are still some elements of my explicit teaching which need to be adjusted. I consider Lewthwaite and McMillan's (2010) words as I ponder the feedback "too much teacher talk" and what this means for my EALD learners. Superfluous language, I determine, will probably hinder my students' thought processes as they code switch from their mother-tongue to English. I evidently need to model more with demonstrations, as Lewthwaite et al. (2013) urged. Perhaps, in making the learning more transparent I ought to follow Perso's (2012) advice, using multiple examples and visual imagery. As an effective teacher, asking more questions, Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) believed, would guide me in determining who has understood the content being taught. Furthermore, I have to ensure that there are ample opportunities to repeat information (Hammond et al., 2015; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b) in order to assist in aiding retention. I note that there was no mention of the plough back, a vital lesson component of EI that is used to close the lesson, (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009), and I realise I must have omitted this. Did I run out of time or did I simply forget? What purpose does the plough back serve and how important is this in meeting my students' needs?

4.4.2 Transformation – adjustment of practice

What do these observations mean for my TSI students' needs and my practice as I strive to execute the EI model more effectively and become a responsive practitioner? I see some merit in the observation feedback, but I question the relevancy and appropriateness of EI in its raw, unchallenged form. I believe the model needs to be more fully grounded in the contextual features of the TS. As I reflect upon my practice I am becoming more acutely aware how my students' linguistic needs impact on their learning and, consequently, my teaching. Hammond et al. (2015) and Nakata (2011) stressed the need for practitioners to adjust their teaching to assist EALD students with

their English language skills. This brings into focus the need for clear, effective classroom communication. Perso (2012) cautioned that such students have to code switch not only between languages, but also between cultures. They need extra scaffolding and support if they are to access the curriculum in the same manner as their non-Indigenous peers. To this end my instructions cannot be glossed over, but must be clear and succinct. Further, the purposefulness of checking for understanding, as Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) stipulated, cannot be underestimated. I have to make the learning more accessible by using explicit, clear modelling and the think-aloud process (Archer & Hughes, 2011). It is imperative that the independent activity is pitched at the right level, so all my learners can achieve in our all-inclusive classroom. Also, I realise I cannot undervalue the usefulness of repeated access to information in assisting my learners in retaining vital information (Hammond et al., 2015; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b). My students want to achieve and I am willing to adjust my teaching to ensure that this occurs. As McNiff and Whitehead (2005) pointed out, AR involves improving a situation and it is exactly this that I am striving for in my teaching. With reflection, I am beginning to see that EI and CRP may not necessarily lie in direct opposition, as I initially perceived. It is likely that they may inform each other, but I remain unconvinced about EI as the dominant imperative.

Pine (2009) spoke of students themselves being involved in AR and as this study is primarily concerned with my students' needs, it was essential that I spoke to my students directly, through open dialogue. Having identified and reflected upon some elements of my EI teaching that I do not execute well, in the next phase I progress the research by conferring with my students to determine what they expect from my teaching in the year ahead. What was of concern to them? Most importantly, I wanted

to discuss my teaching with my students because they had lived the experience and thus, their viewpoint became our daily reality.

4.5 Student Input Through Dialogue – Introduction

I started the first dialogue by asking my students questions such as ‘What do you want from me in the year ahead? What can I do to assist you? What adjustments do you need me to make? What are your concerns?’ This initial dialogue session generated animated discussion. Analysing students’ responses using Lichtman’s (2013) 3Cs analysis (See Appendix P), it immediately became apparent that two distinct concerns had emerged. I categorised the responses into general classroom practices (Code CP) and general teaching practices (Code TP). As this study’s focus is predominantly to bring into question the EI model, it seemed justified to focus on the teaching responses. To this end, I engaged in further conversation with my students to discuss the concerns which were directly related to my explicit teaching. Cooperatively, we identified the five aspects which were of most concern. These were written as ‘I will’ statements. The purposeful use of the words ‘I will’ reinforced the commitment to my learners that I held about their learning. The five concerns all related to their English learning, as my EALD students felt that this was the area of the subject area that they required the greatest assistance with.

4.5.1 Results – my students’ needs

1. I will help you learn by adjusting the EI model to meet your English needs (KE1).
2. I will recognise that you are EALD learners by assisting you with learning oral, not just written English skills (KE2).
3. I will help you with English assessment (KE3).

4. I will consider our class dynamics in English (KE4).
5. I will help you feel successful at school, particularly in English (KE5).

4.5.2 Analysis – consideration of students' needs

It was clear from this discussion that the EI model, as I am currently executing it, is not meeting my students' needs. Although the model may be valuable in theory, I feel, given the unique context of learning, that it needs to be guided by a broader set of principles. My students want to learn and it is imperative that I adjust my teaching, a comment which Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) deemed as vital to the success of students (KE1), particularly students whose first language is not English (Hammond et al., 2015).

I question why my students wish to focus more on their oral English skills (KE2). Through further discussion my students inform me that they are concerned because English is not their first language and they are soon due to begin high school. I am reminded of Nakata (2011) and Osborne (2001) who both spoke of preparing such students for mainstream society. I re-read some of the requirements of the English curriculum and am met by the pervasive reminder that little is done to assist students with their oral skills, and yet the necessity of linking oral and written demands has been clearly outlined in the literature (Hammond et al., 2015). This gap in the curriculum provokes a response in me. What can I adjust in my execution of the EI model to facilitate the process, as measures of a responsive teacher (Gay, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011)?

I am not surprised that my Islander students want more assistance with English assessment (KE3) given the focus there is on results and data, emphasised by Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) as central elements of EI. Similar to Gay (2010), I

disagree with the huge focus on academic results, which I feel severely detracts from other, more valuable aspects of teaching and learning. This is a major source of tension, I feel, because the teaching mandate is to assess regularly. Schools, I perceive, have fallen under the misguided spell of carrying out, rather than drawing into question the educational decisions enforced by policy makers. I am troubled. What exactly can I adjust within the EI model to facilitate this process? Should assessment be negotiated, or perhaps as Barnes (2000), Bishop and Glynn (1999) all advised, should various modes of assessment be made available to cater for my students' diverse needs? Certainly, EAL learners require additional scaffolding in successfully completing assessment tasks (Hammond et al., 2015).

I ponder my students' fourth concern and if this means they want to work more closely with their peers? For the most part students work individually as they respond to the fast pace of instruction and consolidations within the EI model, but maybe my students want me, in a variety of tangible ways, to more closely match school to home structures, a supposition commonly encouraged in the CRP literature (Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Osborne, 2001; Perso, 2012; Rahman, 2013). Do my students want to work cooperatively? If so, how will I do this to fit within the EI model which typically promotes individual learning?

In considering the last statement (KE5) I wonder what my students determine as their success. I reflect on Rahman's (2013) use of the term "bi-cultural" learners (p. 661). I view my Islander students as bi-cultural and I believe that they are entitled to feel success in both their home and school cultures. However, the school culture must be based on their own beliefs and values, in contrast to a pattern of conformity to the practice determined by the dominant culture (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop &

Glynn, 1999). Success in Western schooling is often measured by academic achievement, but perhaps my Islander learners define their success differently?

4.5.3 Transformation – moving forward

I am deeply troubled by this data and the implications it presents for me as a responsive practitioner. My inner unrest has been heightened by the fact that I have come to know the gravity and extent of my students' concerns. These appear to far exceed the concerns voiced in my personal journal and the comments received from my critical friend. In problematising my teaching, it is clear from this initial student dialogue that the EI model in its present form, and as I am executing it, is not meeting my learners' needs. I feel completely torn. On the one hand, I am reassured by the candour with which my students have responded. In our initial discussion, they were mature, and this reinforces to me how serious they are about their learning. On the other hand, however, I realise the daunting task that awaits me. With each phase of this first cycle the enormity of my situation intensifies. I consider the challenges of implementing responsive practices, especially given that I originate from a completely different background to that of my students, and the complexities that arise from the tensioned cultural interface in which I work.

While these responses have given me some pertinent information to progress the study, I need clarity about my students' precise needs. Having determined 'what' my students want from my teaching I now need to investigate 'how' to do this. I intend to follow the advice of Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010), to digress from the what of classrooms, to focus more on the how. For this purpose, I engage in our first YC session.

4.6 Student Input Through Yarning Circle One – Introduction

The identified student concerns were categorised into the five broad themes: EI adjustment, oral versus written opportunities; assessment, class dynamics and success. In order to enact my action plan, my next step in the analysis stage was to determine what action I needed to take. To do this, using Lichtman's (2013) 3Cs analysis, I explored each identified concern by asking the students how specifically I could assist them. From the responses, certain concepts arose that were used to guide the research in the subsequent cycles.

4.6.1 Results

1. How can I help you learn, particularly in English?
2. How can I assist you with oral and written English needs?
3. How can I help you with English assessment?
4. How can I help you with our class dynamics in English?
5. How can I make you feel successful in your English learning?

The following themes were identified in their responses:

1. We learn by clear teaching. We learn by watching and listening. We want you to break down the learning more. (Concept: a more flexible approach to the EI model is needed).
2. We want you to recognise we are EALD learners by breaking down the learning more and using different words. We want to do more speaking activities. (Concept: I must forego, change the curriculum to include opportunities for oral practice).

3. We want to be assessed in English in different ways and we want more teacher support with this (Concept: I need to scaffold, adjust the assessment task, deviating from the EI model of students working independently).
4. We want to work with our peers in English (Concept: I must consider deviating from the EI approach of working individually to incorporate group work).
5. We want to feel successful at school by embracing our TSI culture in our English learning (Concept: I must allow my students to determine their own success in learning which may look different to the success determined by EI practices).

4.6.2 Analysis – further consideration of the five key elements

This YC has provided me with clarity about the means - that is, how I could begin to address these goals in the next cycle. The fact that students learn by watching and listening is encouraging, because this is precisely what is expected of them in the 'I DO' part of the EI model (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009). Despite the fact that EI breaks the learning down, my students want me to do more of this. This prompts me to consider the pace of instruction, as Osborne (2001) urged. They want clear teaching, but how do they define this? Do my learners define clear teaching the EI way, or perhaps clear teaching encompasses a more fluid, holistic approach to learning?

To date, our English units have focused solely on writing skills, and yet my students want to focus on their oral skills too. Does this follow the oral manner in which Indigenous peoples traditionally operate, as others have suggested (Barnes, 2000; Nakata, 1995; Perso, 2012)? If so, how will I adjust the EI model, which focuses mainly on the written mode, to provide more oral opportunities, and what place does this skill

have in our new English curriculum? My students want me to use a variety of lexis. This implies to me that they are eager to expand their range of vocabulary, and this is an attribute of effective teaching that Hammond et al. (2015) emphasised. How will I do this and how will I ensure that my student can use the vocabulary taught in their every-day English? To what extent will the impending Big Write program (Andrell Education, 2017) provide opportunities to improve lexis?

The response to the third statement causes me great unrest. One of the non-negotiable aspects of my teaching is the assessment task. In fact, teachers are faced with the challenge of prioritising assessment tasks. Personally, I have the unrelenting sense of teaching to the test. This bothers me immensely because I see teaching and my role as an educator as more in-depth. I reflect on my personal teaching philosophy that learning should be relevant, meaningful and engaging. I deeply resent the fact that my students are subjected to such frequent assessment. I am doubtful about its purpose. Will it be possible to assess their English skills in diverse ways, not just in written format, as advocated by many in the CRP literature (Barnes, 2000; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010) and also by supporters of a Multiliteracies approach (Hepple et al., 2014; O'Rourke, 2005; Unsworth, 2006)?

The students want me to consider our class dynamics (KE4), and this prompts me to reflect on how students presently learn. Opportunities to interact and discuss with peers using an EI approach in the classroom are limited, and yet it is precisely this that my students want. I reflect upon Osborne's (2001) advice, suggesting that teachers should consider their class dynamics more carefully and more closely replicate the structures used at home in their classrooms. When this does not occur, Lewthwaite et al. (2013) cautioned that the disconnection between home and school deepens. Rahman (2013) warned of the perils of students who are forced to neglect their home culture in

assuming the habits of the mainstream culture. I need to reconsider how I can organise our class dynamics to fit within the EI model. More importantly, I need to reflect the values of my Islander students' home lives, as valued by many (Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Perso, 2012; Queensland Government, 2000).

Contrary to the perception that success must be defined by academic achievement, my students informed me that success, in their view, lies in the importance of their TSI culture (KE5) which, I grieve to admit, is often displaced in our daily teaching schedule. Neither the prescribed nature of the EI model nor the pre-determined English curriculum embrace my students' identities. As a teacher on a journey of embedding responsive practices, this is of grave concern. I am reminded that CRP advocates have argued that learning begins with students' identities (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Perso, 2012; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). How can I, as a flexible, critical practitioner, embrace my students' culture – that is ultimately who they are and what they seek? What am I able to adjust and to what extent will I be effective in ensuring the very success my students desire?

4.6.3 Transformation – progression

My teaching has now been problematised through four sources of data and associated practices: through critical reflection of my teaching; through engaging in conversation with my first critical friend and observing her teaching; through two observations of my teaching by my second critical friend; and through student dialogue. Particularly, the student responses have been instrumental in providing me with a clearer vision about what my students want from my teaching and the orthodoxy of the EI imperative in the TS context. Clearly my students are dissatisfied with both

my teaching and the current focus of their education. I have to be more flexible in how I interpret and enact the EI approach and in my role as an educator. Through this inquiry phase, I have arrived at a point at which I possess sufficient information to guide the study and devise a plan of subsequent action.

If I am to be responsive I must prioritise my students' needs. I am living in the TS as an experienced teacher because I want to make a difference in my students' lives by affording them strong quality teaching. I believe that is their fundamental right, as Nakata (2011) too demanded. I want my students to be successful in their lives, but I am unwilling to impose my idea of success upon them. Rather, it means talking to them, ascertaining their needs and providing them with the knowledge so they may be in a position to determine their own success, as asserted by some (Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). I refuse to 'dumb down' the curriculum and their schooling, but instead I want, through adaptation of the EI model and my teaching, to make the learning more meaningful. My duty as a committed practitioner, however, is so much more than simply teaching the curriculum. On a personal level, I want to provide my students with effective teaching which can assist in preserving their rich cultural backgrounds, an imperative asserted by scholars advocating for responsive practices (Berryman & Bishop, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Osborne, 2001). However, I also want to provide them with the necessary life skills, again a priority of many experts (Kuhn, 2007; Nakata, 2011; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). The question which remains is this: how exactly can I adapt the EI model to induce more culturally responsive practices so that my students' needs are more closely met?

4.7 Journal Entry Three, Introduction

In closing cycle one, I reflect on the findings by documenting my thoughts in my journal. In particular, this entry identified my students' main concerns within the EI model as being worthy of further investigation. In addition, I consider the tensions which are impeding me from working in a manner which I feel respects and nurtures my Islander students' needs. What did I do in this cycle? What did I discover and how do I proceed from this point? With these thoughts I devise a plan of action to determine which elements of the five concerns my students need me to respond to. It is precisely this plan of action which guides the study in cycle two.

4.7.1 Reflection – responsiveness in a tensioned zone

From the first journal entry, it was clear that there was a sense of unease in my TS classroom. As I end this cycle, it is apparent that this unease has intensified. In considering how to teach explicitly and responsively, it is evident that certain tensions need to be addressed. Specifically, I feel that the sequential, prescribed EI model, which has a significant focus on content and assessment, completely ignores my students' context and imperatives for learning. In this context, I am faced with students who possess diverse languages, different ways of knowing and doing, as Perso (2012) acknowledged. How I perceive this space is of central importance to this study, for in acting responsively I need to view the context as a vehicle to promote learning. Added to this tension is the fact that for decades the Islanders have been marginalised and ignored, as Nakata recounted in retelling his own story (1997, 2001). Despite attempts to have their voices heard, I feel that little progress in the Australian educational system has been made. Many decisions are still being made on behalf of the Islanders as the political agenda of data driven results heavily dominates the Australian landscape (Mills

& McGregor, 2014; Rahman, 2013). This contrasts starkly to my own personal agenda of primarily valuing my students as individuals with specific needs.

There are many issues I wish to tackle but sadly, like Osborne (2001), I feel that I am working in isolation. I simply cannot change or deal with every single aspect of my EI teaching that causes me frustration. I have to make choices. Lewthwaite et al. (2014b) spoke of a “pedagogy of consequence” (p. 3) that calls for action from teachers that contribute to not only improve learning, but also to an improved social standing for Indigenous students. I believe this consequence must commence with my learners, because in being responsive, relationships are a teacher’s tool to empower success. With this in mind, I list the five KEs identified and I consider how I will begin to navigate them (See Appendix Q).

4.7.2 Analysis – two models, numerous tensions

In challenging the prevailing view that my Islander students must be taught explicitly, tensions have arisen. I realise that I cannot address every single tension. I have to commence at the micro-level in my classroom. What can I do to navigate this tensioned zone between the systematic, sequential EI model and the more flexible, holistic, grounded CRP orientation?

By necessity I have to be more flexible in how I approach my EI teaching. This involves assisting my students in their learning so that their voices are not silenced (KE1). What is more, my students want to improve their oral, as well as their written English capabilities. Regardless of the curriculum content, I have to modify the curriculum to allow opportunities for oral interaction (KE2). I am extremely dissatisfied with the fact that English assessment within the EI model is usually of the pen and paper variety (KE3), and my challenge is therefore to vary assessment for my learners

who want to be assessed in a variety of ways. Further, I have to support them in this endeavour by scaffolding the learning. I have to consider how I can incorporate pair or group work, reflecting the dynamics of community life into our classroom, so that my students can work with each other in English, as they have clearly requested (KE4). Finally, I have to investigate ways and opportunities to embed my students' culture into learning, because this is how they determine their own success (KE5). This is non-negotiable, because I view their context as the foundation of our learning. From the responses, it appears my students think so too.

Having identified my students' concerns, I now have an action plan to move the research to the next phase of this AR study. Specifically, as a responsive practitioner, I need to determine how the five broad goals (concerns), can be narrowed down and translated into specific elements of my teaching practice, which I can adjust.

Despite making some initial progress in this first cycle, the tensions I face are very clear. I am battling with my own sense of inner unrest. Despite the mandate to teach responsively (DET, 2011; Queensland Government, 2000), I am grappling with the complexity of a CRP approach. When I attempt to engage in collegial conversation I am met, predominantly, with blank stares. What do responsive practices entail? At the surface level my classroom certainly has the appearance of a responsive environment, but this, I am realising, is just the initial step in an entire process of responsiveness. Similarly to others (Nygreen, 2011; Shoffner & Brown, 2011), I am struggling to comprehend how to be responsive, and I feel this is both thwarting my progress and heightening my frustrations. At a school level, I have the sense that teachers can be responsive, as long as the mandate of teaching explicitly and attaining robust student outcomes take precedence.

A further tension, and one that I feel is decided upon by policy makers at the macro-level, is the biased curriculum, in which my Islander students are barely represented. This pervading disregard for my students' identities bothers me deeply, because I believe that as Australia's First Peoples, they need to be heard, respected and valued, as is duly expected of teachers working for the Department (DET, 2011). I question who are the authorities making such decisions, neglecting the needs of my learners? Despite these feelings of growing unease, I refuse, in being responsive, to passively accept what it is teachers are expected to teach. My students possess rich, unique identities and I have chosen to be their advocate, because clearly their own voices are being silenced.

In fighting for the representation of my learners, a further tension, again at the macro-level, has surfaced. As each year passes in my teaching career, I believe I am losing my own teacher identity as decisions are being made on my behalf. This angers me because I feel that my teacher role has been reduced to one of conformity, in which I have to follow directives without question. What does this mean, however, for my own teacher values based on providing my students with a voice?

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter was the initial data analysis and results chapter. In this "reconnaissance of goals and means" cycle (Lewin, 1947, p. 149) the first journal entry documented my thoughts and initial frustrations relating to the mandate of teaching explicitly, yet responsively. I then engaged in collegial conversation with my colleague prior to watching her teach. By engaging in this conversation, I learned two significant points related to my teaching. First, I learned that other teachers hold similar concerns

about the inflexibility of the EI model. Second, and more significantly, I learned, when viewed from a more flexible viewpoint, that adjustment of the EI model is possible.

I then sought external input from my second critical friend, my HOC, through two teacher observations. These observations clearly demonstrated that, despite my own perceptions of my EI teaching, change needed to be initiated if I was to teach from a more responsive standpoint. Extrapolating from my HOC's feedback, I advanced the study by engaging in conversation with the learners themselves. These initial conversations revealed the five KEs of my EI practice within English that were of most concern to my students.

Despite the progress made in this first cycle, it was apparent that there were impediments to my adjusted practice, but these identified tensions may actually provide the impetus for change to my daily teaching. In aiming to navigate the tensioned zone between teaching explicitly and responsively, it became clear that I have been failing to fully comprehend what is meant by responsive practices. Further, I was troubled by the prescribed curriculum, with its unrealistic focus at the expense of my students' cultural identities. I was also struggling to uphold my own sense of what is central to my professional identity, working with my students to foster the attainment that they see as necessary in their lives.

In cycle two, I began a preliminary exploration into the tensioned space between EI and CRP in the discipline of English. Specifically, I determined my students' precise needs, using the data collection tools of my reflective journal entries, student dialogue sessions, YCs and student work samples. That is, this cycle explored the elements of my practice that required adjustment in teaching explicitly, as mandated by Education Queensland and the College. Further adjustment is also required to teach to my students

responsively as is required (DET, 2011), but also, and more poignantly, how I clearly desire to teach.

Chapter 5: Data Results and Analysis: Cycle 2

5.1 Introduction

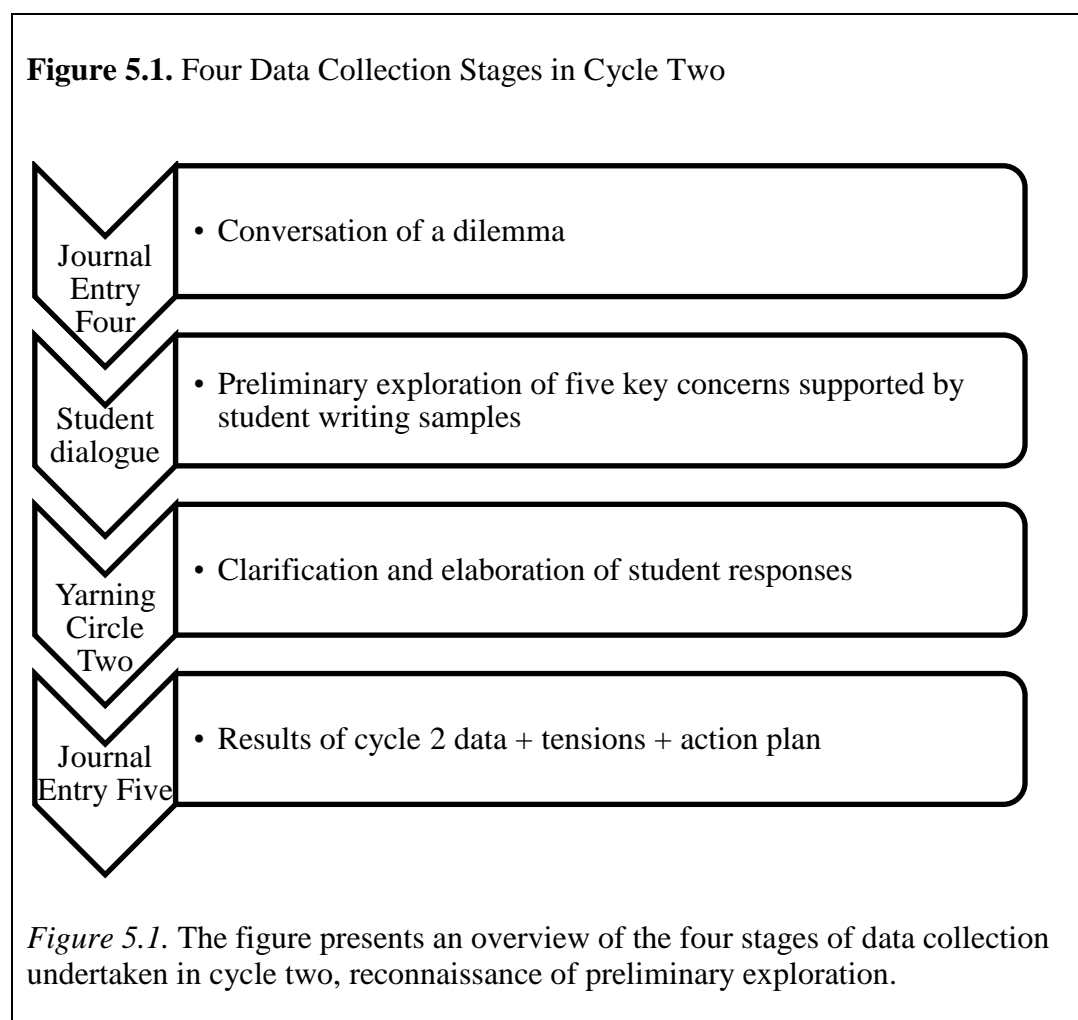
In the previous chapter the first research cycle was presented. This cycle introduced the research, outlining the intense, problematic nature of teaching in the TS. My teaching came under scrutiny through a variety of processes identified in the literature including critical self-reflection (Berry, 2007; Sellars, 2014), observations of my teaching by a critical friend (McNiff & Whitehead, 2005) and student dialogue (Berry, 2007). By the closure of this cycle five KEs within English had been identified, primarily from my students' input, as being of most concern to them. From these a plan of action was devised.

Having identified the five broad goals to address, the second cycle was an exploration of each goal. Through critical self-reflection, and more significantly by engaging in dialogue with my learners, I explored each concern to determine the aspects of my EI practice which, from my students' perspectives, demanded adjustment. Whereas cycle one provided me with a general action plan, cycle two enabled me to narrow the foci of the study and thus commence consideration of how I could modify my teaching, as is commonly endorsed (Hammond et al., 2015; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Smith, 2001).

5.1.1 Organisation of cycle 2

This cycle comprised four data collection and analysis components. I began the second cycle by engaging in conversation with one of my students. This conversation encapsulated the tension that practitioners in the TS face as they teach EALD learners who strive daily to navigate the requirements of English language skills and literacy practices in general in mainstream classrooms. This was documented in journal entry

four. The second data source comprised numerous student dialogue sessions, which were held with the purpose of establishing how precisely my students' five identified concerns needed adjustment. This was supported by student work samples which displayed the difficulties EALD students encounter in writing English (KE2). I then engaged in a YC with my learners to seek clarification of the responses yielded in this cycle's dialogue sessions. I concluded the chapter with journal entry five, reflecting upon the results generated in the second cycle, considering the tensions which surfaced. I illustrate my steps in Figure 5.1.



5.2 Journal Entry Four, Introduction

Journal entry four captured a brief discussion with a student at the end of a routine class day, early into this second phase of the AR cycle. Through this

conversation, I was reminded of the necessity of considering my students as EALD learners, as Hammond et al. (2015) and Nakata (1994, 2011) exhorted. The situation in which I work differs considerably from a mainstream classroom, and I can ill-afford to approach my teaching thinking that the way I taught down south will be successful in my current context. As such, my teaching demands adjustment.

5.2.1 Reflection – making it meaningful

This is the conversation:

Student: “Ms, You been look my ruler?”

Teacher “I been look your ruler?”

Student “Yes Ms, You been look my ruler?”

Teacher “I have seen your ruler”.

Student “Yes, Ms. You know. You been look my ruler?”

Teacher “Ah, you mean have I seen your ruler?”

Student “Yes Ms. You been seen, you been look my ruler?”

Teacher “No, sorry. I have not seen your ruler. What colour is it?”

Student “Same colour Ms”

Teacher “Same colour?” (confused teacher)

Student “Wa (yes). Ms same colour”.

Teacher “Same colour as what?”

At this point the conversation halts. We both laugh and I teach the student the term ‘double-dutch’.

This dialogue is typical of many conversations I have with my students and reflects the complexity of the situation in which I operate. My students are clearly EALD learners, and yet disturbingly the English curriculum content and focus does not

necessarily match my students' needs. As part of the ACARA (2016) guidelines, within the English curriculum, teachers, across Australia, are expected to teach their students the competencies outlined at each year level. As part of this process schools, individually, determine the actual delivery and content of the English program. Early in my first year on the island, the College replaced the newly initiated C2C English program in favour of Language for Learning program, supported by a writing program, Big Write (Andrell Education, 2017). These documents make up a substantial part of the English program that teachers in the TS are directed to implement. Despite the fact that the newly introduced writing component of the English unit is supposedly designed specifically for EALD Indigenous learners, I have discovered that the actual content is often disconnected from my students' lives. This creates an unnecessary tension for both educators and students. In turn this isolates and excludes many students who, in trying to comprehend the content, struggle also with the language demands, an issue Hammond et al. (2015) urged practitioners to monitor carefully. I am realising, increasingly, that teachers must make a conscientious effort to seek resolution of such dilemmas. However, given the volume of the units, the plethora of language skills teachers are expected to teach and the emphasis on strong student outcomes, this is no easy feat. I wonder who is going to support the teachers in the arduous task of teaching EALD skills in addition to a curriculum, which is, I believe, already overloaded. I support Nakata's (2011) view that English ought to be regarded as an additional language, so that students can master English language skills prior to attempting to navigate the English curriculum and mainstream curriculum in general.

5.2.2 Analysis - EALD needs

This conversation highlights the often-overlooked fact that students in the TS operate in another language, necessitating what Perso (2012) referred to as code

switching. Teachers in the region face several challenges. They face the pressure of covering the content and skills as mandated. In addition, teachers are pushed, often unrealistically, to prepare students with the necessary language skills so that they can access the mainstream curriculum and perform at the same academic level as their native English speaking peers. However, I maintain that it is neither justifiable, nor realistic to expect Islander students to be as skilled as their western peers in English. Indeed, Hammond et al. (2015) referred to international evidence which suggests that non-English speaking students take, on average, five to seven years to reach academic English proficiency in a mainstream, English speaking classroom. My experience would suggest that this is sometimes an even lengthier process.

By engaging in conversation and taking time to critically reflect I have been reminded of the many challenges my students face. It has been strongly suggested that students who do not possess English as their mother-tongue require intensive support in this regard (Nakata, 1994, 2011; Queensland Government, 2000). How can I adapt my teaching and my interpretation of the EI model so that I may more adequately meet my students' linguistic needs? In listening to my students' voices responsively, it is imperative that I do not simply proceed, delivering the prescribed curriculum at face value and in the EI manner mandated, despite the demands placed on me as a teacher to do so. There must be an allowable alternative, for if I teach in an uncritical manner I only perpetuate the current system, and culturally responsive teachers, first and foremost, as is widely referenced, are willing, wanting and insisting that the present educational system be challenged (Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Pearson, 2011).

In facilitating the learning of English skills I have to make the content accessible by breaking down the learning and linking it to what students already know (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hammond et al., 2015; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009). As a responsive

teacher I need to consider my students' prior knowledge and learning and utilise this to facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge. Not only do I need to know 'what' to teach, but also 'how' to teach it, as Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) recommended. As well as adhering to the principles of teaching explicitly, as Archer and Hughes (2011) maintained, teachers are expected to maintain a brisk pace, proceeding in a sequential manner. Rather than adhering rigidly to this principle, I now realise I have to let the students' needs guide me, as Rychly and Graves (2012) and my critical friend advised. This would inevitably mean slowing down the delivery of my instruction, in order to enable my students to operate as EALD learners. It would also mean alternating between the parts of the EI model to further scaffold the learning, as my critical friend demonstrated.

I consider my next step. I refuse to teach without critical reflection because in doing so, I become another perpetuator of the educational system – one that shamefully groups students through the EI model, as a whole, with the same needs, rather than as individuals with specific requirements. The MCEETYA report (2000) and Perso (2012) outlined that Indigenous peoples' sense of self and community is of primary importance to their sense of well-being. I view both these aspects as being mutually exclusive and teachers, faced with such learners can ill-afford to teach either in isolation. DET (2011) and Nakata (2011) emphatically stipulated that teachers of Indigenous students need to make a conscientious effort to embed Indigenous perspectives meaningfully, despite the fact that this can be challenging for non-Indigenous teachers to achieve.

Engaging in critical reflection and documenting my findings in my journal entries is propelling me to question my own teacher assumptions, as Berry (2007) also experienced. Through the results yielded, with each step in this AR study I have come to comprehend my practice more deeply and this enables me to progress the research.

The results which have emerged from the data in this cycle have clearly indicated the problematic nature of the EI model, if implemented unchallenged and without due thought or consideration. I now engage in conversation with my students.

5.3 Key Element One, Introduction

Cycle one revealed that my learners needed me to adjust the EI model to facilitate the learning process for them (KE1). In this second cycle, I began a preliminary exploration into their first concern, by examining the EI model from my students' perspectives, asking questions regarding each EI component. In addition, I questioned my students about feedback, because they had previously revealed its importance as an effective teaching tool to facilitate their learning. The results presented in Table 5.1 were used to guide me in my decision making and to align my teaching with my learners' needs in the next cycle.

5.3.1 Results

Table 5.1

Explicit Instruction Model Responses

I Do	Responses	We Do	Responses	You Do	Responses
Write down one thing that I do to help you learn.		Write down one thing we do that helps you learn.		Write down one thing that you do that helps you learn.	
Teach step by step.	50%	We do examples together.	75%	I can practise by myself.	50%
Explain things slowly.	35%	We can ask questions.	25%	I can see my own mistakes.	30%
Give Examples.	15%			I can ask questions.	20%
Write down one thing I could improve upon to help you learn more.		Write down one thing I could do to help you learn more.		Write down one thing I could do better to help you learn more.	
Break it down more.	50%	Do more examples.	50%	Give more time.	60%
Give more examples.	35%	Explain more slowly.	35%	Give more extension activities.	30%
Use easier words.	15%	Ask more questions.	15%	Give easier tasks.	10%

Due to the fact that the plough back component of the EI model is very short, I simply asked the students its purpose. Responses included: giving more examples; to memorise work; so that Ms D can ask questions; to remind us; to learn; to know what we have learnt; to get ready for high school; to gain more understanding; so Ms D knows we have listened. This data clearly indicated the inconsistent manner in which I had used the plough back to close the lesson.

As part of my adjusted practice, students urged me to consider the manner in which I provided feedback. In Table 5.2. I present the significant findings that required adjustment in my delivery of feedback.

Table 5.2
Feedback Results

Statement: Ms D	Yes	No	Unsure
3. Talks about the learning as she monitors	40%		60%
9. Uses rubrics for assessment		80%	20%
10. Gives feedback on assessment	65%	15%	20%
12. Circles your errors	80%	10%	10%
13. Uses a tick/cross to mark your work	70%	20%	10%
14. Corrects incorrect answers	65%	15%	20%
15.Provides extra examples on your work	55%	10%	35%

5.3.2 Analysis – consideration of alternatives

This was the second data source in this cycle. From these initial responses, several important trends, which further supported the teacher observations in cycle one, become evident. Although I execute parts of the EI model effectively, as a responsive practitioner, I cannot dismiss the fact that further adjustment is needed (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010). My students want me to break down the I DO part of the EI model

further. Scaffolding the instruction is regarded by many scholars (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hammond et al., 2015; Lindsay, 2014; Rosenshine, 1987) as something effective teachers do frequently and well. This prompts me to consider that the students need further clarification and explanation of new ideas and concepts. Over a quarter want more examples and a few want me to use easier words. Perhaps, this means that I sometimes forget to adapt my speech and pace of instruction to meet their linguistic needs? In the WE DO section over half the students want more examples and think I should explain concepts more slowly. Rather than comply with the brisk delivery of instruction that Archer and Hughes (2011) advocated, perhaps, as Osborne (2001) consistently urged, I should work at a slower pace, using a variety of examples to help my students learn. Some students want me to increase my teacher questioning, which Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) frequently acknowledged as being an effective technique to check for understanding. It was evident in the YOU DO part that my learners need more time to complete the independent activity. This would enable them to work at an unhurried pace, having more chance of completing the tasks, increasing their chances of success. This is important because effective teachers, as Bright (2012) illustrated, set their students up to succeed. It is imperative that I carefully select the independent task and, given the responses, I need to provide more extension activities to challenge my more capable learners. The sheer diversity of the plough back results suggested that students do not comprehend this strategy and strongly implies that I do not use this extensively, nor effectively. Clearly, these responses indicate that students do appreciate some of the principles adhered for in the EI model and demand that I use these more frequently.

It was evident from the feedback responses that not only do my students want feedback, but that they also value its importance. Indeed, it is widely acknowledged in

the literature that feedback is an effective teaching tool used to advance students in their learning (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hattie, 2012; Strandberg & Lindberg, 2012).

However, it was readily identifiable from these results that there are four major flaws in how I deliver feedback: I do not explicitly discuss students' learning as I monitor; I do not use rubrics; I do not provide assessment feedback; and there was inconsistency in my provision of written feedback. In this light, I clearly need to modify my execution of this process.

5.3.3 Transformation – the power of dialogue

In this dialogue, I sought to openly and respectfully interact with my students to determine how they perceived my teaching. That is, as Rychly and Graves (2012) proposed, to view the learning through my students' eyes. What do my students hear and see when I stand before them, guiding them in mastering the English language? Hunt (2010) spoke of teachers noticing their practice. I have chosen to notice mine through my students' voices, and yet this transparency, now my reality, has shocked me, because visibly my perception of my teaching does not align with my learners' views.

My judgement regarding my EI execution, as evidenced by my students' responses, has been severely misguided. In many instances, I have interpreted the model literally, rather than from a more critical, yet flexible standpoint. Despite the fact that the data yielded strongly suggests I need to completely modify my approach, readdress and reconsider the value of feedback and its purpose, I have experienced some success. The honesty of my students' answers reinforce that they want to learn and improve their learning. Given the candour of their responses, it could also be inferred that they feel comfortable and safe engaging in such intimate conversation with me. This realisation pushes me to reflect upon my HOC's advice in cycle one – to focus on building positive

relationships. Such relationships, as widely voiced in the CRP literature (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Perso, 2012), are paramount on my journey to attaining responsiveness.

5.4 Key Element Two, Introduction

My students' second identified concern, revealed in cycle one, was that they wanted to be treated as EALD learners (KE2). They required extensive support in writing English, but the need to be able to communicate orally in English was more important to them. Clearly this need demonstrates that students recognise that English is not their mother-tongue and the inherent tensions this creates. Given that the focus of the English curriculum endorsed throughout the region, is predominantly on writing, I wonder how I may resolve this tension. I decide to speak to my more experienced colleague to see if she can guide me. My first critical friend believes I need to respond agentically – by engaging in conversation with my learners to determine how they feel about writing and the impact Creole has on their learning. She also advises me to analyse some recent writing samples to determine the gaps in my students' knowledge.

5.4.1 Results

I begin my analysis by examining three writing samples (See Appendix R), one of which is discussed herewith. The task was a short recount of their holiday and the students were given a one hour timeframe to complete the piece of work.

Plate 5.1. Sample C

On my holiday I went to I.T. With my other family. It was so fun. At I.T. I played with my brother and sister. It was so fun to play with them. My mum said to me go and swim now then I went in to swim then where all ate at the afternoon then I take my little brother and sister to sleep. look

The following went (sp)
 Next Saturday we all go to Firday Island to camp. It was so fun. At the night then we all went to bed. then in the morning we all get up then go to swim. then we went to fishing at the beach. We all cook the fish.

(C)

oo
o

some tense

paragraph

oo
o
^

punctuation

tense

spelling

repetition

5.4.2 Analysis - student writing

Student C has used paragraphs correctly but the past simple is not used consistently throughout. There is no evidence of connectives or openers to support the writing. There is contextualised language such as 'other family' (adopted family), 'brother and sister' (to mean cousin or friend) and a 'swim' (shower) that could cause confusion for the reader who is not familiar with island ways or some Creole. Punctuation and spelling errors are common. Prepositions (at the afternoon as opposed to 'in') are common and the writing reads like a list.

In addition to analysing my students' strengths and weaknesses in writing, I sought to learn how they viewed their writing capabilities and the impact of speaking EALD. The results are displayed in Table 5.3.

5.4.3 Results

Table 5.3
Students' Perceptions of their Writing and Speaking

Statement	Yes (%)	No (%)
1. I find writing confusing.	90% yes	10% no
2. Writing lessons are boring.	60% yes	40% no
3. I understand different writing genres.	50% yes	50% no
4. Creole is my first language.	100% yes	0% no
5. English is my second/third language.	100% yes	0% no
6. I speak Creole at home sometimes/a lot/always.	100% yes	0% no
7. I speak Creole in class a lot/a little.	100% yes	0% no
8. I often get mixed up between English and Creole.	50% yes	50% no

5.4.4 Analysis – writing and speaking needs

Visibly evident from the data, is not only that students find writing and the structure of it extremely challenging, but many are not enjoying writing lessons. Student

enjoyment and engagement with the curriculum content is believed to be a vital component of student success (Barnes, 2000; Wisehart, 2004). I wonder how the students, after so many years of schooling, can still find writing so difficult. From this evidence, I infer that their first language is influencing and subsequently impeding the growth of students' ability to write with ease in English.

This evidence is further substantiated by the responses pertaining to students' use of Creole. It is clear, despite the lack of acknowledgement of students' language needs in the curriculum and the recognition of Creole (Queensland Government, 2000), that students do not speak English as their mother-tongue. What are the implications of these results at the classroom level, for my teaching and my students' learning? Clearly if I am to be responsive, I cannot dismiss students' linguistic demands? I consider the school's concealed agenda which Moss (2001) and Rahman (2013) both spoke of as being detrimental to students' learning. The hidden agenda across the region is the lack of acknowledgement of Creole. This has to be acknowledged as being problematic and the curriculum must be adjusted in accordance with this need. As Aoki (2012) exhorted, I may have to make decisions regarding what ought to be taught and what I actually choose to teach.

5.4.5 Transformation – allowable alternatives

This data pushes me to reconsider the English curriculum, particularly the College's focus on writing. As indicated by the responses, there needs to be a more open acceptance and recognition of the students' first language, Creole and how this is clearly impacting on their linguistic performance in the classroom. The tension has become clearer. From these results, I now need to consider how I can reconcile the English curriculum with its literacy skills and support my students to access the general curriculum.

Again, I consider Nakata's (2011) words, in recognising TSI as needing support in this regard. Despite the modified English units, there is evidently a high demand for English to be considered as an additional language. I wonder why this need has never been fully met. Who has decided to ignore this demand? Further, why is it not made clear to teachers venturing to the TS that students, because of their language needs, face more challenges accessing the curriculum? This becomes immensely challenging for teachers. Osborne (2001) over 15 years ago, condemned the negative perception of Creole and while the present situation is less grave, there is still an unspoken lack of acceptance that students speak Creole.

I realise that for my students to progress their English skills, I will need to teach English from the perspective of an additional language. This means I will also need to modify the curriculum to create opportunities for oral interaction, a fact commonly recognised as a useful learning tool for EAL students (Hammond et al., 2015). Further, I will need to carefully consider how I will deliver the impending Big Write program to facilitate their command of written English, rather than delivering it unquestionably.

5.5 Key Element Three – Introduction

My students' third concern (KE3) was their need for support in completing English assessment. To this end, I engage in a dialogue to determine more precisely which aspects of our assessment process my students need me to change. The results are presented in Table 5.4.

5.5.1 Results

Table 5.4
Assessment

1) In class, we assess	Too much	Just right	Not enough
	50%	50%	
2) My assessment marks are	Important to my learning	Not important to my learning	
	100%		
3) When I take an assessment, I feel:	Nervous	Confident	It depends
	15%	15%	70%
4) When we do a literacy assessment in class I think I should	Work alone	Work with a peer	
	50%	50%	
5) Before I take an assessment I understand what I have to do	Always	Sometimes	Never
	10%	90%	
6) Taking assessments helps to improve my learning	Agree	Disagree	
	100%		

7) It is important to get my assessment mark back and understand my mistakes	Agree 100%	Disagree	
8) How can Ms D improve assessment	More time	More teacher support	
9) Please circle 1 response in each column about how you would prefer to be assessed:	Traditional assessment Reading Quiz Cloze passage Writing Multiple choice Gap-fill Correct mistakes	Creative assessment Poster, letter, postcard PowerPoint, Word Movie maker, photography Demonstration Performance Build something	Other Student portfolio Oral presentation Teacher interview Group project Problem-solving

5.5.2 Analysis – assessment

Admittedly I feel the unrelenting focus on data as impacting negatively on my teaching. Similar to Wisehart's comments (2004), I have the sense of teaching to the test and this focus detracts from other, more valuable, aspects of learning. In exploring my students' third concern, I wanted to know if they shared the same view as myself. It is obvious from the responses that many students feel that we assess too frequently (Q1). Is this data drive, as Sleeter (2012) claimed, stemming from neo-liberal moves to meet the workforce demands? Despite this, as is widely acknowledged (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hattie, 2012; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009), students do recognise the value in assessment and its subsequent feedback (Q2, Q6, Q7). However, students' attitudes to assessment are not always positive (Q3). When I ask my students, they inform me that they tend to feel more relaxed when completing more informal, creative assessments such as those in science. I ponder how I can resolve this tension for them in English, at least at the micro-level.

Given that explicit teaching focuses on individual performance, the fact that half the class want to work with a peer is disconcerting (Q4). It appears from the data that there is a mismatch between how the school operates and how students prefer to learn. Values within schools that represent the dominant culture could, Queensland Government (2000) and Rahman (2013) cautioned, impact negatively on the needs of learners, particularly Indigenous learners. Indeed, there is strong recognition within schools of the necessity to embed Indigenous perspectives (DET, 2011; Nakata, 2011). Surely, I question, this also ought to include a preference for students' learning styles? In analysing the responses to question five, I was shocked that only ten percent of the class always know what to do in an assessment. Rather than ignore this vital piece of evidence, I stop, reflect and question my learners further. From this additional probing, I

learn that students find the actual language of English assessment difficult to understand. My immediate reaction is: how I can facilitate this process and ease their tension?

The final two responses are extremely pertinent to my inquiry. Clearly, I need to deviate from the EI expectation, which is working unsupported within a stipulated timeframe. I need to provide more of a nurturing, caring approach by offering more teacher scaffolding and time. As Hammond et al. (2015) urged, I need to break down assessment tasks in order to alleviate the stress students experience. The results to question nine demonstrate, as Barnes (2000), Bishop and Glynn (1999) advocated, that students should be assessed in a variety of ways. The pertinent question is how and to what extent, given the inflexibility of the prescriptive assessment style, will I be able to accommodate this need more responsively?

5.5.3 Transformation – doing things differently

The current focus in schools across the Far North is in improving student academic outcomes, and it seems, as Mills and McGregor (2014) portrayed, a widespread dilemma across Australia. I no longer have the sense of working in a community that nurtures learners, but rather I feel that I am expected to adhere, unquestioning, to the directives placed upon me. This is not part of my teacher identity, and for this reason, as Berry (2007) revealed, is the source of the frustration I now experience. Despite my initial enthusiasm in coming to the TS to work in a community environment, I feel stifled by the imposed directives and consequent expectations placed upon me. Assessment prescribed by the EI model is intense. I regret the fact that there is little I can do to alter the actual frequency of assessment tasks. I feel extremely restricted and bothered that such decisions are made, outside my classroom, at the

macro-level, on my behalf, without my consent, despite the fact that I am a professional and the person who knows my students most intimately.

I take a few days to reflect and again decide to speak to my first critical friend. Our conversation enables me to see that I have been following the EI model literally, and in doing so I have not always enabled my students to demonstrate their full potential. "Some teacher support in rethinking the EI model" says my friend, is both reasonable and important to ensure my students' success. I do want my students to succeed, so I must change my approach towards assessment by having a more flexible mindset to ensure this happens, as Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) endorsed.

The responses from this dialogue are pivotal to improving assessment procedures for my students. Despite the formal style of assessment tasks and the frequency of them, I can, according to my students, support them in alternative ways: I must ignore the stipulated task time as I feel this may be contributing to my students' sense of nervousness, instead allowing my students' needs to guide me. Allowing non-native English speaking students more time is a strategy endorsed by Hammond et al. (2015) in facilitating assessment tasks. By denying students opportunities to work with their peers on their assessment, I have shamefully disregarded their culture and how they prefer to learn. I now need to create ways for students to work together and I consider allowing them to peer edit each other's work. Culturally responsive teachers, observed Gay (2010), Taylor and Sobel (2011), set their students up to succeed. In the past I have simply collected completed assessment tasks, but I no longer feel comfortable doing this. I genuinely want my students to experience success and evidently, as EALD learners, they need more teacher scaffolding. I could assist students more fully in this regard by checking their work, using our class proofreading codes, prior to completion. This, I see, as scaffolding the learning task and is referenced as

being indicative of effective practices (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hattie, 2012). Given the linguistic demands of my students, surely the onus is on me. Placing my students at the heart of learning I have to be the one to ask 'What can I do to promote learning and success for my students?' I believe in my students. They can and will succeed, but I have to rethink my mindset which has been rigidly complying with the EI mandate and reinvent my teacher self.

5.6 Key Element Four, Introduction

In the previous cycle my students stipulated that they wanted to work with their peers in English. The benefits of working cooperatively have been widely documented (Allen, 2006; De Jong & Hawley, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Slavin, 1987).

However, this approach to learning clashes with our daily westernised classroom routine, which, adhering to the principles of the EI model, is more individualistic and competitive in nature. This creates another tension. However, having observed my first critical friend teach, I know that working cooperatively is achievable. I speak to my students, to gauge their sentiments. They reveal that they do want to work with each other, but unaccustomed to working in this manner, they are not sure how this will operate in our classroom. As I too have my doubts, I engage in collegial conversation with my first critical friend and my cultural mentorship group. Both suggest that as I have not engaged in cooperative learning with my students before, that I should trial the process first. With this in mind I organise a full day of working cooperatively. I choose the groups based on a mixture of gender and personalities.

5.6.1 Results

Despite my enthusiasm, the trial was far from successful. My learners did not work collaboratively as a group and learning time was wasted. I feel frustrated.

Rahman (2013) spoke of students, particularly Indigenous students, assuming another identity which is determined by the dominant culture, once they enter the school grounds. Could it be possible, that despite the unspoken expectation that Islanders work together as a community, that my students, now so used to working individually within EI, are no longer accustomed to working collectively in the classroom? Indeed, my cultural mentorship group remind me that cooperative learning is no longer considered “right practice”. I consider how I could adapt my practice within EI to successfully incorporate cooperative learning. I resume collegial dialogue with my critical friend, who has ample experience of teaching in this manner.

Susanne prompts me to consider mixed ability groups, instead of groups based on a mix of personalities and genders. Such groups, she comments, and as supported by Johnson and Johnson (1990), allow for peer teaching and promote learning of vital social skills. Indeed, Pardo and Raphael (1991) cautioned that thought needs to be given to the structure of groups. As well, Susanne cautions that working cooperatively will not be easy, but rather is identified as a skill which must be taught explicitly (Slavin, 1987). She advises me to be patient and suggests that the process will take time to master. Based on her advice I consider how I, with relatively little experience, can proceed in inducing cooperative learning practices both successfully and responsively. Further, the demands of EI to work individually will not allow me to use this learning style exclusively in the classroom. However, determined to meet my students' needs, I consider my upcoming action plan carefully, before deciding that I have to at least try because this is ultimately what my students desire. Fortunately, I am supported by my HOC who fully comprehends what I am attempting to achieve. This support encourages me to move ahead with my endeavour, and as Rychly and Graves (2012) commented, to think outside of the norm by prioritising students' needs.

5.6.2 Analysis - cooperative learning

Even on the second attempt not all the students automatically worked well together, nor did they all use the social skills I taught. Obviously, this reinforces the enormous disconnection between how my students engage in community life and how they are expected to behave within the school setting, an aspect frequently voiced by Rahman (2013). It is clear from the second trial just how challenging working in this manner is both for myself and my students. My critical friend reiterates the message that group work takes time to master. The students simply are not accustomed to working cooperatively in the classroom. Analysing my own teaching from a critical perspective, I realise that I am partially at fault because I lack experience in teaching in this way. I feel immensely frustrated because I feel that my students, through the nature of how the curriculum is delivered, are missing out on a valuable element of their education. Working cooperatively, as Johnson and Johnson (1990) acknowledged, promotes vital social skills, especially when the learning is socially constructed, embracing the learners' home culture and values. Similarly, such skills are deemed important in daily life and the need for life skills is commonly reinforced throughout the literature (Kuhn, 2007; Lewthwaite et al., 2013).

Despite the initial frustrations, in the second trial, I noted that some of my learners were engaged and on task. This prompted me to further consider the individual, competitive nature of EI. In the past I have simply dismissed cooperative learning because teaching explicitly and following the EI model so literally has not lent itself to working in this manner. However, my responsiveness is pushing me to consider alternatives. In fact, I now feel embarrassed by my own inflexibility in not having enabled my students to work together because this contradicts and devalues how they clearly prefer to operate, as various authors have stated (Barnes, 2000; Bishop & Glynn,

1999; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). What is more, my students determine success by embedding their TSI culture into learning, a comment also made by Nakata (2011) and, ironically, DET (2011). This inevitably includes, I surmise, incorporating 'how' they want to learn, not just 'what' they want to learn (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010). The Islanders tend to work together as a community, and as several scholars have reported (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Osborne, 2001; Rahman, 2013), I must replicate this in our daily class routine. As my mentorship group urge, the students need opportunities to work collaboratively and develop social skills.

5.6.3 Transformation – deviating from the EI norm

Berry (2007) surmised that one of the advantages of having a critical friend is that they listen, suggesting ideas which can lead to decisions being made. I feel humbled by the ongoing support I receive from my support network. My critical friends and mentorship group are active listeners. Rather than impose their own ideas on me, they gently prompt me to consider alternative pathways. Through collegial conversation I am discovering a lot about my own teaching and the implications for the decisions I make. In these two trials, I have learnt I can still teach explicitly using groups in part, but similarly to my first critical friend, I have to forego the preconceived idea of teaching sequentially and adapt my teaching to alternate between the various parts of the EI model, thus ensuring higher teacher-student interaction.

In working cooperatively and in wanting my students to experience success, I now realise the futility in setting the students up to work together and then to deny them this right by demanding that they complete the YOU DO task in isolation, as is the EI norm. As a viable alternative, I must re-invent my interpretation of the YOU DO

component, enabling the students to work collectively, but independently from the teacher.

In the second trial I positioned myself in the centre, not the front of our classroom as is expected in the EI structure. I see this as a subtle shift in my practice because it sent the message that I was no longer in a position of power and authority, as is prescribed in the EI model (Archer & Hughes, 2011). Rather, I adopted the role of a facilitator, guiding the learning. In the process, I discovered, the conversation digressed from teacher talk to become more interactive and dialogic, another pattern of interaction endorsed in the literature (Clements & Battista, 1990; Gray, 1997; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010).

Despite the aid of my support network, I am sceptical about how well the groups will operate. Sanaa (2006) stressed that student-centred approaches make the teacher's role more challenging because the teacher must be adept at successfully navigating group dynamics. This concerns me because I possess relatively little experience in teaching in this way. Moreover, I am acutely aware of the unspoken school directive – that it would be unthinkable to operate in this manner all of the time. Visitors to the school are frequent and it expected that the teaching methodology 'on display' is that of EI. This deeply troubles my sense of self because I feel disempowered to use my own judgement in my own classroom. I am reminded that it is not who my students are that is important, but tragically their data that defines them. It bothers me to think that teaching has become reduced to such minimalist terms, as Wisehart (2004) too lamented. However, meeting my students' needs is what is important. I refuse to abandon cooperative learning because of my own scepticism or inexperience, but instead I need to pursue this endeavour because this is what my students clearly want.

In the upcoming enactment cycle I decide to organise our cooperatively learning groups on a weekly basis.

I now turn to address my students' final concern – embedding cultural perspectives into learning (KE5).

5.7 Key Element Five, Introduction

In cycle one I learned that my students want to feel successful and to them, this means integrating their TSI culture (KE5), essentially who they are, into our English learning. DET (2011) and Nakata (2011) stressed the need for teachers to embed Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum, but the challenge facing non-Indigenous teachers is how to achieve this. How does a teacher possessing Western ideologies navigate the extremely tensioned space between the content-based ideology of EI and the more pupil-orientated ideology of CRP to embed cultural values in an insightful, relevant way?

Admittedly, I have made some gains in my first year on the island in acquiring a cultural knowledge base to enable me to occasionally embed cultural perspectives into the curriculum. I have had successful attempts at making the learning more inclusive and meaningful, but there is much I still have to learn. Faced with the likelihood that I will never be totally competent in this regard, I believe that this is going to be my greatest challenge on this journey. However, regardless of the differences in values and experiences between my students and myself, my obligation as a responsive practitioner is to address my students' needs. With this in mind, and through honest and reciprocal exchange of ideas with my learners, I explore their interpretation of TS culture in Table 5.5.

5.7.1 Results

Table 5.5
Culture

1. What is Torres Strait Island culture to you?
Response: dancing, warriors, ancestors, food, ceremonies.
2. Is your culture important to you? Why?
Yes. It is our identity.
3. Is it important to learn and keep your culture? Why?
Yes. It needs to be preserved or it will fade away/disappear.
4. What should new teachers to the island know about your culture? Name ONE thing.
Language.
5. What kind of lessons could we do in school to include your culture more?
Language, dancing, history and cooking
6. When you are older will you pass on your culture to your children?
Pass it on because otherwise it will disappear/communicate

Overall, the results, as presented in Table 5.5, strongly indicate the students' connection to their land and their people. The word "proud" was used frequently to explain how the students feel about being TSIs. Their interpretation of culture, as revealed by the responses (Q1) is diverse, or as one child stated "my culture is everything". Question two revealed that all students see their culture as important because it is who they are (their identity) and the phrase 'to pass it on' was selected by more than half the class. When asked if it is important to learn their culture (Q3) the response was unanimously "yes" with the majority explaining that they wanted to preserve it, otherwise it would fade away. Almost all the class stated that new teachers should know something about their language (Q4) and the students want lessons that

include language, dancing, history and cooking (Q5). All the students will “pass on their culture to preserve it or for the purpose of communicating” (Q6).

5.7.2 Analysis – being different

Nakata (2011) frequently urged that Indigenous perspectives be embedded in the curriculum and cautioned that this cannot be a superficial gesture. Similarly, the data responses revealed that students want to uphold their culture, as well as embed it into their English learning. The students' passion is palpable, and yet I see this as my most persisting tension. As several scholars have emphatically stated, current schooling in Australia has been deeply criticised for serving the needs of the dominant culture (Ball, 2005; Mills & McGregor, 2014; Rahman, 2013). Ball (2005) went as far as to condemn Australia's present educational agenda which, he claimed, is being predominantly driven by student achievement. Rahman (2013) criticised the mainstream culture as being inflexible in its approach, a view also held by others (Nakata, 2001, 2011; Osborne, 2001). Despite Departmental lipservice paid to ‘valuing diversity’ and ‘catering for diverse learner needs’, it seems the mainstream culture has decided, at some point that explicit teaching is ‘in mode’ and other styles of teaching are ‘passé’. I question how I can embed culture into learning within the rigid parameters of the EI model and a prescriptive curriculum. This tension gnaws at me because I feel an urge to get it right. I genuinely believe my students should not have to simply fit in with someone else's ideals, but rather should be valued for who they are and the differences they represent. Indeed, Ladson-Billings (2005) talked of colour-blindness and stressed the need for teachers to acknowledge the diversity of ethnic and minority groups. My students are different and I want them to be proud of this.

The data shows that many students envisage their culture in terms of learning practical skills, a perspective documented by Barnes (2000) and Perso (2012). What can I do to navigate this space? Perso (2012) believed that, despite the value of literacy, it should not be promoted at the expense of culture. I have to teach adhering to the principles of EI, but at the same time I have to listen to my students' voices. I cannot disregard their context because my students need it to make connections to the learning. By necessity, I have to respond to the very clear message about who my students are and what they bring to the learning context, because learning is a social endeavour.

5.7.3 Transformation – two levels of operating

It is more apparent in this second cycle that I am striving to reconcile two issues at both the micro-level and macro-level. Already, through the data which emerged from the student dialogue sessions I can envisage how, at the micro-level in my classroom, I can resolve some of the tensions my students face. However, it is at the macro-level, the complex space where decisions about supposedly best practice are made for me, that I am beginning to doubt how much I may actually achieve. Embedding and adopting TSI perspectives into the prescribed curriculum is superficial to say the least, and I feel that little has changed since Nakata (1994, 2011) expressed similar sentiments. As Moss (2001) and Rahman (2013) emphatically stated, neglecting or ignoring students' cultural identities at the classroom level will only fortify acceptance of the concealed curriculum. This, in turn, only intensifies the message that the dominant culture is superior. Rather than dismiss my students' rich backgrounds, I want to celebrate who they are so that they may become more valued, understood and respected as Australia's First Peoples. Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) advised teachers to make learning both meaningful and accessible so that they can ensure success (KE5), but as Rychly and

Graves (2012) cautioned, this must be determined by the students, not by those who know so shamefully little about them (Bishop & Glynn, 1999).

The question which remains is how to do this, given that I cannot choose the English units to be studied. I turn to my mentorship group who remind me that, due to the remote location of the islands, many students have had limited contact with mainland Australia. They urge me to make links between the learning and students' lives as others have urged (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013). If I don't possess the knowledge to do this successfully, my cultural mentorship group suggest I seek help. Their offer of support reassures me immensely because I realise that, despite the fact I will never be totally competent with island ways of knowing, I can turn to others to assist me to more competently meet my students' needs. No longer can it suffice to say "I simply do not know" or "I haven't got the knowledge". Rather, I have to actively seek support, so that my students can embrace learning in their own manner.

This journey is challenging all of my previous beliefs and assumptions. It is critical to the success of my students' learning that I do not teach the way I taught down south because success in the TS, is evidently viewed through an alternative lens.

5.8 Yarning Circle Two, Introduction

In cycle one five KEs in English were identified as being of concern to my students. In this present cycle, these concerns were explored using student dialogue. From the data analysed, concepts arose concerning how I could adjust my teaching. In order to clarify the student responses, I now engage in a YC by asking specific questions related to each KE. In many instances the responses in this second YC reinforced the results yielded in cycle two dialogue sessions, but in some cases new

insights were revealed. The results are presented and the new pertinent insights (underlined) are discussed.

5.8.1 Results

1. How can I best adjust my teaching? Are there specific parts that you want me to change?

Yes, you need to adjust all parts but especially the pace and breaking it down. We want more time in the YOU DO part. You need to provide more consistent feedback.

2. How am I helping you in learning written and oral English skills and what further adjustments do I need to make (KE2)?

We like the Big Write program, the games and level it up activities. We still need help with our writing skills. We want more oral English practice, to learn new words and to be able to use Creole in class when we want.

3. How can I help you with English assessment even further (KE3)?

We want to be assessed in different ways. We want less assessment. We need more teacher support and to be able to work with our classmates. We want to decide about having our work displayed on the classroom wall.

4. How can I help you to learn by working with your peers cooperatively (KE4)?

Teach us social skills such as sharing and turn-taking. Do group work more often.

5. How can I embrace your culture into learning (KE5)?

We want to learn in the community and for the community to be involved in our learning.

5.8.2 Analysis – Yarning Circle

The data generated in this YC was valuable to the study because three new insights have been revealed: Students want to be able to converse in Creole in class (KE2). They want to avoid spotlighting (KE3). They wish for the community to be involved in their learning (KE5).

CRP advocates (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Osborne, 2001) were not dismissive of the potential of using students' first language in the classroom to facilitate learning and indeed, DET (2011) now acknowledges that students' first language should be embraced as a means of engaging students and assisting them understand Standard Australian English. I discuss this need with my students (KE2) and we agree that they can converse in Creole with our full-time teacher aid to clarify ideas and concepts, but with myself they should consistently attempt to speak English.

Osborne (2001) pointed out the need for practitioners to avoid spotlighting. This, he explained, avoids embarrassment or shame. Clearly, given the responses to KE3, I need to provide students a choice as to whether or not their work will be displayed in the classroom. In the future, they will have the option of refusing.

I am not surprised that the students want the community to be involved in their learning (KE5). Community involvement is commonly voiced in the literature (Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Nakata, 2001, 2011; Perso, 2012) as being valuable and beneficial to Indigenous learning. DET (2011) even encouraged teachers of Indigenous learners to have an open-door policy whereby community members can enter the classroom at any time and engage in the learning process. The

pertinent question is how can I achieve this, given the mandate to follow a prescriptive curriculum which does not sincerely value community voice?

5.8.3 Transformation – taking risks

Many of the strategies identified by my students as necessitating teacher adjustment are endorsed by direct teaching models (scaffolding, breaking down the learning, modelling, etc.), and put forward as attributes of effective teaching (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hattie, 2012; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Pearson, 2011). I now realise that EI has many merits. However, is its exclusive and uncritical use justifiable in a remote Indigenous setting where students clearly speak EALD? Given this consideration, could it be more productive to use the EI model in a moulded, more receptive format? My students have to navigate the complexities inherent in the English language. EI, through its strengths, assists them in doing so, but considering the broader context, I believe that the model must be reshaped so that it works better for my students.

On this journey I am choosing to actively acknowledge how students respond to my practice as Schoenfield (2003) recommended. By doing so, I am choosing to care for my learners, as Savage et al. (2011) urged responsive practitioners to do. I do this by making my teaching transparent and open for discussion, and allowing my students to freely critique it. I am taking a stance in my classroom by refusing to blindly accept the status quo, which is deemed essential for working with students trying to mediate the cultural borders of classrooms (Gay, 2010; Nakata, 2011). I am willing to change my teaching to provide my students with what they want from me and my practice to foster this transition. My teaching must be justified. It must be personalised. It must be

responsive or my personal journey will be in vain and the purpose for coming to the TS will remain unfulfilled.

In this preliminary exploration, I have come to understand that I am operating on two different levels. At the micro-level, through engaging in dialogue with my students, and through critical self-reflection, I am beginning to understand how I might adjust my practice. However, at the macro-level – that is the level decided by the school, the College, the Education Department and policy makers – many tensions exist. It is in examining these tensions that I now conclude Chapter Five.

5.9 Journal Entry Five, Introduction

In this journal entry I discuss the results of the data yielded in this cycle and the tensions I continue to face as I consider the complex space in which I work.

5.9.1 Reflection – achievements and tensions

As I near the end of this preliminary enquiry I have come to better know the elements of my own practice, which is fundamental to AR (Lewin, 1947) and teaching practice change (Elliott, 1991). Inevitably, in striving to be responsive I have gained some clarity about how to begin adjusting my EI teaching to meet my students' needs in cycle three. Specifically I have discovered, through the student dialogues, that I need to break down the learning further; use more examples, teacher questioning, easier words; slow down my pace of instruction; provide more time to work individually; use the plough back to determine if students have understood and provide constructive feedback (KE1). I have come to see the merit of EI and that it is likely palatable to my students, but not in its unadjusted, raw format.

Further, I have learned that my students desire more opportunities to practise their spoken English and they wish to use Creole in class (KE2). It is important that I achieve a balance in embracing the rich cultural languages of my learners and preparing them with the necessary linguistic skills they will need in society (Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001). In regards to assessment (KE3), my students have revealed they need more time to complete assessment tasks; they wish to be assessed in diverse ways; they wish to work with their peers and receive more substantial teacher feedback (Hammond et al., 2015). Not all students are receptive to having their test scores displayed in the classroom. Responsive teachers acknowledge the multitude of ways their learners wish to be taught and assessed (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013), while avoiding spotlighting (Osborne, 2001). The cooperative learning groups (KE4) are still a relatively new occurrence in our classroom, having only been trialled on two occasions. However, the class, on the whole, wants to engage in group work more frequently. Students also want to learn social skills, deemed essential life skills by those who exhibit a preference for working in this manner (De Jong & Hawley, 1995). In embedding Islander perspectives into learning (KE5), my students have informed me that the community should be involved in their schooling, a consideration commonly exhorted in the literature (DET, 2011; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Nakata, 1994).

5.9.2 Analysis – realising the gravity of the tensions

Berry (2007) cautioned that teaching is fraught with tensions, and describes the nature of teaching education itself as a “learning problem” (p. 15), but one which she believed practitioners should view as a means to develop professionally. Professionally, at the micro-level in my classroom, I am taking a stance and developing my practice to

be more compatible with my students' needs. In this extremely complex and murky zone I am starting to resolve some tensions.

However, as I have gained clarity in this second cycle about my learners' needs, I am more aware of the extreme complexity of the space in which I work. This is the cultural interface between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, which is often contested. Within this space, teachers should consider how they view their Indigenous students as learners, as Durie (2005), Nakata (2007, 2011), Yunkaporta and McGinty (2009) urged. My students want to learn and they want to experience success in their learning. They know the additional challenges they face due to their linguistic needs. I have to navigate this swampy ground, so that my students can be successful on their own terms.

In this tensioned zone, decisions are made at the policy level (Queensland Government, 2000) that do not sincerely value or respect my students and their identities. I am the one left endeavouring to resolve the tension of achieving a balance between Creole and English, as my students desire (KE2). I am the one left battling to resolve my students' assessment dilemma of offering less assessment but with a more flexible means of demonstrating their capabilities (KE3). I am the one left striving to create opportunities for my students to work with their peers (KE4). I am the one left grappling to comprehend how the English curriculum can be so devoid of relevancy and Islander perspectives (KE5). Frustratingly, the sheer complexity and volume of the demands placed on me from within the education hierarchy, which inhibit my freedom to teach as I please, are challenging my sense of self and compelling me to doubt my own teacher identity.

Despite making progress on this AR study, I concede that the journey is far from over. The more I probe into my students' perceptions about my teaching and learning, the more I discover. The more I discover, the more critical I become and the more my frustration is heightened, rather than appeased. In this investigation phase, I have found some solutions to my dilemmas, but in finding these solutions other tensions have surfaced, as Berry (2007) experienced. I am frustratingly, more or less working alone. I am confronted with a restrictive pedagogical approach and prescriptive curriculum. Given the remote geographical location of the study and the unique cultural norms of my students, I find this utterly absurd. I am battling policy makers, who far removed from my context of learning, make decisions for me. My professional judgement, it appears counts for little other than student results.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter was the second data results and analysis chapter. In this preliminary investigation, guided by the five broad key findings of the previous cycle, I began to investigate my students' needs to determine precisely how I could adjust my interpretation of my EI teaching in the tensioned zone between EI and CRP. Specifically, through the responsive reflections noted in my personal journal, I started to question the EI model more critically as I came to more comprehensively understand elements of my practice.

As this study is ultimately about my students' needs, an important part of the data collection process is to ensure that my learners have opportunities to voice their concerns. My role, as a responsive practitioner, is to listen and respond to those concerns, acknowledging the tensions my students and I face (Berry, 2007; Lewthwaite et al., 2014a; Sellars, 2014). Through deep and meaningful questioning and dialogue

with my learners in this second cycle, I scrutinised the specific aspects of my practice which my students want me to adjust. The data yielded in the YC was also important to this study because the findings revealed new information, pertinent to my needed adjustment of practice. It is this combined evidence that I will use in the following cycle to initiate my action plan. It is vital that I take action because the success, or indeed failure of my students is contingent on what, as Lewthwaite et al. (2014a) remarked, I choose, or indeed, choose not to do.

Cycle three is the enactment stage of this AR study. In this cycle, given the data yielded in the previous two cycles, my own reflections, the advice of my critical friends and mentorship group, I begin the critical stage of adjusting my EI teaching. This cycle is highly significant to this study because action researchers engage in research in order to bring about change (Lacey, 2006) and improve a situation, and it is precisely through my deliberate intent to intervene and upset the orthodoxy of what is in this extremely tensioned zone, that I aspire to change my teaching so I can respond to my students responsively, in a manner that nurtures and respects their identities.

Chapter 6: Data results and analysis: Cycle 3

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter Five, cycle two was presented. This cycle was a preliminary exploration of the five key concerns in English which my students had identified in cycle one. It was evident by the closure of this second cycle that my students were dissatisfied about many aspects of my EI teaching. As a responsive practitioner, this dissatisfaction bothered me, and I knew that I had to adjust my EI teaching and teaching in general to be more receptive to their learning needs.

In Chapter Six, cycle three is presented. This cycle comprised multiple stages of interrogation and enactment, in which I addressed the specific elements of my teaching that my students find concerning. By the end of this third cycle, I experienced a sense of achievement as my learners assured me that they were satisfied with the adjustments I had made.

6.1.1 Organisation of cycle 3

Cycle three comprised seven data collection stages in which multiple phases of interrogation and enactment occurred. To begin, using my reflective journal I considered the tensions teachers face in the TS as they navigate the cultural interface. It was important that I did not consider the study solely from my own teaching perspective, but also that I considered the social, cultural and political implications of teaching in the TS, as Nakata (2011) stressed. These reflections were documented in journal entry six. Then, I engaged in five key stages of adjustment as I attended to my students' needs (5 KEs). In some instances, satisfied with the results based on my students' commentaries, I moved on to address further concerns. In other instances, when the responses indicated that further adjustment of my EI practice was needed, I

determined a more suitable action plan for further refinement of practice. Students' writing samples were also presented in this cycle as further evidence of how I addressed their second concern (KE2).

This cycle closed with journal entry seven in which I discussed the achievements, as indicated by my students' responses to my teacher adjusted practice. At this point I arrived at a pivotal moment on my journey, experiencing a sense of achievement as I successfully realised my goal of adjusting my teaching. The organisation of this cycle is illustrated in Figure 6.1.

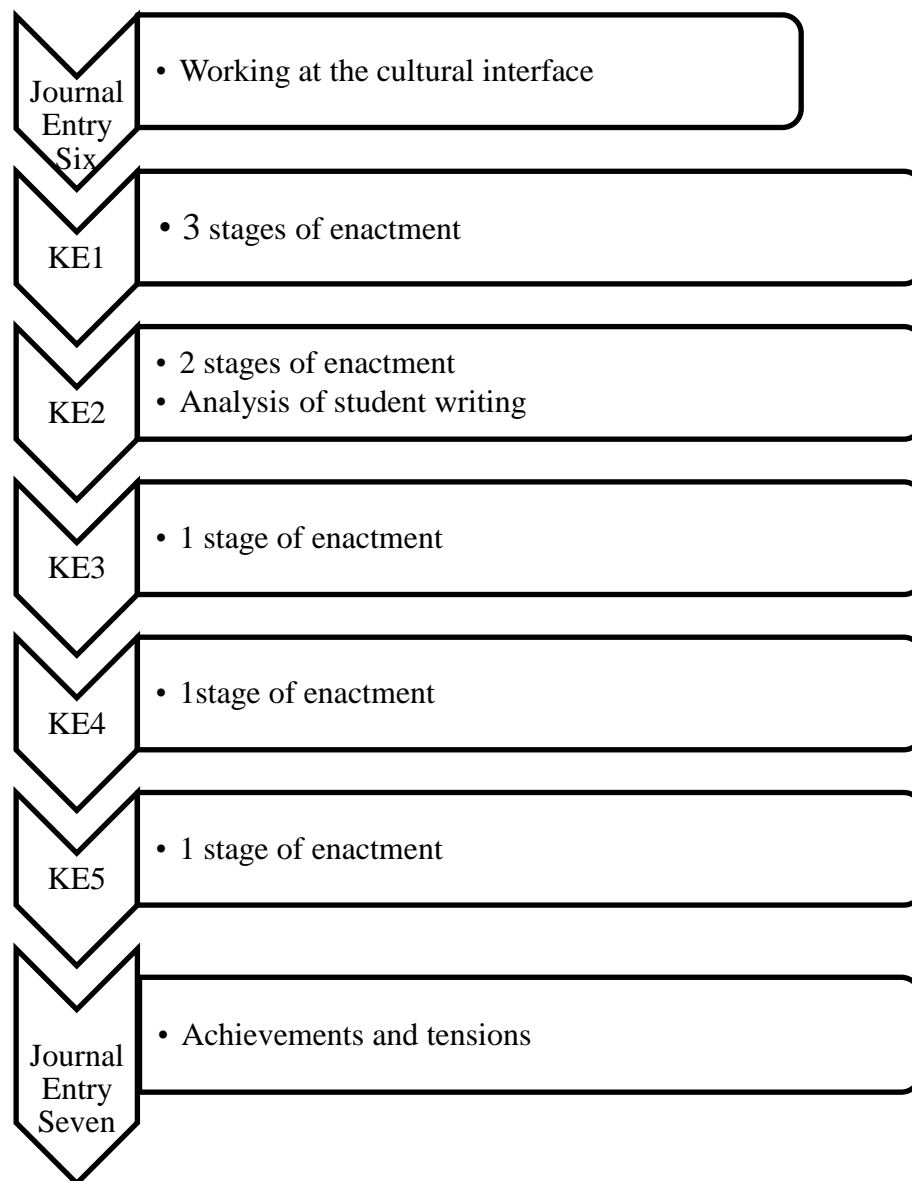
Figure 6.1. Seven Data Collection Stages in Cycle Three

Figure 6.1. The Figure presents an overview of the 7 stages of data collection undertaken in cycle three, the reconnaissance of interrogation and enactment phase.

6.2 Journal Entry Six, Introduction

From the results of the previous cycle, it was evident my students' concerns about my teaching and their learning were numerous. If I am to continue on my path of endeavouring to represent my students, it is essential that I adjust my teaching.

However, such adjustments, if they are to be effective, cannot occur in isolation. Rather, they must be considered within the tensioned space in which I operate, and this journal entry captured the difficulties of working in such a zone as a non-Indigenous teacher.

6.2.1 Reflection – working in a tensioned zone

I want and need to adjust my teaching, but in order to do this successfully at the classroom level, I must also consider the broader context. As a responsive educator, I resolutely refuse to impose my views and values on my students. Rather, I need to work with them in the space between their world and mine – the cultural interface. Not surprisingly Nakata (2011) perceived this space as contentious. I am suggesting that this space is complex, where two diverse ways of knowing and seeing compete. In this situation, how do I come to know or view my world with my Western background and values, compared to my Islander students? How do our knowledge systems differ and do they meet at any point? In the classroom, my Western knowledge tries to make sense of my students' Islander knowledge. We possess different mother tongues, ideas and values. Undoubtedly our life experiences differ too, and these ultimately impact on how we perceive the role and purpose of education and how we are ultimately positioned within it.

How does this positioning influence my teaching and my students' learning? In utilising my own knowledge to assist my students, I have to recognise that I originate from the privileged culture. On this point, DET (2011) cautioned that practitioners who are part of the dominant culture need to clearly understand their position and subjectivity and how this impacts upon students. I speak and live in two vernaculars, but, unlike my students, I have the fortune to have been born 'into' English. Speaking the dominant language as my mother-tongue gives me a distinct advantage. My

students, on the other hand, face the arduous task of having to master English language skills to enable them to compete in a society where their Western peers are already advantageously positioned. Clearly, in navigating the complexities of our English units, my students need scaffolding and intensive support in acquiring basic language skills, which I realise I probably take for granted.

In working in this complex space, I need to view the learning through my students' eyes, as scholars Rychly and Graves (2012) advised. This inevitably means I have to make choices for my students, using my professional knowledge of my students' needs to determine the English skills they require, and this ultimately will mean being more selective about what I choose to teach (Aoki, 2012).

6.2.2 Analysis – seeing things differently

As I continue on my own journey of learning, my awareness regarding the intricate space in which I work is heightened. It is not possible or productive for teachers to work here without deeply considering the learning context, because, as CRP advocates frequently pointed out, it is precisely the context that ought to shape the learning (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Nakata, 1994, 2011; Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

I am discovering that my priority in being responsive needs to focus on building strong relationships, and this means being cognisant of my students' learning context, needs and aspirations. How I value education and its purpose contrasts starkly to the beliefs and values of my students. My students, despite their young age, already comprehend the need and the struggle they face in their acquisition of English. EI will enable me to scaffold and break down the learning to assist my students in this regard, but I see the fundamental issue, which lies at odds with my students' aspirations, as

much more intense. The issue, as I perceive it, stems from the curriculum itself, its focus and the values of the dominant culture it represents.

The context in which I work is deeply complex. Not only am I struggling with my own sense of unrest to become more responsive, as did Berry (2007), but I am also dealing, on a macro-level, with an educational system that issues directives without consideration of the context I represent. Regardless of the issues and challenges I face, I want to improve my students' learning. As I embarked upon this journey, I questioned if I could embed cultural values into learning, as my students have requested (KE5). Now, as I am re-thinking, re-adjusting and refining my EI practice, the question has shifted. No longer is the question starter 'if' but more significantly 'how'. Culturally responsive practitioners, as is commonly referenced, adapt their practice and do so often, regardless of the challenges with which they are confronted (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

To assist me in navigating this complex terrain, I again seek the advice of my mentorship group, who suggest I utilise the resources of the community. Why have I not done this previously? Have I been too proud or embarrassed? Have I been unaccepting of the community's ways and values? My support group has presented alternatives and if my care, as Savage et al. (2011) outlined, is to be genuine and driven by a passionate desire to serve my students, I cannot overlook such alternative viewpoints.

6.3 Key Element One, Introduction

Students revealed in the second cycle that their concerns regarding my execution of the EI model (KE1) were numerous. Specifically, students wanted me to break down the learning; provide more scaffolding, use more examples and easier lexis; ask more questions; consider pace; allow more time in the independent task; work with peers;

have more extension activities and improve my feedback delivery. Such strategies have been deemed as effective, especially for EAL students (Hammond et al., 2015).

Throughout the term, through multiple phases of interrogation and enactment, I have adjusted my teaching, using a checklist to guide me. I now seek feedback from my learners about how I presently execute my explicit teaching. Students responded to my delivery of five EI English lessons (See Appendix S). 100 responses were recorded for the entire class and are discussed.

6.3.1 Results

Ninety seven percent of the students now agree that the learning has been broken down sufficiently with 96% stating that I had provided ample teacher examples and questioning in the I DO part of the lesson. The responses in the WE DO part of the lesson are equally encouraging, with 95% stating that I now provide enough examples. When questioned about the pace, 73% agree that the pace is just right. However, 8% state it is too slow, and 19% state it is still too fast. When questioned about the time in the YOU DO part of the lesson, 71% had enough time to complete the set task, but 18% disagree, commenting that the time was insufficient. Eleven percent felt that they now had too much time.

6.3.2 Analysis - explicit teaching

These results indicate that I have been successful in re-adjusting many elements of my EI teaching. My students do value the strategies used in adopting an explicit approach. Particularly, my students now believe that my teaching is broken down sufficiently and that I provide ample examples to facilitate learning. Archer and Hughes (2011) and Hammond et al. (2015) referred to this as scaffolding and contend that it is something that effective teachers use frequently. However, from this data, it is

apparent that over a quarter are still dissatisfied with my teaching pace. This, I concede, is a difficult teaching element to master. I consider EI's brisk pace, but I do not feel that working so hurriedly benefits my EALD learners. Clearly a large proportion of my students also agree. I contemplate Osborne's (2001) words of working more slowly and allowing my students wait time, a sentiment Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) also confirmed. I am inclined to agree, especially given my learners' linguistic needs.

Although I have been successful in adjusting my practice to allow more time for my students to complete independent tasks, 29% of students felt that the task time was not well balanced, while 11% of students felt that there was too much time. In trying to resolve one problem, another has surfaced. Such occurrences, according to Berry (2007), are common within schools, exacerbated by the diversity of learners in any given classroom. It is essential that I find a balance and ensure that there are also opportunities for my early finishers, so that they do not become disengaged and off task, as occurred in one of my earlier teacher observations. The tasks must be doable, as Bright (2012) stipulated, but also engaging so that my more academically minded students can be extended in their learning (Hammond et al., 2015; Hattie, 2012).

6.3.3 Transformation – a new perception

I began my journey naively thinking that my EI execution was meeting my students' needs. Early in cycle one, through engaging in dialogue with my learners and from listening to my HOC's feedback, I learned, to my dismay, that this was not how others perceived my teaching. This discovery was crucial to the research, for, if I had chosen not to find out, I would have continued to teach in the same manner, oblivious to the profound effect this was having on my students' learning.

Sellars (2014) spoke frequently of critical reflection, that is, looking inwardly at oneself. I concede that engaging in this act of self-awareness takes courage, courage to admit that errors are being made; courage to admit improvement in practice can be made. Gay (2010) held the term 'responsiveness' synonymous with bravery. Choosing to be responsive is not an easy path to follow, but one, I am learning which demands determination, passion, commitment and a willingness to change.

Analysis of the results indicate strongly that, despite some success in adjusting my teaching, I have still not fully addressed my students' concerns. Specifically, I need to attend to pace, task level and organisation of the independent task. I see considerable merit in the strategies endorsed by the EI model, as is widely referenced (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Rowe, 2006), but these strategies cannot be followed literally, given the context of learning. Rather, they need to be adjusted to accommodate students' individual demands, as responsive practitioners have consistently agreed (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001).

6.3.4 Further improving the execution of EI

My students' responses demonstrate that I have not sufficiently addressed all of their concerns pertaining to the EI model. As a responsive practitioner, I cannot proceed to address my students' second concern (KE2), knowing that their first concern remains unresolved (KE1). Consulting with my second critical friend, I learn I should provide further scaffolding through teacher questioning, to assist with pace. This, she surmised, will provide me with a more accurate idea as to how well students have comprehended the lesson content. She reminded me of her previous feedback, in cycle one – students need to know the learning intention and to include the plough back. I cannot afford to abandon my students' needs, so I continue in my quest to improve my EI execution,

documenting my reflections. After several weeks of teacher adjusted practice, I seek further feedback from my students about my teaching.

Twenty students responded to six lessons (See Appendix T). Within the literature, it has been widely acknowledged that effective teachers make the learning intentions clear (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Bulger et al., 2002; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Rosenshine, 1987; Smith, 2001). For this reason, the students were asked to state the learning intention (WALT – We are learning to) in order to determine if they had understood the lesson purpose. To determine pace three questions were asked about the main activity, extension task and time to spare. If the students did not complete the main task I deduced that the pace was still too fast. A question about what type of activity early finishers engaged in was in response to an earlier teacher observation in which it had been noted that some learners were off task. As cycle two revealed that students did not know what the plough back was, nor understood its purpose, a question pertaining to this was also made.

6.3.5 Results

The results demonstrate that every single child in every lesson was able to successfully state the learning intention. Only one child did not complete the main task, which strongly suggests that the lesson pace was now pitched correctly. Just less than 75% of students were able to complete the extension task, with half of the class also engaging in an extra activity, related to the learning.

The plough back results (What have we learnt today?) are very encouraging compared to cycle two's results. Seventy five percent of students were able to articulate what skill or concept they had learnt. The remaining 25% were either unclear, did not match the learning intention or were simply left blank. Given that every child completed

the main task, I inferred from the blank responses that the students had simply run out of time and had not completed this part of the grid.

6.3.6 Analysis - effective teaching

The data visibly demonstrates a further shift in my practice towards a more effective, and yet responsive execution of my explicit teaching. The learning purpose must be clearly stated if the learners are to have an understanding of what it is they are expected to do, as is widely documented in the literature (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Rosenshine, 1987). For this reason, I now write the learning intention on the board at the outset of each lesson. It is evident that the students understand the content they are presented, and this strongly implies that the teaching and lesson goals are now clearly aligned.

The fact that there was only one occasion that a child did not finish the main task clearly demonstrates that the pace is now being pitched according to the level of the class. Osborne (2001) and Smith (2001) both speak of lesson pace. Osborne (2001), having worked with ESL learners in the region, believed that an unhurried pace is best for such learners. In the earlier observations, in cycle one, it was noted that some of my early finishers were left without a task. In response, I now provide an extension activity for every lesson, and I have explicitly taught the students the types of activities they can engage in, should they also finish the extension task. Providing learning opportunities is something Gray (1997) and Lattuca (2006) stressed effective teachers do often.

Analysing the results from a more critical perspective, it could be argued that the lesson pace was, in parts, too slow because of the fact that so many students had spare time. However, I believe that by working at a slower pace I am able to give most of the students a chance at attempting the extension activity. This, my students have informed

me, gives them a feeling of success, which Black (2004) deemed an important condition of learning.

The results of the plough back are particularly positive because in cycle two the students did not comprehend its purpose. Now, I ensure that I finish every lesson a few minutes early to include a summary of what was learnt. This comprises only a few questions, but, as Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) pointed out, it provides an indication of whether or not re-teaching is necessary. For the students, this serves the purpose of knowing if they have learnt the required skill or concept.

6.3.7 Transformation – the smaller details

Sellars (2014) illustrated that the nature of reflective practice is a powerful tool in that it enables the researcher to take decisive action to improve their teaching. Despite having been a teacher for many years, it is only recently, through deep and critical self-reflection and through my willingness to openly allow my teaching to be analysed and critiqued by my students, that I have been able to develop professionally. The productive dialogue sessions with my learners are empowering me to deviate from the prescribed EI approach, and to reshape how I view my practice. As I am willing my students to take risks in their learning, so too am I taking risks in my teaching, by trying new strategies and, like Berry (2007), being receptive to change.

Reflecting on the data gathered to date, I have made significant gains in my re-interpretation of the EI model over the past three terms. However, if viewed through a critical lens I admit that further changes are still possible, indeed necessary in meeting my students' needs, as several authors exhorted (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). For instance, I would like even more students to be clear about the plough back and its purpose. I decide to heed the

advice of Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009), by placing the plough back before the independent task. In the past, I have always regarded the plough back as an optional, add-on extra, not understanding its real purpose. Repositioning the plough back before the students attempt the YOU DO activity ensures that it becomes deeply embedded into the learning. This is important because I now use this as an indicator to determine if I should proceed with the task or re-teach. In making the independent activity more productive, I reflect upon my critical friend's advice. Rather than wait for the class to finish the entire independent task, she suggested that I correct part of it and provide immediate feedback, as Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) also advised. I like this idea, as it assists in maintaining student engagement, as well as encouraging them to complete the task, through teacher scaffolding.

I consider what these adjustments mean for my students. I am experiencing some success at the micro-level, and have come to realise that there are many strategies used in explicit teaching that are indeed indicative of responsive, effective teaching practices. However, my goal on this journey is not only to be an effective teacher, but a culturally responsive, effective teacher. This, I am learning, means that I must begin, not with the curriculum and the directives forced upon me, but with the students I work with and their learning context. It is essential that I reject conformity and uniformity and, in its place, seek to value, nurture and represent my students as individuals, acting as an advocate on their behalf.

6.3.8 Key element one, feedback

Cycle one focused upon adjusting my teaching and the need to also adjust my delivery of feedback. In cycle two, four specific concepts relating to feedback were

identified by my students as needing adjustment. Throughout term two, as part of my adjusted EI teaching, I addressed my students' feedback needs (See Appendix U).

6.3.9 Results

My improvement in delivering feedback focused on the four areas of:

1. More explicit written feedback
2. A weekly scheduled time allocation to discuss and clarify feedback individually
3. Making feedback as I monitored more explicit (This is feedback. Look at the word 'Brazil'. It is a country. This means it is a proper noun. What type of letter do proper nouns begin with?)
4. Using rubrics for assessment as a means to provide feedback

Over a term, I collected students' English books once per week and made an average of six written comments and corrections, totalling 60 responses per student. I scheduled a weekly session, allocating a specific time to the feedback process. While students were working independently, I approached each child, providing opportunities to clarify the feedback provided. Keeping the checklist, I attempted to provide one piece of oral feedback to every child in every literacy block. Admittedly, keeping accurate track of all the feedback provided was challenging, due to class interruptions and assessment tasks. On average, every child received feedback every day, equalling 50 responses per term. Rubrics were used for each assessment task, amounting to two per term.

6.3.10 Analysis – refining feedback

Keeping a checklist was definitely an effective way for me to monitor my own performance because it made me more aware of how much feedback I was actually

providing. In reflecting on the feedback process, the main obstacle to its success was not simply the inconsistency of feedback I offered, but more so the fact that it was often delivered in a rushed manner. This, as is also evidenced by the pace results, is not what my Islander students want. Through reflection and thus committed action, feedback sessions have now become more deeply embedded into our class routine. Similarly, explicitly stating that I am providing feedback as I monitor, has had a profound effect on my students' learning. Through conversation the students have come to value the importance of feedback and I intentionally use the word 'feedback' as a key to remind them that I am giving extra scaffolding, as is recommended by scholars (Hammond et al., 2015; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Nakata, 2011). My Islander students, I discovered, like the explicit manner in which feedback is now provided, because it demonstrates that I genuinely care.

Using rubrics as a means of providing feedback has, my students informed me, been useful. Typically, I now introduce the rubric prior to the assessment task and refer to it in providing feedback. In this way students, having already completed the English unit, possess an understanding of the taught content and can more readily understand what is being asked of them in the written assessment task. This also addressed one of their earlier concerns – of not always understanding the assessment requirement.

6.3.11 Transformation – making choices

As a responsive practitioner, I want to make a difference in my students' lives. I want, as my students clearly want, to make learning a successful experience. Explicit feedback is commonly viewed as a tool to advance students in their learning (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hattie, 2012; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Strandberg & Lindberg,

2012). Because of the effect explicit feedback has had upon the students' learning, my students now want and expect feedback sessions to occur.

Upon reflection, the feedback I have been providing was not hugely successful and this, I now realise, has been counter-productive, particularly in providing written feedback which is a time-consuming task for teachers to organise. The problem previously, I now understand, has been my own teacher obsession with time and pressure to cover the mandated curriculum, a common teaching tension (Hammond et al., 2015). This preoccupation has been at the expense of vital areas in my teaching, feedback included.

As I progress on my journey of responsiveness, similarly to Berry (2007), I am finding some viable alternatives as I seek solutions to the dilemmas I face. Through critical reflection I now value the necessity in adjusting my practice and providing choices, as others have commonly contended (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). As was the case in introducing child friendly rubrics, where plausible, I have to find more preferable options for my students.

The demand for teachers of Indigenous learners to reduce the disconnect between home and school life is widely mentioned in the literature (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Rahman, 2013). In respecting how my Islander students operate and in an effort to align school and home structures, it is important that I offer individual and personalised, as well as whole of class feedback. Lack of time will no longer suffice as an excuse. Further, personalised feedback provides further opportunities for me to connect with each of my learners individually and strengthen our rapport.

Having analysed the students' responses in this interrogation and enactment phase, it is evident that they are satisfied with the manner in which I have more closely aligned my teaching with their needs. With this in mind, I turn to re-address my students' second concern (KE2).

6.4 Key Element Two, Introduction

In cycle one, students stated that they wanted to be recognised and treated as EALD learners. In cycle two, through more rigorous exploration, it was revealed that students needed assistance in writing. They also demanded opportunities to practise their spoken English. In this cycle, I adjusted how I taught writing skills by:

1. Spending more than the recommended 45 minutes on the weekly Big Write program (Andrell Education, 2017).
2. Creating more student-teacher interaction by significantly increasing the time allocated to the WE DO section
3. Allowing children to work with peers in the independent task
4. Providing substantial oral and written feedback on their performance
5. Transferring students' skills, learned in Big Write, to other areas of the English program

After a term of implementing the Big Write program I engaged in dialogue with my students to determine how they felt about their writing and speaking. The results of the initiatives are displayed in Table 6.1.

6.4.1 Results of Big Write program

Table 6.1
Post Big Write and Oral Results

Statement	Responses	
1) I feel confident/not confident about my writing	100%	confident
2) I feel writing is interesting/boring.	75%	interesting
3) I know how to use Wow words in writing	100%	yes
4) I know how to use connectives in writing	100%	yes
5) I know how to use openers in writing	100%	yes
6) I can punctuate my writing well	100%	yes
7) I understand about different writing genres	95%	yes
8) My oral skills benefitted from:	100% agree	Pair-sharing, roleplays, presentations, cooperative learning
9) In class, there were enough/not enough opportunities to practise speaking skills	95%	Not enough
10) I would like more/less/same speaking opportunities	100%	more
11) I found teacher correction of my oral skills useful/not useful	100%	yes
12) I now feel confident in presenting publicly	90%	yes
13) I enjoyed the oral activities	100%	yes
14) I am able to speak Creole in class	100%	agree

15) How can Ms D improve your oral English skills? 25%

More time

In addition, I analysed three writing samples to determine if the students' new writing capabilities supported how they now felt about their writing, or if discrepancies existed. One writing sample is presented herewith and discussed. (See Appendix V for writing samples and Appendix W for writing and speaking rubric).

Plate 6.1. Sample A

You are either Jack or Hoshi. Tell the story from one of their viewpoints. Use the following headings.

Leaving my wife:

It was very hard for me to leave my pregnant wife behind, because I had to go to war and fight for our country Australia. I was very nervous to leave my family because I promised my wife ^{would} that I will be home. My comrades picked me up I kissed my wife good bye. My last words were "I promise that I will be back home." We went on a big plane to New Guinea. Then we got there we landed on the south coast of New Guinea.

Training in New Guinea:

sergeant

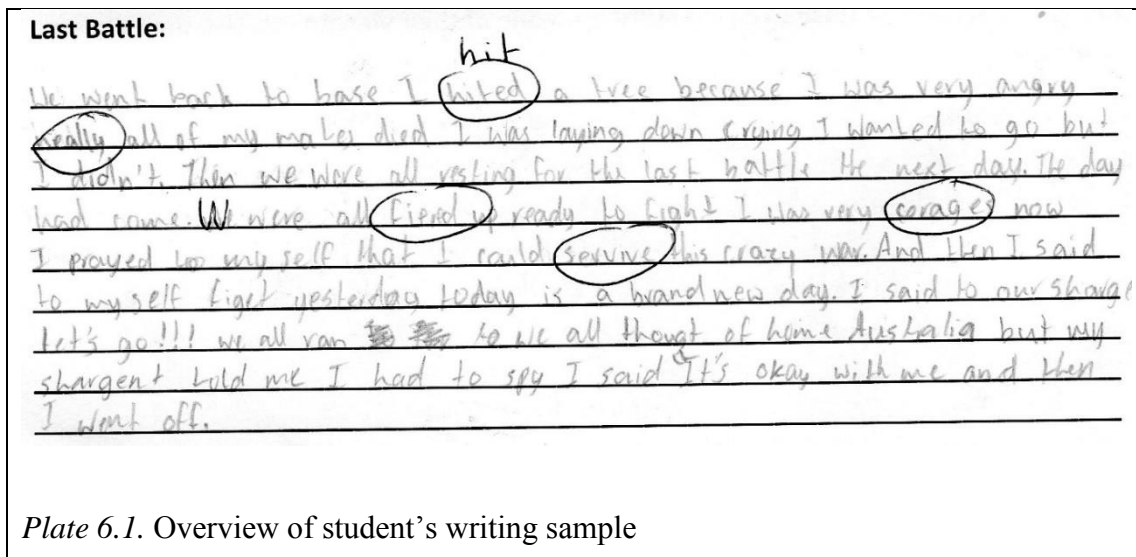
We landed on the south coast of New Guinea. We were messing about and then our sergeant told us "stop messing about" he said one of my mates laughed, then sergeant said to my mate's "do you think this is a joke. Here are Japanese people ^{here} waiting for us, now stop messing about." We all stopped playing, we were walking through muddy water. Leeches were grabbing our legs. We were training for 6 hours. Our legs were tired it was stinky that I wanted to give up but I couldn't because I was fighting for my country and I was fighting for my pregnant wife.

Fighting in New Guinea:

attack

The first battle had come. We were all prepared for war. We all grabbed our rifles. We marched proudly all the way until we got to the battle ground. Our sergeant yelled "attack!" We all ran out. Some of us died, some of us didn't. Blood flew every where, bodies laying that way and this way. I was cribened but this is what I had to do is kill and fight. But then when I was about to kill my last one our sergeant said "retreat!" we all turned around. We left our dead mates behind. I was very sorry for them.

Sample (A)



6.4.2 Analysis - writing and oral responses

Sample A:

Compared to the writing samples analysed in cycle two, this sample demonstrates clear growth in students' writing capabilities. Sample A is coherent and easy to follow. Paragraphs are well organised and the writer displays knowledge of a variety of tenses and complex sentence structures. There is a range of vocabulary related to the topic of war. Connectives are visible, as is the use of adverbs. The writer has used adjectives to make the story more interesting. There is some use of direct speech. Spelling errors are minimal and tend to be related to irregular spelling rules. The writer did not complete the final paragraph, but overall the story message is clear.

However, meeting my students' writing needs has been easier than meeting their oral demands. This is partly due to the fact that the curriculum emphasis has focused predominantly on the written mode, emphasising the views of the dominant culture. To date, there has only been one English unit that has focused specifically on oral skills, and yet this is a skill deemed important to Indigenous values, as Nakata (2001) and Perso (2012) confirmed. However, in being responsive, I chose to deviate from the

mandated curriculum in order to provide opportunities for speaking through pair-sharing, role-plays and cooperative learning, heeding Aoki's (2012) advice.

6.4.3 Transformation – a sense of empowerment

Pine (2009) spoke of mindfulness of teaching - making decisions and taking action on behalf of students. On this AR journey, I am acting with thoughtfulness as I seek to do what I feel is ultimately right for my students. The more I reflect upon my teaching, our classroom, the structure of EI and the mandated curriculum, the more confident and empowered I become in taking a stance on behalf of my learners. This means critically examining the EI model and the curriculum to determine 'Is this appropriate for my learners at this point in time?' Despite the many positives that I am realising EI has to offer, the answer has often been 'no'. Inevitably, adjustments to practice have been made, because effective responsive teachers choose to represent their students and their needs, rather than follow given mandates unquestionably, as CRP advocates have strongly emphasised (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

Having worked as an ESL lecturer I believe that my area of expertise lies in English. This confidence has assisted me greatly in delivering the Big Write program and helping my learners with their written demands. Indeed Bulger et al. (2002) advocated that teachers need to know their subject area well. However, Pearson (2011) cautioned that teachers cannot solely rely on knowing their subject area well. In his mind, they need to also deliver the content effectively. To this end, Pearson (2011) spoke of good quality instruction which in turn induces high quality teaching. Applied to my content, this means my knowledge of the Big Write program (Andrell Education, 2017) has to be coupled with effective instruction for maximum learning to occur.

Despite my success with the Big Write program (Andrell Education, 2017), I found incorporating oral opportunities into the curriculum, using an EI approach, challenging. However, in responding to my students' desire to improve their oral skills, I feel my decision to not teach certain parts of the curriculum to provide time to incorporate this skill, was nevertheless the right action to take. Lewthwaite et al. (2014a) referred to teachers making choices about what they teach. In my own context, this meant taking decisive, deliberate and responsive action to focus on oral communication, because this is what my students had identified as being worthy to them. Having recently watched every child give an oral presentation, I felt a huge sense of pride and satisfaction. The sheer confidence with which my learners now speak has further reinforced the fact that I have fulfilled one of their needs. Despite this success, as is evidenced by the data, students unanimously want more oral language practice.

My most relentless challenge on this journey has been a personal one. I have, until recently, felt obliged to uncritically follow my job description. I have discovered, however, through engaging in dialogue, critical reflection and subsequently choosing to notice, that this approach has not been in my learners' best interests, nor has it been in mine. Ultimately, I always felt guilty about doing what was required because I knew that this meant neglecting my students' needs. In retrospect, I wish I had discovered my new-found confidence earlier in the previous year and, perhaps I would have been able to make a difference to my students' lives much earlier.

Having partially resolved some of my learners' linguistic needs, I now turn to address their assessment concerns (KE3).

6.5 Key Element Three, Introduction

An analysis of cycle two assessment data revealed that my students held grave concerns about the nature of our English assessment. In particular, my learners were bothered by the frequency and limited style of assessment. Unable to change these assessment directives, I have, over the past term, adjusted other elements of our assessment routine which were causing my students distress, as Hammond et al. (2015) encouraged. Specifically, I gave students more time to complete assessment tasks. I provided extra scaffolding by breaking down the learning task requirements so students knew exactly what was required of them. I also gave more feedback to support their EALD needs. In meeting my students' desires to work with their peers, I organised weekly lessons for learners to share, discuss and edit their writing. Unable to address my students' concern of demonstrating their writing skills in a different manner, I gave them the additional opportunity of presenting their work orally. The results of the adjustments are displayed in Table 6.2.

6.5.1 Results

Table 6.2
Post Assessment

Statement	Agree	Disagree
1) I understand how my assessment will be marked	95%	5%
2) Ms D explains the rubric clearly	95%	5%
3) I now have more time to complete assessments	90%	10%
4) We can also do an oral assessment piece	100%	0%
5) Ms D provides an 'A' exemplar and explains it	100%	0%
6) Ms D explains the assessment answers to the class	95%	5%
7) Ms D gives me 1:1 feedback about my assessment	100%	0%
8) Ms D uses written codes to provide feedback	100%	0%
9) I can peer edit my assessment	100%	0%
10) I can decide NOT to have my work displayed	100%	0%
11) We do a lot of assessment in class	50%	50%
12) How can Ms D improve assessment?	75% nothing	25% more time

6.5.2 Analysis - implemented changes

In teaching explicitly, scholars have frequently emphasised the importance of students knowing how they will be assessed (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hammond et al., 2015; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009). As an effective teacher, I have adapted our assessment routine to include child friendly rubrics, making the task clearer by

clarifying the language used so that the students know exactly what it is they are required to do. Osborne (2001) makes frequent reference to working at an unhurried pace. For this very reason, I now disregard the recommended assessment timeframe, and instead allow my students to guide me based on their EALD needs (Hammond et al., 2015).

Rahman (2013) spoke of schools being inflexible in their approach and this, she stipulated, is not conducive to Indigenous learning outcomes. One of my biggest tensions is not being able to alter the English assessment task, which is always in the form of a written essay, despite the literature acknowledging that learners should be able to demonstrate their learning in a multitude of ways (Barnes, 2000; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013). I have tried to overcome this tension by allowing my students to demonstrate their English skills in two different ways. While one style must be written, students now have the additional option of also presenting orally. However, what I did discover in this trial was that students rarely took up this opportunity. When I questioned this, the general consensus was that they regarded this assessment as an extra task that they had to do. They stated that it would have been preferable to have had the choice between the written or oral mode for delivering the task.

Zacharias (2007) was mindful of the fact that providing feedback individually can be time consuming, and yet I have come to value its importance in advancing my students in their learning. Archer and Hughes (2011) and Hammond et al. (2015) spoke of effective practitioners scaffolding the learning. I now provide extra scaffolding by using written codes on my students' work. This gives students an additional opportunity to edit their work more closely before handing in their completed version. Despite the enthusiasm of some researchers for displaying data prominently in classrooms (Archer

& Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009), I am sceptical, because some of my students revealed in our last YC that they are clearly uncomfortable with this process. In respecting my students' cultural preferences, avoiding shame or embarrassment, as Osborne (2001) recommended, they now get the choice to say no.

6.5.3 Transformation - of self

As each teaching year passes, I feel that my workload increases. The pressure to perform and produce results is rising. Wisehart (2004) cautioned that schools have become impervious to any consideration of how students learn. In the process, I feel that the fundamental issues that concern students have become neglected. If it were not for this journey, would I have taken the time to consider my learners' needs? I think not. I think, like many teachers, I have been preoccupied with the mandates placed upon me and the pressure to perform at the expense of my students' learning. I too have been guilty of negligence.

Nevertheless, I have taken a stance by choosing to embark upon this journey. Engaging in critical reflection, as Sellars (2014) described, is the purposeful and deliberate act of reflecting upon one's practice and taking action. Through such critical awareness, I have been able to contemplate and respond to some of my students' needs, ultimately propelling me to consider and find alternative options in my EI teaching. I now believe that explicit teaching has many advantages, but I feel that it should not be regarded as an exclusive approach to teaching which, I contend, is the current mindset in the TS. As Heward (2003) remarked, there is no single method of teaching that is without error. What is more, I would suggest that teachers who are faced with the directive of teaching explicitly, approach the model with caution, challenging what is, with a view to changing their practice as Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) noted. This

is even more important for teachers of Indigenous learners, who face the additional challenge of navigating the complex cultural interface (Nakata, 2007). This interface is replete with issues such as diverse languages, different ways of knowing and alternative values. Sellars (2014) spoke of teachers who need to experiment in their practice while seeking solutions. It is through such experimentation that I have found some answers to meet my students' needs. Forcing myself to think creatively, I discovered that change is possible. The result is that assessment procedures, in our classroom, are now more manageable.

Despite my new-found optimism, I still feel burdened by the vast quantity of assessment that teachers are expected to present and evaluate, and I question its genuine purpose. While I value some styles of assessment, I remain doubtful about the amount and frequency of it. I actually feel that I am simply complying with assessment demands to add to the ever-increasing production of data. One has to question, as Wisheart (2004) did, if this is happening to the detriment of more valuable, enjoyable learning experiences? I am also totally unconvinced, given the unique learning context of the islands, that there should be only one style of assessment. Similarly to my critical friend, I feel that my learners should be able to demonstrate their capabilities in a multitude of ways (Barnes, 2000). By not affording them such opportunities I claim the system is failing their needs.

Given that the responses demonstrate that my students are satisfied with most aspects of our assessment routine, I turn to examine my students' fourth concern, our class dynamics (KE4).

6.6 Key Element Four, Introduction

Cycle one revealed that in order to meet my students' needs, they wanted me to consider class dynamics. Through further analysis, in cycle two, my students informed me that they wished to work more closely with their peers in English. In being responsive, I chose to deviate from the EI model norm of working individually, and instead organised one day per week of cooperative learning, a practice commonly endorsed in the literature (Allen, 2006; De Jong & Hawley, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1990). The groups were organised so that I taught explicitly in part, but for the most part students worked cooperatively, focusing on social skills. In this present cycle, I engaged in conversation to determine how my learners felt about their experience. The results are presented in Table 6.3.

6.6.1 Results

Table 6.3
Post Cooperative Learning

Statement	Agreement (%)		
1) My learning in a group was	Less 30%	More 20%	Same 50%
2) What difficulties did you have working in a group?	Noise/talking 90%	Other 10%	
3) What did you enjoy about working in your group?	Sharing ideas 85%	Other 15%	
4) I think group work should be used:	Sometimes 45%	Always 55%	Never
5) For future groups I would like to work	With my friends 70%	In a same sex group 30%	
6) For future groups, I would like to work in:	A mixed ability group 55%	In an ability group 45%	
7) Overall, I found working in a group	Positive 85%	Negative 15%	
8) Which of the following skills do you think you can learn by working in a group?	a) <u>working together</u> b) listening e) encouraging others	c) <u>helping each other</u> d) <u>sharing ideas</u> f) <u>checking answers</u>	
9) Name ONE place where you would be able to use the social skill learnt	Group, community, school		
10) I could work with my group in the independent activity (YOU DO)	True 100%		
11) We should do _____ cooperative learning in class.	More 85%	Less 15%	
12) How could Mrs D improve cooperative learning groups?	75% Different groups		

6.6.2 Analysis - working as a team

The benefits of working cooperatively have widely been acknowledged in the literature (Allen, 2006; De Jong & Hawley, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1990) and if organised well, can promote the learning of important social skills, as Slavin (1987) indicated. Supporters of constructivism exhorted that, as knowledge is socially constructed, it is vital that students have ample opportunities to interact and share ideas in this way (Clements & Battista, 1990; Gray, 1997). However, this style of teaching has been challenged, particularly by those who claim it is a teacher's job to direct the learning (Clark et al., 2012; Lindsay, 2014; Rowe, 2006). Such advocates have maintained that minimal guidance simply does not work. Others, however, argued that constructivist approaches actually demand considerable teacher skill, dedication and deep knowledge of the subject area (Lida et al., 2012; Sanaa, 2006).

From a teacher's perspective, given the extent to which I am directed to adopt an explicit approach, I found organising the groups somewhat challenging. Indeed, Slavin (1987) described this style of teaching as a skill to be mastered. Despite the fact that the students were used to working together in the community, initially, working cooperatively in a class environment posed some challenges. I think this stemmed purely from the fact that the students are accustomed to working individually, as is the EI norm, in school. The students' progress was further hindered by the fact that I felt I could only use group work on a limited basis. Another consideration would have to be teaching the content explicitly and also including the teaching of social skills, for as I discovered it was easy to focus on the former, but in the process, the latter was either omitted, or it became an add-on to the lesson, rather than being deeply ingrained. It is apparent from the data generated that I did not master this.

6.6.3 Transformation – student preferences

Since the start of my EI journey I have, like my first critical friend, regretted the fact that cooperative learning no longer appears to have a valid place in classrooms. The drive for student outcomes delivered through a brisk pace of instruction has taken precedence over learning, which requires students to interact, communicate and negotiate. I have always regarded the sole emphasis on academic, competitive and individual learning, driven by the delivery of EI, as a lost opportunity. The reality is particularly stark in my current teaching situation, given that opportunities to interact orally are already sparse, and yet absolutely necessary if my EALD students are to have any success in improving their linguistic skills, as scholars have concluded (Hammond et al., 2015; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001).

In reflecting on the achievements and challenges of working cooperatively over the duration of this term, I have come to comprehend aspects of my teaching more clearly. Foremost, by denying my students opportunities to work together, I feel that I have failed them. Not only have I failed to acknowledge their sense of self by more selectively matching the school with their familiar home environment, as is often stated (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Osborne, 2001; Rahman, 2013), but also vital social skills have not been learned. As well, opportunities to enhance critical thinking skills and decision making capabilities through working cooperatively have slipped away, and yet these skills are revered by effective teachers (Hattie, 2012; Kuhn, 2007). Indeed, De Jong and Hawley (1995) criticised teachers who do not use groups for this very purpose. If I am to enable my students to experience success in their learning (KE5) I have to prepare them for society by creating such opportunities.

I feel weighted down by this knowledge. I deeply resent the expectation that learning should 'look' and 'feel' a particular way. It is almost an unspoken demand. The EI teaching focus is dismissing other viable learning styles. Yet on the whole, despite some initial frustrations and on-going struggles, my students have benefitted from our cooperative learning experiences. Have I too become a pawn in this charade of education? Do I too have to play the schooling game, which Wisehart, (2004) critically documented? I feel suffocated by the lack of autonomy I possess. My professionalism appears to hold little value, unless I am disposed to take on the data challenge.

The next section discussed embedding TSI perspectives into learning, KE5.

6.7 Key Element Five, Introduction

Cycle one revealed that my students wished to feel successful at school, particularly in English (KE5). In cycle two, I discovered that they determined this success by embedding their Islander values into our learning. This meant involving the community too, as was revealed by the previous YC. Embracing community values is something that responsive practitioners strive for as they endeavour to match school and home structures (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Osborne, 2003; Rahmen, 2013) and this is something I have tried to embed into the English curriculum. In a student dialogue, I discussed the initiatives I had implemented. The results are displayed in Table 6.4.

6.7.1 Results

Table 6.4
Examination of Language for Learning texts

Statement		Agreement	
1. The texts were relevant	Always	Sometimes 75%	Never 25%
2. I enjoyed the texts	Always	Sometimes 75%	Never 25%
3. The class English activities were	Difficult 25%	Just right 65%	Easy 10%
4. Ms D broke down the texts to help me learn	Agree 100%	Disagree	
5. Ms D told stories about the text to help me understand	Agree 100%	Disagree	
6. What was your favourite English text?	My favourite text was		Why was this your favourite text?
7. We sometimes took our learning out into the community	Agree 100%	Disagree	
8. The community came into our classroom	Agree 100%	Disagree	
9. 9) Name the types of texts you would like to read about			
10. The oral activities should be	One week 55%	Two weeks 45%	

6.7.2 Analysis – topic relevancy

The results generated from the data are disconcerting both for my students and my teaching. In my students' views, the curriculum texts, although specifically chosen

for EALD learners, lack relevancy, meaningfulness and enjoyment. I question who, at the macro-level, has decided on the unit content and lament that they appear out of touch with my students' preferences. These are some of the fundamental necessities, which CRP advocates, (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Nakata, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) have deemed as effective, responsive practices. Why, as Gay (2010) requested, are more culturally relevant and appropriate materials not used? Is there, perhaps, a lack of these and if so, why are Indigenous peoples not encouraged to develop their own resources? Could this be due to the fact that, historically, in Islander cultures print was rarely used as a means of communication and the preference was for oral means of transferring information, as Nakata (1995) reminded us? Even if specific Indigenous texts are not available, why, as Perrone (1994) urged, has deeper thought not been given to the English content topic and relevancy? I ponder, too, why the curriculum developers, if supposedly working in the best interests of Indigenous students, have placed such a limited focus on oral needs? The overriding message, as Nakata (2011) himself expressed, is that the needs of Indigenous learners are only being met superficially. The dominant voice continues to be driven by Western values.

6.7.3 Transformation – adjustment

At the micro-level, I have had many successes in meeting my students' needs, as is demonstrated by the dialogue results. Specifically, given an English unit that was relevant and meaningful, I made significant adjustments to the delivery of it (See Appendix X). However, the problem which looms, I realise, is so much greater than merely the text topic and relevancy. The issue is, as I view it, is that the entire English curriculum is the same curriculum endorsed by the dominant culture, reflecting the values and beliefs of the dominant culture, accessed by the so called privileged non-Indigenous students of the dominant culture.

In this regard, I am beginning to feel a sense of despair. Like Osborne (2001), I feel that I am working solo, faced with the mammoth challenge of instigating change single handedly. Responsive advocates (Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) have maintained that teachers are wanting and willing to change, but I contend, similarly to Nakata (2011), that they need to be supported in this regard. For change to occur, it has to come from the macro-level, from national policies and documents. Moreover, essential that Indigenous peoples must be involved in this process or the cycle of decisions being made on 'their behalf' perpetuates itself. I continue to ponder 'who is benefitting from the present educational system?' Further, 'who is being silenced?' I question 'how exactly' can my TSI students be given a voice to be liberated from an educational system whose decisions have predominantly been made by the white man? How, as Nakata (2011) suggests, can non-Indigenous peoples view the Indigenous community in a manner that does not simplify them, but rather that acknowledges the complexity of their heritage? Clear, in adopting a transformative, critical lens, the questions are being asked, but I wonder to what extent, they will be answered?

Somewhat disillusioned, I discuss some of my feelings pertaining to the English program with my mentorship group who reminded me of the adjustments I have made and how this has contributed, in their eyes, to my students' learning. In particular, I have had many successes this year because I have made the decision to deviate from the EI model by: extending our learning beyond our classroom and out into the community; allowing students to have opportunities to work with their peers; including more oral opportunities; providing support in assessment tasks and by offering supplementary ways to be assessed. The support from my cultural mentorship group offers me some

reassurance. At the micro-level, I feel that I have done everything possible to adjust my practice in resolving my students' concerns.

With this thought, I now close the chapter in journal entry seven.

6.8 Journal Entry Seven

In bringing this interrogation and enactment cycle to a close I reflect on the progress I have made from my students' perspectives.

6.8.1 Reflection - a sense of success

The academic year is drawing to a close. I breathe a sigh of immense satisfaction, for in the minds of my students, as indicated throughout this cycle, my quest to represent them and to value learning as they desire, has been successful. I recall at the start of the year I regarded the task of adjusting the EI model to meet my students' needs in English as overwhelming. In cycle one, watching my critical friend teach and realising that my interpretation of the model had been too literal, too rigid, was a crucial turning point on this journey. Further, by reflecting on the feedback provided by my HOC about my teaching, also in cycle one, I was given a starting point to engage in adjustment of my practice. Responsive scholars (Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) have demanded that such adjustment is vital, because the EI model, in its pure form, was hindering my Islander students' performance.

Through collaborative enquiry and discussion with my critical friends, cultural mentorship group, and my students, my teaching has undergone transformation. These professional dialogues have enabled me to comprehend the meaning of responsiveness. My pedagogy has evolved throughout the three cycles. My drive, determination and

perseverance have enabled me to progress the study, seeking alternative solutions where possible. As Sellars (2014) stated, through scrutiny and reflection of my teacher self, I have become adept in making informed decisions, feeling empowered in the process. I am a different person, a different teacher.

6.8.2 Analysis – achievement

Despite my frustrations at the macro-level, I feel extremely proud of my achievements at the micro-level. Throughout the year, I have critically reflected on my teaching to develop my knowledge and understanding of my Islander students in their unique context. I have socially reconstructed how I view myself, my students, my teaching and our learning as Sellars (2014) advised teachers to do. This has occurred amid the complexity of the cultural interface. At the micro-level, I have resolved many shortcomings in the educational system, in order to give my learners access to quality teaching. I know this because my students' responses in this cycle have told me I have adapted my practice to meet their needs.

Specifically, adjustments include: learning which is broken down; sufficient teacher questions, examples and adjusted pace. In the independent activity students have more time to attempt the extension task and choices are available to those who complete this. Overall, students comprehend what the purpose of the plough back is. Feedback is more deeply embedded into our learning, as is the consistency and delivery of it. All of these practices are deemed indicative of effective teaching practices (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hattie, 2012; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Lindsay, 2014; Rowe, 2006).

The Big Write program (Andrell Education, 2017) has been immensely successful, as is demonstrated by the writing samples and the fact that students are now able to speak Creole in class as they desire (KE2). Assessment procedures have been

facilitated because students now have more time; they are able to peer edit their work; the actual task is clearer; they have the additional option of presenting orally, partially meeting their needs to demonstrate their learning in different ways as scholars have suggested (Barnes, 2000; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Hammond et al., 2015). Students can choose not to have their work displayed in our classroom, saving shame or embarrassment, as Osborne (2001) recommended (KE3). Cooperative learning has, for the most part, worked well with students indicating their preference to work more often in groups (Slavin, 1987) and acquire social skills (KE4). In responding to my students' final concern (KE5), I have had some success in embedding TSI perspectives by choosing to either deviate from or supplement parts of the curriculum, as scholars have acknowledged (Aoki, 2012; Lewthwaite et al., 2014a).

I came to the TS as an experienced teacher, believing I could make a difference. Within a short time of arriving on the island I realised, if I were to make such a difference, I had to choose. Was I going to adhere to the principles of the EI directive, in compliance with the data agenda (Mills & McGregor, 2014) as required by the Education Department, or was I going to represent the students, by empowering them as Gay (2010) preferred, working collaboratively with them as Nakata (2011) proposed? I chose the latter because I had a burning desire to give my students, who are geographically remotely located, who do not speak English as their native language, who politically, historically and socially have been misunderstood and misrepresented (Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001), opportunities to pursue their own dreams. The tranquillity of our classroom; the responses emanated from this cycle's student conversations; the progress made as evidenced by my students' writing and speaking capabilities, clearly demonstrate some success. These elements combined create in me a sense of having arrived, a sense of having accomplished what I came here to do. I feel

a sense of achievement, for visibly, insofar as my students are concerned, I have adjusted my teaching to become a more effective, culturally responsive practitioner.

6.9 Conclusion

This chapter was the third data results and analysis chapter. In this interrogation and enactment phase, guided by the results yielded in cycle two, I pulled apart the EI model, interrogating its specific elements as I attempted to navigate the tensioned space between EI and CRP. I began the cycle considering the tensioned nature of my work in operating at the cultural interface. As this study was predominantly concerned with meeting my students' needs, I engaged in numerous conversations with them to determine how I could adjust the five elements of the EI model which were causing them concern. This interrogation of the EI model led to multiple phases of enactment. The cycle ended with journal entry seven in which I considered the progress, from my students' perspectives, I had made on this AR journey and the sense of achievement I now felt.

It is clear from the results of this interrogation and enactment cycle that my students are now satisfied with the elements of my EI teaching that I was able to adjust. With this in mind, I move to the final research cycle, the reconnaissance of results phase. Given that I sought feedback from my critical friend in cycle one pertaining to my execution of EI, it seems appropriate and justified that I now seek further affirmation from her of my progress. I want and need my friend to observe my teaching. Not only am I hoping that my critical friend will comment on my EI teaching, as is her mandate, but also, given my journey's significance to the TS community, I sincerely hope that she will also comment upon my transformation as a teacher. What exactly will

she say about my refined delivery of the EI model, and more poignantly what comments will she make pertaining to my success on my journey of cultural responsiveness?

Chapter 7: Data Results and Analysis: Cycle 4

7.1 Introduction

In Chapter Six the third research cycle was presented. In this cycle, based on the findings yielded in the previous cycles, I interrogated the specific elements of the EI model to precisely determine how I could view it from a more responsive mindset and enact it, in addressing my students' five main concerns. In examining my students' needs more closely, my teaching and moreover my thinking underwent transformation, through multiple stages of enactment and adjustment. As this chapter concluded I felt a sense of achievement, because in my students' eyes I had adjusted my EI teaching, being more mindful of their individual requirements.

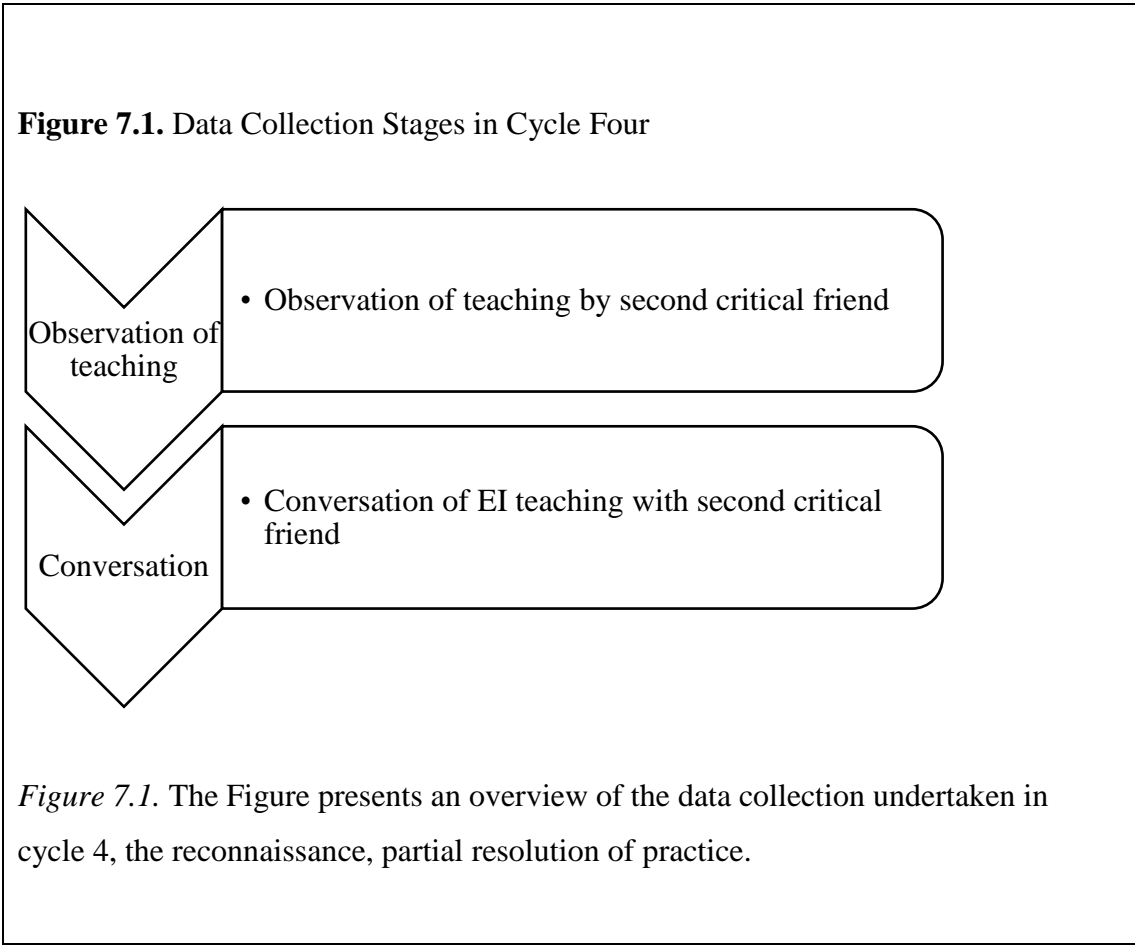
Cycle four, in Chapter Seven, is the final research cycle. Using an observation of my teaching, conducted by my second critical friend as evidence, I experienced complete turmoil as I came to comprehend (Lewin, 1947) that, in the eyes of the Education Department my presumed effective and responsive teaching held little value, and that the dominant teaching approach is clearly EI. That is, my effectiveness as a teacher was determined, not by the responsive practices I had endeavoured to embed into our classroom routine, but disturbingly by a checklist of my compliance to the EI model. It was with this realisation that my own sense of professional satisfaction in adjusting my practice for my students was completely disrupted, and contrary to the aspirations I held about my teaching at the outset of my journey, I arrived at only a partial resolution of my practice.

7.1.1 Organisation of cycle 4

Using this teacher observation as evidence for considering my practice was a defining moment on this AR journey, because it is through the conversation with my

critical friend following my observation, that I experienced a profound sense of disappointment. For, at this precise point on my journey I came to realise that even though I had endeavoured, as a responsive practitioner, to embed the EI model within a more responsive framework, the feedback I received gave clear indication such adjustments were of limited value in the system in which I was employed.

I illustrate the data collection process in Figure 7.1.



7.2 Teacher Observation, Introduction

In cycle one I sought guidance from my second critical friend about the execution of my explicit teaching. This occurred through our school mandated teacher observations, with the purpose of providing constructive feedback to assist students in their learning. Given the experience and expertise of my critical friend, I wanted, in this

concluding cycle, to engage in further collegial conversation to ascertain, after my year's journey in a TS classroom, her perception of my teaching. After receiving positive feedback from my students about my adjusted practice, I was looking forward to finding out what my experienced colleague thought of my responsive teaching. Specifically, how did she view my EI teaching in light of the fact that I had adjusted the model considerably to be more responsive to my Islander students' needs? Particularly, in my critical friend's opinion, had I become a more effective, culturally responsive teacher?

The observation occurred in an English class, which focused on adverbial phrases and lasted 45 minutes. I looked forward to my observation and my HOC's feedback as there were several adjustments to the lesson that evidenced my redefining of the EI model for my students, for example, not following the model sequentially, as prescribed, but alternating between the I DO and WE DO components to facilitate further understanding to support my students' EALD needs. A standard EI checklist was used by HOC (See Appendix Y) to determine my effectiveness in using the pedagogical approach of EI. Due to the fact that the checklist was solely concerned with EI strategies, deemed effective teaching by some scholars (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Lindsay, 2014; Rowe, 2006), I also used a video-recording as evidence of responsive strategies which had become embedded into our class routine.

7.2.1 Conversation

The post-teaching conversation with my critical friend pertaining to the lesson observation is brief and I am reminded again of my HOC's intense schedule. I think these collegial dialogue sessions could potentially be extremely powerful in enabling

teachers to improve their repertoire of skills in becoming more effective practitioners, and yet they are frequently conducted in a very hurried manner.

Whilst the checklist is extremely detailed, I notice, to my dismay, the strategies commented upon are solely those which pay attention to the EI model. Disturbingly, apart from the comments provided in the overall comment box, there is hardly any comment about my endeavour to become a more effective teacher by attending to being a more responsive teacher. My so-called teacher effectiveness has been defined purely by my conformity to EI. I feel bitterly disappointed that my efforts to embed more responsive practices have gone unnoticed in this particular observation. Why has my critical friend not made any specific comments about the many adjustments I have made to my EI teaching to become a more effective teacher? Why am I being judged using a standard checklist which pays solely attention to the EI model, when the requirement of teachers in the TS is ironically also a culturally responsive approach (DET, 2011)? How is it possible that the observation feedback is merely a standard checklist of EI strategies, rather than feedback that is more personalised, adapted to my individual teacher needs and growth as a responsive practitioner? I have attempted, on my journey, to adapt my teaching to be more personalised towards my students, so why is my teacher effectiveness not measured in a similar way?

I am left feeling confused because I know, on a personal level, that my friend has been fully supportive of my journey to become a more responsive educator. In speaking to my critical friend on a more informal level, she is extremely passionate about the school and the students. She often refers to practices deemed responsive practices, so why is it that in a mandated observation, she presents me with a standard observation checklist which gives little acknowledgment to other aspects of my teaching? With reflection, I realise, she is simply following what she is directed to do,

complying with requirements imposed on her from the hierarchy within which we both work.

7.2.2 Analysis - adjusted practice

I take some time to analyse the video-recording. Compared to the two teacher observations in cycle one, it is highly visible that I no longer stick rigidly to the EI model, but rather I use the model more flexibly, more as a guide to delivery. This decision was absolutely crucial, given the context of learning and my students' linguistic demands. More specifically, in analysing this lesson I alternated frequently between the I DO and WE DO components, in order to facilitate the learning. I did not adhere to the brisk pace of instruction, as mandated by the EI model (Archer & Hughes, 2011), but allowed my students' needs to guide me. In respecting my students' needs to expand their lexis, I used a range of vocabulary, endeavouring to explain the meaning. My students were not forced to work in isolation to complete the independent task as is expected, but rather they worked cooperatively with a peer, as they wished, discussing their learning as they did so as Osborne (2001) endorsed. As Bright (2012) advised I made the YOU DO task doable so that all students were able to complete this activity. Moreover, two extension activities were provided, so that the students who finished early could engage in further learning to extend themselves, or were able assist a peer by assuming the role of a buddy helper. Such strategies enabled my students to experience a sense of success in our all-inclusive classroom.

Deviating from the EI norm of positioning myself at the front of the classroom, I circulated regularly, adopting more of a facilitator role, as Lewthwaite et al. (2014b) recommended, assisting students, particularly in the YOU DO task, so that they could experience success. During this teacher movement, frequent feedback was provided to

my students, to guide them in moving forward, heeding the advice that the purposefulness of feedback is essential to learning (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hammond et al., 2015; Hattie, 2012; Strandberg & Lindberg, 2012). In response to my HOC's feedback in cycle one, my instructions were clearer and more concise, enabling all students to get on task.

Throughout the lesson, I engaged in ample explaining, modelling and demonstrations as is required in teaching explicitly, but in embedding responsive practices I considered the context of learning by using personal artefacts and examples. This made the learning both accessible and contextualised, as is commonly referenced in the literature on responsive practices (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Nakata, 2011; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). I used significant checking for understanding, as Hollingsworth and Ybarra (2009) frequently urged, to determine how much of the lesson content my students had comprehended. I notice that when students did not understand, rather than proceed in an untimely manner, I stop, reflect and re-explain. The learning was broken down and scaffolded significantly by using repetition and providing individual assistance. It was crucial to me that my students received this support, because I wanted them to experience success and enjoyment in their learning. The strong teacher-student rapport, which I had made every effort to build, is demonstrated by the minimal off task behaviour and my HOC's personal comments.

So, why is it that I do not feel a sense of elation, or at least a sense of satisfaction in having improved my own teaching? Throughout this study, I have probed, I have questioned, I have scrutinised and reflected upon how I could become a more effective teacher in the eyes of my students. Why then, do I still feel, as Berry (2007) felt, a prevailing sense of unrest? Why am I, despite improving my own teaching, still deeply bothered by the intensity and focus of EI across the school?

CRP scholars have regularly spoken of effective, culturally responsive teachers who adapt their teaching to meet the needs of their learners, considering deeply the students they teach and the learning context (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). On this AR journey, I have attempted to adjust the EI model to meet the needs of my Islander, EALD students. Evidently, as my students' responses demonstrated in cycle three, some elements of this pedagogical approach, once adjusted, have assisted them in their learning. So, how is it that I find myself, despite my genuine care and intent to reconcile my students' concerns, stuck in this EI vortex? As a professional, why am I expected to comply with the EI mandate, without question? I feel my Islander students hold little value in the current educational charade that prioritises data (Mills & McGregor, 2014) over identity. My agenda, however, is not EI and I possess no desire, nor any inclination, to passively comply with this EI directive. Rather, my agenda, as a responsive practitioner is to promote a community of learners, as Wisehart (2004) urged, by nurturing, valuing and respecting my students – that is who they are and who they ultimately aspire to be, as Rahman (2013) frequently mentioned.

The EI approach has a strong presence in the FNQ region, having been chosen by many schools as the preferred teaching methodology. Presently, there seems to be limited flexibility in working with this enforced imposition. Admittedly, there are merits to teaching explicitly, but given the unique context of learning, this pragmatic, prescribed, didactic approach clearly has its limitations, despite the privileged, elevated status it currently holds. Unless teachers are willing to instigate change by challenging the current state of what is in schools, as Nakata (2011) strongly advised, I claim more teachers will become extremely disenchanted with education, as encapsulated by the on-

going tensions outlined in my critical journal reflections. It saddens me immensely to think that the voices of the Islanders are still being silenced and that little appears to have changed since Nakata (1994) voiced his own concerns. Further, despite the rich, cultural heritage of Australia's First Peoples, from whom, I believe, many valuable lessons could be learned, the present Australian educational system, with its retrograde agenda, continues to disadvantage those in society who obviously need it the most.

7.2.3 Transformation – partial resolution of practice

I did not envisage feeling such a sense of angst and frustration at my journey's end. I certainly did not foresee arriving at only a partial resolution of my practice. In endeavouring to become a more effective responsive teacher, I have made the choice to adjust the EI model, so that my teaching could become more personalised, meeting the individual needs of my students. Why is it, after my desperate year of turmoil and the relentless passion I have demonstrated in my TS classroom, that my critical friend's main concern is how closely I adhere to the principles of the EI model? Why is it that my refined, readjusted and now responsive approach to teaching explicitly appears, for the most part, to go unnoticed? Why does my critical friend not comment upon my teaching in this formal observation within a more responsive framework, as I have clearly positioned it? Why, in our brief conversation, does the focus of my presumed effective teaching rest solely on EI? How can it be at all possible, despite my persistent efforts to do what I ultimately felt was in the best interest of my learners, that there is scant mention, in the continuum checklist used in the observation, of the actual context of learning and learners' specific needs?

The tensioned zone between EI and CRP which I have desperately attempted to navigate remains severely fractured. I am trapped in the political turmoil of compliance

and response. I want to serve my Islander students by affording them opportunities to adjusted, quality teaching that is also culturally responsive. However, as I have come to understand (Lewin, 1947) the agenda here does not entail the deep embedding of responsive practices, but is an agenda driven by data performance. This agenda dictates everything teachers are instructed to do. I acknowledge that my HOC is simply following her own directive, which is to ensure that teachers adhere to the principles of the EI model. Despite the rhetoric that practitioners must respond to their learners in a culturally responsive manner (DET, 2011), the only sanctioned discourse across the TS region is undoubtedly explicit teaching.

This all-consuming, imposed EI mandate seriously undermines what teachers like me are striving to achieve. The presumption that this is the only way to teach, if left unchallenged, could, I argue, negatively impact upon future generations of learners. Unadjusted, how does the EI way, with its blatant disregard to students' context of learning prepare students to become successful members of society? I am left, at the end of this journey, feeling utterly dismayed by the dire situation in which I find myself. I feel a burning desire to usurp the education system, to cast aside its ethnocentric, white, middle-class values, for these certainly hold no place in the minds of my Islander learners and their community. I am still angered by the prolific focus on data, the biased curriculum and EI model, which forces Islander learners to abandon their own identity and culture (Rahman, 2013), in favour of the ways assumed by the dominant culture (Nakata, 2011).

It appears I have come full circle. I have embarked on a journey of exploration, investigation and enactment, only to find myself back where I originally started. My journey has been an active response to my Islander students' needs, who, I claim, should have access to high quality education. Despite the successes I have experienced,

I question whether the relationship between EI and more responsive practices will ever be reconciled. Teachers in the TS have to confront the dilemmas they will inevitably face. This confrontation begins by taking a decisive stance, for in teaching in this highly complex and tensioned region, there are choices to be made. Along my journey, I have learned that, either practitioners must adopt a responsive mindset by choosing to represent their students and who they clearly are, or they choose to represent the Education Department by placing the unrelenting demand for data at the forefront of their agendas. However, unless there is a decisive change of focus in the mindset of policy makers and educators at the macro-level, and unless other practitioners embark on a journey to initiate change, as I have endeavoured to do, I claim that responsive practices in our schools will remain as simply rhetoric, bound and constrained by the more rigid EI presence.

7.3 Conclusion

This cycle was the final data results and analysis cycle. In this cycle a video-recorded observation of my EI teaching was used to ascertain if I had improved in my execution of EI. Despite the clear improvement made in the delivery of my explicit teaching, I was left frustrated in my quest to be regarded as a more responsive, effective practitioner. As the cycle closes, I reach only a partial resolution of practice, as I came to comprehend (Elliott, 1991; Lewin, 1947) the restrictions placed on my critical friend, and how this impedes her from fully responding to my passionate struggle to become a more effective, yet responsive teacher.

In the next chapter, Chapter Eight, I present the study's findings as I respond to the three research questions posed in Chapter One. I discuss the significance of the study to myself, as a responsive practitioner, to my Islander students, the College and

future teachers considering working in the TS. I also outline the study's limitations, before concluding with an epilogue.

Chapter 8: Findings

8.1 Introduction

In Chapter Seven the final AR cycle was presented. Using an observation of my teaching, I arrived at only a partial resolution of my practice. It became apparent, that despite having adjusted my teaching to meet my students' concerns in cycle three, in the culminating cycle, I experienced complete turmoil. Seeking confirmation of my responsive teaching from my critical friend after my year long journey, I came to comprehend that my responsiveness held little value in my TS classroom where the curriculum agenda was still being determined by those with a vested interest in EI. My compliance and execution of the EI model was the only activity of importance to the Education Department.

The purpose of this present chapter, Chapter Eight, is to reflect upon the study intent, design and outcomes. It responds to the three research questions; identifies implications for professional practice and suggests possibilities for future research.

8.1.1 Organisation of the chapter

First, I summarise the research design, reflecting on why AR was the most suitable methodology for this study. Second, I present the study's findings, answering the three research questions posed in Chapter One. Third, I conclude the thesis by considering the study's implications both for myself as a reflective practitioner and for my students. Directions and suggestions for further study are also discussed.

8.2 Research Design

This was an AR study based on a transformative, critical paradigm (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). AR was deemed the most suitable methodology for this project

because I sought to question my own practice, through critical inquiry, with a view to initiating change and transforming aspects of it (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Lacey, 2006; O'Brien, 1998), in order to address the concerns my students held about my EI teaching. Moreover, through this journey, I sought to bring about change in my thinking, especially how I considered my practice within the complex space in which I work. Highly dissatisfied and frustrated with my first year of teaching as an experienced practitioner in the TS, I chose to embark on a journey to challenge the imposed EI mandate and, more significantly, to question its purpose and its implications for my EALD Islander students.

I achieved this through intense, critical reflection as Berry (2007) suggested, and purposeful, deliberate action (Sellars, 2014), which led me to interrogate the EI directive. I problematised my teaching as is advised (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010) by making it transparent, so that my learners, through our conversations, could evaluate, critique and provide me with valuable feedback about how I taught, with a view to adjusting my practice. Ultimately, I endeavoured, on my journey, to determine how I could become a more effective teacher, adhering to the principles outlined by EI (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Fleming, 2015; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Lindsay, 2014), but also responding to my Islander students' concerns in a culturally responsive manner (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). To this end, I began by prioritising the context of learning and my students' needs before the demands of the curriculum, enabling my students to learn successfully.

This AR study comprised four cycles. In each cycle, as Elliott (1991) described, I experienced reconnaissance, as I came to understand myself and my practice more clearly within the realms of the complex, political, tensioned cultural interface (Nakata,

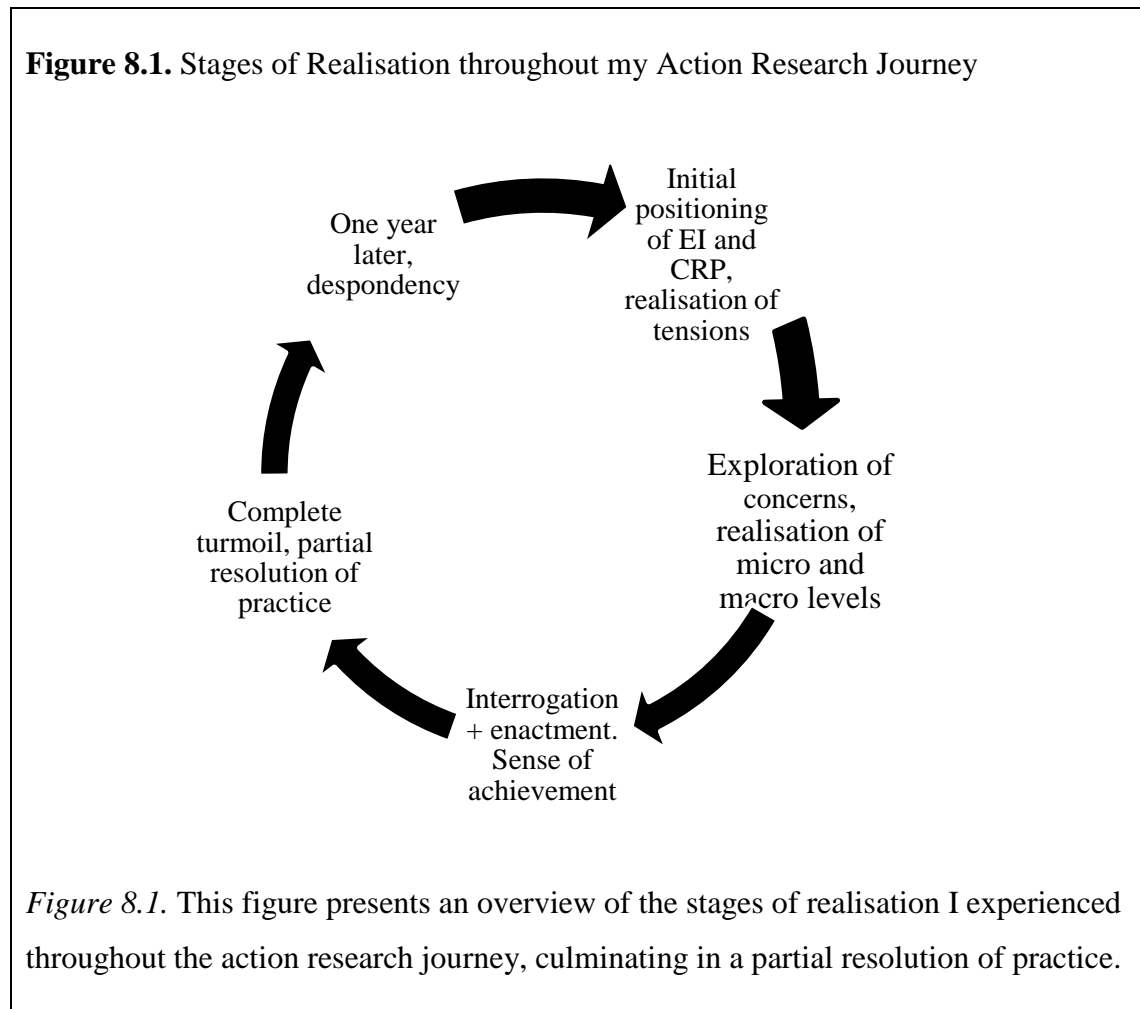
2007) in which I operate. In cycle one, the goals and means phase, I outlined my unease as I documented my initial tensions pertaining to how I envisaged the dual imperatives of EI and CRP. In this cycle, I described the research, also identifying the main concerns my students held about my teaching. It was clear from this introductory cycle that my struggle was endeavouring to comprehend what 'responsiveness' exactly entailed.

Cycle two was a preliminary exploration of my students' concerns in English using an EI approach. In this cycle, it became evident that I was battling to operate on two distinct levels, the micro- and the macro-level. In this exploration cycle, I came to realise that EI does possess merits, and possibly did not lie in direct opposition to more responsive practices, as I had initially perceived.

In cycle three, the interrogation and enactment stage, I engaged in numerous stages of critical reflection and subsequent action, in which I adapted my explicit teaching, responding to my learners at the micro-level in our classroom. As this cycle ended, I experienced a sense of achievement because in my students' minds and as is demonstrated throughout the dialogues, I had adjusted my teaching sufficiently to meet their needs.

However, my sense of success was abruptly fractured in the culminating cycle, cycle four, as I experienced an evaluation of my change based upon externally imposed criteria. This concluding cycle was damaging to my profound sense of teacher self, for through a mandated teacher observation I learn, in the eyes of the Education Department, that my presumed responsive teaching was of limited 'value'. I returned full circle on my journey of responsiveness, only to be confronted by the paralysing reality that my responsive teaching was only of tokenistic worth to those that represent

the state and clearly lay subordinate to the mandated EI approach as illustrated in Figure 8.1.



8.3 Research Question One

The first research question in this study was:

1. How can a teacher negotiate the pedagogical requirements of policy statements in FNQ? That is, how can a teacher teach in a way that acknowledges the requirements of EI and CRP orientations?

In negotiating the pedagogical requirements of EI and CRP in FNQ, this study found that teachers must both re-address and reposition the current imbalanced

alignment of both orientations. That is, responsive practices must become the priority in TS classrooms, rather than be used superficially, and the EI model must cease to be the dominant and unquestioned voice, as currently stands. This is not to suggest that the EI model is replaced entirely, but rather, as the student commentaries in this research revealed, its elements must be utilised and adjusted according to the needs of students and it must be implemented more flexibly and responsively.

Second, as part of this negotiation and in being more responsive, rather than simply being an 'effective' teacher, teachers must place students' needs and the learning context before the mandated curriculum requirements, EI method and present data agenda because, it is fundamental to the success of students that practitioners foreground teacher-student relationships with consideration to the actual learning context, as is commonly referenced (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). Teachers must dispel the perception that the EI model, with its intense focus on academic gain in its raw, unchallenged format, paying scant regard to the actual learning context, is an acceptable and viable means of educating Islander students. Further, in negotiating the pedagogical requirements, teachers need to consider how they will respect the values of the community and work with them, demonstrating sincerity in their actions. This consideration is critical, as this study revealed, to establishing the rapport teachers must have with their TSI students. In classrooms devoid of robust teacher-student relationships, teachers position themselves and their students to fail.

Third, teachers of Islander students must adjust their teaching, with which I experimented and as Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) endorsed. Throughout this study, I reshaped and remoulded the EI model (KE1) to align more closely with my students' needs. Specifically, in being responsive, I rejected the mandate to work at a

brisk pace as EI advocates advised (Archer & Hughes, 2011), deciding instead to work in a more unhurried manner as Osborne (2001) suggested. This enabled students to have more task time and time to code switch, as Perso (2012) recommended. It is vital that the learning is broken down substantially, scaffolded, using the think-aloud process, modelling, demonstrations and repetition, with clear learning goals, succinct feedback and checking for understanding. Such strategies are widely acknowledged in the literature as being indicative of effective teaching practices (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Fleming, 2014; Hammond et al., 2015; Hattie, 2012; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Lindsay, 2014; Smith, 2001). However, in introducing more culturally effective, responsive practices, it is preferable that educators ground the learning in the local context by also using personal artefacts, examples and local resources, reflecting and valuing the community's aspirations (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001). Further, teachers ought not to follow the EI model rigidly per se, but deviate from its sequential format, as I did and as suggested by my critical friend, alternating between its components to accommodate diverse learner needs. In reconciling the two pedagogical requirements of EI and CRP, teachers must adapt the EI model to enable students to work collaboratively with their peers in independent tasks, enabling them to monitor their own work, increasing, as Black (2004) reported, their chances of success. Bright (2012) spoke of engaged learning and this study demonstrated that teachers can provide a variety of extension tasks at the appropriate level in the YOU DO section which are contextualised and meaningful to enhance on task engagement.

Finally, by adjusting the EI model to be more responsive and not just demonstrating attributes of a 'good' teacher, as was described in the critical journal reflections, practitioners must choose to be advocates for their students, not for the

Education Department. This advocacy is vital in an educational system which continues to assert Western nationalistic goals over Indigenous community aspirations. Teachers, at times, may choose to reject the authoritative role of direct teaching methods, in preference for more cooperative approaches, as some scholars advocated (Allan, 2006; De Jong & Hawley, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Slavin, 1987). This may inevitably lead to teachers deviating from, supplementing or changing the curriculum, as Lewthwaite et al. (2014a) suggested, prioritising the curriculum-as-lived above that which is planned (Aoki, 2012).

8.4 Research Question 2

The second research question in this study was:

2. What are the guiding principles and practices that effective teachers can adopt in their classrooms which will best meet the needs of their Torres Strait Islander students?

This study revealed that in meeting the needs of Islander students, teachers can adopt certain principles and specific practices to ensure the success of their learners. As has often been identified in the literature on responsive teaching practices (Gay, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) teachers must be willing to place their own needs second to those of the students they serve. They must, in debunking the prevailing myth that Western ways are superior, as Bishop and Glynn (1999) recommended, choose to fully represent their learners, and this must be the underlying principle of everything teachers do in their classrooms. In order to reduce the inequity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous outcomes, teachers must respect and nurture students' values and those of their respective communities. The desires of the minority culture, in this study's case, TSI, must be given priority. Practitioners must begin with a mindset that is committed

to establishing robust teacher-student relationships as CRP scholars have demanded (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Nakata, 2011; Rychly & Graves, 2012; Taylor & Sobel, 2011), and such relationships must precede learning, rather than being an afterthought, built on genuine care (Savage et al., 2011) and deep trust. Without this, teachers, as I experienced, will fail, for Islander students need educators who genuinely want to be there for them, supporting their self-determined aspirations, rather than teachers who are there for their own personal gain, disposed to follow a prescribed mandated curriculum, unchallenged.

This study also revealed that educators strive, where possible, to match school and home structures, acknowledging their learners' identities, as is widely advocated (Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2014b; Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2001; Rahman, 2013). This inevitably means that all learning must be contextualised, drawing on local resources, reaffirming, rather than negating community values (Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). Teachers, as Bishop and Berryman (2010) and Walker (2010) described, must reject deficit theorising, which only serves the purpose of dismissing the cultural aspirations of minority groups and further widening the achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Rahman (2013) pointed out that the nuances of school life present challenges for those who are not from the dominant culture. As this study suggests, teachers and the school system in general, need to adopt a more flexible approach in this respect, so that students do not feel compelled to reject their own identity in favour of the school's. This prioritising is essential in order to assist students in accessing the English curriculum as EALD learners, reducing the disconnection between Island and school life.

Teachers must also be willing to initiate change, but more significantly they must recognise that they are the key instigators in enacting change by holding high student expectations (Gay, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2011), for as this study revealed, students clearly want to learn (KE1). This means that practitioners need to assume a decisive stance in valuing students as individuals, not for the academic outcomes they may achieve (Mills & McGregor, 2014). It is critical that educators approach the present curriculum, which is predominantly based on white, middle-class values, with extreme caution, and strive to respect Islander ways of knowing and doing as Nakata (2001, 2011) and Osborne (2001) proposed. This is possible, as this study has shown, if non-Indigenous teachers acknowledge that they come from the dominant culture and they use this to the advantage of their students, not to their disadvantage. Learning, as the student conversations revealed, must be extended beyond academic achievement and beyond the classroom, based upon students' cultural strengths.

This study found that students held concerns about many aspects of the EI model (KEs). I learned that there are specific practices that teachers can adopt in meeting Islander students' needs. It is essential that teachers do not disregard or underestimate students' linguistic needs because as this study found students wanted to be recognised and treated as EALD learners (KE2). As was frequently noted in the responses, students are "proud" of their cultural heritage. Effective, responsive teachers have to adopt the practice of providing substantial support to improve students' English writing skills, but not to do this at the expense of their oral skills. Rather, they provide opportunities to communicate in English, even if this means deviating from the curriculum (Aoki, 2012) and EI's focus on the written mode. Effective teachers ignore the policy of Standard Australian English only and engage in the practice of enabling students to converse in their first language (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Osborne, 2001) as a means of

clarifying concepts and ideas in English. This practice ought to be embedded into the daily classroom routine, instead of the current trend of viewing students' use of Creole in a negative light.

Effective, responsive teachers do not engage in the practice of setting students up to fail, by forcing them to complete the mandated assessment tasks in isolation, the EI way (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009). Instead, they scaffold assessment tasks (KE3), providing ample teacher direction, enabling students to peer edit each other's work, thus acknowledging learning preferences, as Barnes (2000) encouraged. Effective, responsive teachers devise their own child friendly rubrics, so that students know exactly what is required of them. They offer assessment alternatives, such as presenting orally, as I did, meeting students' needs to be assessed in a multitude of ways. In order to avoid shame or embarrassment, effective teachers in the TS do not fill their classroom walls with data, as is the EI norm (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009), but they avoid spotlighting (Osborne, 2001), instead providing students with a choice as to whether their results are posted or not.

Third, this study revealed that effective practitioners should not necessarily follow the EI practice of students working individually and competitively. At times, effective teachers engage in cooperative learning (KE4), allowing students to work successfully with their peers, acknowledging the many benefits of learning in this way (Allan, 2006; De Jong & Hawley, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Slavin, 1987). They teach students social and life skills (Kuhn, 2007; Taylor & Sobel, 2011), rather than focusing solely on skills required to complete classroom tasks.

Teachers must strive to embed Islander values into learning (Nakata, 2011), because adopting this practice allows students to determine their own success (KE5). As

a precautionary measure, however, non-Indigenous teachers must, as I did, realise their own limitations regarding Indigenous knowledge and be willing to utilise and draw on the resources of the community to assist them in this endeavour. The learning has to be contextualised, meaningful and relevant (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011), so that Islander students can understand the content being presented to them.

8.5 Research Question 3

The third research question in this study was:

3a. What pedagogical tensions does a teacher experience in a TSI classroom?

In this study, it became clear as I progressed through the research cycles, that I was operating on two different levels. At the micro-level, in my classroom, I experienced many successes, as is demonstrated in the student dialogues and conversations held with my support network. However, at the macro-level, it is apparent that in navigating the policy documents to teach my Islander students explicitly, and yet responsively, as is mandated (DET, 2011), I encountered significant tensions (Berry, 2007; Sellars, 2014) and it was evident in the culminating cycle that many of the tensions remained unreconciled.

My gravest dilemma was balancing the imposed EI mandate with a CRP orientation. Despite the progress made in accommodating elements of both styles, this space remained visibly tensioned, because the EI model was clearly positioned as the dominant teaching methodology. This made embedding responsive practices somewhat superficial, as Nakata (2001) commented. This tension was heightened as the study drew to a close and I came full circle on my journey of responsiveness. It is in this defining moment that I came to understand that, despite the struggles I had endured to

become a more effective, responsive teacher, and in spite of the fact that responsive practices are indeed mandated (DET, 2011; Queensland Government, 2000), my effectiveness in teaching was determined solely by my compliance in teaching explicitly, while my responsiveness was virtually ignored.

In trying to reconcile the two opposite teaching approaches, I experienced a deep sense of unrest as I came to doubt my own teacher identity, as did Berry (2007). Many educational decisions were made on my behalf, by those far removed from my context of learning (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). This occurred despite being an experienced and suitably qualified practitioner. Often, I felt that such decisions were made without consideration of my students' best interests, and this is also evident in the student commentaries. I wanted to serve my students by doing what I intuitively knew was right, but frequently I encountered many obstacles that prevented me from doing so.

Durie (2005) and Nakata (2007) described the cultural interface as complex and problematic. Indeed, in striving to become culturally responsive as a non-Indigenous person, I found working at the cultural interface both intense and perplexing. Despite the guidance of my cultural mentorship group and colleagues, I did not always fully comprehend Indigenous ways of knowing, and this sometimes hindered my ability to adequately respond to my learners' needs, despite my genuine desire to do so. Initially something of an enigma, I had to learn independently that responsiveness was not a set of rules or routines to be followed, *per se*, but more aptly was a particular mindset, imbued with a genuine determination and willingness to challenge one's thinking in serving the needs of others. As such, this aspect of the study became more of an exploration of myself and my thinking through reflecting critically on all that I did. However, I often felt that I was working in isolation and this became an extremely personal journey of my own discovery, similarly to Osborne (2001). With hindsight, it

could be said that the actual discovery of responsiveness was the journey, and as such necessitated the exploration that I experienced, albeit in isolation.

In striving to address my learners' concerns (KEs), some tensions remained clearly unreconciled. As a responsive practitioner, I came to despise the unquestioned assumption that the EI way was superior, devaluing in the process other equally valid teaching approaches and preferred styles of learning (KE1). Throughout this study, I felt stifled by the English curriculum (KE2); its frequent lack of relevance and its intense focus on the written mode. The blatant disregard for the use of Creole continues to create tensions for EALD students, who sometimes need their first language to facilitate learning in English (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010; Osborne, 2001; Perso, 2012). I continue to feel completely disheartened by the current educational agenda with its unrelenting focus on academic success and Western ways (KE3) (Mills & McGregor, 2014) which is, I claim, operating to the detriment of embedding more culturally responsive values. Assessment tensions were not fully resolved in my classroom because my Islander students expressed their desire to demonstrate their capabilities in other ways (Barnes, 2000; Perso, 2012). Although I did engage in cooperative learning, as my students requested (KE4), this was always tensioned because of the EI expectancy for students to adhere to the EI model, working individually (Archer & Hughes, 2011). Thus, I felt extremely pressurised to use cooperative learning on a restricted basis, despite most of my students wanting to work in this manner more frequently. Even though the teaching of English in the TS uses a specific program designed for EALD learners, tensions were evident because my students found the prescribed texts often either lacked relevance or did not engage them. This made embedding cultural perspectives, especially as a non-Indigenous teacher, into the learning somewhat problematic (KE5).

3b. How do such tensions influence her beliefs and contribute to adjustments in her teaching?

These experienced tensions, I discovered, influence a teacher's beliefs and contribute significantly to adjustments in teaching. I embarked on my journey as an apolitical, not critical practitioner and yet, I learned, to my surprise that if I were to serve my Islander students I had, by necessity to become more politically aware and critical of an educational system that continues to prioritise Western values. Nakata (1995) cautioned that TSIs must be exposed to Western ways, values and knowledge so that, in the broader social context, students can engage successfully with their Western counterparts. I agree, but would also suggest that a balance between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems need to be reconciled, for presently the minimal representation of Indigenous knowledge in the curriculum is hindering Islanders in successfully accessing Western knowledge, and this is reason to be of concern.

Primarily, it is my belief and experience that if teachers do not adjust their practice, as Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) recommended, and simply teach the way they are used to, they will experience failure, for Islander students have specific, alternative needs in their unique learning context that must be met for them to experience success. Teachers have to begin with the context of learning, refusing to focus exclusively on academic success. It is essential that they make allowances in their teaching for the fact that Islander children speak EALD (Nakata, 2011). Using the strategies already explained, teachers need to make the learning accessible and personal.

Practitioners cannot teach or deliver the curriculum uncritically as it is, because it its present format many aspects of it lack meaning, relevance and accessibility, making it extremely challenging for Islander students to comprehend. Rather,

practitioners must carefully consider the curriculum-as-planned and adjust it to meet their learners' needs. In order to make the learning meaningful teachers must begin with the belief that the context is the embarkation point of all learning. For students to understand the curriculum, the context has to be deeply considered; prior knowledge needs to be activated (Gay, 2010; Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009; Rosenshine, 2012) and local resources must be utilised. Subsequently, it must be delivered in a manner that nurtures TSIs as EALD learners. This latter point is crucial because, presently a blatant disregard still exists for students as multi-lingual and multi-cultural learners.

Given the remoteness of the islands and the significance and value the Islanders give to their own culture, teachers venturing to the TS must challenge the belief that the dominant culture is superior (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Nakata, 2001; Osborne, 2001). Teachers, in working cooperatively with students and communities, must extend their teaching beyond the classroom, immersing themselves in island ways (Perso, 2012). They should not regard this involvement in community life as separate from their teaching role, but as an essential component of that role.

However, despite the findings of this study, I am not suggesting like Pearson (2011), that an 'entire overhaul' of the present educational system be considered, for as Nakata (1995) rightly cautioned, in order for TSIs to survive socially, politically and economically, they need legitimate access to both their own knowledge system and that which values Western knowledge. It is important that learners have access to both systems in order to enable Islanders to express themselves as they wish to be perceived, without fear of being misunderstood or misrepresented by their Western counterparts. Further, as this study has implied, EI does possess many merits. However, as a precautionary measure, teachers need to use this approach more flexibly and from a more critical stance. More specifically, teachers need to reject the EI model as it is

presented to them and question 'how' the model and the curriculum can be adjusted to meet the needs of learners who are EALD and whose context of learning needs to be prioritised over the content of learning.

8.6 Implications of the Study

Relatively few studies involving TSI students have been conducted in this region (Barnes, 2000; Chigeza, 2010). This study adds to the limited body of knowledge of TSI experiences in the classroom, and goes some way to addressing this knowledge gap in the current literature. Following this study, it is suggested that changes be made as to how teachers in the region are directed to teach (KE1). This study is not suggesting that the EI model be abandoned or replaced, but rather that it would be more useful to Islander students if the model were used with a less rigid mindset and enacted approach. In determining student success, teachers in the TS must adapt their EI teaching to respond to their students' needs more responsively. This is non-negotiable.

In the light of this study's finding TSI needs and community imperatives may be more appropriately met in future. The fact that students speak EALD should not be viewed from a deficit viewpoint (Walker, 2010). Rather, as Nakata (2011) suggested, English needs to be taught as an additional language, providing students intensive language support to equip them with the linguistic skills needed in their transition to high school. A further implication of this study is to consider more closely how learning is assessed. As well as providing additional scaffolding and support for students to complete assessment tasks, thought also should be given to the actual type of task employed. Offering students a variety of ways to demonstrate their knowledge is a viable alternative to exclusively assessing English using the written mode (KE3).

The study's findings also strongly imply that students should not always be required to work in isolation (KE4). Opportunities to interact more frequently, through peer, group or whole class instruction, enable students to develop vital social skills and experience success in their learning (Slavin, 1987). What is more, approaching teaching more flexibly could also facilitate the embedding of TSI values (Nakata, 2011) more inclusively in the curriculum (KE5). This in turn may lead to stronger teacher-community ties. The importance of the community in the education of TSI students needs to be elevated. Above all, this study found that responsive practices must become a priority rather than a token in the EI mandate. Creating a more symbiotic relationship between the school, students' homes and the community, and utilising explicit strategies within this relationship, will be a valuable starting point to fulfilling the needs of Islander students.

8.7 Directions for Further Study

This study raises the need for further research in a variety of areas. Critically, studies of TSIs and specifically studies that consider students' perceptions of 'teaching effectiveness' are absent from the literature. This study could be viewed as a stimulus for other researchers to expand upon the issues it has raised, and augment the literature on effective teaching practices such as the study presented by Hattie (2012). This study focused on the English strand in the curriculum. This was chosen intentionally as my students and I believed the EALD focus to be of greatest concern to their success in formal education. It could be, however, that future research focuses on students' needs within other disciplines, thereby offering an alternative perspective. Additionally, this study identified five KEs. I think it would be fair to conclude that each of the five KEs in its own right merit further investigation.

The fifth student concern (KE5) concluded that students wanted to experience success in their learning, particularly in English. From this arose the finding that TSI students wanted to embed TSI perspectives into their learning, and this led to the desire to embed learning in the community and involving community members in it. This was the most challenging part of this study and I believe warrants further investigation. Little appears to have changed since Nakata's (1994) observations, therefore the 'how' of connecting and involving TSI communities in educational matters remains somewhat of an enigma. Attention and thought is needed at the macro-level on how to achieve this successfully, and teachers require support to implement this at the micro-level.

To my knowledge no studies have explored the implications of an imposed EI model on Indigenous learners, let alone TSI students. This model, whilst having many merits, fails to recognise, value and embed TSI perspectives of practice and knowledge into learning. Considering the unrelenting messages of teaching quality and student performance with which teachers in the FNQ are currently faced, this avenue of research needs to be thoroughly investigated. On a final note, the idea of interacting with my students responsively was, at the outset of my journey, a relatively new and unfamiliar concept. Indeed, a significant part of my personal journey has entailed researching, discovering, trialling and implementing ways to learn how to become a more responsive practitioner, rather than simply a 'good' teacher. As I have discussed my research professionally with colleagues, I have been asked many times to clarify what culturally responsive practices actually entail. As a relatively new field, especially within Australia, further investigation of the discipline of culturally responsive practices is a critical direction for future research.

I now turn to the conclusion.

8.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I reiterated the motivation for and focus of the study, the methodology used and why AR was chosen as the preferred methodology for this study. I presented the study's findings, giving attention to answering the three research questions posed by the study. I considered the implications of the study both for myself as a reflective practitioner and my Islander students. Direction and suggestions for further research were provided.

This thesis now concludes with an epilogue, describing the sense of despondency I experienced, one year later in a mainland FNQ school.

Epilogue

Post Torres Strait:

Nakata (1994) and Pearson (2011) both condemned sending inexperienced teachers to remote locations, specifically mentioning FNQ and the TS. Many graduates do this service because it is a 'fast track' to gaining permanent positions in urban Queensland centres. I did not venture to the TS as a graduate seeking to attain permanency within the Education Department. Rather, I chose to go there as an experienced teacher, believing I could genuinely make a difference in my students' lives. Being married with two school aged children, this was not a decision to be taken lightly. On a personal note, I wanted to experience a completely different lifestyle and I wanted my family to share this unique experience with me. I knew that our island lives would be different, but what I had not envisaged was the depth of the difference. Neither had I envisaged the transformation I would experience both on a professional and personal level.

It is the start of a new year. I am arranging my classroom in mainland Australia as I have done previously, but this time with a very different mindset. No longer is my teacher lens narrow and restricted. I am now bolder, more confident in myself and the teaching decisions I will make. Empowered by my previous success, I know what I have to do. I must continue to question and challenge the EI model and its laden assumptions. I must question the values and pre-made decisions I will come to face. Where possible I have to find viable alternatives. My own teaching and personal needs must take second place to my students', and above all, I have to demonstrate genuine care and sincerity in a system where both appear to possess limited importance, and are even, perhaps, pathologised. My stubbornness against accepting second best must prevail. My students can and will experience success this year, and this success will be

determined by the students themselves. My commitment is to guide them on their way. At the micro-level, I know I can foster change.

I find early in the year that I miss the islands. Often, I reminisce with my family about our island life. I miss the informal community conversations I had with parents and my cultural mentorship group and just dropping by my HOC's office unannounced, but always warmly welcomed, for a yarn – usually a yarn about the kids and how we could best nurture them. My new school is huge. There is little warmth and the personal, caring commitment towards the students which sits deep within the core of my being, is virtually non-existent. Results and data, here as well, drive every minute of the teaching regime and my disdain is growing by the day. The bureaucracy is immense. It seems painstakingly slow to get even the little things done. Things often get lost, passed on, forgotten and eventually neglected. I reflect with melancholy on Wisehart's (2004) words, "When we reduce learning in our students' eyes to numbers and letters, we lose passion, we lose complexity and we lose fun" (p. 46). I feel completely lost, drowning in what appears to be a suffocating regime of conformity. This is so far removed from why I chose to teach.

I receive a phone call from a friend asking if I can come over to the boarding house to chat with one of the boys who is experiencing some difficulty at high school. Walter² is one of my ex-students who has transitioned from Grade Seven in the TS to commence high school on the mainland of Australia. In the process, I get to meet several of my old island students. Their faces light up when they see me and immediately we re-connect. They tell me life on the mainland is tough and I probe as to

² Pseudonym

why. “Ms, the teachers talk too fast. They don’t break it down. The thing is they just don’t get me”. My heart lurches. It misses a beat and an all-consuming sadness stings.

The conversation compels me to re-think my research, which was an investigation into my teaching with the aim of improving the learning situation of my TSI students. Upon completion of my study, I sincerely felt that I had genuinely made a difference to my learners’ lives at the micro-level. I had successfully reconciled many components of my EI teaching with more responsive practices. However, my conversation with Walter compels me to consider Nakata’s (2001) words that it is “the politics of ‘how’ Indigenous people are positioned vis a vis colonial knowledges and practices which remain unchallenged” (p. 344). Thus, at the macro-level, I realise how futile my efforts have been. Within the security of their islands, TSIs faced with teachers, like myself, who genuinely care and want to make a difference, can experience success. But presently this ‘success’ ceases to exist once students venture to the mainland and transition to their prospective schools. I consider Walter’s predicament. Over the course of the next five years he is likely to encounter circa 50 teachers, many of whom will not have had experience of living and working in the TS, many of whom will not possess EALD teaching strategies. The transition facing these students is immense, and clearly from this conversation students are ill-equipped.

Until policy makers, stakeholders and state governments make a sincere and concerted effort at the macro-level to do things differently, to position themselves differently and until they enable Indigenous communities to be the ‘dominant’ voice in such decision-making processes, the educational experiences and outcomes of TSI students will remain in peril. As Osborne (2001) reminds us “They did not put themselves on the periphery of our societies, it is something we did, and continue to do, to them” (p. 37).

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Appendix A: Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
Guided Reading – own group Streamed 8.30 – 9.00	Guided Reading	Guided Reading	Guided Reading	Guided Reading	Parade	Guided Reading
Spelling Mastery DI – own group Streamed 9.00 – 9.30	Spelling Mastery	CARS	Spelling Mastery	CARS	Spelling Mastery	
Own class 6/7 9.30 – 10.30	English L4L	English L4L	English L4L	English L4L + BIG WRITE	English L4L	
FIRST BREAK						
Elementary Maths Mastery DI – own group Streamed 11.00 – 11.30	Maths Mastery	Maths Mastery	Maths Mastery	Maths Mastery	Maths Mastery	
C2C Maths Times table chants/warm up – 10 mins 11.30 – 12.30	Warm up C2C	Warm up C2C	Computers	Warm up C2C	Revision for week	
SECOND BREAK						
Non-explicit teaching time	History/Geography	Science	You can do it program	Science	SOSE/ART/HEALTH	

Appendix B: Explicit Instruction format

P2

		Tagai State College - Teacher Capa	
		Phase 1	Phase 2
Descriptors		The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the explicit teaching model. They are developing competency in implementing the components of explicit teaching.	The teacher demonstrates competence with the explicit teaching lesson components, with a pattern of frequent usage for lesson delivery. They demonstrate competence of 'checking for understanding' techniques
Opening the Lesson	WALT - Lesson Intent	<input type="checkbox"/> Introduces concepts/skills to be learned to students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reveals lesson intent/objective and provides opportunities for students to interact with intent/objective
	WILF - Success Criteria	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of success criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/> Checks to ensure students can describe lesson intent/objective.
	Prior Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> Identifies prior knowledge that links to lesson.	<input type="checkbox"/> Activates prior knowledge by brief reteaching and reviewing prerequisite skills.
	Lesson Importance	<input type="checkbox"/> Describes why the lesson is important to students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Lesson importance is explained so that students understand why they have to learn the concept/skill and where and when the concept/skill is used in the real world.
I Do (Teacher Modelling)	Student Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Understands that this section of the lesson is the sole domain of the teacher. <input type="checkbox"/> Students generally engaged during this stage.	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly owns this component of the lesson and this is conveyed to students. <input type="checkbox"/> Demands 100% student attention during this lesson phase.
	Content Delivery	<input type="checkbox"/> Some evidence of content being segmented into instructional units. <input type="checkbox"/> Content is predominately delivered through Explaining (telling).	<input type="checkbox"/> Complex content is segmented into small instructional units and clear concise language is used. <input type="checkbox"/> Uses Explaining (telling), Modelling (thinking out loud) and/or Demonstrating (using a physical object) when delivering content.
	Concept and Skill Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some knowledge of the steps to follow when teaching a new concept to students. <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some knowledge of the steps to follow when teaching a new skill to students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides a precise "bulletproof" definition or rule for the concept. Uses a range of examples and non-examples to reveal and clarify the critical attributes. <input type="checkbox"/> New skill is taught by modelling a clear step-by-step process or methodology.
	Lesson Pace	<input type="checkbox"/> Content is delivered at a moderate or variable pace.	<input type="checkbox"/> Brisk pace is maintained throughout the delivery of the content.
We Do (Guided Practice)	Working Together	<input type="checkbox"/> A range of activities are completed in conjunction with students. <input type="checkbox"/> Relies predominately on a limited range of student response types.	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides opportunities for all students to interact with the concept or practise the skill through a range of problem types taught in the "I Do" and match those to be worked in the "You Do". <input type="checkbox"/> Requires students to respond frequently through oral, written and action responses.
	Guided Practice	<input type="checkbox"/> Works some examples step-by-step with students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Guided Practice is used according to agreed stages (copy me; copy me to a certain point; verbal prompts only; show me independently)
	Checking for Understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategies for checking for understanding and providing feedback are occasionally implemented. <input type="checkbox"/> Single response low order questions are asked with a reliance on volunteers to gauge lesson success.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategies for checking for understanding are in place to verify that students are learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching has occurred before questions are asked. <input type="checkbox"/> Questions are about what has been taught – not opinions <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate wait/think time is provided <input type="checkbox"/> Techniques in place to select non-volunteers and "opting-out" is not accepted; cycles back to students who didn't answer – (minimum of 3 students selected). <input type="checkbox"/> Careful listening to make an instructional decision after response <input type="checkbox"/> Effective feedback is provided by Echoing when student response is correct, Elaborating for partially correct responses and Explaining when responses are incorrect
	Lesson Pace	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate or variable pace when working with students <input type="checkbox"/> Relies predominately on lesson format to move on.	<input type="checkbox"/> Brisk pace is maintained when working with students. <input type="checkbox"/> Moves on when 80%+ of students have mastered concept/skill.
You Do (Independent Practice)	Independent Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Some activities align with examples worked in the "I do" and "We do". <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an understanding of the school's Bookwork Policy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent practice tasks match what has been taught during the "I do" and "We do". <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements of the school's Bookwork Policy are consistently reinforced.
	Expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic instructions are provided and independent tasks are completed successfully by 80% of students in accordance with the stated success criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructions for completing the independent activity are clearly explained and minimum expectations (quantity and quality) of tasks are set and completed successfully by 80%+ of students in accordance with the stated success criteria.
	Monitoring and Feedback	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring has a focus on student engagement rather than quality of work produced. <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback is predominately evaluative.	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent work is actively monitored, quality is encouraged and substandard work is not accepted. <input type="checkbox"/> Immediate, individualised process feedback is provided.
	Differentiation	<input type="checkbox"/> Extra rather than extension activities provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> More challenging activities are provided for higher performing students.
Plough Back	Lesson Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Continues to question students rather than reviewing concept/skill taught.	<input type="checkbox"/> Concept definition and attributes and/or skill methodology is restated against lesson intention and success criteria.

Appendix C: Analysis of Journal

I am nearing the end of my first-year teaching in the TS. What a year it has been! The first six months were the most challenging* and stressful* of my teaching career. Frequently, I felt like an outsider, unsure of the norms in the new, unfamiliar surrounds of my students. This unfamiliarity conflicts* with my otherness* (from down south) which clearly was not fitting in with my students' social reality. Many initial tensions* in my classroom concerned behaviour management*. I recall finding my class extremely difficult to manage,* and I felt that a lot of learning time was wasted on mundane and trivial matters,* not related to actual learning. With some trepidation, I seek advice from my HOC. She suggests as I embark upon the journey of being a reflective teacher, I need to focus on building strong relationships with my students, a central component of effective teaching in the CRP literature (Gay, 2010; Lewthwaite et al., 2013; Taylor and Sobel, 2011). Gradually, throughout the year, as I gained my students' trust and respect, classroom behaviour began to improve.

Code: T

Category: Tension denoted by *

Concept: Need to focus on relationships to assist with behaviour management

Appendix D: Analysis of Student Dialogue

Responses	Code	Category	Concept
I will be on time to class (CP)			
I will help you learn by adjusting the EI model to meet your English needs (TP)	KE1	Adjustment of teaching	A more flexible teaching approach is needed
I will recognise you are EALD learners by assisting you with written and oral English skills (TP)	KE2	EALD needs	Forego, supplement, change the curriculum to include this
I will help you with English assessment (TP)	KE3	Assessment needs	Adjust assessment
I will consider our class dynamics in English (TP)	KE4	Class dynamics	Allow cooperative learning
I will give you a special award for good behaviour (CP)			
I will be happy when I teach (CP)			
I will be organised in my teaching (GP)			
I will help you feel successful at school, particularly in English (TP)	KE5	Success in learning	Allow students to determine their success
I will mark all work (GP)			

Appendix E: Analysis of Yarning Circle One

Code	Category	Concept
HE (KE1)	How of English	Watching and listening (like in EI)
HOW KE2	How of oral and writing	Break it down, more words, more oral work
HA (KE3)	How of assessment	Assess in different ways, teacher help
HD(KE4)	How of dynamics	Work with peers
HS (KE5)	How of success	Culture into learning

Appendix F: Writing Sample Codes

Error	Code
She often went swimming on the weekends (SP)	SP – spelling
Yesterday I <u>eat</u> lunch (T)	T - tense
There was <u>a</u> elephant on the beach (G)	G – grammar rule
The <u>boy sad</u> ran quickly away (WO)	WO – word order
We went a ^ swim on the holidays	^ - missing word
How long have you been living in Queensland. (P)	P – punctuation
The <u>petite</u> giant stomped through the town (WW).	WW – wrong word
Start a new paragraph.	NP – new paragraph

Appendix G: Informed Consent Form for Parents/Families

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Appendix H: Information Sheet for Parents/Families

INFORMATION SHEET for Parents/Families



PROJECT TITLE: **Investigating the Dominant Discourses in Teaching in the Far North Queensland Context: A Teacher's Journey**

Your child is invited to take part in a research project about a teacher's classroom practice. Mrs D'Aietti is trying to improve her teaching. She will be asking your child questions or to make comments about how she can improve as a teacher. The things your child says are important to her and she will use these to help your child learn.

The study is being conducted by **Karen D'Aietti** and will contribute to the **Doctorate in Education** at James Cook University.

This is a study of a teacher's classroom practice. By taking part in this study your child may be asked to:

- Provide work samples
- Engage in informal dialogues about teaching and learning
- Engage in yarning circles about teaching and learning
- Be part of Mrs D'Aietti's video-recorded lessons

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you can stop taking part in the study at any time without explanation or prejudice. You may also withdraw any unprocessed data from the study.

THIS IS LOW RISK RESEARCH

Your responses and contact details will be strictly confidential. The data from the study will be used in research publications and reports (**Professional Journals, School Newsletters**). You will not be identified in any way in these publications.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact:

Principal Investigator:

Karen D'Aiatti

Badu Island Primary Campus

First Supervisor Details:

Brian Lewthwaite

School of Education

James Cook University

Second Supervisor Details

Name: Philemon Chigeza

School: James Cook University

If you have any concerns regarding the ethical conduct of the study, please contact:
Human Ethics, Research Office
James Cook University, Townsville, Qld, 4811
Phone: (07) 4781 5011 (ethics@jcu.edu.au)

Appendix I: Informed Consent for Students

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Appendix J: Information Sheet for Students



INFORMATION SHEET for Students

PROJECT TITLE: Teaching in a Torres Strait Island Classroom: A Teacher's Journey

You are invited to take part in a research project about a teacher's teaching. Mrs D'Aietti is trying to improve her teaching. She will be asking you questions about how she can improve as a teacher. The things you say are important to her and she will use these to help you learn. The study is being done by **Karen D'Aietti** and will contribute to the **Doctorate in Education** at James Cook University.

This is a study of a teacher's classroom practice. By taking part in this study I may be asked to:

- Share samples of my work
- Take part in conversations about teaching and learning
- Take part in yarning circles about teaching and learning
- Be part of Mrs' D'Aietti's video-recorded lessons

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you can stop taking part in the study at any time without having to say why. If you change your mind about taking part, anything you have shared with her will be deleted.

No one will know of your being in this study. The data from the study will be used in research publications and reports (**Professional Journals, School Newsletters**). You will not be identified in any way in these publications.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact:

Principal Investigator:

Karen D'Aietti
Badu Island Primary Campus

First Supervisor Details:

Brian Lewthwaite
School of Education
James Cook University

Second Supervisor Details

Name: Philemon Chigeza
School: James Cook University

If you have any concerns regarding the ethical conduct of the study, please contact:
Human Ethics, Research Office
James Cook University, Townsville, Qld, 4811
Phone: (07) 4781 5011 (ethics@jcu.edu.au)

Appendix K: Informed Consent for Head of Campus

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Appendix L: Information Sheet for Head of Campus



**PROJECT TITLE: Investigating the Dominant Discourses in Teaching in the Far North
Queensland Context: A Teacher's Journey**

You are invited to take part in a research project about a teacher's classroom practice. Mrs D'Aiitti is trying to improve her teaching in order to improve student learning. The study is being conducted by **Karen D'Aiitti** and will contribute to the **Doctorate in Education** at James Cook University. As part of this study you may be asked to

- observe teacher in practice and provide feedback of teacher performance

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you can stop taking part in the study at any time without explanation or prejudice. You may also withdraw any unprocessed data from the study.

Your responses and contact details will be strictly confidential. The data from the study will be used in research publications and reports (**Professional Journals, School Newsletters**). You will not be identified in any way in these publications.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact:

Principal Investigator:

Karen D'Aiitti

Badu Island Primary Campus

First Supervisor Details: Brian Lewthwaite

School of Education

James Cook University

Second Supervisor Details

Name: Philemon Chigeza

School: James Cook University

If you have any concerns regarding the ethical conduct of the study, please contact:

Human Ethics, Research Office

James Cook University, Townsville, Qld, 4811

Phone: (07) 4781 5011 (ethics@jcu.edu.au)

Appendix M: JCU Ethics Approval

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Appendix N: Queensland Ethics Approval

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Appendix O: Overview of CRP and EI

CRP	EI
Student focused	Teacher oriented
Group and individual work	Mainly individual work
Unhurried pace	Brisk pace
Flexible assessment traditional	On-going assessment, usually
Teacher and student questions	More teacher questions
Problem solving activities	Limited problem solving
Negotiated curriculum	Told curriculum
Avoidance of spotlighting	Spotlighting common
Different learning styles catered for	EI only
Teacher adopts diverse teaching styles	EI teaching only
Emphasis on doing	Emphasis on completion
Prior learning experiences considered	Learning starts on a blank canvas
Culturally relevant	Limited cultural reference
Use of first language	Standard Australian English only
Learning is reciprocal	Learning directed by the teacher
Focus on individual growth and life skills success	Focus on mastery of academic
School and home structures matched	Students expected to follow school structures
Critique of curriculum documents	Teacher expected to follow curriculum
Holistic approach	More sequential approach

Appendix P: Analysis of Student Initial Responses

- I will be on time to class (GP)
- I will help you learn by adjusting the EI model to meet your English needs* (TP)
- I will help you with English assessment* (TP)
- I will recognise you are EALD learners by assisting you with written and oral English skills* (TP)
- I will consider our class dynamics in English* (TP)
- I will give you a special award for good behaviour (GP)
- I will be happy when I teach (GP)
- I will be organised in my teaching (GP)
- I will help you feel successful at school, particularly in English learning* (TP)
- I will mark all work (GP)

* Denotes one of the five KEs

Appendix Q: Exploration of Key Concerns

College Requirements	Students' Needs	Worthy of Investigation
EI approach used for most teaching?	To help students learn	How can I adjust my
Disciplines (KE1)	my teaching needs to be: Clear, scaffolded Good pace, modelled Checking for understanding Explicit feedback Think aloud +plough back	
Minimal mention of EALD specific skills in the (KE2)	TSI students speak EALD Students want to improve their oral, not just written skills.	Which skills will I teach? How will I help my EALD learners?
Rigorous, traditional assessment (KE3)	My students want to be assessed in a variety of ways and want teacher support with this.	How will I support them? Which modes of assessment can I use within EI model?
Class dynamics: Students work sit in rows, individually (KE4)	My students want me to consider class dynamics	Who do students want to work with?
Celebrate student success this in (KE5) curriculum?	My students determine success by embracing their culture	How can I achieve a prescribed

Appendix R: Writing Samples, Cycle Two

Appendix Plate 1. Sample A

My holidays I played with my best friends. Then we went to Terry Bay and had a swim ^{with} my uncle. ^{we} went diving and it was a lot of fun. When we went home we had a hot shower ^{sp} then we had a day rest for the day. The next day we cleaned up the whole yard and got ^{we} paid ^{paid} 10s each. We went to the shop and bought some sweets to eat. (so) we went home ate all of the sweets we bought.

On my different holiday me, Ralph, Athe. Bay, P. S. L. AZA, Tai and Wasam. We went to Texsa to have a swim. Then (AZA) and (tai) ^{sp} a big lizzed. Tai yelled "look, a lizzed!" We went up to the tree and hit it with a rock and it fell down then. We killed it and Ralph's dog ^{body} Bama ripped its head and body. Then we went to Texsa and lit a (fira) ^{sp} and had so much fun and enjoyed ^{our} day. Then we went home.

④

oo past tense
o paragraph

oo sp
~ repetition
punctuation

Appendix Plate 1. Student A is able to use the past simple tense and paragraphs correctly. However, prepositions are either missed or used incorrectly. This also applies to the use of pronouns. Spelling errors are evident and the use of connectives

and openers are limited. The writing displays a lack of lexical range and there is the use of Creole (We bought us). Punctuation problems exist throughout the sample and there is the sense of reading a list due to the amount of repetition and the nature in which the writing is organised.

Appendix Plate 2. Sample B

On my holiday I went to Boigu. It was
 really fun.

The first thing I did was get in the plane. While I was in the plane I was looking down ~~to~~ at the sea. When I looked down I saw the cargo boat. When the plane arrived at Boigu they grabbed my bag and dropped it at my grabbed Auntie and uncle's house.

Second thing I did was go to the IBIS (shop) to buy myself a soft drink. From there me and Sharon walked to the church to see the Island dancing. When we got to the church I saw my auntie standing next to my Grandpa's house.

Finally I came back home and straight away went to sleep.

(B)

oo paragraphs tense

oo senses

need variety in words

connectives / openers

Appendix Plate 2. Student B is also able to use paragraphs and the past simple correctly. Spelling errors are again evident, as are the incorrect use of prepositions.

This writer has used the wrong structure for a holiday recount (The first thing, the second). There is a lack of sophisticated vocabulary and connectives are limited. Pronouns are used without prior introduction so it is unclear to who or what they refer to. It is as if the student has included every detail, resulting in a list format.

Appendix S: Explicit Instruction Execution

MON LESSON:		TUE LESSON:		WED LESSON:		THURS LESSON:		FRI LESSON:	
I DO		I DO		I DO		I DO		I DO	
Was the lesson broken down enough?		Was the lesson broken down enough?		Was the lesson broken down enough?		Was the lesson broken down enough?		Was the lesson broken down enough?	
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
I DO		I DO		I DO		I DO		I DO	
I gave _____ examples today. Was this enough?		I gave _____ examples today. Was this enough?		I gave _____ examples today. Was this enough?		I gave _____ examples today. Was this enough?		I gave _____ examples today. Was this enough?	
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
WE DO		WE DO		WE DO		WE DO		WE DO	
We did _____ examples today.		I gave _____ examples today.		I gave _____ examples today.		I gave _____ examples today.		I gave _____ examples today.	
Was this enough?		Was this enough?		Was this enough?		Was this enough?		Was this enough?	
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
The WE DO part was		The WE DO part was		The WE DO part was		The WE DO part was		The WE DO part was	
A good pace Too slow Too fast YOU DO I had		A good pace Too slow Too fast YOU DO I had		A good pace Too slow Too fast YOU DO I had		A good pace Too slow Too fast YOU DO I had		A good pace Too slow Too fast YOU DO I had	
a) Enough time		a) Enough time		a) Enough time		a) Enough time		a) Enough time	
b) Not enough time		b) Not enough time		b) Not enough time		b) Not enough time		b) Not enough time	
c) Too much time		c) Too much time		c) Too much time		c) Too much time		c) Too much time	

Appendix T: Further EI Execution

Lesson	Lesson	Lesson	Lesson	Lesson
<hr/>				
WALT:				
Did you finish the main task?				
Did you complete the extension activity?				
Did you have time to spare?				
What did you do in this time?				
Plough Back:				
<hr/>				

Appendix U: Feedback Checklist

	One on one feedback (Walk + talk) or (Sitting down)	Assessment 1 : 1	Rubric: Whole class	Bookwork feedback Correction Tick or cross Rule Written comment Praise	FB: Whole Class
Student A					
Student B					
Student C					
Student D					
Student E					
Student F					
Student G					
Student H					
Student I					
Student J					
Student K					
Student L					
Student M					
Student N					
Student O					
Student P					
Student Q					
Student R					
Student S					
Student T					

Appendix V: Writing Samples, Cycle Two

Appendix Plate 3. Sample B

You are either Jack or Hoshi. Tell the story from one of their viewpoints. Use the following headings.

Leaving my wife:

I remember when I ^{sp} (joined) the crew how Proud and confident I (were). The other young heroic men had signed up too. Only my loving, special darling Nimaobe knew how difficult it would be without me she was with my daughter Hanah + Rose. When my loving Nimaobe thought of her future ahead she was anxious about it. I told her that I promise I (will) return with all my heart.

Training in New Guinea:

I was in the dense jungle of the Kokoda track in New Guinea with my comrades we were training how to use rifles and throw bombs. I was very curious about (firing) a gun. I thought about Hanah and her future with out a father. I sincerely believed that our (Emperor) told us to scuffle through the smelly, swampy dead grass. We had ^{would} crawl up the steep mountains and go left so we could lead the aussies to the right.

Fighting in New Guinea:

Fighting in New Guinea. Fighting in New Guinea in the dense jungle was extremely harsh. A lot of the time, the thing that always (distracts) me was the thoughts and future of my Hanah. The humidity, heavy rain fell on top of our heads and it drove us insane. Many of our soldiers died from Tropical diseases. The jungle was like lightning striking through my eyes. Both Australian and Japanese have died with sorrow. I lost my best mate Joe. I threw a cherry blossom on his grave.

Sample (B)

when my last battle came there was nothing glorious about it. It was disgusting on both sides we fought bravely and slaughtered each other. Blood was every where. All the wounded and dying soldiers. Our comrades and the Australians shrieked and shouted in agonising pain. I wanted to put the gun up my throat and kill myself. I layed near the log where we fired from. I didn't want to have a battle. Luckily I survived.

Wounded yet Survived:

After my last battle I was posted to look around. I saw the smoke but there weren't not much gun fire. I fought with the Australian soldiers. We marched along the rivers. I thought that if we fought we will have the victory!. When we crossed the river I banged into a rock and hurt my knee. suddenly there was like fishes swimming in the ocean. The enemies were every where.

I heard the sound of the glamorous leaves falling from the tree and I could fill my hand running through a lovely hair. But yet I didn't hear my loving daughter call out to me.

Appendix Plate 3. Student B has used a variety of tenses and complex sentence structures. The vocabulary shows a clear understanding of more sophisticated word choices. The writer has used adverbs confidently (extremely). Paragraphs are well organised and the message is coherent throughout. Spelling errors are minimal. Grammar errors tend to be those related to plural endings and irregular tenses.

Student B has used extensive adjectives to appeal to the reader and connectives to join ideas.

Appendix Plate 4. Sample C

You are either Jack or Hoshi. Tell the story from one of their viewpoints. Use the following headings.

Leaving my wife:

*contact
wrong* I thought of my beautiful wife Peggy and daughter Jose and my only son Pete. I saw the glint of steel but unfortunately but it was too late for me. I felt sharp pain I was wrestling with a Japanese soldier. He had a strength we both fought desperately, blood splattering all over my face. I fell to the ground. The approaching face was unfamiliar but kind. I slowly closed my eyes that was the end of me.

Training in New Guinea:

I ^{think} that Hoshi and Jack was so scared from the P.N.G. people because they come down to the plain and ask why you are not home to P.N.G. Hoshi and Jack said to fight you people but Hoshi and Jack said I will train you people in the jungle ok. they went in to the jungle Jack and Hoshi train them in the jungle while it was raining the Jack train them.

Fighting in New Guinea:

Fighting in the thick jungle was extremely difficult. It was terrifying to keep me alive was the thought of my precious family and friends in Japanese. The humidity, heavy rainfalls and mud and insects drove us all insane (terrible) many men (soldiers) became sick (flew) from forest disease. The huge, lush, green jungle was very eerie and soggy ground.

Sample C

Last Battle:

When my last battle came there was nothing on both sides we fought it. It was disgusting each blood was everywhere. All the wounded and dying soldiers - Japanese and Australian - shrieked and screamed in agonising pain. I wanted to curl up in a ball and die. I didn't want to fight. I thought of my family and miraculously I survived.

Wounded yet Survived:

After the final battle, I was sent to scout around (look). I saw the glint of steel but unfortunately for me, it was a second too late. I felt the sharp pain. I wrestled with the Australian and Japanese soldier. He was strong, we both fought desperately, as the pain was coming towards me. The ground, blood splattering. Thoughts of my beautiful wife and daughter had already filled my mind as an approaching face was unfamiliar but kind. I prayed every night so I could be safe to return.

home to my family and friend and wife daughter. I think Jack was happy to see it family.

Sample C: Despite the fact that there is confusion in the introduction, the task is complete. The writer uses a variety of tenses and sentence starters. There is evidence of both adverbs and adjectives to make the writing more appealing to read. Student C has used an array of vocabulary, including lexis related specifically to the topic of war. There are some spelling errors, but similar to the previous two samples, these are minimal. On the whole the text is easy to follow and paragraphs are organised well.

Appendix W: Writing and Speaking Rubric

Semester Two		Unit Seven: Persuasive Song Presentation							
Assessment Task: To produce a persuasive presentation of your favourite song									
A		B		C		D		E	
1. All elements of persuasive are included		1. Most elements of persuasive are included		1. Some elements of persuasive are included		1. Persuasive structure is evident in parts		1. Persuasive structure is not evident	
2. Extensive use of persuasive language		2. Strong use of persuasive language		2. Some use of persuasive language		2. Limited use of persuasive language		2. Minimal evidence of persuasive language	
3. Grammatical and syntactical structure are mainly used correctly with only minor errors		3. Grammatical and syntactical structure are used correctly with only some basic errors		3. Evidence of some grammatical and syntactical structure		3. Grammatical and syntactical structure is seen in parts		3. Grammatical and syntactical structure is basic	
4. Speech is easily understood		4. Speech is easily understood in most parts		4. Speech is understood but needs to be clearer		4. Student’s speech is difficult to follow		4. Student’s speech is incomplete and very difficult to follow	
5. Speech is fluent and body language is very confident		5. Speech is mostly fluent and body language is confident		5. Speech is sometimes fluent and body language is sometimes confident		5. Student requires further help in speaking fluently and confidently		5. Student requires extensive help in speaking fluently and confidently	
Classwork		Classwork		Classwork		Classwork		Classwork	
Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Hardly Ever	
1. Gets on task quickly		1. Gets on task quickly		1. Gets on task quickly		1. Gets on task		1. Gets on task	
2. Stays on task		2. Stays on task		2. Stays on task		2. Stays on task		2. Stays on task	
3. Completes all tasks		3. Completes most tasks		3. Completes all tasks		3. Completes all tasks		3. Completes all tasks	

Appendix X: Adjusted Language for Learning Unit

The most popular text, chosen by the students, was based on the Archie Roach book 'Took the Children Away'. Foremost, the students were engaged throughout this unit because socially and historically the text was relevant (Nakata, 2011; Osborne, 2003a). That they could readily identify with the content and had knowledge surrounding it, assisted them greatly in experiencing success. All of the class were familiar with the book's author. Most of the class knew someone who had been affected by the Stolen Generation (book's theme) and discussion of the text extended far beyond our classroom walls.

To engage the class I scanned the book so the students had access to the colourful visuals and the text. We spent a lot of time reading and re-reading the text on the interactive whiteboard. Earlier, in a teacher observation my HOC had mentioned that I ought to use more repetition as a strategy to aid fluency. Indeed, repeating the text gave the students further success in their learning as they became more confident and fluent readers. I also sourced the song and used this in a variety of ways to create further learning opportunities (Barnes, 2000).


Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) speak of the imperative of teachers adapting tasks in meeting their learners' needs responsively. The mandated assessment task was to present Archie's song and the students' response to it. I adapted the task by allowing the students to research and present their favourite singer and song. This gave the students a choice of assessment task and empowered them in their learning rather than simply dictating what was required. Due to the fact that the students had to do their own research, I extended the unit by two weeks. Normally this would not be feasible due to the mandated, scheduled unit and assessment. However, there was more flexibility in

this process because we were nearing the end of the school year. Allowing the students to actually present their written work as a speech was effective because each child received further feedback on their presentation skills. This enabled them to feel prepared and thus experience success in the safety of our classroom, before presenting publicly on graduation night before the community. The community was invited into the class to listen to the presentations, respecting the students' desire to include them in the learning (Osborne, 2003a). Even though few families did attend, the students told me that they appreciated this as it made them feel that their families were important.

Appendix Y: Observation Feedback

Appendix Plate 5. Observation Feedback

(P1)



Tagai State College
Explicit Teaching Formal Lesson Observation & Feedback

Name of teacher being observed: Karon D'Aetle Date: 6.11.14

Name of observer: [Redacted] Learning area: English Year level(s): 6/7

DEFINITION

Explicit Teaching: The teaching of specific concepts or skills in a highly structured framework consisting of five distinct phases:

1. Opening the lesson
2. I Do (Modelled Practice)
3. We Do (Guided Practice)
4. You Do (Independent Practice)
5. Plough Back - Closing the Lesson

	Before the lesson	y/n	Feedback – areas for future consideration
Check for Understanding and Provide Feedback throughout the lesson. (Excluding the I DO) TAPPLE	Critical content selected – limited to specific elements; based on data and or the Curriculum		You have really perfected this whole part. The video clip got their attention & every student knew what they were going to learn & were ready to learn.
	Opening of Lesson		
	Gained 100% of student attention	✓	
	WALT - Clearly established learning intention	✓	
	WILF - Clear success criteria (measurable)		
	TIB - Why we are learning this	✓	Testament to your effective teaching that you could move so quickly to We Do.
	Brief activation of prior skills and knowledge	✓	
	Teacher Modelled - I DO		
	Logical sequence – progressing from simplest to more complex	✓	
	Modelled/demonstrated/explained - step by step	✓	
	Effective demonstration of think aloud	✓	
	Examples and non-examples (when appropriate) are provided	✓	
	Common errors or misconceptions are addressed	✓	
	Brisk pace or appropriate pace established	✓	

P2



Tagai State College - Teacher Cap

Phase 1

Phase 2

Descriptors		The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the explicit teaching model. They are developing competency in implementing the components of explicit teaching.	The teacher demonstrates competence with the explicit teaching lesson components with a pattern of frequent usage for lesson delivery. They demonstrate competence with 'checking for understanding' techniques
Opening the Lesson	WALT - Lesson Intent	<input type="checkbox"/> Introduces concepts/skills to be learned to students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reveals lesson intent/objective and provides opportunities for students to interact with intent/objective.
	WILF - Success Criteria	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of success criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/> Checks to ensure students can describe lesson intent/objective.
	Prior Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> Identifies prior knowledge that links to lesson.	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly explains measurable success criteria to students.
	Lesson Importance	<input type="checkbox"/> Describes why the lesson is important to students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Activates prior knowledge by brief reteaching and reviewing prerequisite skills.
I Do (Teacher Modelling)	Student Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Understands that this section of the lesson is the sole domain of the teacher. <input type="checkbox"/> Students generally engaged during this stage.	<input type="checkbox"/> Lesson importance is explained so that students understand why they have to learn the concept/skill and where and when the concept/skill is used in the real world.
	Content Delivery	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly owns this component of the lesson and this is conveyed to students. <input type="checkbox"/> Demands 100% student attention during this lesson phase.	<input type="checkbox"/> Some evidence of content being segmented into instructional units. <input type="checkbox"/> Content is predominately delivered through Explaining (telling).
	Concept and Skill Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some knowledge of the steps to follow when teaching a new concept to students. <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some knowledge of the steps to follow when teaching a new skill to students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Complex content is segmented into small instructional units and clear concise language is used. <input type="checkbox"/> Uses Explaining (telling), Modelling (thinking out loud) and/or Demonstrating (using a physical object) when delivering content.
	Lesson Pace	<input type="checkbox"/> Content is delivered at a moderate or variable pace.	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides a precise "bulletproof" definition or rule for the concept. Uses a range of examples and non-examples to reveal and clarify the critical attributes. <input type="checkbox"/> New skill is taught by modelling a clear step-by-step process or methodology.
We Do (Guided Practice)	Working Together	<input type="checkbox"/> Brisk pace is maintained throughout the delivery of the content.	<input type="checkbox"/> A range of activities are completed in conjunction with students. <input type="checkbox"/> Relies predominately on a limited range of student response types.
	Guided Practice	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides opportunities for all students to interact with the concept or practise the skill through a range of problem types taught in the "I Do" and match those to be worked in the "You Do". <input type="checkbox"/> Requires students to re-pond frequently through oral, written and action responses.	<input type="checkbox"/> Works some examples step-by-step with students.
	Checking for Understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategies for checking for understanding and providing feedback are occasionally implemented. <input type="checkbox"/> Single response low order questions are asked with a reliance on volunteers to gauge lesson success.	<input type="checkbox"/> Guided Practice is used according to agreed stages (copy me; copy me to a certain point; verbal prompts only; show me independently) <input type="checkbox"/> Strategies for checking for understanding are in place to verify that students are learning <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching has occurred before questions are asked. <input type="checkbox"/> Questions are about what has been taught – not opinions <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate wait/think time is provided <input type="checkbox"/> Techniques in place to select non-volunteers and "opting-out" is not accepted; cycles back to students who did not answer – (minimum of 3 students selected). <input type="checkbox"/> Careful listening to make an instructional decision after response <input type="checkbox"/> Effective feedback is provided by Echoing when student response is correct, Elaborating for partially correct responses and Explaining when responses are incorrect
	Lesson Pace	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate or variable pace when working with students <input type="checkbox"/> Relies predominately on lesson format to move on.	<input type="checkbox"/> Brisk pace is maintained when working with students. <input type="checkbox"/> Moves on when 80%+ of students have mastered concept/skill.
You Do (Independent Practice)	Independent Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Some activities align with examples worked in the "I do" and "We do".	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent practice tasks match what has been taught during the "I do" and "We do".
	Expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an understanding of the school's Bookwork Policy. <input type="checkbox"/> Basic instructions are provided and independent tasks are completed successfully by 80% of students in accordance with the stated success criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirements of the school's Bookwork Policy are consistently reinforced. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructions for completing the independent activity are clearly explained and minimum expectations (quantity and quality) of tasks are set and completed successfully by 80% of students in accordance with the stated success criteria.
	Monitoring and Feedback	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring has a focus on student engagement rather than quality of work produced. <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback is predominately evaluative.	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent work is actively monitored, quality is encouraged and substandard work is not accepted. <input type="checkbox"/> Immediate, individualised process feedback is provided.
	Differentiation	<input type="checkbox"/> Extra rather than extension activities provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> More challenging activities are provided for higher performing students.
Plough Back	Lesson Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Continues to question students rather than reviewing concept/skill taught.	<input type="checkbox"/> Concept definition and attributes and/or skill methodology is restated against lesson intention and success criteria.

Learning Development Continuum - EXPLICIT TEACHING

Phase 3	Phase 4 – Highly Accomplished
<p>The teacher demonstrates mastery of the explicit teaching lesson model and uses the full range of 'checking for understanding' techniques. Explicit teaching is innate and has become the teacher's signature pedagogy.</p>	<p>The teacher continuously refines practice and actively seeks to implement more effective teaching strategies to further improve student learning outcomes. They initiate and lead activities that focus on improving explicit teaching. The teacher models exemplary practices and mentors colleagues.</p>
<p>Reveals lesson intent/objective that is concise, well-designed with appropriate language to year level and uses a range of strategies to ensure students interact with the lesson intent/objective.</p> <p>Checks to ensure students can describe lesson intent/objective.</p> <p>Clearly explains success criteria to students including exemplars.</p>	<p>Teaching practice is at the Highly Accomplished level for components of the "Opening the Lesson" stage.</p> <p>Works with, mentors and models lessons for colleagues to enhance their repertoire of teaching strategies in the areas of Lesson Success Criteria, Prior Knowledge and Lesson Importance.</p> <p>Leads initiatives within the school to evaluate and improve knowledge of "Opening the Lesson" content and teaching strategies.</p> <p>Continuously strives to improve explicit teaching pedagogy lesson stage through research and on-going professional development.</p>
<p>Activates prior knowledge for new concepts via well-developed questions drawing on universal experience.</p> <p>Activates prior knowledge for new skills by brief reteaching prerequisite skills and sub skills.</p> <p>Provides personal, real-life and academic reasons why the lesson is important to learn and calls on students for additional reasons.</p> <p>Outlines and procedures are well established, clearly understood and followed automatically by students.</p> <p>Commands 100% student attention during this lesson phase and constantly scans to maintain student engagement.</p>	<p>Teaching practice is at the Highly Accomplished level for components of the "I Do" stage.</p> <p>Works with, mentors and models lessons for colleagues to enhance their repertoire of teaching strategies in the areas of content delivery and concept and skill development.</p> <p>Leads initiatives within the school to evaluate and improve knowledge of "I Do" content and teaching strategies.</p> <p>Continuously strives to improve explicit teaching pedagogy lesson stage through research and on-going professional development.</p>
<p>Complex content is segmented into small sequential instructional units that optimise student learning. Clear, concise language that reflects mastery of content is used.</p> <p>Consistently selects the most appropriate technique or combination of techniques (i.e. Explaining, Modelling and/or demonstrating) to deliver content to deliver content, with an increasing focus on Modelling when teaching processes.</p> <p>Provides a precise "bulletproof" definition or rule for the concept that is referred to throughout the lesson. Uses a range of examples and non-examples to reveal and clarify the critical, non-critical and shared concept attributes.</p> <p>How skill is taught by modelling a clear step-by-step process or methodology (script) and mnemonic and a range of other devices are utilised to transfer the process to long term memory.</p> <p>Pace of lesson is brisk and increases in line with student achievement.</p> <p>Provides a range of highly engaging activities for all students to interact with the concept and/or skill ensuring that they are scaffolded in order of difficulty and closely match those problem types taught in the "I Do" and to be worked by students independently in the "You Do".</p> <p>Requires students to respond frequently through oral, written and action responses and utilises a range of techniques for whole-class choral responding.</p> <p>Guided Practice is used according to agreed stages (copy me; copy me to a certain point; verbal prompts only; show me independently) and with precise checking at each stage.</p> <p>Implements wide range of strategies to check for understanding and to verify that students are learning what is being taught while it is being taught.</p> <p>Teaching has occurred before questions are asked</p> <p>Questions are about what has been taught – not opinions</p> <p>Adequate wait/think time is provided – including pair-share techniques where appropriate.</p> <p>Techniques in place to select non-volunteers and "Opting-out" is not accepted; cycles back to students who didn't answer</p> <p>Careful listening to make an instructional decision after response</p> <p>Effective feedback is provided by Echoing when student response is correct, Elaborating for partially correct responses and explaining when responses are incorrect</p> <p>Requires students to justify answers and models correct response for high-order questions before proceeding</p> <p>Techniques are in place to gain a whole-class snapshot of understanding (e.g. personal white boards, cards, actions.)</p> <p>Examples are worked together at a brisk pace, and pace increases in line with student understanding.</p> <p>Accurately gauges the most appropriate time to move to independent work.</p>	<p>Teaching practice is at the Highly Accomplished level for components of the "We Do" stage.</p> <p>Works with, mentors and models lessons for colleagues to enhance their repertoire of teaching strategies in the areas of Guided Practice and Checking for Understanding.</p> <p>Leads initiatives within the school to evaluate and improve knowledge of "we Do" content and teaching strategies.</p> <p>Continuously strives to improve explicit teaching pedagogy lesson stage through research and on-going professional development.</p>
<p>Independent tasks are well scaffolded, increase in difficulty and precisely match what has been taught during the "I do" and "We do".</p> <p>Requirements of the school's Bookwork Policy are consistently reinforced and teacher expectation of book work is at a very high level for all students.</p> <p>Instructions for completing the independent activity are concise and clearly explained and minimum expectations (quantity and quality) of tasks are set and completed successfully by 100% of students in accordance with the stated success criteria.</p> <p>Independent work is actively monitored, quality is enforced and sub-standard work is not accepted with students required to re-complete work to standard.</p> <p>Immediate, individualised process feedback is provided and addresses areas for improvement.</p> <p>Activities are targeted and personalised for higher performing students and in-class intervention is provided for students identified during the "We do" through brief reteaching of skill/concept (1:1 or small group).</p> <p>Concept definition and attributes and/or skill methodology is restated against lesson intention and success criteria.</p> <p>Requires students to reflect on what they have learnt and connects learning to the next lesson.</p>	<p>Teaching practice is at the Highly Accomplished level for components of the "You Do" stage.</p> <p>Works with, mentors and models lessons for colleagues to enhance their ability to design quality differentiated independent activities and to provide effective feedback.</p> <p>Leads initiatives within the school to evaluate and improve knowledge of "You Do" content and teaching strategies.</p> <p>Continuously strives to improve explicit teaching pedagogy lesson stage through research and on-going professional development.</p>
	<p>Teaching practice is at the Highly Accomplished level for components of the "Revision" stage.</p> <p>Works with, mentors and models lessons for colleagues to enhance their ability to revise lesson content.</p> <p>Continuously strives to improve explicit teaching pedagogy lesson stage through research and on-going professional development.</p>

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Check for Understanding and Provide Feedback throughout the lesson. (Excluding the I DO) T A P P L E	Guided Practice - WE DO	y/n	Feedback – areas for future consideration
	Guided practice follows the SAME steps & level of complexity as demonstrated in the I DO	✓	<p>You always use every opportunity to expand the kids' vocab + this pays off in the end.</p> <p>This part well planned with a range of activities.</p>
Students complete - all together, step by step	✓		
Monitoring of students throughout – requiring varied response types (establishing readiness of students for independent work)	✓		
Confirmation that all students are completing multiple examples with teacher	✓		
Immediate affirmative and corrective feedback provided	✓		
Re-teaches concept when necessary	✓		
Brisk pace or appropriate pace maintained	✓		
Independent Practice - YOU DO		Challenging.	
Independent task set- matching the task practised	✓		
Expectations are set for minimum completion	✓		
Task adjusted for targeted students	✓		
Closing the Lesson		Done after 'We Do'.	
Lesson intentions reviewed	✓		
Students explain or demonstrate that they ^{can meet} have met success criteria	✓		
Follow on learning			
<p>Overall comments</p> <p>Karen, thank you for everything you have done for all the students you have taught. You make a difference (a really positive difference) in their lives. Your teaching is very effective.</p> <p>Teacher will (when – date and time):</p> <p>Coach will (when – date and time):</p> <p>Thank you also for sharing with + assisting other teachers. You have been a leading teacher on staffs I have appreciated your input. Thank you</p>			