

## Inquiring About Cultural Components of Early Childhood Education

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### Abstract

Culture and diversity are familiar yet challenging concepts for early childhood kaiako (teachers). This is a background paper to stimulate thoughts and queries around cultural components in early childhood environments. The author presents findings from a completed research that supports culturally responsive practices within the early childhood teacher education context. The completed research applies a Teaching as Inquiry model to formulate queries for the lecturers. The author then proposes a future research project within the early childhood education context to explore the components of culture. Under a sociocultural research framework, the proposed research aims to collect data from a range of early childhood settings in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Convenience sampling will be used to select willing centres from the initial teacher education (ITE) providers' database. With the collected data, the proposed study is aimed at enabling participants to develop a reusable reflection model for early childhood kaiako who seek to embrace culturally relevant pedagogy. In support of the proposal, the author theoretically applies a Teaching as Inquiry model to selected questions for reflection listed in Te Whāriki, the early childhood curriculum. The discussion may extract thoughts to help kaiako to formulate focus queries, learning queries and teaching queries within the early childhood education environment.

Keywords: Culture, cultural responsiveness, early childhood teacher education, reflection and reflective practice, Te Whāriki

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