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# Researching Ethnicity, Poverty and Educational Inequality

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# Researching Ethnicity, Poverty and Educational Inequality

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## FUNDING SOURCES:

**2009-2012:** Glasswell, K; Singh, P., McNaughton, S. and Davis, KL. *Smart Education Partnerships: Testing a Research Collaboration Model to Build Literacy Innovations in Low Socio Economic Schools.* **Australian Research Council Linkage: LP0990585**

**2013:** Singh, P., Pini, B., Glasswell, K. & Liyanage, I. Sustaining Collaborative Inquiry: Smart Education Partnerships to Improve Teaching Quality and Student Learning Gains in Disadvantaged Communities. **Griffith University, AEL Group**

Ethics Approval Number: GU Ref No: EPS/23/09/HREC

# MAJOR PROJECT OBJECTIVE

A research and development **partnership** between:

- Griffith University,
- Auckland University,
- Department of Education and Training & twelve low socio-economic status government/public schools in three clusters- culturally and linguistically diverse, 6-17% Indigenous, 5-29% language background other than English

## Major Goal:

To design and implement a **capacity building** model that will positively impact **classroom instruction** and **student achievement** in reading comprehension.

# The partners:

- **RESEARCH TEAM:** University Researchers + state and local policy personnel (Kathryn Glasswell, Parlo Singh, Stuart McNaughton, Kate Davis)
- **SCHOOL BASED RESEARCHERS :** 6 educational researchers with successful experience in low SES schools, literacy teaching/learning, and teacher professional development work.
- **DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS:** 3 Senior Policy Officers/Administrators of Educational District.
- **EDUCATION PRACTITIONERS:** 12 Principals
- **EDUCATION PRACTITIONERS:** 14 Heads of Curriculum, Lead Literacy Coaches/Teachers
- **EDUCATIONAL PRACTITIONERS:** 290 Classroom Teachers

# The Real Difference – Both Ways Dialogue

- Deputy Principal 2 : *The real difference has to come with that partnership where you're working together in context. So it's no good taking us out of our context and preaching to us – and I think that people coming in and developing an understanding so there's a shared understanding of the environment, the students, the staff, that more - it's personalised learning for schools. I mean, it's personalising and learning for the school, and it's personalising the approach for the school. ... the project ... was very well established with key experts, with school-based researchers, but then that knowledge that we were providing a degree of expertise as well and it was that partnership and there was the – dialogue was going both ways. So the conversations were going both ways, they weren't just one-sided. I think that's what's made it really rich because it's been about the children in this class with this teacher there, as much as these are strategies for everybody to use ....*

# Design-Based Research vs Action Research

(Anderson & Shattuck, 2012)

- Design practice - evolves through the creation and testing of prototypes, iterative refinement, and continuous evolution of the design, as it is tested in authentic practice
- Partnership negotiates the study from initial problem identification, through literature review, to intervention design and construction, implementation, assessment, and to the creation and publication of theoretical and design principles.
- Division of Labour of Research Team and Practitioner Team

## Data Collection – 2 Teams

- (1) Design Based Intervention Team – Kathryn Glasswell,
- (2) Qualitative, Ethnographic Studies Team – Parlo Singh

- Teacher survey data (n=98)
- Field notes and audio-taped conversations by School-Based Researchers from ‘rolling meetings’
- Interviews with Administrators, Principals, Curriculum Leaders (n=29)
- Interviews with School-Based Researchers (n=6)
- Focus Group Interviews with Classroom Teachers (ongoing)
- Plus systematic classroom observations undertaken with Teach-Scape tool (not reported here)

# Analysing Cultural Identity

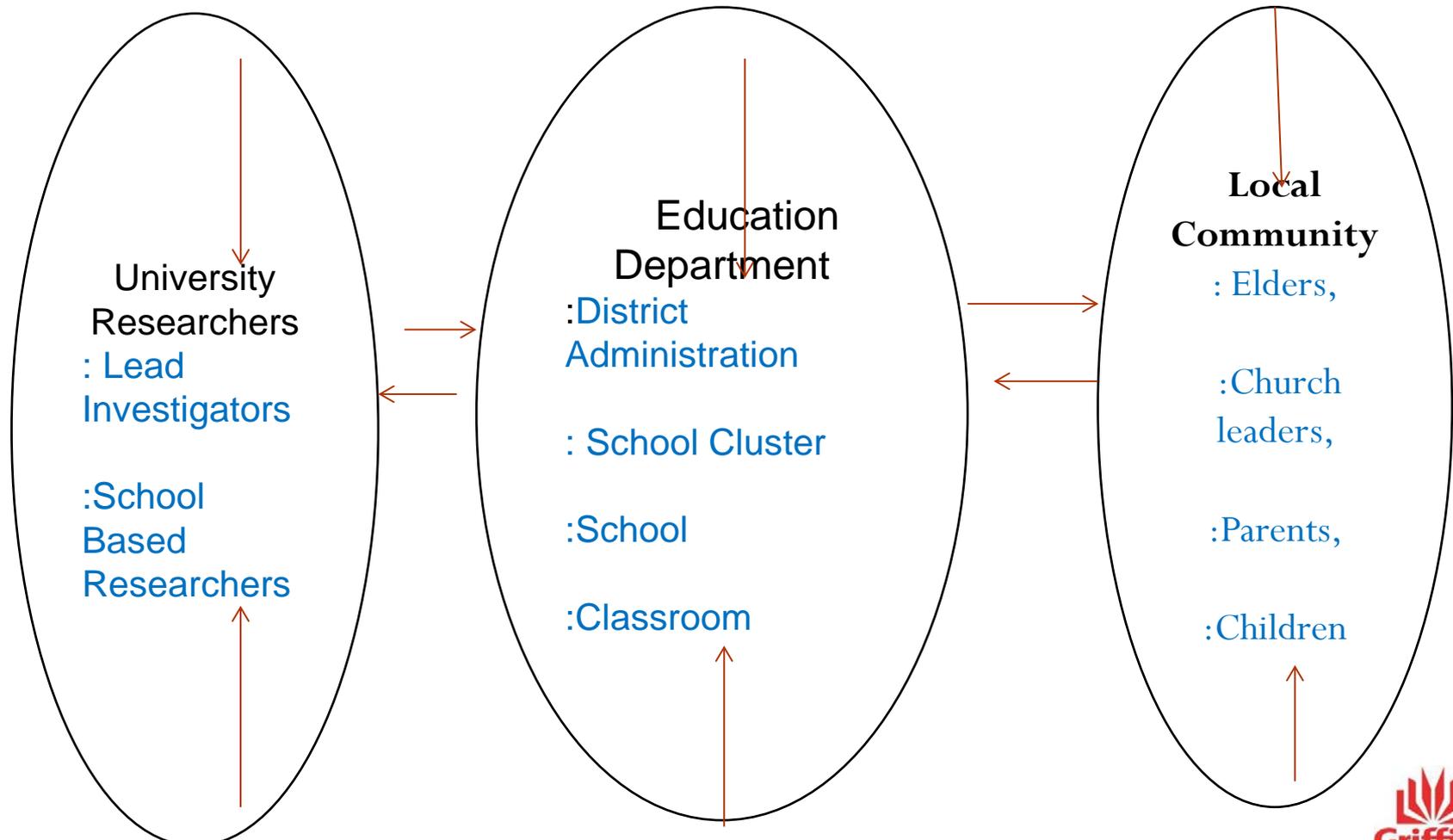
## GROUP ONE

- Cultural Difference Theory
- Cultural Frame of Reference

## GROUP TWO

- Postcolonial Challenges / Contact Zones
- Transculturation & Hybridity

# Relations Within and Relations Between



# The Structure of Pedagogic Discourse

## Instructional Discourse Regulative Discourse

**Instructional Discourse = principles regulating the selection, organisation (sequencing, pacing) of instructional knowledge**

**Regulative Discourse = theory/assumptions about the learner, learning, and teaching.**

- Bernstein, B. (1975). *Towards a Theory of Educational Transmissions (Class, Codes and Control Vol 3)*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bernstein, B. (1990). *The structuring of pedagogic discourse*. London: Routledge.
- Bernstein, B. (2000). *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity (Revised ed.)*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Oxford: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Moore, R. (2012). *Basil Bernstein : The Thinker and the Field*. Independence, KY, USA: Taylor and Francis.

# Three Phase Process – Kathryn Glasswell, Griffith University

## Phase 1

Data Collection, Analysis &  
Inquiry

Data-informed decision making

- **Diagnostic testing** Feb, June & Nov each year 2009-2012
- **Data Meetings: Collaborative data conversations**
  - Plot scale scores on class map/Diagnostic data wall
  - Group students for differentiation
  - Identify developmental 'regions' of reading comprehension
  - Reflect and plan for specific Literacy interventions

## Phase 2

Professional Learning  
Instructional Innovation

- **Professional Learning**
  - Specifically targeted professional learning developed and facilitated by University Researchers to build teacher content knowledge at the school site
- **Learning Walks**
  - monitor the implementation of pedagogical innovation
- **Share and Reflect:**
  - Provide opportunities for teachers to reflect on and monitor their classroom instruction and adjust to meet student needs

## Phase 3

Sustainability

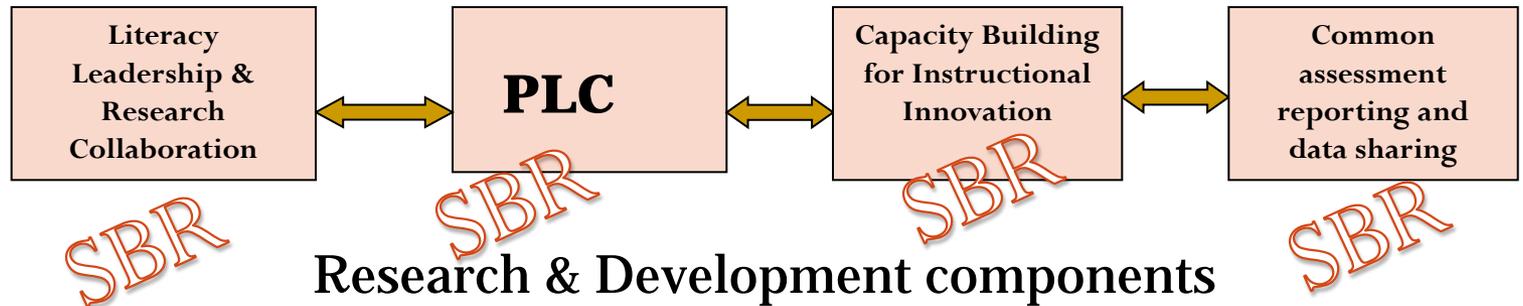
- **Develop capacity:**
  - Develop each school's capacity to function as a sustainable, self-improving system.
  - To be flexible and responsive to changing needs of diversifying student populations
  - sustain a focus on high-quality instruction in EVERY classroom for every child.

Monitor the R & D process for instructional innovation and improved student outcomes in low SES schools.

# Research & Development Goals for Partnership –

Kathryn Glasswell, Griffith University

## Engagement within and across schools contexts



Outcomes

School Culture

Classroom Instruction

Student Achievement

# THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- **Rolling or Ongoing Meetings** – Professional Learning Conversations with Individual Teachers about the LEARNING needs of Whole Class of Students, Groups of Students, Individual Students
- **Whole School Based Meetings**– Needs Based Professional Capacity Building
- **Regional Cluster Meetings** – Sharing Understandings of Learning Data and Pedagogical Intervention Work
- **International Partner Meetings** – Comparing our work with work in New Zealand research projects + other research studies (international research literature)

- *School Based Researcher: The routines and the expectations around the sharing of data and talking about the data and developing a no blame, you know, **this isn't about blaming, this isn't about teacher-bashing, this is about looking at data and looking at where kids are at on a developmental scale and seeing how we can move them forward.** I think a lot of our work has been done successfully, where teachers come to the rolling meeting fully comfortable with looking at the student data and also taking on that shared responsibility, which is also one of the factors of the PLC [Professional Learning Community] is to say well, these kids go, I have them here and then so-and-so has them, so-and-so has them, but we need to work together if we're going to move these forward. **So when we look at our (data) wall, we're all in this together and we need to have a look at our practices down through the region, to sort of say okay, irrespective of whether they're in grade four, five, six, or seven, if this is what the data is saying their competencies are at the moment, and we want to move them along, then all of us together need to work to move this group of students along.***

# Valued Student Outcomes?

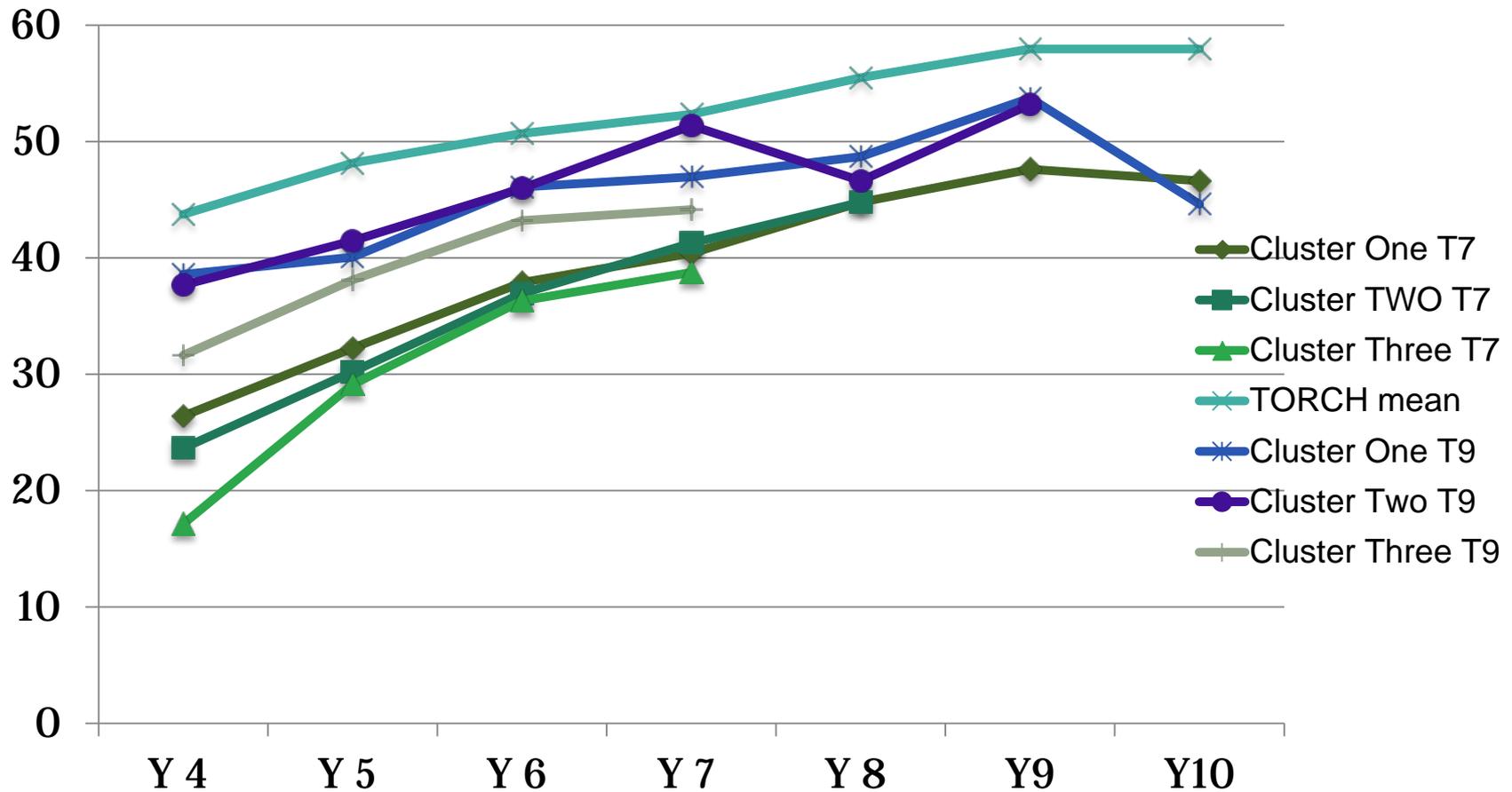
Stuart McNaughton, University of Auckland

Evidence being analyzed from achievement patterns -  
indicative data on:

- Acceleration
- Shifting distributions
- Generalised effects on sub groups
- But noticeable school by school and class by class variation

# Accelerated Literacy Gains -

[T scale means] - Kathryn Glasswell, Griffith University



# Shifting from Deficit Talk to Making a Difference

- **District Administrator Two:**

I can remember one particular classroom teacher who was a wonderful classroom teacher actually, she was very skilled. But she articulated that she did not realise she was the blocker, she was the one who was stopping her students from learning and from going any further and it wasn't until after 12 months of the project of her going to that natural protective mode that we see when the kids are struggling with something and we wished - and they've got a horrible home life and we can't put anything more on them. She was very much in that mindset. So she'd gone into a protective mode and I'm not going to put any more stress on them by making them do extra work and - can't do that.

So her interpretation of supporting the students was that it wasn't until she had been pushed enough to start actually doing what we're asking her to do. To say, come on just throw them a few more books, get excited about it, do all these different things, that she actually started doing that and then she could see the results in her students' performance and then she automatically felt the guilt. That, oh my goodness, how many other students have I stopped from progressing because of my mindset, of my blocking their performance? She was at least good enough to be able to notice and interpret that in and of herself and then to do something different about it.

# Shifting from Deficit Talk to Making a Difference

- **PRINCIPAL FOUR**

Rolling meetings have been really excellent in that the teachers now are really confident going in and talking about their kids, what they're doing, what I'm going to do next. So I think those rolling meetings have really taken the teachers to another level in the way that they can discuss their children, be responsible for their children. It's not someone else's problem and what they're going to do about it and then also look for support: what else can we do? So I think those data walls have been really good for that.

...

Don't just say oh well they're low socio-economic or they come to school with nothing and we can't do anything. Take that away and have those high expectations. So I think teachers being able to see that oh look, I did make a difference with these kids by doing this; these ones have really moved on. So I think that has been affirming for the teachers as well.

We feel a whole lot more optimistic that we can actually do things for kids who have fallen on the thorns of life in various ways, but we don't hear that mentioned as a reason why kids can't learn.