Empowering Pasifika Students to Express their Identities through Visual Arts in New Zealand Secondary Schools: The Role of Euro-descendent Teachers

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Abstract

The greatest numbers of young people in New Zealand are from Pasifika peoples' ethnic groups. In contrast, art teachers in secondary schools are predominantly European. Research conducted in 2015, which investigated how art teachers are responding to the increasing diversity of students, uncovered important insights. This article provides "snapshots" of how four European-New Zealand art teachers, who work in schools where Pasifika students comprise the largest ethnic group, are empowering them to express themselves within their cultural milieu. Articulated through the voices of the art teachers, the stories of these students are visualized through examples of their art works.

Keywords

secondary school, visual arts, Pasifika identity, New Zealand, art education

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Every school in New Zealand will this year have access to materials about the climate crisis written by the country's leading science agencies – including tools for students to plan their own activism, and to process their feelings of "eco-anxiety" over global heating. The curriculum will put New Zealand at the forefront of climate change education worldwide; governments in neighbouring Australia and the United Kingdom have both faced criticism for lack of cohesive teaching on the climate crisis. The New Zealand scheme, which will be offered to all schools that teach 11 to 15 year-old students, will not be compulsory, the government said. Background. Studying the concept of secondary language identity is one of the main problems in educational psychology since it involves the ability to use a foreign language effectively in various fields. Since languages don’t exist in a vacuum but are culture-bound, a person’s process of psychological transformation into having a secondary language identity entails profound psycholinguistic and psycho-sociological character changes. However, professional communication differs significantly from everyday cross-cultural communication, which means that it should be studied separately. Objective.