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An educationalist and a software engineer walk into a bar. Exploring the interface between culturally sustaining pedagogy and value-sensitive design

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Biography:
Herbert holds a Ph.D. in Computer Integrated Education from the University of Pretoria in South Africa. He has taught English and managed both Technology and Academics in secondary schools in South Africa. He has also developed and facilitated Master's-level papers and Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma level papers on the integration of technology into the curriculum at tertiary level, both in South Africa and New Zealand. His current role involves the planning and facilitation of papers specifically aimed at encouraging in-service teachers to adopt digital and collaborative practices in their classrooms in New Zealand.

ABSTRACT

New Zealand society and education have been shaped by both bicultural and multicultural forces. The Treaty of Waitangi (signed in 1840) originally established the basis for a bicultural relationship between Maori and inhabitants of European descent. More recently, large numbers of Pacific Island peoples have made the country their home. Most recently, increasing numbers of immigrants from across the globe (most notably from Asian countries) have settled in New Zealand, resulting in a vibrant culturally diverse population.

The New Zealand schooling sector is also influenced by the global imperative of effective integration of technologies into the curriculum. To this end, teacher initial training and teacher in-service professional development seek to provide teachers with the relevant skills, competencies and knowledge to enable them to engage in good practice in this regard. Against this backdrop, educational achievement in the schooling sector has been characterised by a significant difference (Education Counts, 2019) between Maori and Pacific Island student achievement, on the one hand, and the achievement of their peers, on the other hand. For this reason, the Ministry of Education advocates culturally responsive curriculum design and pedagogy (Ministry of Education, 2018) as an integral part of all teacher practices.

This paper examines the theoretical roots of culturally responsive pedagogy and its relationship to a more recently formulated approach, namely culturally sustaining pedagogy Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris, 2012). Furthermore, the paper examines the relationship between technology and values, from the perspective of an engineering-inspired approach referred to as Value Sensitive Design (VSD) (Van den Hoven, 2007). This approach seeks to identify and analyse values embodied in the design of technologies and values associated with the intended use of such technologies. In schools, technologies are often integrated into a curriculum with little thought given to the values that their designs embody or the values directing their intended uses.

Teachers are required to engage in effective integration of technology into the curriculum and, simultaneously, engage in culturally responsive practice. This paper suggests ways in which teacher professional development might enable teachers to apply insights from VSD theorists and practitioners to the integration of technology into curricula that specifically address culturally sustaining pedagogy.