

***“Ways of Seeing Revisited”.***  
***Introducing a way forward in visual analysis.***

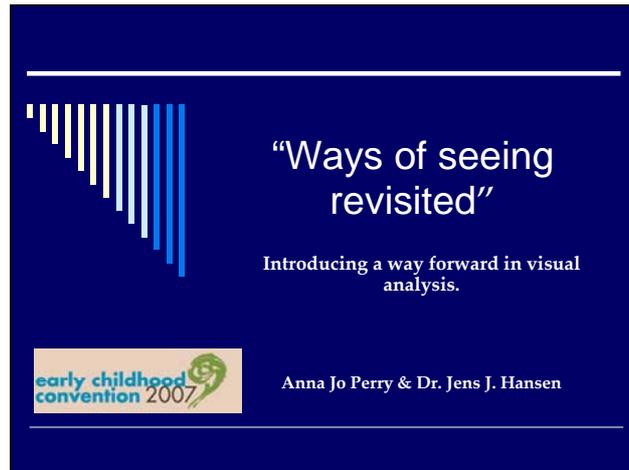
**Paper presented at the Early Childhood Education Convention,  
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## Slide 1



These notes have been prepared as an accompaniment to a slide show which probes ways of seeing. Why on earth, one can sense people saying, should such a straight forward process be revisited and then be prodded? In truth, with the possible exception of those who are visually impaired we all pretty much take our ability to see for granted. Seeing is, after all, but one of the senses which helps us to realise, to believe, to appreciate, and even, on occasions, to disbelieve. Seeing, together with hearing, smelling and feeling is the elixir that ignites our cognitive capacities – above all, seeing prompts learning.

But everyone sees things differently. Even if we are all inspecting the same object at the same time or the same images at different times, or the same event from a range of locations, our perceptions of what we see varies enormously for such is the uniqueness of human interpretations. Indeed, the fickle variability of our reconstruction of that which we think we see is what renders us human (if you see what we mean). This then, is what these notes are about. They embody our thinking on ways of seeing but they do so in ways which are far from complete. They represent how we are beginning to address the challenges of seeing in order to more validly portray the jigsaws of reality so that we may accord dignity to the phenomena that surround us and to the people who construct those realities. As facilitators of learning, we need to know about such matters so that we can help communities of learners to tell their stories. We want them to become empowered to achieve this as learning partners – we want them to construct their truth and thus help us to learn from them. Enough preamble...

As we see images and events, we inevitably begin to create stories in order to explain to ourselves and others what we think is happening. However, what we think we see, and what we think is happening are strongly influenced by prior experience, by our early socialisation, our values, beliefs, judgements, and aspirations. In fact, every part of who we are influences

each small step in our individual sense-making journey (Berger, Blomberg, Fox, Dibb, & Hollis, 1972). In our increasingly high-impact visual world, the force of what we see is brazenly apparent even though we are frequently oblivious to what we see precisely because of the impact of sensory overloading, a reality documented by Geog Simmel as early as 17??.

Clearly this matter has considerable importance for us, both as teachers and as researchers, as we try to establish and disseminate knowledge in a myriad of different ways to a myriad of learners and their communities of learning. What it all boils down to is that what we want them to see and know, may not be what they actually see and know, because the social construction of their reality is, as social science fondly trumpets, greatly dependent on everything they have seen and done beforehand.

## Slide 2

A presentation slide with a dark blue background and white text. The title is 'What we are focussing on...'. Below the title is a numbered list of five items. At the bottom left is the date '20/09/2007'. At the bottom center is the copyright information: '© Flexibleplus - Research & Development, Ph +64 9 411 7703 www.flexibleplus.com'. At the bottom right is the number '2'.

What we are focussing on...

1. Questions about using the visual and particularly photographs in teaching and research
2. A pilot project and an introduction to a new take on an established procedure for visual analysis
3. The matter of inter-observer reliability...its effect on teaching and on 'real' critical self-reflection
4. Using software to help the procedures
5. Some very tentative conclusions.

20/09/2007

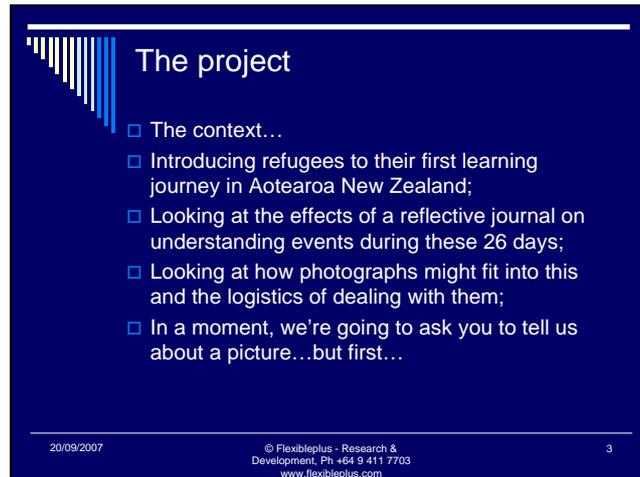
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2

This presentation focuses on four areas and then draws some very tentative conclusions. First, we briefly critique literature surrounding the use of the visual, and particularly photographs, in research. There are, we suggest, some basic questions that need to be posed although possibly answers to these questions may never really be conclusively framed. Second, we describe a pilot project during which we developed a new 'take' on an established procedure for visual analysis. Third, the project highlighted the fragility of inter-observer reliability which brought us back very firmly to the idea of being critical of the ways in which we think we see things. This not only prompted us to pose questions about what students learn from what we say and/or show them, but also, encouraged us to review how we perceive what they are learning based on appreciating who we are. This, we reason, is especially pertinent for ECE. Fourth, we have developed a new procedure for capturing data concerning what we think we see and subsequently coding those data by using QSR software.

We know that this procedure has not previously been used by researchers using this software and we are confident that what we have developed will be welcomed by qualitative researchers from many disciplines across many countries. For that reason, we ask that you consider this presentation and these notes to be a 'work in progress' because it is our intention to submit this to a refereed journal. But for this session, our primary intentions are to share our thinking in order to provoke discussion and reflection.

### Slide 3



The project

- The context...
- Introducing refugees to their first learning journey in Aotearoa New Zealand;
- Looking at the effects of a reflective journal on understanding events during these 26 days;
- Looking at how photographs might fit into this and the logistics of dealing with them;
- In a moment, we're going to ask you to tell us about a picture...but first...

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The context for the research that was the catalyst for this presentation is the Early Childhood Education Centre within the Centre for Refugee Education which is situated at the Mangere Refugee Reception Centre, Auckland. New Zealand's annual quota of 750 UNHCR registered refugees spend their initial six-weeks in the country taking part in an *on-arrival* programme. The education programme introduces refugees to their first learning journey in their new country.

This qualitative research project is an example of practitioner research. The research goals could hardly be described as 'lofty' because they were very basic indeed; we simply set out to examine what effects, if any, a reflective journal might have on understanding events that transpired during the (approximately<sup>1</sup>) 26 days of the education programme. At the same time we decided that we wanted to see how, if at all, photographs could inform our understanding. We decided, therefore, to explore the logistics of dealing with photographs with respect to the challenges inherent in coding and analysing pictorial data. We wanted to develop procedures for maintaining consistency and we wanted to explore the feasibility and usefulness of QSR software in aiding this process.

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<sup>1</sup> The word approximately is used here because in some instances medical imperatives, for example, meant that full participation spanning 26 days was not possible.

Specifically our 'field-work' procedures embodied the very essence of simplicity. One of the teachers at the Centre was given the brief of taking (snapping) photographs of the teacher-researcher whenever she saw her colleague working with parents or children and parents. She was told not to pose the groups or to move herself or anyone else around for better angles; she was told to point and snap; just to take the image. The photographs, it was reasoned, would supposedly compliment a reflective journal which was being developed by the researcher.

In due course, the 'snap-shots' were developed and upon examination, further interest was sparked when several of the photographs did not cohere with the reflections of the researcher. One photograph was particularly at variance. While the journal discussed a successful morning during which the researcher had introduced the positives of early childhood education to a late-arriving group of parents, the picture actually showed an authoritative, imposing researcher as lecturer delivering a spiel to parents who had their eyes turned to the floor and whose stance suggested chastised or even a defeated poses.

As the initial analysis continued it became clear that some significant questions had arisen from using the photographs as a partnering lens to the reflective journal. There was an incongruity between the data – they portrayed and conveyed differing stories. These inconsistencies challenged us and provoked significant reflection and discussion on likely explanations concerning the differences between the two. We began by considering the role of photographs.

#### Slide 4

A blue slide with white text and a decorative graphic of vertical bars of varying heights on the left side. The title is "Some perspectives on photographs...". Below the title is a bulleted list of four points. At the bottom, there is a small copyright notice and a page number "4".

Some perspectives on photographs...

- Images of something; something that is or something that happened?
- Reality? "A simple truth revealing mechanism..." (Edwards, 1992);
- Something that is created by the photographer "all images, despite their relationship to the world are socially and technically constructed" (Becker, 1986);
- How we see things can be variously interpreted (John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 1975).

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So what are photographs? On a very cursory level they are an image of something that is or a capturing of something that has happened. Perhaps we can even think of photographs

as representing their own reality – as fresh representations that *ipso facto* assume a validity of their own (Edwards, 1992).

Irrespective of this, whenever take photographs, our values, judgements, likes and dislikes play a big part in our choice of subject, our pictorial framing. Instantly, what we frame becomes at once a construction and an interpretation; it becomes a glimpse of our own and also someone-else's reality. In short, a photograph is socially constructed (Becker, 1979).

Equally important is the debate about whether photographs are data in themselves or a way of storing information that can then be analysed to create data (Emmison & Smith, 2000). In our view, a photograph represents a source of information in its own right from which data can be extracted; it is, in effect, a latent data source which invites interpretation and it is the outputs of that interpretive exercise that become data. But whilst in research we invariably have a predilection for completing analyses, ensuing stories are sometimes not just about what has been found out, but equally, can be concerned with what has eluded the researchers. Hence, we concur with Becker (1979) that it is also important to consider as we look at an image that has had a frame put around it, what as not taken and why.

At the same time, we must beware of chicanery because the electronic technology that is now available allows those who are adept at such things, to construct images of events that never happened at all. Digital enhancement, like plastic surgery, masks reality to an extent that truth becomes thwarted and that is not our focus here.

## Slide 5



Slide 5: What do we use photographs for?

- Triggering recollections of events, people, places, icons, rituals, memories;
- Photographs prompt thinking about all of these to varying degrees
- In all instances they can launch or encapsulate stories.

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In looking at what photographs are we also need to question what purposes we use them. At a personal level, we use them to record and recollect significant events and people...birthdays, weddings, holidays, those who are precious to us. These images prompt

emotions and typically trigger some degree of thinking. Hence, photographs contain the essence of stories we can tell in order to unlock meaning. But as we've indicated earlier, we live in an era of visual surfeit<sup>2</sup>. We are all, routinely, quite aware of the presence of the almost overwhelming presence of images in our everyday lives. They are just there – everywhere. We reason, therefore, that in order to be visually discerning, we must not only be vigilant to the potency of the visual, but we must also, in ECE and research alike, seize opportunities to become informed by those who are a part of the images we are contemplating analytically.

## Slide 6

A presentation slide with a dark blue background. In the top left corner, there is a decorative graphic of vertical bars of varying heights, colored in a gradient from light blue to white. The main text is white. The title is "This means that...". Below it are two bullet points, each preceded by a white square icon. At the bottom, there is a thin white horizontal line, and below that, small white text providing a date, copyright information, and a website URL. A small number "6" is in the bottom right corner.

This means that...

- Whatever the image and whatever the purpose for the image, in QL it is an information source that can be converted into data.
- How we do that, validly and reliably, is the research challenge.

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Notwithstanding all of these points, photographs are an important information source in qualitative research. Anthropologists have known this for a long time and have routinely used artefacts to ply their discipline. And in education, during teacher initiated learning moments, we routinely use pictures to encourage children to discern. However, in educational research, and in ECE, we are suggesting that this is not enough; we can also to use authentic *in situ* photographs as a platform for unlocking the stories of members of communities of learning.

The question for this presentation, therefore, is how we accomplish this with validity, reliability, and above all, with consistency. To try and make clear what we've been talking about up to this point let's take an example. Look at this next photo and tell us what you see and what you think is going on.

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<sup>2</sup> We comment again that Geog Simmel saw the city of the eighteenth century as providing a sense-deadening excess of stimuli and similarly, in the early half of the twentieth century, Louis Wirth noted that we become inured to visual abundances. Thus, if sensory excesses deaden our capacity to discern, we must, as researchers and ECE teachers, be vigilant.

## Slide 7



How did you see the photograph before we introduced the grid? What interpretations did you contemplate? What difference, if any did the introduction of the grid make? Given that you now have nine smaller photos, how do you now view this picture?

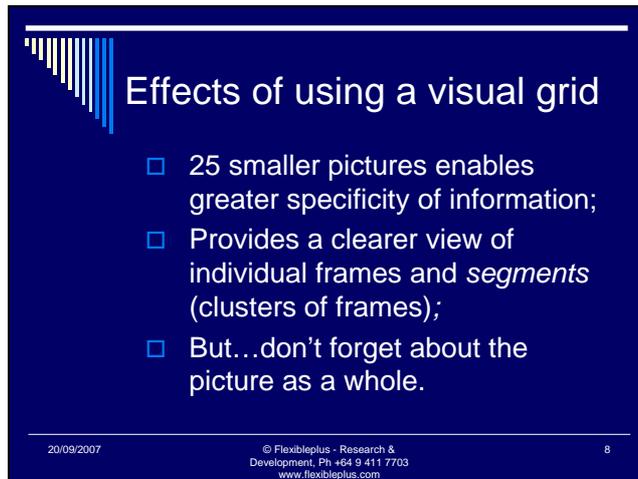
You might, for instance, notice the woman sitting... is she, perchance, the hostess? Would the matriarch be standing at this type of function....perhaps then, she is not the 'grand' mother? Does the fact that the woman standing has a coat and hat on (when the other two women don't) mean that she is freshly arrived?

What feelings, if any, spring from this photograph and are encapsulated within the frame? Does it convey formality, comfort, lots of money, a by-gone era, a sense of propriety, of values and places for everything (the child is sitting away from the table, not up to it)?

Did you question the age of the photograph at all? Perhaps you knew the scene. It's from the screen play of 'A room with a view' by E. M. Forster (with the screen play by R. Jhabvala, 1986). Did you see the clues which enable you to conclude that this was 'shot' in quite contemporary times, for example, the road in the corner, the child's hair style and so on? With no pun intended, we simply say – you get the picture.

We realise that in leading you through this exercise, we are using the photograph as a heuristic, as a device for conveying meaning. The 'actors', and again no pun is intended, are separated from us by time and space and that separation is the determinant that initiates this kind of approach. However, as will become apparent, our key message is that when actors from photographs are present, as can be the case in ECE and in research, we can and should involve them in the story telling process.

## Slide 8



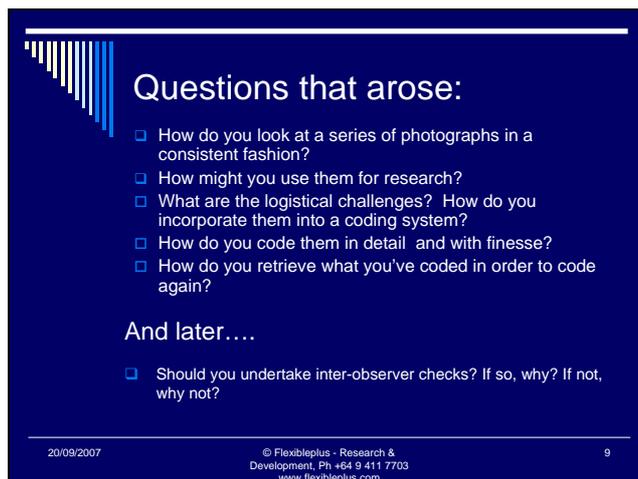
**Effects of using a visual grid**

- 25 smaller pictures enables greater specificity of information;
- Provides a clearer view of individual frames and *segments* (clusters of frames);
- But...don't forget about the picture as a whole.

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Adding a grid (of whatever size squares) creates a series of smaller images each of which may be interpreted to surrender information. They can also be inspected to prompt more detailed questioning of the data they fence thus adding more to the main story. As when clusters of individual grid squares are grouped, further information or questions can also arise. But while the permutations are clear, we must continue to see both the wood and the trees. This means that it is important not to lose sight of the main photograph, the gestalt, even though each part may enhance our capacity to understand the whole.

## Slide 9



**Questions that arose:**

- How do you look at a series of photographs in a consistent fashion?
- How might you use them for research?
- What are the logistical challenges? How do you incorporate them into a coding system?
- How do you code them in detail and with finesse?
- How do you retrieve what you've coded in order to code again?

**And later....**

- Should you undertake inter-observer checks? If so, why? If not, why not?

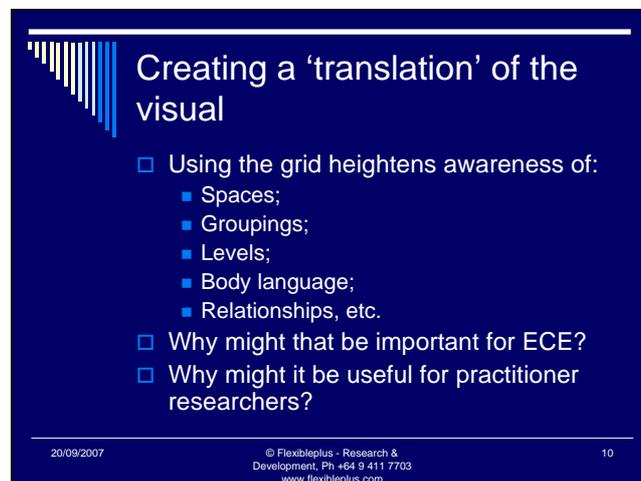
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At the end of the 26 days of the pilot project, sixteen photographs were selected for further consideration but in looking at them as a group question that clearly arose was how can we analyse them consistently as a clutch of pictures? Moreover, how might they be used

in order to create the data for research? What procedures should be deployed or devised if none were available? And how might they be processed in order to fit into a coding system? Indeed, if they were to be incorporated into a coding scheme, what would such a system look like?

In short, we needed to determine how we could code photographs in detail and in the same manner across a very small or very large clutch of pictures. We also needed to establish ways in which we could revisit the photographs we had already coded so that they could be further coded a process that Lyn Richards refers to as *coding on*. As we began to look at each photograph a further question that arose was to what extent was our interpretation of being shaped by our professional knowledge, by a sort of academic-Euro-centricity?

## Slide 10



Creating a 'translation' of the visual

- Using the grid heightens awareness of:
  - Spaces;
  - Groupings;
  - Levels;
  - Body language;
  - Relationships, etc.
- Why might that be important for ECE?
- Why might it be useful for practitioner researchers?

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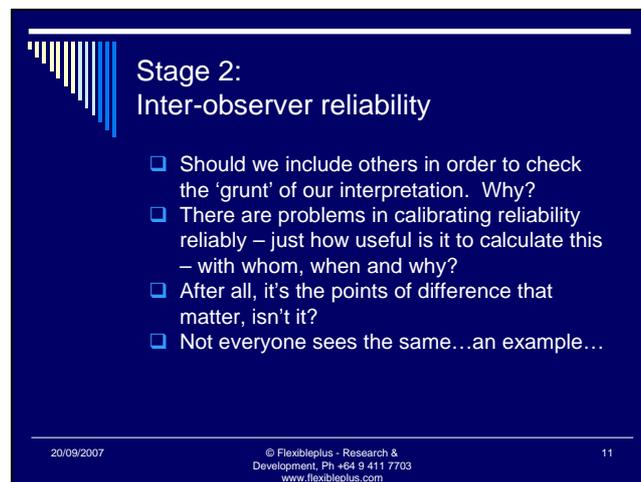
As we began to code and analyse each photograph using the grid we found ourselves becoming aware of several things. First, we noted spaces – grid squares within which there were no people or activities. We began to seek interpretations about the spaces which became part of the story of the picture. Why were these spaces there? Were the spaces, or the distances intentionally engineered by one or more of the players; were they indicators of social expectations; were they relevant to understanding the specific actions that were going on?

Second, we wondered about the grouping of people in the photographs. Were these groupings significant insofar as how *we* saw the action? Did we both see things in the same way? And if there were differences, to what extent was that important or even unimportant? Third, and coupled with this, was our interpretations about the levels at which the people within the photographs were located? Were they all situated at the same level or were there differences and what effect, if any, did this have on how we interpreted actions, relationships

and status? Fourth, we thought about the body language caught within the photographs and this was especially telling because as you move through an event you cannot see yourself as others do. Thus, how photographs capture our body language may reflect the sense we convey to others but are unable to discern ourselves as we participate in the event being photographed. (For instance, a smile captured on camera as a smirk may convey a sense of smugness which the smiler had not intended.) Finally, all of these things had an impact on how we interpreted and wrote about the relationships portrayed within the photographs.

A latent consequence of our questioning was the emergence of a new discourse. In talking about these matters, we found that we began to create a language for talking about the events in the photographs and this began to underpin the coding and analysis. But we also wondered about just how reliable our analyses were.

## Slide 11



Stage 2:  
Inter-observer reliability

- ❑ Should we include others in order to check the 'grunt' of our interpretation. Why?
- ❑ There are problems in calibrating reliability reliably – just how useful is it to calculate this – with whom, when and why?
- ❑ After all, it's the points of difference that matter, isn't it?
- ❑ Not everyone sees the same...an example...

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The question of whether we were actually seeing what we were coding and writing about or whether instead we were seeing the events captured through the lenses of expert knowledge was an interesting one. To test this, a sample of the photographs were given to two other teachers in the CRE, neither of whom had explicit ECE experience outside of having been a parent to their own children. Each teacher was given the brief to “write what you see and that may include writing about what you think is going on.

Significantly, of the ten points each teacher made, no more than two were similar in any way. The initial appearance, therefore, was that the co-efficient of inter-observer or inter-rater reliability was only around twenty per cent – a level that at first glance would give cause for concern. Clearly, there was a need to probe this further.

To test the ‘reliability’ of these seeming discrepancies in what the teachers saw, two further raters were approached and were shown the same photographs with the same brief.

One rater was a person who had previously worked as a teacher at the CRE and the other rater was a person who had neither teaching nor ECE experience. Interestingly, the results were very similar; the inter-observer or inter-rater reliability levels were again very low indeed. It became clear to us, however, that when these points of difference in interpretation were examined, they appeared to be mainly reflective of the types of prior experiences each rater had brought to the exercise with the images they were shown. A good example of this is the following picture.

## Slide 12



When each of the refugee families arrived in New Zealand, they, after going through border checks, are driven straight from the airport for around five minutes to then turn off Massey Rd and this is the first view they encounter as they move down the driveway at the centre. Welcome to the Mangere Refugee Reception Centre! This is actually a *good* picture of this first view because the hard top road is new. It replaces what was tantamount to a gravel track with car-eating potholes leading to the possibility of a less than acceptable place for anyone to stay at the end of it.

It looks uninviting and less than perfect for already traumatised people. But remember, just for a moment, that at the Kakuma refugee camp (which is about eight hours outside of Nairobi in Kenya and where there are about 86,000 people), the UNHCR representative and the VIPs stay in converted containers. That's where the food and water are but much more importantly, it's where the safety is! With that knowledge, look again at that picture. Clearly then, we all see things differently as we interpret what we see in ways that are informed by the knowledge and experience we already have.

## Slide 13

What does that mean for teaching in ECE?

- Remember, the photograph comprises a sets of smaller images which make up the whole
- Consider stepping back and showing parents and children what the teacher saw and asking them what they see as learning stakeholders;
- We, as teachers, may learn a lot about the family of learners.

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We typically use traditional and digital photographs in early childhood education to show children engaged in different activities. As teachers, we then normally proceed to write what we think the picture shows based on our professional knowledge as teachers. Our writing is then used to document learning and the learner's dispositions and can inform the next step in planning for teaching and learning (Carr, 1998).

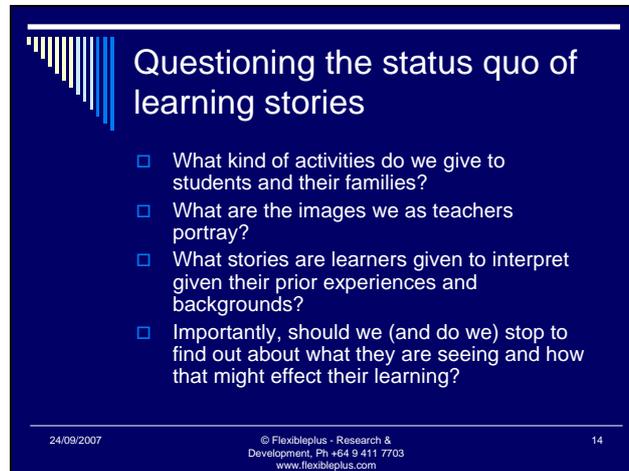
There are some issues with this that have been well documented. Two of them are about the skill level of the writer and the subjectivity that is involved because what is written represents one person's view of what happened – specifically, the teacher's view. And as we have demonstrated, the variability of interpretation between two people looking at the same photograph is considerable. So how, we wonder, might be the written interpretation become altered if parents or family members were to see that which we saw at that moment of observation? What if we gave whanau a chance to write what they see? We contend that teachers may then learn a lot more. We reason that given the fickle nature of pictorial analysis which we have repeatedly found, that if the two stories are stood side-by-side, the planning of the next stage will become fuelled by deeper and richer knowledge.

Forming reciprocal relationships with parents is also part of the regulated requirements of *Quality in Action, Te Mahi Whai Hua* (Ministry of Education, 1998) which is a significant part of every centre's charter. Consideration of the possibilities that co-operative opportunities that emerge from the use of photographs, that is, planning which involves parents, believe, could form a significant part of this.

Possibly there will be some who will reason that parents will not know what to write, and undoubtedly, for some, that may be true in some instances. But equally, it might be that photographs can capture and release information from parents about their children that warrants further discussion and the rewards to the children as learners can be considerable.

We suggest that asking parents to come involved in this kind of partnership elevates them to roles of importance that move beyond fundraising.

## Slide 14



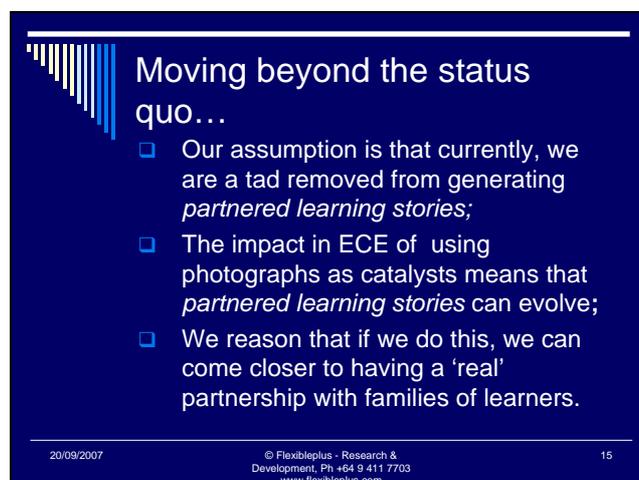
**Questioning the status quo of learning stories**

- What kind of activities do we give to students and their families?
- What are the images we as teachers portray?
- What stories are learners given to interpret given their prior experiences and backgrounds?
- Importantly, should we (and do we) stop to find out about what they are seeing and how that might effect their learning?

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A step that extends beyond asking parents to write what they see would be to allow the parents to take the pictures. After all, we take the pictures that are important to us, so why not allow someone else who may see things differently take photographs which they can then discuss with us? Currently, it is the teacher who chooses images about learners and it is the teacher who interprets. When do we ask parents, who are pivotal members of our communities of learning, to take the photographs for us to then co-interpret with them and do we ever stop to find out if this is significant for them or if we are missing an opportunity to learn about something that may be fundamentally important for them?

## Slide 15



**Moving beyond the status quo...**

- Our assumption is that currently, we are a tad removed from generating *partnered learning stories*;
- The impact in ECE of using photographs as catalysts means that *partnered learning stories* can evolve;
- We reason that if we do this, we can come closer to having a 'real' partnership with families of learners.

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Our key point, then, is very clear indeed. We assert that the concept of ‘partnered learning stories’ can be developed by using photographs and telling stories about learning in a broader fashion than currently appears to be the norm. We reason that by including whanau, parents and children, the concept of a ‘real’ partnership’ within a community of learning moves a touch closer to becoming a reality that focuses on the realities of parents as co-teachers (Ministry of Education, 1998).

## Slide 16

A presentation slide with a dark blue background and white text. The title is "Using photographs provides a methodology...". Below the title is a bulleted list with three items. The first item is "There are two parts to that methodology for ECE:", followed by two sub-bullets: "Part One involves ECE theory of learning journeys and we take that as a given;" and "Part Two involves appreciating the impact of photographs taken and interpreted by learning partners (teachers and parents and learners);". The second main bullet is "These next slides illustrate dimensions to consider." At the bottom left is the date "20/09/2007". At the bottom center is the copyright information: "© Flexibleplus - Research & Development, Ph +64 9 411 7703 www.flexibleplus.com". At the bottom right is the slide number "16".

Using photographs provides a methodology...

- There are two parts to that methodology for ECE:
  - Part One involves ECE theory of learning journeys and we take that as a given;
  - Part Two involves appreciating the impact of photographs taken and interpreted by learning partners (teachers and parents and learners);
- These next slides illustrate dimensions to consider.

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It is important to reiterate that we are not criticising the idea of learning stories. They play a significant role in early childhood education theory and remain a strong part of the methodology provided by using the photographs in the way we have outlined. What we are suggesting is simply that another dimension to the use of learning stories can be informed when photographs are taken and interpreted by more than one person.

Moreover, as we shall shortly see, the learning story gains added potency when it is considered not only for the parts that are imbedded within it, but also when the photograph is scrutinised as a whole. Let’s now look at some more photographs that illustrate this.

## Slide 17



If you focus only on the top left hand corner of this sequence, what would you think that you might be seeing? Pretty common-place isn't it? After all, we've all seen similar pictures of the queen attending different events – weekly women's magazines thrive on this family, their hats, and their antics. What do you think when the other two photographs of Her Majesty are added? Do they add to the story we begin to create? Certainly, adding the pictures to the right of the queen makes the story clearer to us but the experience may not necessarily have been the same amongst the immediate on-lookers!

## Slide 18

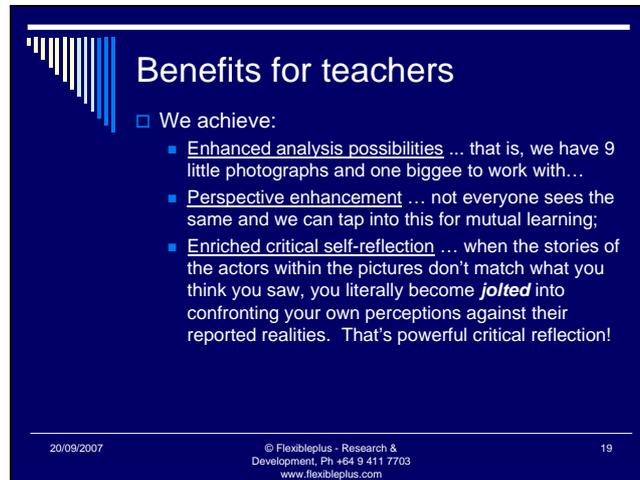
Ways of seeing...

- Although each little picture can tell its own story...
- They do make sense together; they comprise a *gestalt*;
- This suggests that we really need to interpret the big picture in order to better understand and appreciate the constituent parts;
- But we mustn't forget those specific parts

This exercise clearly showed us two important aspects of interpretation. First, it must be recognised that systematically looking at smaller parts of photograph enables those undertaking interpretation to add a degree of finesse to their analysis. This is important because looking at the parts in such a systematic way affords opportunities to add greater depth to the story. But at the same time, and as a second point, it is essential to realise that it

is the whole that tells the full sequence of events. In other words, the series of much smaller pictures create the gestalt.

## Slide 19



**Benefits for teachers**

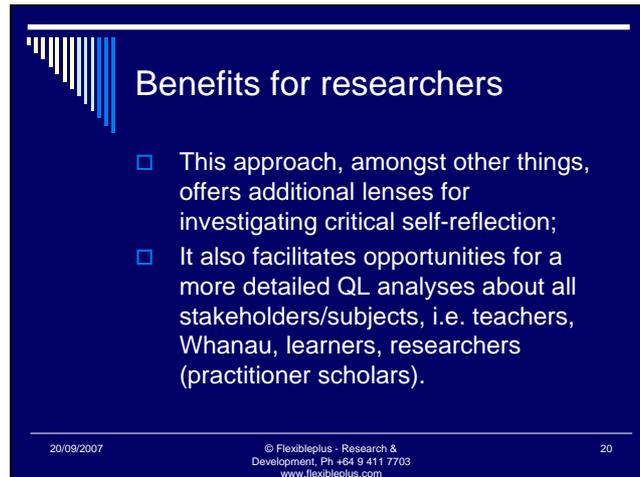
- We achieve:
  - **Enhanced analysis possibilities** ... that is, we have 9 little photographs and one biggie to work with...
  - **Perspective enhancement** ... not everyone sees the same and we can tap into this for mutual learning;
  - **Enriched critical self-reflection** ... when the stories of the actors within the pictures don't match what you think you saw, you literally become **jolted** into confronting your own perceptions against their reported realities. That's powerful critical reflection!

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There are clear benefits for teachers in considering photographs in this way. First, there are more elements that can be used to use to develop understanding of what the images and the story are about which can facilitate a deeper understanding of the children we teach and the contexts within which they learn. However, the amount of time required to complete photograph analyses (note we are using the plural here), clearly becomes extended.

Second, because each person who views the images inevitably sees or interprets them in the different ways the potential for story enrichment becomes magnified. It is only when the different views of all are included that the potential for rich, thick understanding becomes realised or, put another way, the potential for accentuated mutual learning becomes achieved. The idea of creating additional lens that are not as intrusive as video lends itself very well to critical self reflection in early childhood teaching; this approach often triggers challenging and thought provoking questions that may move the practitioners to deeper levels of consideration and meaning making.

## Slide 20



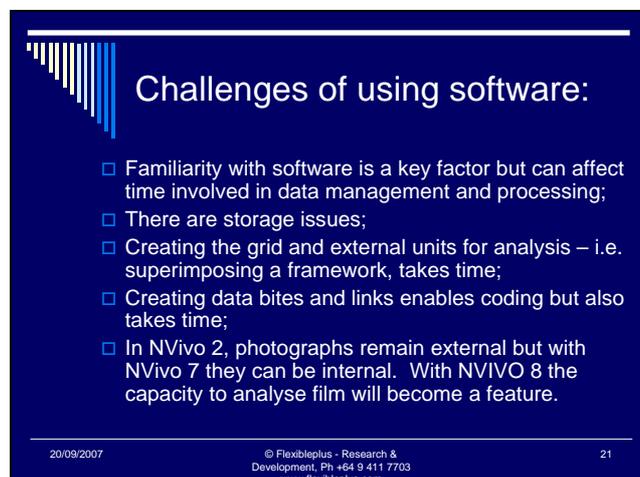
### Benefits for researchers

- This approach, amongst other things, offers additional lenses for investigating critical self-reflection;
- It also facilitates opportunities for a more detailed QL analyses about all stakeholders/subjects, i.e. teachers, Whanau, learners, researchers (practitioner scholars).

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Critical self-reflection has great importance in the theory and practice of early childhood education. The curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1996) itself lays out sets of reflective questions for teachers to consider in all the areas it covers. But these and personal self-reflection represent only one personal view, which, as we know, is effected by the personal experience and prior knowledge of that individual. Moreover, we also know that there are growing instances of using video to analyse practice but we note that this technology can, in the beginning at least, be intrusive and thus have an effect on the behaviours of members of the community of learning who are aware of the presence of the technology. Using photographs in a systematic way, we suggest, lessens technological intrusion whilst still affording a rigorous set of views that is are can still be interpreted in ways beyond the sole lens of the teacher. Thus with the addition of a grid, and with the help of fully participating partners, teachers are able to create more opportunities to analyse learning and teaching for everyone involved.

## Slide 21



### Challenges of using software:

- Familiarity with software is a key factor but can affect time involved in data management and processing;
- There are storage issues;
- Creating the grid and external units for analysis – i.e. superimposing a framework, takes time;
- Creating data bites and links enables coding but also takes time;
- In NVivo 2, photographs remain external but with NVivo 7 they can be internal. With NVIVO 8 the capacity to analyse film will become a feature.

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For this project we used software as a tool to facilitate analysis. Initially, QSR NVivo 2 was the software of choice but later, for reasons of extending our experimentation with software, we shifted our modus operandi to QSR NVivo 7. In making these comments, it needs be stated that whilst this presentation has been about ECE, the project as originally formulated was, in part at least, focussed on exploring new ways of using qualitative software to heighten capacities for undertaking qualitative research and analysis. But we do not intend to describe the specific procedures we devised in detail in this forum because that is not our remit; it is another story for a separate forum. However, we will say that we were able to devise procedures for using QSR software in order to smooth the progress of our analysis.

But before we could harness the software, we had to devise ways and means of overlaying the grid onto each photograph and once again, because this exercise also extends beyond the scope of this presentation, we will not go there. Suffice it to say that the procedures we devised are quite involved and time consuming but let us hasten to tell you that we are happy to share this procedure with other scholar practitioners and researchers. We make this gesture because we believe pictorial data can be better analysed by creating visual grids. We venture, therefore, that there is merit in software developers finding ways of simplifying the process and imbedding such capacities into future versions of their software.

Specifically, it must be noted that NVivo 2 does not allow the storage of photographs within the software (although they can be accessed as external data bites). Hence 'external documents' were created with units for analysis being accorded to each square within the grid. This meant that each square could be assigned coding which could be retrieved whenever these data were needed. We have, as we indicated, also used NVivo 7 and whilst the procedures remain very similar, NVIVO 7 does allow the internal storage of photographs. However, importing photographs as data sources with grids included remains problematic as does the direct assigning of codes to grids.

**Slide 22**



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