

Te piko o te māhuri, tērā te tupu o te rākau
Language and literacy in marae-based programmes

This series covers research on teaching and learning in literacy, language and numeracy and analyses of international surveys on adult literacy and numeracy.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Te piko o te māhuri, tērā te tupu o te rākau

*(The way in which the young sapling is nurtured (bent),
determines how the tree will grow)*

Background to the research

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi is actively engaged in raising the literacy, numeracy and language (foundation) skills of Māori learners while ensuring the education system has the capacity to be inclusive of Māori. The wānanga is keen to foster support for student learning through strengthening foundation learning opportunities in both te reo Māori and English, in keeping with the wānanga's focus on promoting and developing effective bilingual and bicultural learning environments that will help improve and attain successful education outcomes contributing to positive tertiary studies, work and living.

In practice this requires the application in both languages of a complex web of reading, writing, speaking, listening, critical thinking, problem solving, numeracy skills, and communication technology so that people can achieve their own goals in meaningful social, cultural and/or vocational context/s. One such context is through learning on the marae. Currently, marae-based education programmes at the wānanga extend into over 30 different marae. These programmes range from certificate-level foundation skills training to undergraduate degree-level, formal discipline education. Therefore the need to offer foundation learning opportunities to all Māori students at the wānanga is potentially both extensive and intensive.

In responding to the government's prioritisation of foundation learning, this project is seen as a springboard for research that aims to:

“build adults' fluency, independence and range in language, literacy and numeracy so that they can use these skills to participate in all aspects of their lives”.

The project sought to extend and enhance research already completed in 2005, namely “Working in the Light of Evidence”(2005a), a review of the best evidence available internationally of effective programme and design methods for teaching literacy, numeracy and language to adults, and “Pedagogy in Practice” (2005b), a study that explores literacy, numeracy and language teaching by observing how 15 adult educators in a variety of contexts actually teach their students.

Specifically, this research used qualitative research methods to explore the utility and potential of marae-based education programmes to provide effective foundation learning opportunities for Māori learners. This is reflected in the phrase ‘Te piko o te māhuri, tērā te tupu o te rākau’, which symbolises the importance of strong learning foundations for future success in learning.

Aims and goals

The aims of the project are best exemplified through their contribution to an overall framework of evidence that followed Ministry of Education guidelines, including exploring the questions:

- Where are we at?
- Where do we want to move to?
- How do we get there?

The research provided a unique opportunity to build knowledge and understanding of the foundation learning levels and aspirations of Māori learners. The main research goals of this project were:

- **Goal 1:** To broaden our understanding of marae-based education programmes to provide, develop and improve foundation learning opportunities for Māori learners in the context of two programmes that are delivered primarily through the teaching medium of te reo Māori: the undergraduate degree programme Bachelor of Mātauranga Māori, and a relevant bridging-to-tertiary programme, Te Pouhono.
- **Goal 2:** To build evidence of the ways that marae-based education programmes help to foster holistic learning for Māori learners in order to enhance foundation learning and also to improve retention and successful outcomes in tertiary education programmes.

The following sub-goal for this research project became evident also:

- **Sub-goal:** To document how the juxtaposition of the two ideologies – Māori and non-Māori – makes a pedagogical impact on the development of language, literacy and numeracy for Māori learners.

Literature review

A perusal of relevant literature both in New Zealand and overseas indicates that very little published work is available that refers to marae-based learning. Use of this model of education to promote knowledge acquisition among Māori learners is a growing phenomenon, given the remote nature of communities and the mixed ability of people to access continuing education. From a social justice framework perspective, learners who enrol in certain programmes at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi are given equitable access to, and participate in, learning that is more culturally appropriate, particularly through the mobility of lecturers and programmes, which enables them to go out to those communities and move between marae. In doing so, the rights of Māori learners to gain opportunities to improve literacy and language development through privileging te reo Māori is accentuated. For these learners, their education through marae-based learning opportunities will span their lifetime; it has triggered literacy learning that involves “the spiritual, and the material, the ancestral and present-day realities”, and helps to deal with past and continuing impacts of colonisation (Rawiri, 2005, p. 29).

Methodology

The project employed qualitative case study methodology that was driven by the project objectives and logical scope for the research. Two Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi programmes that use te reo Māori as the main medium for teaching and learning were also chosen for their marae-based delivery mode. The main programme is the undergraduate degree programme, Bachelor of Mātauranga Māori, and the other is one of the several ‘feed-in’ bridging programmes, Te Pouhono. They share commonalities in their use of the marae as both a teaching and learning environment and social context, their use of teachers and lecturers who are highly proficient in te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori, and their use of knowledgeable community members from whānau, hapū and iwi to enhance the learning opportunities for Māori learners.

Participants from the two programmes were interviewed using an interview schedule, in either one-on-one interviews, or collectively as a group. Interviewees had the option of responding in te reo Māori or English – most chose te reo. Data was transcribed, translated into English and bracketed under themes that were embedded in the interview schedule, and analysed against the goals for the research project.

Data presentation and analysis

Some early trends indicated that worthwhile data came from the earlier research activities, and some of this related to the efficacy and relevance of marae-based learning opportunities in the following ways:

- The significance of *environment* created by marae-based programmes, for enhancing the learning of the students.
- The significance of being in a place that has evidence of *tipuna all around*, for influencing the *wairua* behind learning.
- The significance of *supportive roopu*, coming together in the *same rohe*, for facilitating learning.
- The significance of the *inclusion of community places and people* to the whole learning experience, and the continual generation of the idea that it is not just the one student who is engaged in learning, but the whole whānau and community.
- The significance of the *system* behind marae-based learning opportunities for continuing to reflect the tikanga and kawa of the different rohe.
- The significance of marae-based learning opportunities, for generating *deep emotion* that relates to continuing learning for the good of ‘our children’ – in order to lead the way.
- The significance of marae-based learning opportunities, for *engendering and promoting the acquisition of knowledge* that enables students to continue through a degree programme.
- The significance of marae-based learning opportunities, for *promoting language development* in te reo Māori, writing in te reo Māori, and critical thinking.

Discussion

The data has allowed certain assumptions to be made about marae-based foundation learning opportunities, namely that they are sites for:

- bringing out the language and tikanga of learners and making explicit the tacit knowledge(s), that exist at the heart of Māori connected to the marae
- bringing back learners to the marae to engage in dynamic learning succession, particularly in relation to speaking te reo Māori
- bringing up issues of historical connections to past learning experiences and putting these in a context that is removed from the cultural relevancy of marae-based education
- bringing about understanding and validating the incredible diversity and flexibility afforded by marae-based learning to deal with both the subtle and explicit challenges of developing literacy particularly through the development of oracy.

Key findings

The key findings that arose from interviews and discussions became main themes for this research.

- ***The significance of the system***, for improving foundation learning opportunities.
- ***The significance of tipuna and kaumatua (elders)***, for enhancing foundation learning opportunities.
- ***The significance of deep emotion and wairua*** as a pedagogical instrument.
- ***The significance of the marae base***, for engendering safety and promoting language development to the extent where participants moved from an average assessment of 2/10 to 6/10 in spoken language proficiency after just one year on their programmes.
- ***The significance of the ability to kōrero in te reo Māori*** as being of the utmost importance associated with marae-based learning opportunities; that is, there is a general recognition that while reading and writing are important – especially writing – it is the ability to speak the language that is more relevant and important.
- ***The significance of marae-based education to foster achievement*** and progression in moving Māori learners through their programmes to the next level.
- All the first-year students moved successfully to the second year of their undergraduate degree programme as a result of participating in the marae-based education model.
- The Te Pouhono group have transitioned successfully to the first year of the Mātauranga Māori degree programme. These participants are now on the same successful learning journey as those from Case study 1.
- ***The significance of the teacher being expert and confident in te reo Māori and tikanga*** to add a balance of expert knowledge, passion and spirituality to the experience of learning in marae-based situations.
- ***The significance of improving access to foundation learning opportunities through fielding new opportunities***, a desire and passion to learn the language, the influence of mokopuna, a hunger for Māori knowledge, and a shift in awareness.
- ***The significance of the enhancement of foundation learning opportunities arising through marae being the access point for learning***, identity development and reaffirmation coming from a different kind of wairua on the marae, the strength of leaders to enhance learning, and the knowledge that learning on the marae is the stepping stone to success.
- ***The significance of pedagogical impacts of different ideologies, for influencing the phenomenon of language shift to create ‘safety’***, the socialisation and ‘conditioning’ through language, the juxtaposition of two worlds to create present-day focus, and practices to enhance individual learning for community gains.
- ***The significance of the admission that having just any education was not enough for Māori***, but having mātauranga (knowledge past, present or future which has its roots in the language and culture of the Māori people) was the important factor. Acquiring ‘Māori knowledge’ was the ultimate motivation force behind education participation.

Recommendations

The findings indicate that the following three main points should be implemented:

- All the findings need to be aligned and linked to all current education, literacy, and language learning strategy documents and reports that are currently being considered by the New Zealand Government.
- Marae-based education opportunities are fundamental to promoting success in learning for Māori learners of all ages in both te reo Māori and English and need to be resourced accordingly, particularly in the areas of:
 - iwi and hapū liaison
 - upskilling teacher capacity and capability
 - funding to promote access and equity to such opportunities.
- Authentic marae-based models of education should be considered as the primary vehicle for the promotion, delivery and sustainability of te reo Māori, ngā tikanga and ngā mātauranga. That is, marae-based learning opportunities that are true and well intentioned to reflect the living context of Māori should be a readily sourced avenue of valid educational outcomes. Situations that reflect the tikanga, mātauranga, and use of te reo reveal the collaborative and social nature of learning among whānau, hapū and iwi.

Conclusion

The foundation learning opportunities that are embedded in the marae-based programmes enhance the capacity and capabilities of Māori learners to link the idea of learning on the marae to legitimate knowledge for effective communication.

Bringing about engagement with marae-based learning has the potential to take people out of their comfort zones and yet creates places of safety and confidence building. The extent and level to which using te reo Māori to build confidence in learners is mirrored by the understanding of learners that speaking the language *makes* them want to be confident, and, as Cummins (1989) indicates, intellectual benefits come from the increased ability and control learners have in being able to manipulate language development in reading, writing and oral expression.

1 INTRODUCTION

This research report is the result of collaborative work from different discipline areas within Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. Involved in the foundational studies area of the Wānanga, Susan Mlcek (Principal Researcher, interviewer/analysis/literature review) saw this project as an opportunity to raise awareness of, and showcase, the inclusive practice of marae-based learning that is an integral part of the Wānanga. Members from the Mātauranga Māori degree programme all embraced the research rationale and parameters, including Ngareta Timutimu (Senior Researcher, interviewer/translation/analysis), Monte Aranga (Interviewer/translation/analysis), Nikora Taipeti (Interviewer), Te Rurehe Rangihau (Interviewer), Te Makarini Temara (Student liaison and support), Yvonne Shepherd (Data collection/translation), Haturini McGarvey (Student liaison and support). Carl Mika (Literature review) from the masters degree programme completed the link between all levels of learning at the Wānanga. That is, although this research specifically deals with case studies from one certificate programme – Te Pouhono – and an undergraduate degree programme – Bachelor of Mātauranga Māori, the combined input from all the above Māori researchers includes their engagement also as lecturers who teach across certificate-level programmes, undergraduate degree programmes, and masters degree programmes. Furthermore, their awareness of the need to validate foundation learning opportunities for Māori learners recognises the overall contribution and importance of literacy and language proficiency to provide both capacity and capability for Māori development.

The project has a two-fold purpose. First, the reason for the research is best summarised through its contribution to an overall framework of evidence that is manifested through the following Ministry of Education guidelines for this research (see Table 1), and to which researcher reflections about the rationale and parameters of the project have been added in italics. Second, the project provides an opportunity for exploration and validation of teaching and learning strategies that relate to literacy and language development for Māori learners, including: formal and informal structures of practice, level of inclusion of features of literacy development such as reading, writing, speaking and listening, and the extent to which learner-centred curriculum that is designed to foster oral proficiency in te reo is actually learner-directed or teacher-directed (see section 2, Literature review).

Table 1
Overall framework of evidence

	Māori learners currently engaged	Potential Māori learners	Practitioners including Māori practitioners	NGOs – Marae
Where are we at?	The current average age of learners at the Wānanga is 35-40 years. Many are 'second-chance' learners and many have minimal high school education.	Potential learners come from the local high schools, youth intervention programmes, further iwi clusters, and newly accredited programmes such as the nursing degree.	The practitioners are expert in their knowledge and understanding of curriculum and need opportunities to use teaching and learning situations to identify and rectify foundation learning gaps for Māori learners.	In one programme alone at the Wānanga, there are seven marae clusters involved. The potential is huge, varied and challenging.
Where do we want to move to?	We want to ensure that Māori learners are provided with education opportunities that increase the likelihood of retention in the programmes and the achievement of successful education outcomes.	Through a cohesive planning approach to design, delivery and assessment of education programmes we can guarantee that potential learners will benefit from a holistic learning environment that provides sound foundation learning and successful transition throughout the length of study.	We want to continue to foster a critical pedagogical approach to teaching and learning. This kind of approach privileges the notion of 'praxis' whereby teachers, tutors, facilitators and lecturers at the Wānanga have a commitment and intention to continually critique action and reflection.	The Wānanga acknowledges the potential of marae-based learning environments to provide succession for students to several different programme areas. Foundation learning opportunities become an integral part of the learning journey for many students, including bridging programmes, certificate programmes, and formal discipline programmes.

	Māori learners currently engaged	Potential Māori learners	Practitioners including Māori practitioners	NGOs – Marae
How do we get there?	In maintaining current learner engagement, every teaching and learning situation needs to be reviewed and evaluated as being appropriate, relevant, and of value to the Māori learner; the application of foundation learning opportunities needs to be approached as a dynamic pedagogy.	In preparatory stages, ongoing review and evaluation of programmes will be invaluable for Māori learners, particularly where the application of foundation learning opportunities is approached as a dynamic pedagogy; its application becomes a 'living' resource for students and teachers.	The Wānanga needs to foster staff development and effective resources to assist teachers and trainers to provide ongoing foundation learning support and opportunities for students.	Using appropriate protocol to foster ongoing round-table discussions with iwi and hapū will ensure a continuing learning platform for the facilitation of foundation learning opportunities on the marae.

1.1 Aims and goals

The research provided a unique opportunity to build knowledge and understanding of the foundation learning levels and aspirations of Māori learners in a unique adult learning environment whereby tertiary studies are auspiced by a wānanga and facilitated in cluster groups on the marae with support from iwi and Māori tutors. Therefore, the main goals of this project were:

- **Goal 1:** To broaden our understanding of the utility of marae-based education programmes to provide, develop and improve foundation learning opportunities for Māori learners across a range of different education programme contexts, and in particular two programmes that are underpinned primarily by te reo Māori: the undergraduate degree programme Bachelor of Mātauranga Māori, and a relevant bridging-to-tertiary programme, Te Pouhono.
- **Goal 2:** To build evidence of the ways that marae-based education programmes help to foster holistic learning for Māori learners to enhance foundation learning and also to improve retention and successful outcomes in tertiary education programmes.

The wānanga has mainstream accountabilities that relate directly to government policy and which have the potential to define delivery of tertiary education to a formal model of education. However, in using the context of the marae to facilitate learning, there are implications for iwi and hapū support of tertiary studies to broaden the possibilities for a unique dynamic for learning to occur, so a sub-goal for this research project became evident:

- **Sub-goal:** To document how the juxtaposition of the two ideologies – Māori and non-Māori makes a pedagogical impact on the development of language, literacy and numeracy for Māori learners in both te reo Māori and English. Under the link 'Te Reo Māori', the New Zealand Literacy Portal offers no definitive policy, research or notes relating to literacy and te reo. From an earlier source, (Murphy & Keegan 2002) *Matauranga reo – language knowledge*, is posited as a 'deep feature' of a te reo Māori Literacy Framework. Additionally, *Te kawai ora* (Ministry of Māori Development, 2001, p. 10) indicates that Māori literacy – 'reading the world, reading the word, being the world' – is "literacy [that] is tribally located and that whānau, hapū and iwi were literacy providers". For the purpose of this project the above ideas are relevant, as well as the concepts of literacy, language and numeracy being not exclusive to, but embedded in, the dynamic processes of speaking, listening, reading, writing and critical thinking that impact foundation learning particularly in the acquisition, development and growth of te reo Māori proficiency.

There were additional considerations for the research project that are encompassed in the following project objectives.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

A perusal of relevant literature both in New Zealand and overseas indicates that very little published work is available that refers to marae-based learning for adults. The use of this model of education to promote knowledge acquisition among Māori learners is a growing phenomenon, particularly given the remote nature of communities and the mixed ability of people to access continuing education. From a social justice framework perspective, learners who enrol in certain programmes at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi are given equitable access to, and participate in, learning that is more culturally appropriate, particularly through the mobility of lecturers and programmes, which enables them to go out to those communities and move between marae. In doing so, the rights of Māori learners to gain opportunities to improve literacy and language development through privileging te reo Māori is accentuated. For these learners, their education through marae-based learning opportunities will span their lifetime; it has triggered literacy learning that involves “the spiritual, and the material, the ancestral and present-day realities”, and helps to deal with past and continuing impacts of colonisation (Rawiri, 2005, p. 29).

2.1 Rationale for Māori defined pedagogies

Else (1997) highlights the recommendation that more research be undertaken into the ‘new’ kinds of education which may be helping Māori. This report was intended to examine the education gap between Māori and non-Māori and, although not referring directly to marae-based education, noted generally the need to reconceive of education so that Māori can be effective in educating their own. This reconception was foreshadowed by the report of the Department of Maori Affairs (1960), which would then form the Hunn Report (1960), and also attempted to address the disparity between Māori and European children, although the report itself does not appear anywhere to advocate the reinstatement of marae-based learning or similar situations.

Such reconfiguring of education means having to re-address the effects of colonisation; that is, several Māori writers place the lacuna in the educational status of Māori at the feet of colonisation. For example, Tiakiwai (2001, p. 2) argues that colonisation has had a devastating effect on all Māori structures delivered through policies of assimilation. Consequently Māori have withdrawn from learning. The effect has been the lack of Māori engagement in learning, and a continued undervaluing of self in what Walker (1999, pp. 188-189) describes as:

“Maori, as a subordinated class, beneath even the meanest strata of the dominant culture, were imbued with a feeling of whakama, a crippling sense of inferiority and shame in the face of the grand narrative of the coloniser. This hegemonic function of schooling was evident at the outset”.

Hemara (2000, p. 5) asserts that a culturally common cynicism of Pākehā education existed: “Māori (and some Pākehā) suspected that European education was a tool of the colonial enterprise and that the education on offer was irrelevant and inadequately delivered.” Smith (1999, p. 59) often emphasises a similar point: that Western education is considered true knowledge – a grand truth while indigenous knowledge is regarded by the West as more primitive, and not really knowledge. She explains how the institutions of imperialism have facilitated the development of disciplines that have in turn assisted the West in defining, classifying and storing indigenous knowledge. She describes how loss of knowledge, culture and language results in huge loss to the cultural identity of the indigenous person (*ibid.*). For Smith, schools and universities are the repositories of Western knowledge, which then gets reproduced for consumption (*ibid.*, p. 58-59). Universities (as well as schools) categorise what comprises knowledge and assigns disciplines (*ibid.*, p. 65), in the name of academic freedom. In many cases, indigenous knowledge was not taught because it was considered something less than knowledge – unverifiable, and mythical.

The effects of colonisation on the ability of Māori to learn were alluded to early on in the writings of H.T. Whatahoro about Te Kauwae Runga, one of the esoteric bodies of ancient Māori knowledge. Moihi Te Matorohanga, whom Whatahoro records, warns against giving the tapu discourse around the Whare Wānanga to the Pākehā in case it is sold for money, and thus rendered noa, or common, within the public domain (Smith, 1913, p. 160). Tikao also notes the slide in meaning of Māori mana, itself linked with practices of knowledge acquisition, toward a Pākehā meaning (Beattie, 1939, p. 98) and, although he does not note this in a disparaging way, he does allude throughout the rest of the book to changes in Māori customary practices since colonisation occurred.

Smith (2007, p. 70) describes one important pedagogical and philosophical difference between Māori and Pākehā cultural versions of learning. She notes the importance of silence when watching and learning:

“I hear quite a few of my relations telling me the same story, they had to just observe, learn the job and get on with it. They too notice a marked increase in the amounts of questions that are asked – ‘why and what’ questions. The assumption is that such questions are signs of curiosity and intelligence and that it is healthy to ask such questions. Silence is considered unnatural and working in the silence is considered foreign. Silence is important because knowing is not translated through words, but is translated through direct observation. Silence gives us space to observe the needs of others, gives us opportunities to observe how things change over time.”

She continues by emphasising the often pointless exercises of collecting and classifying activities that were required of students at school, and moreover how they conflicted with the traditional, holistic teachings with which she was raised (*ibid.*, p. 71).

2.2 Historic pedagogies

Historically, Māori engagement in learning was holistic – meaning that learning occurred in all situations and contexts. Mead (2003, p. 313) notes that there was an acceptance of, and adherence to the binding nature of tapu. The fluidity of these learning contexts (or learning communities) underscored Māori society’s relationship with the world around it (natural, spiritual or physical), and was sourced in such events as the ascent of Tane into the heavens, which saw the retrieval of knowledge (Robinson, 2005, p. 70) and which paved the way for humans to be able to access that knowledge.

The inclusivity of learning is highlighted by Hemara (2000, p. 5), who has written extensively on the realm of Māori pedagogies in his eponymous literature review. Hemara’s recounting of intergenerational learning reflects Smith’s (2007) claim that learning is based on assistance from elders and occurs in the wider community. He points out the potentially biased nature of literature, though, when he reminds the reader that the majority of informants have been male (Hemara, 2007, p. 7). It was for this reason that he included traditional Māori media such as moteatea, kōrero tawhito and whakapapa in his review. He also asserts that accounts usually state that only boys and men received an advanced education, indicating that nearly all the researchers were men: “This may say more about the ethnographers than the Māori subjects” (*ibid.*, p. 19).

However, while it is undoubtedly true that the exclusion of women from the literature will have a profound effect on the basis of learning, it is nevertheless possible to distil some general principles about traditional pedagogies from literature, including sources outside of Hemara’s review. That students were often in a state of tapu is one feature that figures largely in the works of such writers as Mead (2003, p. 310) and Smith (1913, p. vi). Additionally, karakia had to be said at different times in the course of teaching (Hemara, 2000, p. 21; Mead, 2003, p. 308), and continue to be recited on various learning occasions.

Hemara states that students started at the same learning point (Hemara, 2000, p. 9) and progressed gradually. There were generally only a small number of students (*ibid.*, p. 5). The process of learning itself began in the womb (*ibid.*, p. 10), and at birth karakia were recited so that children could assume their future roles readily (*ibid.*). The roles of children could not be fulfilled without their involvement in discussions at hui, and McLean (1996, p. 32) cites Samuel Marsden's astonishment at this phenomenon:

“... Samuel Marsden (1882) was surprised to see young children encouraged to contribute to important discussions. Because most important public occasions took place on the marae or in the whareniui ... children could not help but learn from what was going on around them.”

Learning was often spiritual in nature, but sometimes the element of physical surprise was employed to encourage students to learn. A type of “faux-anger” – a term adopted by Hemara (2000, p. 21) was used in Whare Wānanga to confuse students to get them to respond to a problem. McLean (1996, p. 43) states that “Historical discourse, whakapapa and related activities taught the children ... where they were located geographically and genealogically” and that oriori were also used to place ancestors in events into cryptic form (*ibid.*, p. 23). Pere (1982, p. 69) believed that geometrical shapes were best learned within the context of the environment so that the shape, colour and size of all things could be related to holistically.

Whakapapa was seen as a vital tool to learning. Moon (2003, p. 43) posited that whakapapa referred to the layering of knowledge, which itself alludes to a belief that knowledge must be acquired gradually. Tikao, a tohunga of Kai Tahu, recounted to Beattie the care necessary in the learning of karakia, and highlighted the consequences of the omission of words or the wrong uttering of a karakia. He recounted an instance where another tohunga forgot the words to a karakia and died shortly thereafter (Beattie, 1990, p. 93). Benton (1995, p. 6) referred also to karakia being used before, during and after learning to ensure receptivity to and retention of knowledge; karakia were thus to be used carefully and thoroughly.

Despite this precaution, however, it seems that the delineation made between learning and practice was slight. In their report on wānanga capital funding, the Waitangi Tribunal noted that teaching and learning occurred every day, and observation was necessary to ensure that the welfare of the people was maintained (Waitangi Tribunal, 2007). Hence seemingly inanimate objects such as whakairo could influence learning because they possessed mauri and were representative of past generations (Hindle, 2002, p. 9). These were necessarily tribally based; pedagogies therefore were highly dependent on the iwi from which they derived (Benton, 1995, p. 9). Benton also notes that names for these learning institutions differed between iwi and that, although they often contained the word whare, they were not bound to any particular building (*ibid.*, p. 3).

2.3 Modern constructs of Māori and other indigenous peoples' education

The need to develop educational interventions which resemble the above pedagogies, or which are philosophically similar, is one that has fuelled the development of indigenous institutions. These institutions reflect cultural concerns and aspirations and strive to adopt policies and processes that better reflect the needs of their own peoples. Stokes (1999) cites Boyer's 1997 report, which focuses on the establishment of First Nations/Native American colleges and found that those indigenous peoples involved were participants in the revitalisation of appropriate learning methods of the First Nations/Native American people, where “they are changing lives and offering real hope for the future” (Stokes 1999, p. 4). Schwab (1996, p. 10), through research conducted among aboriginal communities, has also examined the role of indigenous institutions in providing better services and outcomes for their own people, concluding that “the achievement of competence in both worlds should be the ultimate aim of Indigenous education”. Efforts of indigenous peoples have challenged Western ways of thinking about, and constructing, learning and learning communities.

Literature on marae-based learning is scarce, apart from its basis in pre-colonial times (see above). Literature on foundation learning on marae in tertiary settings is even more scant. Much of the literature dealing with this area focuses on language acquisition for second language learners, which does share similarities with foundation learning.

2.4 Contemporary overseas indigenous approaches

McGrath (2002, p. 103) applies Edward Hall's definition of high-context culture to the Inuit, in the context of second language learning. She states that high-context cultures are capable of learning through observation, due to communication being more dependent on context than spoken words alone. In commenting on the need to transmit culture along with the knowledge of language, she cites the dilemma that students face when they are taught to greet someone, for instance, but no place may be given for body language and facial expressions when that learning is occurring (*ibid.*).

Students were able to contribute to solutions to this dilemma, and one of the comments they made was that learning needs to be based on experience (McGrath, 2002, p. 104). This experience did not appear to be solely or obviously culturally based, for instance, "... go to the park, do drama ..." were suggestions given alongside "...make bannock, bring fish in and eat them". Possibly, the Inuit draw on a number of sites for contextual learning to take place. McGrath then considers the Japanese language programme at York University, in which students first explore the spaces of a Japanese house and are then given the names for them (*ibid.*), demonstrating, as she states, that cultural awareness occurs simultaneously with language acquisition. She finally advises against attempting to adapt a second language to a mother tongue, and posits that this risk is ameliorated through the experiential learning of a high-context language.

Maracle & Richards (2002, p. 127) describe the challenges and relative success of an immersion programme for Mohawk language learners, driven by the apparent failure of existing once-a-week language classes. These authors recount the establishment of the immersion programme, which took place in a rented house, and sought the involvement of elders and other speakers so that a contextual basis for learning was evident. Maracle and Richards cited preparing lunch as a way in which conversation was encouraged through context (*ibid.*, p. 128). They did refer to some problems: primarily, much of the instructors' time was spent explaining simple grammar which was meant to have been taught earlier, and students busied themselves in writing too much down without listening to explanations.

Although these authors did not elaborate on the actual importance of an ancestrally defined building, and seemed to prefer more orthodox, Western learning pedagogies, they did highlight throughout the paper the need for involvement from the wider community. Community participation was a factor discussed by Blair et al. (2002, p. 95) also, in relation to Dene language revitalisation. These authors emphasised the importance of involving all members of the community – not just elders – in language learning, along with student engagement in traditional activities. Similarly, De Garcia et al. (2002) describe the comparative success of a language camp for Jicarilla students, which was run on the basis that learning occurred alongside doing, with a community focus.

Kirkness (2001, p. 43) is one writer who does discuss the importance of a culturally based physical environment for learning. She cites the importance of the Longhouse to learning for the Salish people. The Longhouse concept is based on traditional homes of the Coast Salish people, and is used in teaching at the University of British Columbia. It is apparently constructed of red cedar logs; she describes this physical construction as a "...vessel for the continuation of knowledge...", and draws a parallel with the marae-based learning approach.

2.5 Contemporary Māori approaches – learning opportunities as literacy in context

The development of literacy, whether through speaking, listening, reading, writing or critical thinking (Ministry of Education, 2007), is best understood as a social construct, or ‘social practice’ (Elish-Piper, 2000). Learning opportunities that encapsulate literacy and language development are socially constructed (Cummins, 1986; Hohepa & Jenkins, 1996). For adult learners, foundation learning that also encompasses numeracy, and information and computer technology, can be rewarding as well as technically challenging (Benseman & Sutton (Eds.), 2008), not least because of the sometimes lengthy breaks that adults take between engagements with formal learning encounters. Added to the above concepts of the practice of ‘literacy’, for Māori, *akoranga Māori* (Māori learning) is both social and functional literacy (Ministry of Education, 2001), because of the need to maintain social relationships, express feelings, give clear instructions and share information, whether in the home or on the marae, and is best exemplified through “intergenerational learning across families” (May et al., 2004, p. 1). Saville-Troike (2003, pp. 3 and 7) also suggests that patterns of knowledge and behaviour are transmitted in the process of socialisation and enculturation. These learning situations in the home and especially on the marae can be no less formal than in a ‘mainstream’ classroom and provide a ‘strengths model’ of education, building on existing family literacy” (*ibid.*).

The key to situations in the family and on the marae being effective as important sites for learning is that they respond to the idea of a “responsive social context” that allows individual learners to have some control over “learning interactions” (Glynn, 1987, cited in Hastings and Schwieso (Eds.), 1987, p. 253). Being ‘responsive’ is a critical factor in the evolvement of learner-centred, and learner-directed, curriculum whereby learners have the potential not only to participate in, but also to *initiate* and *mediate*, the context for learning. Participation in local wānanga allows Māori learners to pursue one of their main objectives, the pursuit of te reo Māori. However, encouragement of learning is not just through an emphasis on developing ‘literacy’ or ‘oracy’, but includes multiple ways of communicating and meaning making (Mlcek, 2006). That is, Māori have historical and contemporary approaches to linking learning on the marae as legitimate knowledge that maintains mātauranga (Māori knowledge), not just through oracy but also through the *nature of oral practice* (*ibid.*). In examining the connections between language, power and knowledge to transform relationships and personal situations, Māori learners are also engaged in ‘critical literacy’ (De Souza and Andreotti (Eds.), 2007).

The Ministry of Maori Development (2001, p. 10) nominates Māori literacy as the ability to “read the world, read the word, and be the world”, and states that “literacy is tribally located and that whānau, hapū and iwi are literacy providers”. In another indigenous study, Hohepa & Jenkins (1996 p. 6) argue that the systems of so-called “preliterate societies” are actually very sophisticated bodies of knowledge. They continue with the idea that “[t]exts need to have relevance to social practices. The growth of literacy requires institutions for using text, such as spiritual, legal and political” (*ibid.*, p. 9). Tiakiwai & Mika (2005) take up this point when discussing the diverse nature of learning sites by using three case studies: Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, the Ngāti Awa Settlement Claim, and Te Kohika. These authors depicted the last two in particular as less obvious, but nevertheless valid, learning sites. In these two cases, learning occurred for those connected with the events and was mediated by such cultural aspects as tikanga and whakapapa. The formality of the above situations cannot be underestimated, particularly in the rules and protocols of engagement. However, compared to the formal structure in a conventional classroom, whereby the teacher, through interpreting the ‘official’ curriculum, initiates and controls the environment, the environment and event in the case of Māori learning are quite often the vehicles for both teacher and learner “reciprocity and mutual influence” (Glynn, 1987, cited in Hastings and Schwieso *ibid.*, p. 259) to establish and maintain learning through instances of mana, tapu, and noa, which are all “relational and social processes within which life unfolds” (Harvey 2006, p. 55).

Culturally appropriate teaching, although not necessarily delivered on a marae, is a common theme explored by several writers. For example, Mete (1996, p. 117) discusses the instance of the Huarahi

Education Trust, which delivered literacy skills to Māori of all age ranges. Mete offers a stern message for other Māori educators:

“Until Maori PTEs realise the effectiveness of employing their own people, utilising culturally safe methods of delivery in both Maori and Pakeha languages, they will always be part of a Treaty that has denied our rights.”

The Huarahi Education Trust was successful in delivering literacy skills but was closed in 1995 due to lack of funding. Mete was quick to indicate that, while the community was generally helpful, it was not always so: when the Trust was established it was pitched into competition for funding with other institutions (*ibid.*, p. 120) and so was among the various Māori educational institutions which were viewed with some distrust within their own ranks. However, during its relatively short existence it did deliver literacy skills in particularly contextual ways, including through the Parental Skills Pilot:

“In keeping with the kaupapa of literacy, it introduced concepts of **mana wahine** and **mana tane** through the oral stories of kaumatua and mythology and assisted parents to support their own children’s literacy skills.” (*ibid.*)

Similarly, the Haranui Marae Training Centre provides their marae for learning, and students are encouraged to learn about tikanga and te reo Māori in its appropriate setting (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2006).

Marae continue to be used as a space and place for teaching generally, and the delivery of specific literacy skills are embedded in the receptive features (*reo torohū* = *whakarongo* ‘listening’, *pānui* ‘reading’, *mātakitaki* ‘viewing’) and productive features (*reo whakaputa* = *kōrero* ‘speaking’, *tuhituhi* ‘writing’, *whakaatu* ‘presenting’) of language (Murphy & Keegan, 2002, p. 3). Many iwi and hapū continue to hold wānanga for their own people. These wānanga are interested in developing the knowledge base of their people, and encouraging them to ‘read’ their tribal surroundings, particularly through oracy and articulating those surroundings. Royal (2001, p. 38) discusses his experience of learning where he discovered the impressions of one’s body within the wharenuī through the tracing of genealogy. He believes the body is a reflection of a wharenuī that emphasises the contextual importance of learning.

In the more formal sense of the name, wānanga have come to mean the Māori tertiary institutions that are recognised by legislation. Mead (1997, p. 59) describes the legislative characteristics of wānanga as being underpinned by Māori tradition and custom; consequently, wānanga will be “...more attuned to iwi needs”. For Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī, the focus extends beyond such cultural expectations that are taken for granted assumptions of the Wānanga’s operations and activities. Mead (*ibid.*) notes that the development of alternative learning communities, such as the wānanga, has come about in frustration at the adherence to mainstream ideologies that continue to position Māori on the periphery of what counts in New Zealand society.

Te Wānanga o Raukawa developed a marae-based studies initiative which recognised that Māori prefer to be educated by their own people and in accordance with tikanga (Te Wānanga o Raukawa, 2004a). Titled Iwi and Hapū Marae Based Studies, this programme ensures that marae are able to commit to the 10 kaupapa of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, pukengatanga, rangatiratanga, wairuatanga, kotahitanga, ukaipotanga, te reo, kaitiakitanga and whakapapa. Mutual Recognition Arrangements with the Committee Mātauranga of each participating marae ensure that these kaupapa are adhered to (Te Wānanga o Raukawa, 2004b). Their programme perhaps best reflects Durie’s goal of *whakatuia*: the extension of learning beyond the school gate and the relational positioning of Māori views of learning (Waitere-Ang, 2005, p. 365)

Various mainstream universities offer options for Māori-centred learning. Te Timatanga Hou at Waikato University, for instance, appears to offer literacy skill development to students, and the

students can also participate in kapa haka (University of Waikato, 2004). It is not stated, however, whether the teaching takes place in a marae setting. The Huarahi Māori stream of the Certificate in University Preparation also offers language and critical thinking skills “...in a supportive Māori and Pasifika learning environment” (*ibid.*). The University of Auckland offers specialised teaching to Māori students in the form of the Graduate Diploma in Business (Māori Development) – Te Tohu Huanga, which is based on a Kaupapa Māori approach to teaching, where whanaungatanga, kotahitanga and the lived Māori experience of lecturers are critical to its success (Henare, 2001, p. 116). While this programme of study does not in itself offer explicit ‘literacy skills’, students are encouraged to develop these alongside the content itself. In this way, literacy and content are allowed to inform each other.

2.6 Conclusion

There is a long way to go in regard to documenting literacy and language development as an outcome of marae-based programmes. Part of the ongoing debate about how programmes are deployed to communities revolves around the contestable nature of just what constitutes literacy and language development and even whether the programmes are foundation opportunities or an extension of what is tacitly held by learners. However, an accepted favourable pedagogy among ‘mainstream’ literacy and language practitioners is that content and context are intertwined, and literacy and language are socially constructed. There is no denial also of the incredible diversity and flexibility afforded by marae-based learning to deal with both the subtle and explicit challenges of developing literacy within a culturally appropriate context.

3 METHODOLOGY

The project employed qualitative case study methodology that was driven by the project goals, objectives and logical scope for the research.

3.1 Logical scope

The programmes and participants in the project are identified and delineated in the following table.

Table 2

Participant description list

Programmes participants came from the Bachelor of Mātauranga Māori degree programme (Level 5 – Year 1), and Te Pouhono (Level 4)	<p>Te Pouhono is part of the marae-based education cache of programmes that is offered to communities to support, enhance and promote cultural uniqueness. Delivery mode is through wānanga on local marae, and includes teachings that belong to individual rohe regarding waiata, reo and tikanga. Attendance varies depending on arrangements with individual whānau, hapū and iwi, and includes a wealth of local knowledge and expertise.</p> <p>The Bachelor of Mātauranga Māori degree programme involves three-year full-time study. Five core papers plus one elective paper cover topics such as: <i>te reo</i>, <i>tikanga</i>, <i>tu-marae</i>, <i>toi-whenua</i>, <i>mātauranga Māori</i>, <i>tahuhu kōrero</i>, <i>whakapapa</i>, <i>whanaungatanga</i>, and <i>te taiao</i>. Students must have a minimum of level 3/4 proficiency in te reo Māori before they can undertake the course.</p>
Students – involved in key informant interviews (n=11), and group discussions (n=7)	<p>These were the Māori learners involved in two programmes, the main part of which is delivered in a marae setting. The different cohorts included a variety of ages and gender makeup.</p> <p>Students in the Te Pouhono programme are studying to gain a minimum level 3/4 proficiency in te reo Māori. Ideally, the undergraduate degree operates on a level 5 skills indicator, but in reality many students will enrol in a Bachelor of Mātauranga Māori degree programme with a borderline level 3/4 proficiency. However, the ‘immersion’ techniques of the delivery will see most, if not all, students acquire the nominated level 5 proficiency for their degree programme before the end of the first year.</p>
Teachers/lecturers/facilitators – involved in focus group discussions (n=5).	<p>These were the teachers and facilitators from Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi who design, deliver, and conduct assessment on the marae-based programmes. Their preferred mode of delivery is in te reo. They design sessions that are ‘learner-centred’, in that they meet the needs of the learners who want so much to close the gap in their lack of language proficiency.</p>
Marae and community members – involved in informal interviews about the goals and aspirations for Māori (n=3)	<p>These were the iwi and hapū members who support the marae at which the learners are involved in their education programmes.</p>

3.2 Access to participants on different marae

The students who participated in the research came from the following marae areas: Whangaparaoa, Torere, Opotiki, Waiohau and Ruatāhuna. In the Mātauranga Māori degree programme, the content was delivered in weekly cluster sessions that saw, for example, Whangaparaoa, Torere and Opotiki participants coming together at the one marae, and people from the surrounding area of Waiohau meeting at the marae in Waiohau. The cluster sessions rotated on a regular basis so that each member of the clusters experienced the different kawa at each marae and actually got to ‘live’ their whakapapa links. The sessions were delivered at night from approximately 6.30pm to 9.30pm in the wharenuī and used the experiences and knowledge from several of the teachers who are part of the degree programme. The teaching medium is mainly te reo Māori and although the programme begins in the first part of year one in a bilingual mode, the students are expected to become more fluent in te reo so that by the second year everything is conducted in the Māori language: content delivery, student response and feedback, group work, and assignments.

The group at Ruatāhuna were part of a bridging course – Te Pouhono – which is seen as an ideal ‘feeder’ for the undergraduate degree programme, and this programme was delivered as a series of weekend wānanga at the marae. The main impetus for these programmes is that they bring whānau members together to learn about the tikanga, whakapapa and kawa of their marae. It is a programme that also provides one stepping stone to prepare students for the Mātauranga Māori degree programme.

In both settings, access to participants was through either the weekly cluster sessions or the periodic noho marae that are conducted to bring all cluster members, from all years, together at the one marae. The choice of marae is planned well in advance, and the idea is that throughout the year the students will get to experience the tikanga and kawa of different marae throughout the Mātaatua region. Students arrive at these noho marae delivery weekends on the Friday night, work throughout the day and evenings, quite often to midnight, and usually leave after the Sunday morning session. The intensity and commitment to these weekends is huge; students and teachers work together in their own separate year groups, come together for karakia, waiata and pepehā, will often participate together in a hikoi that relates to the particular rohe of the marae, and eat and sleep together. The wānanga that take place on the marae symbolise the extent and level to which this environment is used as a dynamic place of learning; every part of the marae is used to extend knowledge.

3.3 Case study programmes

Two programmes were accessed to provide information about the efficacy and validity of marae-based programmes to provide foundation learning opportunities for Māori learners. The original intention was to source participants from two Certificate Level 4 programmes to note the incidence of opportunities that would enhance students’ capacity and capabilities to transition into degree programmes. In the end, the choice of one degree programme highlights the need to be mindful of the entry level of first-year students and their abilities to engage in tertiary studies at the outset; quite often when these students enrol in the wānanga they have borderline level 4/5 capabilities in a range of literacy and language situations.

Case study 1: Participants in Bachelor of Mātauranga Māori degree programme

The participants (n=7) came from an area that stretches from Whangaparaoa in the extreme Eastern Bay of Plenty, through Torere, Opotiki, Whakatane and Waiohau. The ages ranged from late twenties to 70 years.

Case study 2: Participants in Te Pouhono programme

The participants (n=4) all came from the area around Ruatoki and Ruatāhuna. The ages ranged from late twenties to mid-forties.

3.4 Research design and methods

The case studies were used to gather evidence of the impact of environmental factors on student learning, for example: the physical location of learning; the degree of integration with or separation from other learning; and involvement and support from whānau, hapū, iwi and wider community and connection to other social and development goals, including connection to health, welfare and justice services.

The case study methodology addressed the goals of the project (see Section Two), and was used to:

- trace the impact of the marae environmental factors on Māori learners’ capacity to participate in foundation learning

- contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the way a holistic approach to teaching and learning, manifested through marae-based programmes, could develop foundation learning and contribute to the retention and success in tertiary education overall
- track the influence of pedagogy on the kind of gain that Māori learners accessed from foundation learning in marae-based programmes compared to other learning environments.

3.5 Methods

The research sought to achieve the project objectives in the following ways:

1. **Key informant interviews** were used to gather evidence regarding direct learner gain from two different kinds of marae-based study programmes. The method was also employed to gather evidence about teaching and learning factors such as expectations and attitudes of teachers; teacher education, experience and subject knowledge; theoretical and pedagogical approaches; assessment practices; and learning environments and programme resources and demands.

On a broader scale, key informant interviews were used to:

- assess the level and extent of literacy, language and numeracy capabilities
- assess the gain achieved by Māori learners after undertaking foundation learning opportunities in their programmes.

Additionally, informal interviews were undertaken with selected community members to evaluate the nature and utility of marae-based education to provide foundation learning opportunities for Māori learners.

2. **Group interviews** were used to gather evidence that related to learner factors such as learner goals and aspirations; access to programmes; experiences of education and learning; and effects of gender, age and life experience on students' level of engagement with marae-based programmes.

The group interviews were used to:

- extend the learner narratives about learning opportunities and education programmes and practices that work
- build evidence of the unique nature of marae-based education programmes that incorporate literacy, language and numeracy learning, to foster a holistic learning environment for Māori learners
- develop knowledge and understanding of the kinds of pedagogical models of teaching and learning that provide successful outcomes in foundation learning for Māori learners.

Group feedback was taped and rich note-taking was undertaken to capture the stories and examples of foundation learning opportunities experienced by the learners.

Research instrument

Questions were designed to elicit answers that would achieve the aims and goals of the project. Two research instruments were used an interview schedule (face-to-face), and interview schedule (focus group). Participants had the choice of responding in English or te reo Māori. The questions from those schedules are linked to the goals in the following table.

Table 3

Research goals and questions

Goal 1: To broaden our understanding of the utility of marae-based education to provide, develop and improve foundation learning opportunities for Māori learners across a range of different education programme contexts.	<p>How important is it for you that you were able to do your programme on the marae?</p> <p>What are some of the factors that have helped to improve your learning, and why?</p> <p>If someone asked you about the level of your reading, writing and language skills in both te reo Māori and English, how would you rate yourself before starting the programme, and comparing it to your current level of development?</p> <p>Where are we at?</p> <p>How well is the Māori learner succeeding in the overall education system today?</p> <p>How well is the Māori learner succeeding in tertiary education today?</p> <p>How supportive are hapū, iwi and community organisations, including Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī, in wanting to develop Māori learners?</p>
Goal 2: To build evidence of the ways that marae-based education programmes help to foster holistic learning for Māori learners to enhance foundation learning and also to improve retention and successful outcomes in tertiary programmes.	<p>How are marae-based programmes effective in:</p> <p>Making sure that you stay in your programme?</p> <p>Improving your knowledge?</p> <p>If you had to think about having access to learning opportunities, how has your learning experience changed from:</p> <p>Before starting your marae-based programme?</p> <p>After the first year of your marae-based programme?</p> <p>Where do we want to move to?</p> <p>Is the current marae-based approach to providing learning opportunities for Māori learners working, and how can we build on that?</p> <p>What other learning opportunities for Māori learners do we want to promote?</p>
Aim 1: To document how the juxtaposition of the two ideologies – Māori and non-Māori makes a pedagogical impact on the development of language, literacy and numeracy for Māori learners.	<p>Can you comment on the difference between traditional schooling methods and what your experience is of marae-based learning opportunities?</p> <p>If someone asked you about the level of your reading, writing and language skills, how would you rate yourself before starting the programme, and comparing it to your current level of development?</p> <p>How do we get there?</p> <p>Is the answer through maintaining marae-based learning opportunities?</p> <p>Is the answer through expanding marae-based learning opportunities?</p> <p>What are some other ways we can develop and deliver learning opportunities for Māori learners?</p>

3.6 Limitations

The project set out to research the provision of foundation learning opportunities from other organisations within the community, but in the end this became too problematic given the limited scope of the research. The participant numbers are not large and although the interview instrument used was the same across each case study, the quality and quantity of information from each of the interviews were not consistent throughout. For example, in listening to the tapes and reading the transcriptions, there appear to be some discrepancies between the understanding that the participants have about the research, and the capacity of the researchers to make clear the intended outcomes of the research.

There is also an acknowledgement that while the research instrument had translations in both English and te reo, some of the questions appeared to be repetitive, and therefore became redundant, and some held some fairly sophisticated ideas that at best could only be answered with minimal engagement. The assumption that just because something is translated into te reo Māori it will be easier to understand is not necessarily the case. Four of the 11 participants chose to answer in English, with one of these choosing to answer from an English translation script of questions. In the end, because of time commitments, the research project used four separate translators from te reo Māori to English, and it is quite possible that this exercise has resulted in different perspectives coming through from each.

4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Early trends

Worthwhile data came from the earlier research activities, and some of this related to the efficacy and relevance of marae-based learning opportunities in the following ways:

- The significance of *environment* created by marae-based programmes to enhance the learning of the students
- The significance of being in a place that has evidence of *tipuna all around* to influence the *wairua* behind learning
- The significance of *supportive roopu*, coming together in the *same rohe* to facilitate learning
- The significance of the *inclusion of community places and people* to the whole learning experience, and the continual generation of the idea that it is not just the one student who is engaged in learning, but the whole whānau and community
- The significance of the *system* behind marae-based learning opportunities to continue to reflect the tikanga and kawa of the different rohe
- The significance of marae-based learning opportunities to generate *deep emotion* that relates to continuing learning for the good of ‘our children’ – in order to lead the way
- The significance of marae-based learning opportunities to *engender and promote the acquisition of knowledge* that enables students to continue through a degree programme
- The significance of marae-based learning opportunities to *promote language development* in te reo Māori, writing in te reo Māori, and critical thinking.

4.2 Improving access to foundation learning opportunities

New opportunities

Marae-based learning was seen as a chance to bring learners back to their groups, and communities back to their roots and to their Te Aho Matua (Māori philosophical framework). Opportunities are there through the realisation that adults can still go back to get an education regardless of where they began. The improvement of access to foundation learning opportunities posed both pragmatic and ideological considerations. From a practical point of view participants acknowledged the usefulness of having marae-based learning within their rohe (geographical area), being brought to them in this mobile model of delivering a degree to the people. Several areas are remote, and some distance to the Whakatane Campus base of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. There was praise for the Wānanga’s initiative in going to the people rather than the other way around; travel was a decisive factor in participants’ ability to attend the marae-based learning opportunities. Weekly cluster groups were also a favourable talking point, as were the noho marae that saw groups of students coming together for whole weekends of study.

Desire and passion to learn the language

In response to the question relating to the importance of being able to do their programme on the marae, the overwhelming answers all related to the pursuit of te reo Māori. That is, the greatest factor influencing access to foundation learning opportunities is the foundation of te reo Māori – the desire and passion to learn the language. There was general agreement among participants that not only an effective way, but the only way, to “pursue te reo” was through doing the programme of learning on

the marae. The response from participants varied about whether the same importance should be given to reading and writing in te reo, but there was a clear emphasis on the need to develop and use oral skills. One of the participants from Whangaparaoa summed up his situation:

It's about attitude... I needed to go back and find my reo... I've got to take on this Māori so that our kids don't beat us... I used to stay in the kitchen but now I have more knowledge, I am confident to stand on the paepae [seat on which orators usually sit – usually along the border in front of the meeting house]. I did this first at Torere when there was no one else, so I stood up to mihi [welcome]... In the first year this was really hard. The change was witnessed by others and now I may still be hiding in the back, but I am not so whakamā [shy, embarrassed] ... Kua makere haere te whakamā [the shyness gradually fell away]. (Translation Monte Aranga, 28 March 2007)

The language was spoken of as the primary vehicle for tikanga, and having the latter was important in aiding the participants to conduct themselves properly and confidently on the marae. Several participants felt whakamā (shy) that they could not speak Māori before their programme began. The situation was exemplified to another extent through the experience of one of the participants, who noted that during his time of schooling (he is currently approximately 40 years old), kids at his schools had mostly Pākehā teachers, and then were exposed to the *Rangatahi Series* language learning materials at high school, but “there weren't people who could speak Māori”. His journey of learning the language then became similar to that of the other participants:

I could pick up some words by listening to speakers on the marae, but had difficulty with the new Māori words from Taura Whiri i te Reo.

Working as part of a group was a huge help for those who had little or no experience of talking on the marae, but who anticipated their input would be needed before too long. The programme structure of marae-based learning opportunities set out by Awanuiārangi was seen as a successful vehicle to facilitate this learning.

Influence of mokopuna

All participants were in general agreement that the ‘pull’ of wanting to access further learning opportunities was galvanised by a need to show their mokopuna (grandchildren) that their kuia and koroua (grandparents) could speak the language that was now part of the younger ones’ schooling in Kura Kaupapa environments. Several of the participants are heavily involved in those Kura environments and the primary schools especially have become a logical extension of the marae and therefore the community. Overall, the participants agreed that marae-based activity and what happens at the school are ‘intertwined’. One participant revealed that his leadership role on the Board at his local school meant that he was in a more visible position and there were expectations from his children that he speak Māori; he wanted to extend his involvement at the school, to being able to “stand on the paepae”. Not only that, he “did not want the children to beat him”. Before starting the marae-based programme he used to “sit in the back and just listen”, and occasionally speak up when things were said, for example about tikanga. After the first year, however, he is:

...kai te pai te haere inaianei, kāore i te whakama [going good now, not shy]. (Translation Monte Aranga, 28 March 2007)

In the wānanga experience, many Māori have returned later to study, and students are referred to by their teachers as “late learners, adult learners” and many had even “fallen by the wayside”. As one group participant stated:

... watching and wanting to be there for their mokopuna was a huge factor...

Also, when knowledge is ‘internalised’ it can be passed to others, for example:

If I can't achieve what I want my grandchildren to achieve well I'm in trouble ...You must know how to speak Māori, about your whānau, your children, your foods. We understand that ...you learn from the time you are within the realm [puku] of your mother ...So that you can pass it on to the children and grandchildren – it's not just about me. I am going for my children and grandchildren. (Translation Ngareta Timutimu, 17 March 2007)

Hunger for Māori knowledge

The impetus to participate in further learning was also supported by the growing experience that now Māori are generating their own ways and situations of learning, which comes from several factors including:

...after one year in the programme I am now able to reply back in Māori, whereas before I could not. Tutors were helpful in this aspect as they employed an immersion technique.

...we hunger for Māori knowledge [matekai ki te Mātauranga Māori]. (Translation Yvonne Shepherd, 8 June 2007)

...Māori have been faltering because of Pākehā regulations...the managers of education are Pākehā men...

The marginalisation of the Māori system is not geared to Māori learners. They have not yet succeeded [Kāore anō kia puawai] [but] there is a change in that adult Māori are returning to education. (Translation Monte Aranga, 8 June 2007)

...there is a shift in awareness...we are succeeding with more awareness. Thirty years ago we didn't have Māori learning institutions...it's exciting [and] needs to be recognised and adopted by 'the system'.

Shift in awareness

The 'awareness' factor was nominated by several of the participants, including two who expressed how the role of the Treaty of Waitangi claims had provided a "huge increase and effect on the growth of awareness". There was a call from several of the participants, both students and teachers, to use marae-based learning opportunities as a way for family and sub-tribe (whānau and hapū) to direct the kind of learning that would take place. Learning away from the marae was seen as providing little cultural context. The static classroom was an example of the kind of legacy that hindered access to learning opportunities for Māori learners; many voiced negative experiences of this type of learning mode. But more importantly, the link was made to the kinds of environment that improved learning opportunities, for example:

If we look at the marae environment, it is about connecting yourself with your whenua [land] and your awa [river], and not just looking at whakapapa, but looking around at the environment and committing to it. Look at the marae and compare it to the whare Pākehā [Pākehā school/house]...there we have just a desk, a chair and a blackboard. And we have a teacher who writes all the things on that blackboard. It is all about the whare. In the whareniui [sleeping house] on the marae, it is all about the kōrero...the listening and values.

4.3 Enhancement of foundation learning opportunities

Marae as access point

The marae is seen as the access point and foundation for learning; marae and wānanga are learning bases and are therefore sites for enhancement of any kind of learning. It is about being safe on the marae and knowing and accepting one's place. It is also about acknowledging the marae as a resource for learning and as a source of identity development:

The marae is the ultimate learning place for Māori. There has been a breakthrough with marae-based education, as marae equals identity.

It has been overlooked that the marae has knowledge resources...haven't tapped into this yet. Marae breeds success. Other institutions don't have enough practice.

Identity development and reaffirmation through a different kind of wairua

The idea of the marae being a resource for identity development is not new, but another idea was put forward regarding the enhancement of foundation learning opportunities being reaffirmed through marae-based education, to not only “embody identity” but also to “reaffirm who we are”. This meant offering people what they wanted to learn in the best possible way. As one participant stated:

Ko te tauihu o te waka kei mua, te kei kei muri. Kia Māori a roto, kia Māori ā waho [The prow of the waka is in front, the stern behind; steer straight. Be Māori inside and out]. (Translation Yvonne Shepherd, 8 June 2007).

Enhancing learning opportunities comes from the validation of the learner, of their wairua and their mana. From trying to improve learning through traditional methods of schooling, going to a marae-based programme was where “the wairua is different...when you are in the wharenuī [sleeping house/meeting house], they are giving back your mana...giving back your kōrero”.

Having an awareness of wairua as the passion of life is quite important. Te mauri o te marae is about having that sense of power, and that sense of influence and identity.

There was a general call for Māori to come back to their marae and this was exemplified in the words of one of the participants from the Te Pouhono programme:

It reminds me of a saying I learned long ago “ hoki ki o maunga kia purea koe ki ngā hau a Tawhirimātea” but I prefer to say, “hoki ki o marae kia purea koe I te hau matauranga o tenei ao” [Go back to your marae and learn the things about your ancestors and where you are from]. (Translation Monte Aranga, 12 July 2007)

Stepping stone to success

And in other ways, two other participants called for an assessment of how marae-based learning has always been there for Māori learners to have the potential to epitomise success and needs to be acknowledged as a stepping stone to further learning:

Marae-based approach to learning has been totally overlooked...our people can feed and care for thousands of manuhiri [visitors]...not being formally educated...can whaikōrero [speak formally] for up to an hour. Marae have always been a learning institution mai ra ano...we, that is Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, hasn't tapped in yet. For years our people had been told or thought that they were dumb, not good enough. Marae-based learning equals success...is successful.

Kia toro atu te tamaiti ki ngā mātauranga katoa o te ao ēngari me timata i ngā kaupapa Māori [The child will reach for all knowledge of the world BUT must start with Māori knowledge]. (Translation Yvonne Shepherd, 8 June 2007)

However, as one participant stated:

Kua parauhia te whenua, kua rakurakuhia te mārā kua whakatōhia te kākano. Kei tō whare te kōrero [The land has been ploughed, the seed bed prepared, and the seed sown. It is now up to the individual]. (Translation Yvonne Shepherd, 8 June 2007)

At the end of their first year of the programmes, most of the participants nominated an improvement from a 2/10, to an average of 6/10, particularly in spoken language proficiency.

Strength of leaders to enhance learning

The validation of the learner and the learning mode presented by the marae-based programmes is seen as coming from the strength of the leaders of the whānau, hapū and iwi. This was a repeated call from several of the participants – the notion that, for example:

The most important factors relevant in raising Māori success in education are lifting the motivation of our families to improve through these goals; that by creating learning opportunities and self-belief, they have the means to achieve further aspirations for educational success. They need to understand and believe that we Māori have the ability to spearhead these aspirations through uniting the focus of our whānau, our hapū, our iwi, our leaders.

The next point crosses into pedagogical approaches that saw the tutors in the programmes employ “immersion techniques” to learn the language and tikanga. These practices gave many of the students the confidence to participate and take an active role in their learning. They had no articulated mainstream theoretical underpinnings apart from a tacit awareness and experiential acknowledgement that to immerse oneself in the language is the best way to acquire proficiency and the ongoing flexibility to move between marae. A note needs to be added here that the learners’ faith in the tutors was of a deeply trusting nature that bordered on the level of awe, not just for the knowledge the tutors held, but the fact that the learners had been given the opportunity to access that knowledge. For some learners this process was a profound spiritual awakening, and for others it was a process of validating the spirituality that was both implicit and explicit in mātauranga.

4.4 Pedagogical impacts of different ideologies

The phenomenon of language shift to create ‘safety’

There appears to be an almost direct swing from the privileging of English as the dominant language of teaching and learning, to that of te reo Māori as the dominant medium of instruction in the two programmes. The idea of ‘safety’ was mentioned several times by different people in relation to the level and extent they could speak Māori, and the marae was seen as “the foundation to build a strong base, of identity, and of learning in a safe environment”. The start of the learning journey was seen to begin on the marae and then to venture outwards. Again, the main vehicle for this safety was seen to be through the language, not as an isolating entity but one that was both symbolic and an activity of freedom:

We should be offering the world and the universe to our people. Why should we learn English ... who said we should? It is more important to give them...learners...the key to turn them on.

Socialisation and ‘conditioning’ through language

When relating to their past experiences, nearly all the participants, and particularly those in the group discussions, agreed with being ‘conditioned’ into a certain way of learning; for those lucky enough to have te reo language classes at school, these were also somehow disconnected from real life. This way of learning was nominated as the ‘traditional kura’ (mainstream schooling), and both implicit and explicit reference was made to the idea of colonisation still having an influence on current learning situations. For example:

It is about our intrinsic right to speak our language, practise our tikanga. Therefore we should be allowed to do whatever is necessary to achieve this.

We need to go through a decolonising process with students, which is tedious. However, the majority of Māori are like that.

The juxtaposition of two worlds

Not everyone had negative experiences of the ‘Pākehā world’ of schooling. For example, the kuia on the degree programme had the following insights to share, including the different roles taken by the people around her:

All of our people must be educated so that we can live in both worlds. I was encouraged by elders to pursue knowledge: whānau support was there to those who wanted to learn. Some listened and some didn't...some of the learning was from the Presbyterians. My mother focused on the Māori things but my father encouraged me to pursue Pākehā knowledge. My father said pursue Pākehā knowledge – we were sent to the mission, to speak English, use a knife and fork. (Translation Ngareta Timutimu, 17 March 2007)

But in comparing those past experiences to current marae-based learning, they were seen generally among the participants as part of a world dominated by the classroom and a formality that was both overwhelming and overbearing. That is, there is a sense that Māori are still “dominated by Pākehā”, and Māori children and Māori knowledge still struggle for status and recognition. The kuia also supported these sentiments. In the words of another participant, she felt as if she was “on another planet and nothing made sense”.

When I was born, I was born with the reo and I had the reo until I was about four years old. When I was five, the reo was taken from me when I went to the Pākehā school.

However, there is no denying that learning on the marae appears to have even more of a formal structure than the Pākehā classroom, particularly in regard to rules and protocol of tapu and noa, mana and tikanga, who can speak and who cannot, highly specified turn-taking and schematic rituals. But whereas the Pākehā classroom “weighs you down”, the following observation points to a different outcome of marae-based learning:

In terms of improving my knowledge, on our marae or in our class, there are certain tikanga [protocols] we need to stick to and it heightens the senses – yes, heightens it – it is a special experience...of wairua [spiritual well-being].

Pedagogical practices to enhance individual learning for community gains

The quality of delivery and the knowledge base of the lecturers were seen as defining factors for the success of marae-based programmes and for developing confidence in the participants. There were common goals that had much to do with being linked to each other through the Mātaatua waka connections, as well as common whānau, hapū and iwi relationships. The embodiment of learning was emphasised through comments about individual lecturers, their knowledge and “beautiful āhua” (character, being, personage), but also about individuals who were willing to help each other. One kuia from Waiohau was quite specific about the knowledge of the lecturers, and how she needed to interact with them. Compared to the other participants, her reo was of a very high standard, and this she acknowledged, but for her it was now about displaying “authentic knowledge, otherwise the lecturers would be disappointed”. Her words echo the others when the structure of imparting knowledge takes on new dimensions in a marae setting:

...there is so much that is discussed at noho marae. I hadn't heard my parents discussing some of these things – ngā rangi tuhaha [the heavens] of Io...and coming to the end of the year, we had had proverbs, local sayings, idioms – I didn't know what kiwaha [tribal slang, colloquialism] were – it's enlightening...metaphorical language.

It was a year of very deep topics...others said I should start at a higher level but no, start from the beginning...this is like the whāriki [woven mat]...the beginning. Start from the right whāriki for the whare. This programme is Awanuiārangi's, so start from the aho, from the wairua, the spiritual, from the ancestors, the kaupapa...te aho o to kaakahu, te aho o te reo, te

aho o te whakarongo...start from the beginning. (Translation Ngareta Timutimu, 17 March 2007)

When the participants spoke of getting back their mana, wairua, mauri, or getting back their kōrero, they highlighted that these occurred mainly through the experiences of searching for whakapapa (genealogical links, relationships), for hapū and iwi. The outcome of learning was never seen as being just for the individual student, but for other people around them, including their tupuna (ancestors) and kaumatua (elders). There was always something to learn and knowledge was never taken for granted. For example, not one student rated themselves higher than a 2/10 in relation to their oral Māori language skills, and yet all were seemingly ‘fluent’ and would have had to have a certain proficiency in the reo before starting their programmes. Nearly all participants credited their improvement in the reo as being influenced by working as part of a group. One participant drew memories from a long time ago, and reminisced:

Our class working as a group is a big thing...that’s not allowed in the Pākehā world, you work individually...you and yourself on your chair. What I like is not working alone [but] working together.

Nowhere is the pedagogical impact of the different ideologies more pronounced than in the system of relationships that exists through marae-based learning opportunities and the nature of working towards a collective, and yet still successful, outcome. The participants talked about not only learning about tikanga and kawa (practices of tikanga), but actually applying these to everything they did on each of the marae they visited, and throughout other aspects of their lives. The learning that takes place on the marae became a chance “to live it, and breathe it”. The wharenuī is “like our kura” (school), and when the students sit in the wharenuī, and tell their stories, they get the strength of the mātauranga on the marae; their tipuna are there alongside them, as are their koroua (elder male) and kuia (elder female). Because of the adult age of the learners, many of them can remember being encouraged by their elders to pursue education – in their cases, “Pākehā knowledge”. They reinforced the view that they were not seeking education just as an individual, but with the full collective support of whānau, who gave them money and karakia (prayers). In at least two situations, the participants were “sent by the elders” to obtain this education. Three of the participants highlighted the acceptance Māori have in a marae-based learning environment and that while the teacher or ‘subject expert’ might hold the ‘qualifications’, it is the elders who retain the mana because they are the ones with the knowledge of whakapapa and tikanga.

There are things I need to know...no matter what the kaupapa [issue] that is taking place on the marae. I need to be clear about those tikanga regarding those kinds of roles. I need to follow closely the kuia and koroua that are still with us. Don’t do things in isolation but knowing that these are the backbone of the marae who need to be supported to hold on to the mauri of our ancestors and maintain the tikanga of our marae. ... I follow the guidance of the iwi, the elders give the directions to follow, here is the kaupapa, here is the kaupapa to address, and we stick to that.

Māori were acknowledged as being “really strong at getting people to come together on education to help ourselves”, and no more so than on the marae. This participant, along with others, knows that it is not about excluding the ‘Pākehā world’ but sometimes working with and alongside it for the advantage and collective good of her people. They have a deep understanding that several of the marae are losing their elders and that “our children are in trouble” and therefore there is a great need to return to the marae. She, like several of the other participants, and her hapū embrace technology; they bring the computer and other learning opportunities to the marae, and as she says, “it’s not that we’re giving the mana to others”, but it’s about collaboration and discussion with others.

Ma te huruhuru te manu ka rere [A bird must have feathers before it can fly – literally, we need the skills to make progress, to go forward]. Kei reira he wahanga kei te tino ngoikore

mohio ana tatou kei te iwi tonu [We know there are areas we are behind in]. (Translation Ngareta Timutimu, 17 March 2007)

The understanding that getting an education was the main thing that was going to help Māori was an opinion prevalent throughout the interviews and discussions. However, the focus of the kind of education did not waver among the participants, for example:

If you want to go somewhere, the main thing is not just having education, but in having the mātauranga. If you look at the old days, kua were always on the marae. We need to hold to those old ways – it is very easy.

The feeling of ‘ease’ in going back to the marae for education and further learning was influenced by past experiences of schooling that was ‘hard’ and being made to “feel like an alien in the Pakehā world”, but also balanced by an acknowledgement that getting back the reo and knowledge of tikanga will have pragmatic outcomes, but is never-ending:

Although the year is finished, I’m going back to the things I learnt so that my knowledge is internalised...for myself, I haven’t reached the pinnacle of knowledge but I am able to gauge where I am. We must learn the tuturu reo, be an expert in the reo...why, because we see the world today, those who are excellent in both languages are pursued by government. That’s one job we Māori can say...here’s what we can do – pay me. Be strong to learn the skills of the language. Be fluent in both languages. ... Every person in our group has progressed ...now I am saying to them come on, come on. (Translation Ngareta Timutimu, 17 March 2007)

4.5 Data analysis

As indicated in the methodology section, the analysis of the information is presented the following table that captures the dynamic relationship between the overall goals of the project, and the information provided by participants in response to interview questions that were linked to these goals.

Table 4

Data analysis

Goal	Case study 1	Case study 2
<p>Goal 1: Broadening our understanding of the utility of marae-based education to provide, develop and improve foundation learning opportunities for Māori learners across a range of different education programme contexts.</p>	<p>The marae does not just provide the context for learning but <i>is the resource</i> for learning. It acts as an effective system that combines the knowledge of kaumatua and tipuna with the efforts and input of the lecturers, as well as the programme set out by Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. The lecturers are there to make explicit what has been tacitly known by many for a long time, that is, the power and centrality of te reo Māori as the main medium to foster successful learning</p> <p>Being on the marae heightens a sense of awareness about not just the wairua of the place, but about the environment to generate exciting learning through metaphorical language, karakia, waiata, kiwaha and whakapapa. For example, from the data ‘starting from the beginning is likened to having the ‘right whāriki for the whare ...’.</p> <p>There is nothing that cannot be done on the marae; technology and computers can be easily introduced, experts can come onto the marae to speak. In fact one of the resources asked of students undertaking the degree programme is that they have their own computer, and many of them do bring along laptops. Because the Wānanga has had more experience with facilitating this kind of education, they can deploy to any marae site and students will observe and learn through strict protocols.</p>	<p>The access to the marae is easy, with the wharenuī representing the kura. The awakening to learning comes from going back to the marae, to the roots of who Māori really are. The marae provides a safe environment for learning, and involvement in this type of learning happens best through learning with whānau, hapū and iwi. The tikanga and kawa of the marae use the language of te reo, as a vehicle to grow knowledge among community members.</p>
<p>Goal 2: Building evidence of the ways that marae-based education programmes help to foster holistic learning for Māori learners in order to enhance foundation learning and also to improve retention and successful outcomes in tertiary education programmes.</p>	<p>Learning as part of a group, in clusters and at noho marae has ensured that students remain focused on the kaupapa at hand. Sharing the aspirations of learners means to also engage in sharing kai (food), sleeping spaces, and structured kōrero.</p> <p>All the first-year students moved successfully to the second year of their undergraduate degree programme as a result of participating in the marae-based education model. That is, the seven learners who participated in the research project all attained level 5 proficiency in their first year, and moved into the second year of study.</p>	<p>Developing mātauranga through te reo Māori and interaction with whānau provides the key impetus for supporting marae-based education. Learning te reo in a mainstream classroom has little cultural relevance.</p> <p>The Te Pouhono group have transitioned successfully to the first year of the Mātauranga Māori degree programme. These participants are now on the same successful learning journey as those from Case study 1. That is, each of the participants from the Te Pouhono programme achieved successful level 4 proficiency in te reo Māori, to enter the <u>undergraduate degree programme</u>.</p>
<p>Sub-goal A: The juxtaposition of the two ideologies – Māori and non-Māori – makes a pedagogical impact on the development of language, literacy and numeracy for Māori learners.</p>	<p>There is a strong sense of still being dominated by the Pākehā, but at the wānanga, people are given status; mana and qualifications go hand in hand.</p> <p>There is a general recognition that while reading and writing are important – especially writing – it is the ability to kōrero in te reo Māori that is of the utmost importance to the students. They recognise the need for ongoing foundation learning skills in how to write, and how to present work to meet the standards of an academic degree.</p> <p>Learning the reo goes hand in hand with accepting responsibility and the right place on the marae. This impetus has driven an average rating at the beginning of the degree programme from a 2/10 to between 6/10 and 7/10.</p>	<p>There is the idea that mainstream education experiences conditioned Māori, not just necessarily in how to learn, but in the way <i>they wanted people to learn</i>.</p> <p>The system did not help then and it does not help now; there is a reaffirmation that looking to the future of Māori and the kind of education that is privileged, requires <i>looking to the past</i>. Learning te reo makes students <i>want to be</i> really confident. Working with whānau to apply the correct tikanga on the marae has improved engagement with literacy and language. Last year they would have rated themselves between 1/10 and 2/10, but this year they gave themselves close to 4/10.</p>

5 DISCUSSION

Overall, foundation learning is both explicit and implicit in all the levels of learning undertaken by participants on the marae. In this section, discussion centres on the need to consider four relevant themes that hold pivotal comment on the basis, relevance and future of marae-based learning opportunities for Māori learners. *Bringing out...* takes learners back to admissions of fundamental needs and expectations of language acquisition. *Bringing back...* relates to the resolve that learners adopt, no matter the difficulty of the journey, to continue the work of tipuna and kaumatua. *Bringing up ...* presents the ongoing accent on the cultural relevancy of language, not as an exclusive device, but an inclusive one, to demonstrate the living context of Māori. *Bringing about...* responds to the engagement of learners in social collaboration with relevant others such as whānau, hapū and iwi, to foster expansive foundation learning practice that is ongoing.

5.1 Bringing out...

...the language and tikanga of learners and making explicit the tacit knowledge(s) that exist at the heart of Māori connected to the marae. When learners talked of their improvements in regard to developing their expertise in te reo, this was a difficult admission to make, because this idea came from people who, for a major part of their lives, lived and worked around their marae but who really knew very little of the legacy they should be protecting. For example, it appeared that the expectation for many was that they would continue to contribute to manuhiri (visitors) occasions, through working and staying ‘at the back’, even long after they had every right to be ‘at the front’. Some of these marae are isolated, and ‘town’ is easily a couple of hours away. Despite their humility, the participants of the research recognised that the language was still ‘there’, deep inside them, because it had been all around them from when they were born, and even before, inside their mother’s puku.

Language acquisition theory points to the latent power of language to be sustained tacitly; the form and sounds remain from birth and triggers throughout life, including positive attitudes about one’s language (Saville-Troike, 2003, p. 198), make acquisition and improvement possible with just one year of semi-immersion strategies (Francis & Reyhner, 2002, pp. 32-39; May et al., 2004). However, positive attitudes are not enough to revitalise a language, but a change in behaviour brings more restorative results for intergenerational continuity (Brandt & Ayoungman, 1989, p. 58). In the right context, improvement is profound. Just like other cultures, foundation and language learning is acquired in responsive social contexts (Glynn, 1987) that reflect the cultural values and practices of the families in the community. There is an interconnectedness between whānau and the kura of the marae which is stronger for most Māori learners who experience marae-based education than the more traditional relationships that exist in other teaching and learning environments. Within this responsive social context, the learning communities that comprise lecturers and learners together provide language contexts that are embedded in the experiences, protocols and values of the marae community. The lives of the learners are directly connected with the lives of people in the community: whānau, hapū and iwi. Looking to kaumatua participation and guidance in all aspects of the learning reinforces the appropriateness of the marae-based cultural context.

The above ideas are also not unlike the findings reported in *Te kāwai ora* (Māori Adult Literacy Working Party, 2001, p. 10) about Māori literacy – *reading the world, reading the word, being the world* – that “literacy is tribally located and that whānau, hapū and iwi were literacy providers”. Furthermore, “literacy gives people the power to function fully as citizens who are critically literate in their history and in their world” (*ibid.*, p. 3). Embedding literacy and foundation education provision within the context of learning about tupuna, whakapapa, wairua, tikanga and te reo Māori through marae-based learning provides one of the fundamental keys to success for Māori.

5.2 Bringing back...

...learners to the marae to engage in dynamic learning succession for the younger generation, and to carry on the work started by tupuna and kaumatua. When Durie (2001) set out three broad goals for Māori in education, he epitomised the kind of kōrero that has become prevalent among Māori learners who are engaged in marae-based learning opportunities: to live as Māori, to participate successfully in the wider community and to enjoy a healthy and spiritual lifestyle. The goals of individual learners are consistent with the goals and aspirations of their whānau and their relationship appears to promote a collaborative model of nurturing leadership for the benefit of the community around the marae. The Māori language and cultural practices (tikanga) are modelled on the strength of the kaumatua and kuia, but it is now becoming critical for younger ones to step forward and take their place on the marae. The idea is that by standing confidently in their own language and the cultural safety of the marae, their strength is then manifested in an ability to learn new skills and knowledge with greater confidence. Bringing confidence back through practising their own language and ways of learning rekindles the acceptance Māori learners may have had in the past, that a successful education will provide the useful pathways needed for engagement in further learning opportunities plus benefits in responding to and gaining employment. These factors will in turn lead to their future health and well-being, as well as motivation for the younger generation coming behind.

There are some fundamental changes happening regarding the engagement of Māori learners to define and promote their own desired learning platform, and this push comes through a deepening awareness of the efficacy and validity of being Māori. Penetito (2002, p. 17, cited in Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 11) captures the burgeoning mood in the following way: “If there is an emerging educational vision among Māori, it is the desire for an education that enhances what it means to be Māori: so simple and yet so profound.”

5.3 Bringing up...

...issues of historical connections to past learning experiences and putting these in the context that is removed from the cultural relevancy of marae-based education. The evidence of successful foundation learning programmes for adult Māori learners is minimal. Mlcek (2006) suggests that “it is never just about ‘literacy’ and ‘oracy’”, and different ways of communicating is the key to ‘making meaning’. Furthermore, in the practice of literacy and oracy, the isolation of one over the other serves as minimalist terrain that overshadows the multiple ways of communicating to demonstrate literate capabilities. Māori learners have evolved from the dominant discourse of the traditional schooling curriculum to a structure of learning on the marae that is no less formal, and is highly contextualised through the protocols and rules of the marae, but is more culturally relevant because individual acts of communication heighten the preciousness of te reo and Māori experience as being of paramount importance for the ongoing engagement in foundation learning.

The foundation learning opportunities that are embedded in the marae-based programmes enhance the capacity and capabilities of Māori learners to link the idea of learning on the marae to legitimate knowledge for effective communication purposes on both specific and broader levels. Māori have historical and contemporary links to how this is done through oracy that relates to the *nature* of oral practice, accompanying behaviours and activity in a given situation – in encounters. Privileging oral modes of communication in order to perpetuate language, culture and traditions is a means of maintaining mātauranga (Māori knowledge) (Mlcek, *ibid.*). In addition, running like a continuous piece of woven whāriki is the presence of a special kind of wairua that comes from being connected to the marae, in order to stand tall in the community and the world. That is, “The goal is to be in the world as Māori, to be a Māori world citizen not just any homogenised cultureless citizen” (Smith, 2006, cited in Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 10).

5.4 Bringing about...

...understanding and validating the incredible diversity and flexibility afforded by marae-based learning to deal with both the subtle and explicit challenges of developing literacy particularly through the development of oracy. Part of successful community member development is the ability of individuals to learn how to express themselves in te reo Māori; this challenge has been taken up with the wānanga programmes. For Māori learners, being literate in their own language is a further reaffirmation and expression of their identity and their place in the world. For many, this direction of affirmation has not been an easy journey. That is, literacy development on the marae cannot be disconnected from the language and culture of tupuna and kaumatua because it is through this tool that Māori can be proactive in asserting their place alongside the Pākehā world. Speaking and learning in te reo Māori provides a foundational platform that acknowledges how precious the language is as a fundamental medium of culture and education for Māori learners.

Bringing about engagement with marae-based learning has the potential to take people out of their comfort zones and yet creates places of safety and confidence building. The extent and level to which using te reo to build confidence in learners is mirrored by the understanding of learners that speaking the language *makes* them want to be confident and, as Cummins (1989) indicates, intellectual benefits come from the increased ability and control learners have in being able to manipulate language development in reading, writing and oral expression. For example, clusters of learners from each of the marae groups ‘pull’ others into the wānanga settings and onto the programmes so that not only are numbers increased, but the capacity of individuals from their rohe is strengthened. Issues that pertain to individual marae are explored with fellow learners and lecturers, who in turn use the readily available curriculum offered by the environment to enhance their programmes. The programmes are learner-centred certainly but cannot exclusively be codified as such because, while they also enjoy learner-directed energy as indicated above, they are formally directed by lecturer input and the impact of environment. Because learners have a high regard and gratitude for their lecturers’ knowledge and expertise, they have a positive response to their learning.

Ka Hikitia (Ministry of Education, 2008) is the Māori education strategy for 2008 to 2012, and it resonates the same values held by the participants of the research project that spaces should be created for Māori voices to give input to their educational future. The document directly supports the transmission and development of te reo, ngā tikanga me ngā mātauranga Māori as valuable outcomes in their own right. *Ka Hikitia*’s outcome for Māori learners is for Māori enjoying education success as Māori in te ao Māori, New Zealand and the world. However, what the document advocates is a “personalised learning” strategy that ought to be delivered in a “range of settings”, and a “range of contexts”, which appears to be “at odds” with the findings of the research into marae-based learning opportunities. This research project clearly identifies that Māori learners are best supported through the *collective* mode of whānau, hapū and iwi, as well as individual student collaboration that is part of the marae-based education model.

Foundation learning opportunities are not just discrete units of learning; that is, they are not only as a result of ‘deliberate acts of teaching’, and neither are they episodic. This research shows that foundations of learning are built on a continuous and dynamic amalgamation of precious historical knowledge, future aspirations, and current pragmatic engagement. For Māori learners, foundational learning is embedded tacitly before they are born, and is manifested through individual achievement that starts and ends with the collective support of whānau, hapū and iwi.

At different levels, the above latter relational triad can be monitored through the myriad ways that people enjoy encounters of learning on the marae. Some of these ways may appear ‘informal’ or spontaneous, such as who gets what job to perform, but they invariably lead to upholding more formal structures that actually serve to create places of safety for Māori, as well as a space for success. Foundation learning opportunities on the marae reinforce the notion that learning happens not in a vacuum, but is an extension of social and purposeful activity that cannot be isolated from everyday life

(Elish-Piper, 2000). When foundation learning evolves out of more 'formal' engagement, these opportunities serve to indicate to Māori learners the seriousness of the legacy they hold. One such formal encounter of learning is realised through wānanga teaching that protects and perpetuates te reo Māori, ngā tikanga me ngā mātauranga. Participants in the research project know that the journey is not easy, but the most precious legacy of all is the privileging of oracy so that proficiency in te reo remains the main vehicle of foundation learning. How can, for example, the concept of wairua being woven through the whole purpose of life be articulated more clearly than through te reo? Marae-based education provides the unique and valid environment for Māori learners to flourish in their language.

6 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Key findings

The key findings arose from some of the early trends that surfaced again in later interviews and discussions to become significant themes of this research.

- ***The significance of the marae system***, for improving foundation learning opportunities, that is, marae as access point.
- ***The significance of the presence of tupuna and kaumatua (elders)***, for enhancing foundation learning opportunities.
- ***The significance of deep emotion and wairua*** as a pedagogical instrument.
- ***The significance of the marae base***, for engendering safety and promoting language development to the extent where participants moved from an average self-rating of 2/10 to 6/10 in spoken language proficiency after just one year on their programmes.
- ***The significance of the ability to kōrero in te reo Māori*** as being of the utmost importance associated with marae-based learning opportunities; that is, there is a general recognition that while reading and writing are important – especially writing – it is the ability to speak the language that is more relevant and important in the context of the marae.
- ***The significance of marae-based education, for fostering achievement*** and successful progression in moving Māori learners through their programmes to the next level:
 - All the first year students moved successfully to the second year of their undergraduate degree programme as a result of participating in the marae-based education model.
 - The Te Pouhono group have transitioned successfully to the first year of the Mātauranga Māori degree programme. These participants are now on the same successful learning journey as those from Case study 1.
- ***The significance of the teacher being expert and confident in te reo Māori and tikanga***, to add a balance of expert knowledge, passion and spirituality to the experience of learning in marae-based situations.
- ***The significance of improving access to foundation learning opportunities through fielding new opportunities*** for learning, a desire and passion to learn the language, the influence of mokopuna, a hunger for Māori knowledge, and a shift in awareness.
- ***The significance of the enhancement of foundation learning opportunities arising through marae being the access point for learning***, identity development and reaffirmation coming from a different kind of wairua on the marae, the strength of leaders to enhance learning, and the knowledge that learning on the marae is the stepping stone to success.
- ***The significance of pedagogical impacts of different ideologies, for influencing the phenomenon of language shift to create ‘safety’***, the socialisation and ‘conditioning’ through language, the juxtaposition of two worlds to create present-day focus, and practices to enhance individual learning for community gains.

- *The significance of the admission that having just any education was not enough for Māori, but having mātauranga was the important factor.*

6.2 Recommendations

The findings indicate that the following three main points should be implemented:

- All the findings need to be aligned and linked in to all current education, literacy and foundation learning strategy documents and reports that are currently being considered by the New Zealand Government.
- Marae-based education opportunities are fundamental to promoting success in learning for Māori learners of all ages and need to be resourced accordingly, particularly in the areas of:
 - iwi and hapū liaison
 - upskilling teacher capacity and capability
 - funding to promote access and equity to such opportunities.
- Authentic marae-based models of education that are a combination of ‘learner-centred, learner/whānau-directed, and teacher/whānau/marae-directed’ should be considered as the primary vehicle for the promotion, delivery and sustainability of te reo Māori, ngā tikanga me ngā mātauranga. That is, marae-based learning opportunities that are true and well intentioned to reflect the living context of Māori, should be a readily sourced avenue of valid educational outcomes. Situations that reflect the tikanga, mātauranga, and use of te reo, reflect the collaborative and social nature of learning among whānau, hapū and iwi.

6.3 Conclusion

The foundation learning opportunities that are embedded in the marae-based programmes enhance the capacity and capabilities of Māori learners to link the idea of learning on the marae to legitimate knowledge for effective communication purposes.

Bringing about engagement with marae-based learning has the potential to take people out of their comfort zones and yet creates places of safety and confidence building. The extent and level to which using te reo Māori builds confidence in learners is mirrored by the understanding of learners that speaking the language *makes* them want to be confident and, as indicated through the research, intellectual benefits come from the increased ability and control learners have in being able to manipulate language development in reading, writing and oral expression in te reo Māori, English or a combination of both.

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