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Introduction

When it comes to teaching and learning, there are specific New Zealand curriculum guidelines aimed at catering for the uniqueness of being a Maori learner. In the teaching of Te Reo Maori curriculum, for example, the korowai (cloak) is part of the conceptual and structural framework that represents one Maori perspective as it applies for example, to the implementation of the health and physical education curriculum (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2003, accessed [online] 15.11.06). Aspects of this specific curriculum can be found integrated in programmes at Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi through the privileging of health and well-being, spirituality, and support of whanau, hapu and iwi. It uses a framework that incorporates the analogy of weaving whereby separate strands are woven in complimentary levels and layers to support each other. It should be noted however, that categorisation of knowledge into parts, does not sit well with other Maori perspectives. As part of the 'enveloping cloak', supporting framework, the concepts of wairua (spiritual roots and wellbeing of the individual) and manaakitanga (consideration, care, and contribution to self-worth and self-respect) are politicised in formal government documentation and made explicit in order to create the ideal learning model, and yet these are both tacit knowledge(s) of every Maori student at the Wananga and cannot be manifested easily out of the written word. Maori learners have situational knowledge that is embedded in language, culture and traditions so their 'knowing' is inextricably linked to their 'being'. Like tacit knowledge, and many parts of education curriculum that are not 'hidden', *wairua* and *manaakitanga* are captured best through socialisation processes that take them from a 'know-how' status, to the 'know-what' and 'know-why' domains of learning.

The trajectory of the above line of thinking is that when reference is made to education via an online distance education mode of delivery, there are certain questions that need to be addressed such as, what kinds of socialisation processes are embedded in this pedagogical approach to learning? What is valid knowledge? Who says? How is the 'politics of learning' fashioned by what we do in practice? How can distance education be made appropriate and relevant to meet the philosophy [ideology?] of a Wananga setting? What solutions can be devised to provide meaningful learning situations on the basis of answers to these and other

questions? Furthermore, how do we engage in all facets of wairua and manaakitanga – the know-how, the know-what, the know-why, and also the 'know-where' – in our teaching and learning. As a preface to further discussion within this Paper about the place of foundational learning opportunities to provide 'sound-bytes' of knowledge(s), the following point is offered: The place of online distance education can be an empowering force for students and has the potential to perpetuate the essence of wairua and manaakitanga through real acts of teaching and learning, even though this mode of education is just moving through the exploratory stages at Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi.

Deliberate acts of teaching

As practitioners, when good education is delivered for the right reasons, the appropriate purpose, and to achieve effective outcomes, this is done through 'deliberate acts of teaching' (Ministry of Education, 2005b: 3). The mandate for teaching and learning in this Wananga setting is best understood by looking at a brief history of the Wananga and this is also important for setting the contextual framework for the Paper. Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi was opened in 1992 and officially became a wananga in 1997. Awanuiarangi is one of only three institutions designated as wananga under the Education Act 1989. Its formation was an important step in recognising the role of education in providing positive pathways for Maori development. Since that time, the institution has offered a range of qualifications, from certificates to postgraduate degrees.

The name Awanuiarangi is linked to the whakapapa (genealogy) of the Mataatua canoe, which landed at Whakatane. Many tribal groups claim descent from the Mataatua canoe and the ancestor Awanuiarangi. Among them are Te Whanau-a-Apanui, Whakatohea, Tuhoe, Ngati Awa, Ngati Manawa, Ngati Whare, and Ngaiterangi. But although Awanuiarangi has strong links to the people of Mataatua, its doors of learning have always been open to all iwi and all New Zealanders. It facilitates learning for a wide cross-section of adult learners, with the average age of students falling between 35-40 years, and across different programmes that include: marae community education; bridging programmes; art and visual culture; environmental science; nursing; education; media studies; matauranga Maori; Te Ataarangi, and postgraduate studies and research.

Awanuiarangi also recognises that its aspirations are linked to and expressed by other Indigenous people throughout the world, and as such we acknowledge a common experience for tangata whenua (people of the land) and Indigenous people everywhere. We also recognise the importance of introducing Maori learners to developing sound foundational learning skills that will help improve and attain successful education outcomes that contribute to positive tertiary studies, work and living.

Currently, marae-based education programmes extend into over thirty different marae. These programmes range from certificate level foundation skills training to undergraduate level, formal discipline education. Therefore the need to offer foundational learning opportunities to all Maori students at the Wananga is potentially both extensive and intensive.

To engage in deliberate acts of teaching foundational learning to students on campus here at the Wananga, includes being involved in introducing, developing and improving literacy, language and numeracy education, as well as building foundational knowledge that will contribute to sound graduate capabilities. This education is manifested through foundational learning workshops that focus on student and lecturer learning support, that may at first

appear to favour mainstream aspirations only, for example: how to interpret an assignment question or topic, or for an examination purpose; how to write an assignment; how to plan an oral presentation; how to write for meaning using different genres, and how to read for understanding and critical analysis. These topics do not hold the same significance as the traditional and philosophical kaupapa (principle or issue) that inform a Maori worldview of knowledge, for example, *rangatiratanga* ('a person of good character')*, manaakitanga* ('elevating the personal qualities of others')*, whanaungatanga* ('relationship building')*, wairuatanga* ('the spiritual wellbeing of the individual')*, pukengatanga* ('the expression of skill, or the achievement of a standard of knowledge')*,* and *kaitiakitanga* ('care, duty and responsibility for the survival of the knowledge of the Maori world') (Collier, 2002). However, in a bicultural setting such as the Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi, they are real learning issues for students who want to achieve not just in an academic environment, but in work, play and life situations as well.

Foundational learning support
What is foundational learning? To extend the analogy of weaving as a process and not just as the finished cloak, foundational learning could be seen to be an *integrating learning strand* that needs to be 'woven' together with *contextual learning strands* (Ministry of Education, 1997: 14, accessed [online] 15.11.06)*,* in order to be deemed effective knowledge (s). Part of the strategy to address the foundational learning skills of our students, comes from priorities and strategies for all tertiary institutions and outlined in the Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities 2005-2007 (Ministry of Education, 2005a. Accessed [online] 02.08.06 http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=10296&data=l and http://www.tec.govt.nz/about_tec/strategy/step/step.html)
Therefore, an understanding of the importance of foundational learning/ studies at Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi is captured in the following summary:

- **Foundational Learning***: Literacy, numeracy and language learning.* In practice this is the application 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. The priority of raising the literacy, numeracy and language (foundation) skills of New Zealanders aligns with the main strategies and discrete objectives of the Government's *Tertiary Education Strategy* and *Statement of Priorities for Tertiary Education* [*TES 2002-07*, Strategy Three: Raise foundation skills so that all people can participate in our knowledge society, and *STEP 2002-07*, Priority 2.4: Improving language, literacy and numeracy across the adult population.].
- **Foundational Skills:** These are skills that allow people to participate fully in society (the NZ Government refers to *knowledge society*), in terms of what is required for *work*, *recreation, community engagement* and *study*.
- **Foundational Studies:** Develops students' abilities to:
  - ➢ Acquire
  - ➢ Organize
  - ➢ Interpret
  - ➢ Analyze data.
  It utilises a variety of:
  - ➢ Analytical techniques
  - ➢ Values
  - ➢ Understanding
  It strives to further students'

- ➢ Communicative competence
- ➢ Communication ability
- ➢ Effective aural and oral engagement
- ➢ Writing capabilities
- ➢ Access to technological data.

Essentially, the nature of foundational studies reflects meta theories or conceptual frameworks of *how to do things*. The preferred framework that balances *cognitive learning* ('the head' – knowledge, thinking and content), *affective learning* ('the heart' – feelings and attitude), and *psycho-motor learning* ('the hands'- technical/ operational skills), is not unlike the Maori philosophy of how meaning, and knowledge, are constructed, holistically and through privileging the effects of *environment*. The kaupapa (principle or issue) behind wairua – the spiritual wellbeing of the individual - is for example, not dissimilar to being manifested through the principle recognition of a person's worth; from where they come, and to where they are going, based on their current links to environment, time, place, people and events.

Following the above summary then, *foundational skills* and *foundational learning* are developed through *foundational studies* that relate directly to the Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi Mission Statement:

> *Rukuhia te matauranga ki tona hohonutanga me tona whanuitanga.*
> *Pursue knowledge to its greatest depths and its broadest horizons.*

They are also imbued in the practice of providing access and equity to learning opportunities. Such learning opportunities provide engagement for students, through stand-alone programmes, or through integration in other programmes in the Wananga, or as an adjunct to/ within those programmes. They are designed to give support to students, lecturers and their courses but they have also become a pivotal feature of the kind of etautoko (online learning support) we now see as being critical to our students' ongoing development. The practice of manaakitanga and wairua are interconnected, and however determined, cannot be "readily unbundled" (Durie, 2005: 236) from the learning context.

Matauranga Maori

One such learning context at Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi is the three-year Bachelor of Matauranga Maori Degree Programme in which the extent to which a contextual learning strand – the Matauranga Maori degree programme which includes knowledge about all things Maori - supports and cloaks students' capacity to engage in foundational learning opportunities. In the spirit of *manaakitanga* however, the woven cloth that combines the integrative learning with the contextual learning is not just a process of enveloping the learner, but a representation of the tikanga of 'utu' or reciprocity. As Collier (2002: 4) states, "Manaakitanga … can be seen as a desirable principle of pedagogy whereby the positive actions of the tutor the mana or personal qualities of the student are elevated and by the achievement of academic outcomes the mana of the tutor is likewise elevated".

What is unique about this degree is that while it adopts a multi-mode model of education, it is delivered primarily to small communities, 'on the marae', which is the designated safe meeting place and environment, for Maori families and clan members. In the spirit of reciprocity, the lecturer is welcomed into the 'home' of the whanau members and learning is facilitated in a formal, yet collaborative cultural circle (Freire, 1972). In this way, the role of the lecturer-as-teacher is not rejected but the role of the student-as-Subject in their

environment, to act on their world, is elevated. Participating in the Matauranga Maori Degree Programme is to participate in *authentic* education that involves students in re-creating knowledge *with* their teacher. As Maori continue to re-establish and cement their place in a sometimes dislocated and ever-changing world, foundational learning opportunities are a way of "making sense of, and trying to feel some sense of control over, these changes (which in turn), is central to becoming critically thoughtful" (Brookfield, 2001: 51, authors' words in brackets).

With the reality of including online learning in teaching practice however, *how are the above concepts encapsulated in this and other degree programmes at the Wananga?*
There is the inevitable feelings from some of the lecturers concerning a 'mismatch' of pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning, that is between face-to-face as the preferred option compared to trying to harness and recognise diversity via digital means. Using the Matauranga Maori degree programme as a vehicle for online learning, and vice versa, has still some way to go in terms of reconciling the teacher curriculum expertise with the need to have instructional design skills as well, that would ensure an optimum balance in a design/delivery model of online programming. Not all of the lecturers have these skills, and question the appropriateness of online delivery to reproduce what is delivered so effectively on the marae and face-to-face.

Relevant criticisms of the medium are part of the ongoing dialogue about elearning. They need to be taken into account and one of these is expressed by Kalantzis (2003:1) whereby "… much of the dedicated educational material is lock step and highly individualised (one user/ one screen), appearing to be innovative in the 'dazzlement' of the medium, whilst in fact representing pedagogies that are of dubious quality and which, whilst filling the learning space, do not represent effective or powerful learning". As already mentioned, the 'dazzlement' is difficult to reproduce by teachers who are themselves learners of the technology but who will be required to be more integrative with several different modes of education delivery.

A more optimistic view however, acknowledges situations in the future whereby the use of online learning has the capacity to galvanise learning communities of practice for all students. It is a matter of interpretation, but overall, lecturers do not ignore the "multi-agency approach" (Flood, 2002: 56) to this mode of delivery; they are not the only stakeholder in the education equation but will continue to work from peer and student feedback, as well as with instructional designers to transform their curriculum-as-learning-objects in order to afford the best possible chance of participation from the students.

eTautoko (eSuppport) – 'moving' the foundational learning workshops online
Because we know that the preferred pedagogy for an ideal learning environment, particularly for our Maori learners, is the face-to-face mode of delivery (something which the above degree programme strives to achieve), the practice of online teaching is always going to be problematic. What is required, is a new 'pedagogical move' (Kalantzis, ibid), because yet another criticism relates to the real possibility of dimensions of inequality surfacing because of questionable available and reliable resources that would allow students to engage in online learning opportunities, for example technology capacity of the learner, broadband capability and computer technology in the home. Like many organisations, the Wananga works constantly to try to address those student resource issues and whenever possible will bring cluster groups of students to central marae for block teaching using computers-as-technology

because this is one of the foundational communications media in the learning environment. Pragmatically, it is just not possible to initiate or resource the ideal face-to-face delivery mode, even in taking a degree programme out 'to the marae', and many students would simply be excluded purely on the basis of distance from the Wananga. The implication therefore, from inclusion in an online learning environment, however fraught at times, is that students feel that their presence and status as enrolled students of Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi, is validated; they are not just a name 'out there in the stratosphere', manaakitanga is practised, and wairua is recognised and respected. Online distance education at the Wananga has the potential to replicate "the virtual whanau" (family) and to "adopt behaviours that enforce mutuality, reciprocity, and shared responsibilities in a Maori cultural context" (Durie, 2001: 195).

The participation in distance education is for many students the only way they can access tertiary education and academic learning opportunities, and so there is the deliberate 'move' of foundational learning workshops online. Education will not result in learning or knowledge re-creation if the environment is unimaginable, unthinkable, incomprehensible, unachievable, or unconnected from the learners themselves. eTautoko (support online) therefore, allows foundational learning opportunities to be taken 'right to the doorstep of the people'. Currently, these opportunities are manifested through engagement in a typical suite of activities facilitated by an online interface, for example, via chat rooms, forum work, notices and billboards, quizzes and opportunities for evaluation. Students of the degree program have the opportunity to submit work online, share in subject matter online, and also to receive 'sound-bytes' of knowledge(s) in the form of one-pager summaries related to foundational learning strategies for how to develop and practise critical thinking skills, how to write, how to study, how to research, and how to become more organised in their learning.

The one-pagers, as online learning objects, appear at first to apply to discrete acts of teaching and they can be used in this way. But they also follow one of the preferred methodologies of learning – through following narratives. *How do we know what we know?* For our Maori learners their epistemological gaze (Brooker, 1999: 90) comes from the stories of our tipuna (ancestors) passed down to the kaumatua (elders) of our communities. Following stories to gain knowledge is a natural learning medium and so the metaphor of following the story for 'how to write' is a powerful and satisfying achievement. These one-pagers represent 'sound-bytes of knowledge(s) that, when collected over a period of time, equate to large 'bites' of knowledge. They are not objects of 'dazzlement' but mirror sound pedagogical practice of how to do things.

Conclusion
We are taught generally from an early age, to 'chunk' learning and make it more manageable by breaking wholes into parts. However, in learning on the Matauranga Maori degree and other courses such as the Bachelor of Maori Education, eWananga programme, the quality of interrelatedness is appreciated through looking at the 'whole'. Therefore, " … if we think of ourselves as a disconnected part, we lose sense of our connection to a wider whole and inadvertently alienate and disempower ourselves" (Flood, 1999: 14). Foundation studies 'pedagogical move' in using one-pagers online, is a chance to break open wholes into parts but also to recreate the whole, especially if they are designed to be sequential and contextually relevant.

At the Wananga, additional learning opportunities have been introduced via sound-bytes of knowledge(s) to augment the foundational learning framework delivered online to our students. The initial impressions from lecturers and students alike appear to agree with the notion that these pragmatic outcomes are also fundamental to the way that Maori learners expect manaakitanga and wairua to be practised and validated.

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