

Initial Teacher Education in Aotearoa/New Zealand

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From a personal and professional perspective, the author describes the challenges that Maori teacher education programs have faced in order to be granted accreditation. The process has involved the need to sensitize government agencies about the particular needs of rural and Maori communities and the creation of an approach to teacher education based on respect for diversity and sensitivity to community orientations and values.

Tenei te mihi ki nga tangata whenua o Canada. Thank you for inviting me to contribute to the journal.

As is practice I must first introduce myself: *He mokopuna ahau o te waka o Takitimu and Aotea.* I am a grandchild of the tribes of Ngati Kahungunu and Te Atihaunui a Paparangi. I was born and raised in a little settlement called Ohakune and am a result of an interracial marriage between a Māori/Indian father and an Irish mother. I present this paper by invitation, and I would like to dedicate it to my parents, who passed away in 2005 and 2006 respectively, and who provided the one place where I could just “be.”

Nga matua-Takahia atu ra te ara whanui a tane, ki te po uriuri, ki te po kerekere. My loved ones, parents, tread the pathway of Tane into the darkness. (A karanga, or call of farewell, acknowledging their passing)

I have taught in education for a number of years, receiving my initial teacher education at a private kindergarten teachers' college in 1967. Since then I have worked in a number of kindergartens and have also taught in secondary school. I wanted for some time to create an initial teaching program that would suit the needs of people like me, people of mixed heritage. In particular I wanted to develop a program that would reflect the cultural heritage of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The opportunity presented itself in 1989 when I was invited by Auckland College of Education to teach the last of the kindergarten teacher trainees and to be part of a working party to write a new three-year Diploma of Teaching Early Childhood Education. At that time we had a renaissance of tikanga and te reo Māori (Māori culture and language) in New Zealand, so it was an ideal opportunity to write a qualification that would be inclusive and would represent us as New Zealanders. This would be a qualification that promoted an *inclusive* paradigm, highlighting aspects of biculturalism that enhanced shared learning, teaching, and collaboration by acknowledging the social-cultural backgrounds of all participants in the context of New Zealand and that included the teachings of the Treaty of Waitangi.

It is argued (Durie, 2003; Harvey, 2002; Nash, 2001; O'Sullivan, 2001) that "social equity" can be addressed in the provision and delivery of initial teacher education programs to rural and Māori communities, thereby reducing inequalities identified in the dominant model of delivery (i.e., lecturing mode to large numbers of students with minimal pastoral support available). The people involved in the development and delivery of the Diploma in 1989 came from diverse backgrounds in regard to ethnicity, socioeconomic background, age, and Iwi (tribal) affiliations, demonstrating that in-depth ongoing dialogue about students' progress and development would address adversity for student teachers. This is supported by Wilson (2002) where he identifies the Treaty of Waitangi as integral to the preparation of neophyte teachers. Once student teachers have experience in identifying and analyzing how educational achievement can embrace a wide diversity in terms of backgrounds, experiences, skills, and characteristics in relation to their own learning, they will be more aware of how they can apply the same concepts to children's learning in everyday situations. They will be able to articulate and illustrate what being a learner or teacher means for Māori and non-Māori students in a bicultural early childhood teacher education program.

May's (2001) research acknowledges the numerous times Māori grasped tino rangatiratanga (self-determination, empowerment, see Glossary in the Appendix) in the preschool system for their tamariki (child); this is an observation that is familiar to many who have been part of the historic growth and change for Māori in early childhood education. It is common knowledge that until Te Kohanga Reo, the most significant effect for Māori in early childhood education was in the Playcenter movement. May repeatedly refers to examples of success. For example, "Miria Pewhairangi believed that the early Māori centers were successful because they were organized around Māori values and often used Māori language" (p. 85). May continues by discussing how Lex Grey identified that Māori should be able to choose how they participated in preschool education, and he supported Māori families and their communities in doing this. This, of course, did not prove popular with the government of the time, which had established the Māori Education Fellowship because Māori were identified as failing. Grey (cited in May) showed, however, that Māori were not failing: With self-determination they were succeeding and establishing a preschool environment that suited their needs. In turn many Māori women were gaining expertise in preschool education including the late Hine Potaka, a woman from Matata (a rural community in the eastern Bay of Plenty) who committed a lifetime to working with Māori preschoolers and their families. Potaka not only undertook and promoted Playcenter, she also established a reciprocal relationship with Australian Aboriginal peoples and encouraged them to seek self-determination alongside their children. Potaka went on to develop the Awhina Whānau

Diploma in Early Childhood that gained New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) recognition in 1993 (Pakai, 2002). Both Miria Pewhairangi and Hine Potaka have influenced and guided my work as a teacher, thinker, and educator. Their papers remain taonga (highly prized), to be referenced and included in practice, as many of the values they identified and worked with remain relevant in today's world.

These and other considerations such as guidance and mentoring from Te Arawa Kaumatua informed my research and built my knowledge as I prepared the documentation for the Diploma of Teaching Early Childhood Education He Tohu Matauranga Mo Te Whakaako Kohungahunga in 1997-1998. The resulting qualification has the capacity to enhance the delivery of quality ECE teacher education in rural and Māori communities, provide insight into innovative strategies that will promote a more diverse approach to initial teacher education, and inform respective government agencies (e.g., Ministry of Education, Education Review Office, Tertiary Education Commission, New Zealand Teachers Council) about the special needs of rural and Māori communities.

This has become a 20-year journey, and although at times progress was good, there were many more times when progress was hindered by bureaucratic red tape. Further, the presentation of a qualification that challenged the norm was an obvious threat to traditional providers and resulted in a degree of backlash. As the current Diploma has developed to deliver from several other sites to suit Iwi (local Māori tribes), it has also undertaken a significant review and curriculum alignment. The reaccreditation process for the Diploma took place in December 2006. This once again heralded a major challenge to the government agencies responsible for the accreditation process, attributed in part to the lack of early childhood professionals at this level to undertake the accreditation process. This has an effect on the process itself, as panel members need to be informed about the early childhood curriculum and unique culture. The accreditation process is, therefore, challenging on several layers; it often initiates change as well as the development of specific policies and practices for both parties. I believe this is important and indicates an evolving and, therefore, healthy process.

This article is divided into sections that provide a synopsis of the progress and effects of a bicultural early childhood initial teacher education program in Aotearoa/New Zealand. These sections discuss (a) the Treaty of Waitangi; (b) the journey of ECE in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the inclusion of bicultural practices; (c) the Diploma of Teaching Early Childhood Education; and (d) the future. The article will, I hope, cause readers to reflect on the practices that are relevant to them and perhaps to identify similarities between Māori and other Indigenous groups in regard to cultural practices that inform the delivery of teaching and education programs.

Te Tiriti O Waitangi: The Treaty of Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is identified as the foundation document of Aotearoa/ New Zealand. The treaty is used to guide education policy; it guarantees participation, power, and partnership to the two signatories: Māori as tangata whenua (people of the land), and Pakeha (other people; Orange, 1989). How the treaty affects education for Māori has been debated for generations; the reality is that the debate will never end, nor should it. The difference between what our parents received, what we received, what our children received, and what our mokopuna (grandchildren) are receiving has, I have observed, not advanced to any great extent. The education of our mokopuna remains reliant on whether the teachers are able to teach Māori children. How teachers are prepared and by whom is a subject for continued debate for initial teacher education in New Zealand, and although the current government supports inclusion of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in education, the process to educate, update, and monitor how this is delivered continues to be challenged by many, Māori and Pakeha included. The Initial Teacher Education Policy and Practice Final Report (Kane et al., 2005) clearly identifies that

if initial teacher education is committed to graduating teachers who will make a difference to the achievement of Māori children and young people in New Zealand schools, there is a critical need to examine more closely our practices ... with respect to the Treaty of Waitangi, te reo Māori and inclusion. (p. 131).

The report clearly indicates a deficit in the teaching with regard to the inclusion of Māori in many initial teacher education programs; it goes on to give examples of historic attempts such as the taha Māori (add-on model) of the 1970s and 1980s (Kane et al., 2005, p. 130), which although acknowledging the need for inclusion, did not describe how this process would take place.

The lack of new teacher graduates to meet Māori children's needs was identified in an earlier review undertaken by Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Māori Development, 2002). The review identified that graduate teachers reported a lack of knowledge and/or confidence in being able to work with Māori children and their whānau and were not able to pronounce basic Māori, including Māori children's names. This lack of basic Māori knowledge has been a generational issue, with many Māori changing or anglicizing their names to suit the teacher. This is identified by many as a problem for Tauwiwi (Others) and one that therefore needs to be addressed by Tauwiwi and initial teacher education providers. That Māori should feel obliged to meet the deficit for Tauwiwi teachers is no longer acceptable, as discussed by Wilson (2002), who states, "Where in the past Treaty issues may have been an option for Pakeha teachers, today it is a requirement" (p. 27). Wilson continues by identifying that "the beginning teacher will understand the implications of the Treaty of Waitangi and te reo me ona tikanga, that teachers will participate in available professional develop-

ment including opportunities relating to the Treaty of Waitangi” (p. 28). Kane et al. (2005) discuss the variation of inclusion of the Treaty of Waitangi in initial teacher education programs, identifying that

while they refer to the Treaty and to working within bicultural contexts and meeting the needs of all children in their graduate profile, there was insufficient evidence in the course descriptors to determine how respective qualifications would meet these outcomes. (pp. 17-18)

Kane et al. suggest that qualifications may still be using a taha Māori approach, which Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai, and Richardson (2003) describe as added on and tokenistic, rather than a pedagogy in which teachers care, have high expectations, engage in power-sharing and co-construction of the curriculum, and are culturally responsive to their students.

As a professional practitioner I believe it is vital that we establish positive and progressive models of education to meet the needs of all sectors in the community from birth to old age. I believe that learning is lifelong and that we learn from each other. Indeed, learning is not undertaken in isolation unless we choose to do so, but rather in collaboration with others. Wananga hui (gathering) whānau (families) tuakana (elder) teina (younger) learning is the methodology practiced in the delivery of the Diploma of Teaching Early Childhood Education program; the program is based on whānaungatanga (the practices that strengthen family ties) and critical reflective practice. These practices are conveyed by a third-year student’s reflection of the program when discussing practice and ways of learning with a new lecturer to the program.

That is what I enjoy about this program, it teaches us to think, to take responsibility for what we learn and to plan not only for the completion of this tohu (qualification, diploma), but where we want to be in two, three, or more years time. The way we learn here makes me feel safe to open debate, to discuss learning, This is the first time I have felt that I have something to share, to give. I feel empowered. (Tuhoe, Year Three student, Waiariki Institute of Technology, 2003)

Lecturers (teachers) encourage students to evolve and to be empowered and confident to make decisions that will change their lives and have a positive outcome for them and their whānau, thus supporting the goals identified by Durie (2003).

- to live as Māori;
- to actively participate as citizens of the world; and
- to enjoy a high standard of living and good health.

At the 2003 Tuwharetoa Hui Taumata Matauranga Māori Tuatoru (the third conference between Māori and the government) Durie presented a paper titled *Educational Advancement at the Interface Between Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Whānui*. In it he identified that the essential challenge was to understand the reality in which Māori live as children, students, and whānau. Durie argued, “the essential difference [between Māori and other New

Zealanders] is that Māori live at the interface between te ao Māori (the Māori world) and the wider global society (te ao Whānui)" (pp. 5-6). This does not mean that socioeconomic factors are unimportant, but it does imply that of the many determinants of educational success, the factor that is uniquely relevant to Māori is how Māori world views and the world views of wider society affect each other. As a consequence, in educational policy, teaching practice, assessment of students, or key performance indicators for staff, teachers must be able to demonstrate that the reality of the wider educational system can match the reality in which children and students live.

Furthermore, curriculum and assessment for all children should demonstrate and foster an understanding of the features of the two worlds that in Aotearoa/New Zealand describe a bicultural nation. These then should encompass the following.

- *Tino rangatiratanga*. Includes the right to determine one's own destiny. Parents and children are involved in decision-making processes.
- *Taonga tuku iho*. Literally, the treasures from the ancestors provide a set of principles by which lives will be lived. Māori language, knowledge, culture, and values are normal, valid, and legitimate.
- *Ako*. Emphasizes reciprocal learning. Teachers and children can "take turns in storying and re-storying their realities, either as individual learners or within a group context" (p. 1).
- *Kia piki ake I nga raruraru o te kainga*. Participation reaches into Māori homes and brings parents and families into the activities of the learning environment.
- *Whānau*. Where the establishment of whānau type relationships in the early childhood environment is primary, then a pattern of interactions will develop where commitment and connectedness are paramount, and where responsibility for the learning of others is fostered.
- *Kaupapa*. Students achieve better when there is a close relationship, in terms of language and culture, between home and school.

Simply put, if the imagery we hold of the Māori child (or indeed of any child) is one of deficits, then our principles and practices will reflect this and we will perpetuate the educational crisis for Māori children. This thinking is supported by many reputable education researchers Māori and Tauwiwi alike (Frazer & Paraha, 2002; Hemara, 2000; May, 2001, 2003; O'Sullivan, 2001; Wilson, 2002). These researchers identify that Māori need to have self-determination to enhance and improve educational achievement.

*The Journey of Early Childhood Education in Aotearoa/New Zealand
and the Inclusion of Bicultural Practices*

The history of early childhood education in New Zealand has been shaped by political, economic, social, and cultural factors. Changing values and philosophies have influenced the development of early childhood services. Evolving definitions of quality education and the movement toward a commitment to bicultural development, Tino Rangatiratanga, and equity can all be measured in the history of New Zealand's early childhood education services.

The Sixties

As May (2001) identified, "there developed three distinct groups for Māori in early childhood education, Playcenter, Kindergarten and Māori Family preschools" (p. 86). Formal training for Māori in kindergarten was an attempt to show that the kindergarten movement was willing to include selected Māori "girls" into the service. As a recipient I can only say that there were many times when I was glad of the preparation I had received from my Pakeha (Irish) mother and grandmother in the ways of the Pakeha. I attended the first day in my twinset and pearls (accepted dress in the 1960s) and took the first step in my "resocialization/reculturalization" as a young Māori woman. I did take pleasure in knowing that while some of the other "girls" referred to us as the token Māori group (there were four of us), I knew that we had passed all entry criteria, which included an IQ test, and therefore entered on our own merit. As is the case for all Māori, we needed to prove ourselves, to be better academically and professionally, and, of course, to teach the others to sing and play the guitar! This was an accepted and assumed practice for all Māori, and we did succeed academically, all of us working in government agencies at some stage in our professional careers and with the exception of one who died some years ago, remain professional practitioners in the wider early childhood education sector.

It is my experience that when one enters a Pakeha learning environment, one is expected to leave cultural values and lifelong learning at the door. This is extremely hard to do when that background learning is the only support one may have during training. We Māori soon became firm friends, and still are. Indeed it was at training college that I learned to continue to "play the game" (old primary school motto) and to dance the foxtrot—slow, quick, quick, slow—an analogy to describe how I managed the years. However, we all quickly learned to dance with the help of our tuakana (older colleagues, in this context). In year two we were able to succeed and in two cases exceed in areas internal and external to the college. I identify that we are continually in the "quick, quick" stage of the dance, and we need to keep our colleagues dancing longer so that our dreams for early childhood education can be realized.

Developments in Quality Teaching Criteria: Recent Resources

Several key documents and resources have contributed to the ongoing development of early childhood education services in New Zealand. These documents demonstrate a commitment to developing effective measures of quality teaching. Discussions about quality teaching have increasingly included emphasis on a bicultural approach and equity as essential features of early childhood education services. Several specific issues emerge in these documents.

- The need of government to ensure increasing funding links to increased quality.
- The search for quality and how to define it.
- Difficulties in defining quality with attention to both quantitative measurement like adult-child ratios and qualitative assessments of relationships.
- Emphasis on bicultural development and support for tino rangatiratanga.
- Focus on equity.

Research and/or working groups that have had an effect on the development of and the provision of ECE in Aotearoa/NZ are as follows.

Te Whāriki

Te Whāriki, the bicultural early childhood curriculum of the New Zealand Government Ministry of Education (1996), is woven to encourage cross-cultural respect that can weave people and nations together. Te Whāriki is about providing a base that teaches one to respect oneself and ultimately others. Many models were discussed before the early childhood community agreed on the final shape of Te Whāriki. Pere's (1983) model was included as one of the concepts toward the final document, as well as a model developed in 1989 by Te Runanga Māori, a committee of Māori in early childhood education. Te Whāriki is a culmination of the work of several generations of early childhood professionals and whānau groups. It is based on research and kaupapa Māori, and it is imperative that the model remain intact and lived, that is, practiced (Pakai, 1999). Te Whāriki has had the most effect on the early childhood profession and has instigated a major review of all teaching curriculum. The guiding principles of Whakamana (empowerment), Kotahitanga (holistic development), Whānau tangata (family and community), and Nga Honotanga (relationships) have been modeled in the primary curriculum review and are also being investigated at the secondary level. Te Whāriki has been the catalyst for change and major Ministry support to increase participation of all children in early childhood education and to support families (parents/whānau) in their role as teachers and agents of change. The parallel kaupapa Māori content (curriculum developed to suit Māori pedagogy and epistemology) was developed by a team that included Tilly and

Tamati Reedy, representing Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust and Māori from mainstream early childhood education (Reedy, 1995).

The document extends and supports the commitment to biculturalism in Te Whāriki by including bicultural approaches for each of the desirable objectives and practices (DOPs). Thus “all children and their families are enriched with knowledge of both partners to the Treaty of Waitangi and ECE services can support Māori children and whānau” (New Zealand Government Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 9). The DOPs are based on two principles:

- the promotion and extension of learning and development of each child through partnership with parents/whānau; and
- implementation of a curriculum that assists children to be competent and confident learners, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and secure in their knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society (New Zealand Government Ministry of Education, 1998).

Quality in Action

Quality in Action represents a commitment to put these principles into practice through quality teaching so as to reflect the “unique place of Māori as treaty partners and the government’s commitment to Māori education” (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1998).

The growth and development of government *quality* monitors affect the supply of teachers, which will need to be increased to meet the demand in ECE services. The Ministry of Education supports this through:

- Incentive grants to ECE services to meet some of the costs for qualifications.
- RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) schemes to allow those needing to upgrade their qualifications to receive credit for their skills and knowledge.
- Promoting ECE teaching as a career.
- Offering scholarships to attract people to ECE teacher education.
- Providing mentoring and/or support to students undertaking ECE teacher education (New Zealand Government Ministry of Education, 1998).

The New Zealand Teachers’ Council

The New Zealand Teachers’ Council (n.d.) has a major role in the approval and registration of teachers and providers of preservice teacher education. The Council is responsible for identifying the dimensions of a “satisfactory teacher” and identifies the following as significant:

- Professional knowledge
- Professional practice
- Professional relationships
- Professional leadership. (para. 2)

The New Zealand Teachers' Council requires a satisfactory teacher to show that "acceptable learning" occurs for all children in their care in "an environment that affirms the bicultural and multicultural nature of New Zealand" (para. 3). The council identifies professional knowledge, practice, relationships, and leadership as key dimensions likely to produce such acceptable learning. Teachers of early childhood education should demonstrate knowledge of teaching and learning, including *te reo* and *tikanga Māori* (the languages and customs of Māori) based on teacher education programs and ongoing reflective practice; promote learning through their teaching practice; maintain relationships of trust, cooperation, and respect for students, *whānau*, and colleagues; and demonstrate educational leadership relevant to their levels of experience and responsibility.

Quality teaching is defined by the Best Evidence Synthesis *Quality Teaching: Early Foundations* (New Zealand Government Ministry of Education, 2006) as pedagogical practices that facilitate children's access to knowledge and activities and provide opportunities to advance their skills so as to build on previous learning, assist in learning how to learn, and provide a strong foundation for further learning in relation to the goals of the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* and cultural, community, and family values.

Kei Tua o te Pae: Assessment for Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars

These exemplars for assessing children's learning are further confirmation of the sector's and the Ministry of Education's commitment to the provision of quality early childhood education. The exemplars are introduced to early childhood teachers and to *whānau* to inform teaching and best practice so that they are able to support children's learning and encourage participation.

The early childhood regulations are in their final consultative review, as are the criteria for the licensing or certification of ECE services and the New Zealand Teachers Council criteria for registration, proving that early childhood education is an ever-evolving sector, growing and changing to meet sector needs.

Nga Arohaehae Whai Hu: Self-Review Guidelines for ECE

These guidelines arrived in centers in late 2006; they will support ECE services to implement effective self-review that helps to achieve the centers' vision and goals for children's learning. The release of this document is an important milestone in the implementation of the 10-year strategic plan for ECE *Pathways to the Future: Nga Huarahi Arataki* (New Zealand Government Ministry of Education, 2002).

The presentation of the first early childhood convention in 1975 was a clear signal to the wider education sector that early childhood education had come of age. May (2003) describes the first convention and subsequent

conferences as “an indicator of the moving frontier of the debate, discourse and convention on early childhood matters in Aotearoa/New Zealand” (p. 70). It is timely that I reflect on this as I chair the 2007 convention and identify that the theme *Pakiwaitara* (storytelling) will bring together many stories over many generations of early childhood professionals (of all ethnicities) and celebrate the contribution of hundreds of people who have made early childhood in Aotearoa/New Zealand the world leader it is today. It is a timely reminder too that the logo, the Kahikatea tree designed by Colin Gibbs, the whakatauki (proverb) Kahikatea Tu I Te Uri and the Tuhoe waiata (song of the people of the Bay of Plenty, usually presented following a speaker), composed by the late Hirini Melbourne, is now sung at all conventions and the logo adorns all official convention material, further proof or symbols that early childhood has come of age.

*He Tohu Matauranga Mo Te Whakaako Kohungahunga:
The Diploma of Teaching Early Childhood Education*

This initial teacher education program was developed at Auckland College of Education in 1989; it was the first three-year Diploma of Teaching Early Childhood Education in New Zealand. The concept of a bicultural qualification was not realized at that time and was put aside until 1993 when I had the opportunity to develop early childhood programs for Wairiki Institute of Technology (WIT). I was able to write a three-year bicultural undergraduate Diploma of Teaching that was accredited in 1998. The program was supported by a kaumatua (Elder) who gave the name and the whakatauki that provides the whāriki (base) upon which the program is presented.

*He whakatauki
He kohanga pipi i te papa
Ka aitua
He kohanga pipi ikeike i te pari
Ka rere i te ao*

Baby birds nesting on the ground are subject to misfortune (danger and death).

Baby birds nesting high in a cliff face will survive to fly through the world.

Moral: Babies that are not cared for properly are unfortunate (subject to illness and death).

Babies that are loved and cared for properly have a better chance of survival and success.

(Na Dr. Hiko Te Rangī Hohepa, 1993, in Wairiki Institute of Technology, 2006, p. 3)

Philosophy

Early childhood care and education are the basis of education for life. Children are our future; therefore, we are committed to support, value, and nurture their growth and development while respecting their uniqueness, dignity, beliefs, ethnicity, culture, gender, and ability.

The concepts of inclusion, respect, and support and an equitable say in the development and implementation of all policies that affect the sector are integral to teaching and learning.

The recognition and inclusion of both official languages and cultures of Aotearoa/New Zealand and a commitment to fair practices and to sharing of power and resources in an effort to empower both signatories to the Treaty of Waitangi is an integral part of the education of all preservice teachers.

The educational philosophy of the program is informed by the works of Pere (1983), who believes that "learning is always a part of one's life experiences, and learning of formative years is particularly subject to culturally ascribed values" (p. 1). Underpinning this philosophy is the concept of *Matauranga* (knowledge, education), which is open-ended and has no definite boundaries. *Matauranga* encompasses everything experienced by an individual in a lifetime. Teaching and learning in this philosophy requires that teachers have an in-depth knowledge of the theory relating to required areas of learning and an ability to transmit this knowledge to students in a variety of ways. For this learning process to succeed, teachers and students must interact and work closely together. Teachers and students are in the position of jointly evaluating the ongoing learning process. When a student can demonstrate the necessary skills, knowledge, and understanding to perform required tasks, he or she moves on to the next level of learning. *Matauranga* requires teachers to develop an understanding of the innate traits, strengths, weaknesses, and interests of their students. Teaching methods reflect this knowledge. We believe that this philosophy reflects the inclusive nature of the program. It is also a philosophy that supports the *whakatauki* from the late Hiko Te Rangi Hohepa, Kaumatua (Elder) and mentor for the program and follows closely the tenets of the national curriculum for early childhood education, *Te Whāriki*.

Furthermore, the philosophical base of the WIT Charter Document and the Diploma of Teaching Early Childhood Education embraces biculturalism, acknowledging the dual cultural heritage of Aotearoa/New Zealand (Waiariki Institute of Technology, 2006). This is closely linked to the aims and aspirations of *whānau hapu* and *Iwi*, which is a belief in empowering people and offering all students choice. Māori need to be well educated in an education structure that provides a platform to achieve positive learning outcomes. The program was developed to ensure that Māori had options for preservice early childhood teacher education in a medium that best suited the needs of individual communities.

The Diploma of Teaching Early Childhood Education *He Tohu Matauranga Mo Te Whakāko Kohungahunga* is concerned with preparing students for teaching in a variety of learning environments. It is envisaged that graduates of this program will be teachers who will contribute to the professionalization of early childhood education by engaging in scholarship, research, and critical and reflective practice.

Significantly, of a lecture/management team of nine, six writers of the program are Māori. This is unique in the delivery of preservice teacher education programs and is probably the main reason for the program's success.

The Place of Māori Language in the Program

Māori language is an integral part of the first two years of development using a range of teaching methods. Te reo (language) structure and pronunciation, collecting and making resources for teaching, attendance at Marae Wananga, and other related activities contribute to the uniqueness of the program. At year three, students are able to integrate their learning across all curriculum areas, and Māori knowledge develops into research areas for students.

Teaching and learning involve the development of critical thinking and reflective practice, which enable personal and professional growth. Teaching and learning is a continual process that aims to develop a practitioner who can assume responsibility for lifelong learning. Learning is a dynamic process that encompasses the learners and teachers while recognizing the individual's uniqueness. Teaching and learning is a cooperative process in which students and teachers accept responsibility for learning. This occurs in a supportive environment that builds self-esteem and confidence in learning, thereby empowering the learner.

The teacher facilitates the process of learning using current research, developments, and knowledge in teaching practice and education delivered through a variety of methods and media. Experiential opportunities are provided for the student to develop and apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes and to reflect on the experience with guidance and support.

Strengthening Communities: Encouraging Participation

Waiariki Institute of Technology is in a good geographic position to provide education to several communities including Iwi Māori. Multisite (off-campus) provision to the communities of Taupo, Turangi/Tongariro, Tokoroa, Whakatane, and Gisborne follows the pathway of nga matua tipuna (our Elders) as they too traveled Iwi to Iwi developing and establishing communities. This not only meets the objectives of the statement of tertiary education priorities 2002-2007 (New Zealand Government Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, 2002) to contribute to the achievement of Māori development aspirations, it also builds on them. Durie (2001, 2003), Hemara (2000), and Pere (1997) have written about teaching and learning as they relate to Māori. Abbott and Pugh (1998), Carr, May, and Podmore (2001), Ebbeck and Waniganayake (2003), Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence (1999), and Freire (1998a) have written about teaching and learning in a wider context. In addition, Freire (1998b) argued that the creation of people who have vision, compassion, and the ability to work with and support the communities they represent evolves during the

formative years and the years spent in school. The Waiariki program aims to strengthen rural communities and to empower Māori men and women to participate in lifelong learning.

Scott (1999) identifies that “the most effective enterprises are ‘learning organizations,’ places committed to continuous quality improvement and innovation” (p. 94). He suggests that learning organizations continually monitor their own practices, seek out relevant areas for enhancement or innovation, undertake change projects based on these, and explicitly identify and share what has been learned from the whole process. He continues by identifying “some likely futures for education”; in particular,

there will be more flexibility in the design and delivery of learning programs whenever feasible, learning at all levels will have multiple entry and exit points, more flexible rates of progression and learning pathways. Educational organizations will become learning organizations, places that model and practice a capability to manage continuous quality improvement and innovation efficiently and effectively. (pp. 188-193)

The challenge for everyone involved in the accreditation of the Waiariki Diploma was that Māori wrote it for Māori/bicultural communities, that is, Aotearoa/New Zealand. At the time of accreditation (1998) the process had not been developed to an extent where agencies agreed on the criteria that needed to be met other than what the then Teachers Registration Board (TRB)—now known as the New Zealand (NZ) Teachers Council—identified as “people who are fit to teach” (p. 5). The speed of growth of preservice early childhood teacher education in New Zealand put accreditation panels under enormous pressure. Proposed Māori programs in particular were disadvantaged with the process, as some were required to undertake the process with panel members who were not necessarily representative of the sector, had limited knowledge of specific significant pedagogy and Mātauranga Māori, or relied on one person to assess and analyze this. In addition, new providers needed to establish internal processes rapidly to meet accreditation criteria. This resulted in many programs not being sufficiently prepared in terms of informed research as a basis on which to teach, for example. Furthermore, not all providers had qualified staff to teach on these programs.

The program is provided in collaboration and partnership with Iwi, or with mandated Māori and Pacifica groups to develop regional education improvement plans. The scope of these relationships has the potential to reach across the full extent of educational endeavor, with a focus on achievement and participation in early childhood environments that serve large numbers of Māori students (New Zealand Government Ministry of Education and Te Puni Kokiri, 2000). Graduates of the program are keenly sought after for employment, often before they graduate. Employers identify that the ability of our graduates to implement bicultural practices (Te Whāriki) across the curriculum strengthens others. Graduates soon find themselves in leadership positions.

This is supported by the findings of the 2005 *Initial Teacher Education Policy and Practice Final Report* (Kane et al., 2005), which identifies that, providers need to consider how their commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi is operational in their work with student teachers and how that directly results in graduates who have the understanding and capability to work within bicultural contexts, including proficiency in the use of te reo Māori. (p. 236)

Into the Future

The immediate response from the community with the inauguration of the WIT Diploma included skepticism (e.g., “Was the program approved by the New Zealand Teachers Council?”: it was) and negative comments about the emphasis on Tikanga Māori (e.g., “too much Māori” or “too much emphasis put on Māori”) that were initially hard to accept. However, the firm belief in the epistemology of the program strengthened the teaching team to continue, knowing that those in the community who held that opinion would soon realize the importance of bicultural practice and inclusion. Indeed this opinion has changed with the requirement for all early childhood education to demonstrate implementation of Te Whāriki. It is reassuring to observe that many of our graduates are responsible for making curriculum changes in early childhood centers and kindergartens; indeed many hold management positions, and three are employed by the Ministry of Education as Māori and Pacifica liaison officers.

As the program enters its eighth year, questions for the WIT teaching team are:

- Who is going to represent mainstream Māori? There is a lack of acknowledgment for Māori working in mainstream early childhood education; the Ministry tends to concentrate on Te Kohanga Reo.
- How will the maintenance of the Diploma be supported? The program is due for significant modification and review; how will this be managed? How can the unique philosophy, pedagogy, and culture of the program be maintained, and how can the program be supported by WIT? The *Initial Teacher Education Policy and Practice Final Report* (Kane et al., 2005) identifies that:

Establishing a research culture within departments, schools, faculties and/or colleges responsible for initial teacher education will require ongoing commitment of institutional management in terms of targeted strategies and significant resourcing over a number of years. Teacher educators require support in terms of structured leave, mentoring and supervision as they shift into research embedded practice, achieve higher degree qualifications and establish platforms of research within their areas of expertise and interest. (p. 237)

WIT’s early childhood education preservice teaching program is designed to support the development of others using related research and practice to construct their own ways to grow personally and professionally. It is designed to equip student teachers with an ability to work in a

range of communities. An institution's ability to recognize individuality; to acknowledge, utilize, and value this while encouraging participation in the community is vital for preservice teachers. Educating teachers who are motivated and who support positive development for all learners, giving balanced attention to the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive dimensions of the whānau/families and the communities with which they will work should be a challenging and rewarding goal for providers of teacher education programs.

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Appendix: Glossary

- Ako: Concepts of learning
- ECE: Early childhood education
- Hui: Gathering, meeting
- Iwi: Group of people: Tuhoē, Te Arawa, Ngāti Kahungunu, Tuwharetoa, Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi
- Karanga: Call, lament
- Kaumātua: Elder, usually male
- Kaupapa: Reason for, rationale
- Kuia: Elder, usually female
- Māori: People of the land, Indigenous people of Aotearoa
- Marae: Meeting place (space of land)
- Matauranga: Knowledge, education, learning
- MOE: Ministry of Education
- Mokopuna: Grandchildren
- NZQA: New Zealand Qualifications Authority
- Pakiwaitara: A form of storytelling, can use a mixture of drama, music, poetry, dance, art, reading/writing
- Taha: Side

Tamariki: Child

Taonga: Highly prized, sacred

Tauiwi: Other (those not of Māori heritage)

Tane: Man

Te Puni Kokiri: Māori Development Office (a government agency)

Te Reo: Language

Teina: Younger (sibling, or in knowledge; in this case, place in the program-Year 1 or 2)

Tino Rangatiratanga: Self-determination, empowerment

Tohu: Qualification (in this case, the diploma)

Tuakana: Older (sibling, or in knowledge; in this case, place in the program-Year 3)

Tuhoe: People of the central Bay of Plenty

Wananga: Gathering to learn in detail

Whakatauaki: A proverb or saying, usually to complement what is taking place

Waiata: Song usually presented following a speaker

Whānau: Family

Whānaungatanga: The practices that bond and strengthen kinship ties

Whariki: A woven mat (in this context, a base for the qualification)