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# **Taku Ara, Taku Mahara: Pākehā Family Experiences of Kaupapa Māori and Bilingual Education**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
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by  
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## **Abstract**

Kaupapa Māori (indigenous Māori-centred philosophies) initiatives have transformed various social, cultural and public projects in the domains of governance and constitutional issues, health, education, the environment, community development and research in Aotearoa – New Zealand. As a Pākehā graduate of te kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori (Māori language immersion pre-school and primary school), this research is concerned with exploring the impact of kaupapa Māori and bilingual educational initiatives on my life and the lives of two other Pākehā families who share similar educational backgrounds.

This foundational study utilises qualitative narrative inquiry methods as a means of understanding and analysing the implications for Pākehā as a result of their participation in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education. An intergenerational family approach is used in this research whereby the individual voices and experiences of young adults are heard equally alongside their parents’.

Collectively understood, the themes represented in this research offer a unique means of understanding why Pākehā families decided to be involved in Māori immersion settings, and what these experiences mean to them now. One of the principle aims of this study is that it be used as a platform for dialogue amongst Pākehā, non-Māori and Māori about the future direction of bicultural education in Aotearoa – New Zealand.

## Acknowledgements – He Mihi

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Finally, this thesis is dedicated to and in memory of my mother:

Mary Eileen Broadhead (1951 – 1986)



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## Thesis Introduction

Much has been written on the emergence of kaupapa Māori education by various Māori educationalists, academics and historians<sup>1</sup>. These writers (amongst others) have clearly articulated the various visions and issues regarding Māori education. However to date little attention has fallen on non-Māori and Pākehā<sup>2</sup> involvement in these learning settings. Understandably, kaupapa Māori educationalists have been busy theorising and researching the progression of their own educational initiatives and institutions, while the majority of Pākehā and non-Māori educationalists have been slow to engage with the impacts these immersion settings have had, and continue to have on the educational landscape in Aotearoa – New Zealand. This research project intends to address this unexplored area.

This thesis explores the experiences of Pākehā people, those belonging to the dominant culture, who have been involved in and had exposure to kaupapa Māori and bilingual education in Aotearoa – New Zealand. Through looking at Pākehā family experiences of Māori education, this study seeks to highlight what members of the dominant culture have learnt through their exposures by reflecting on the past, and understanding what these experiences mean to them in the present.

As a qualitative research project this study utilises a narrative inquiry approach that centers on human story as a means of understanding personal experiences. In focusing on family narratives this thesis is intergenerational; narratives have been used to explore the understandings of the parents and their respective children, who are now young adults. In keeping with this intergenerational narrative theme, it is appropriate to introduce and locate myself within the thesis. I do this by firstly providing my family background through introducing my father Graham and explaining why my family

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Cooper, Arago-Kemp, Wylie, & Hodgen, 2004; Hemara, 2000; Hireme, 2002; Hohepa, 1992; Jenkins & Ka'i, 1994; McKinley, 2002; Penetito, 1996; Pere, 1982; Rata, 2001 & 2004; G.H. Smith, 1992 & 2003; L.T. Smith, 1986 & 1999; Walker, 1990 & 1991.

<sup>2</sup> In this context 'Pākehā' is defined as those people who have no Māori whakapapa or genealogy, who are of European decent and who call Aotearoa – New Zealand home.

became involved in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education. Following this overview of my background, I provide the structure and content of this thesis.

## **My background**

During my early childhood and adolescent years I, alongside my twin brother James and older sister Annah were raised in Tauranga Moana and Mauao (Mount Maunganui) by our father Graham. Our mother passed away when I was five years of age and since that time my father has not remarried. This meant my siblings and I were raised by our solo father until we left home in our teenage years. My older sister did not attend kōhanga or kura kaupapa as she preferred her local mainstream school at that time. However, my brother and I spent our early childhood education in kōhanga reo and later in kura kaupapa and bilingual units. When I asked my father why he wanted to expose us to Māori education as a Pākehā family, he said:

**Graham:** I had an opportunity for you to learn a broader base of ideas as a part of who you are. My upbringing often felt stiflingly narrow and limited because it seemed so monocultural, even when I could learn as an adult to change. I knew I could use my current experience to offer you what I thought would be a much more useful base. I was resolute that the good things within the Māori world along with our privilege as Pākehā would be a whole new combination for you to choose from as you got older.

On reflection, my father also spoke about some of the influences that shaped his decision to have us involved in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education from a young age:

**Graham:** Being in Men's Action Collective (MAC – an anti-racist, anti-sexist men's group) was a big influence because we did community development projects with local Māori. One that was very powerful was touring the film 'Patu' around the Bay Of Plenty region. Going on the 1984 hikoi was also significant; it created such a powerful learning event for us Pākehā to hear about Māori experience - a mix of both emotional and intellectual consolidation and motivation.

As a result of these experiences, our family came into regular contact with local Māori whānau through my father's involvements in Pākehā anti-racism groups in the mid 1980s

and his work with Māori politically within our local community. Over time, these Māori whānau knew our family and they become known to us. These relationships played an important role in my father's decision to continue exposing us to Māori education, particularly kaupapa Māori education.

In thinking about what he learnt from being involved in these settings my father spoke about developing his understanding of cultural and social privilege as a member of the dominant culture. He learnt about how this privilege could be of use to Māori. He also spoke about the importance of having a committed connection to our kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa:

**Graham:** I was learning about white privilege and the invisible world of Māori people; what I could do with my privilege for justice. I could choose to get involved in a movement and learn things I'd never get to know in a middle-class setting. If I wanted, I could stay comfortable and live a regular middle-class white life - I had that choice. I wasn't brave enough to think that I could do well in an oppressed environment (I was too attached to my privilege), but I could be a partner, and move between worlds while learning a lot and advocate for others to access what they're entitled to.

You need a community connection to do it, or be prepared to put the time in and make it a priority to build community. You can't do it if you just send your kids in, you need to hang out and take part; be prepared to live and breathe it as a major part of your life.

It was within this community context that my twin brother and I became involved in kōhanga reo, and later kura kaupapa Māori. My brother and I were the only Pākehā attending the marae based kōhanga reo in the mid 1980s. This dynamic continued into our primary school and intermediate, as our local school made the transition into a kura kaupapa Māori by adopting Te Aho Matua<sup>3</sup> in the early 1990s. This kura kaupapa Māori aimed to provide better educational opportunities and continuity for local kōhanga reo graduates. We later went on to attend a bilingual unit throughout secondary school at Mount Maunganui College.

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<sup>3</sup> "Te Aho Matua" is loosely translated as "the saying of the parents", and is the charter for excellence in kura kaupapa Māori.

Arising out of these exposures to te reo me ōna tikanga as a young person, I have begun to think more in-depth about the impact that these experiences had on my family. When I reached early teenage years I started to notice that my immediate family's involvement in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education was unique, if not extraordinary for a middle-class Pākehā family with no known existing Māori genealogy. As I have got older I have continued to try to understand the impact these experiences have had on my own identity and that of my family, my ways of thinking about the world and where I am positioned in relation to other Pākehā and Māori in Aotearoa – New Zealand. It is with these personal self-examinations that this small study arose: I wanted to seek out other Pākehā families who share a similar bicultural background and hear from them about their experiences. Personally, I wanted to understand the similarities and differences between our collective experiences. Academically, I wanted to help create space for their voices to be heard within bicultural and bilingual educational discourse in Aotearoa – New Zealand. This is how this piece of work came about.

### **Thesis structure**

It should be stated here that this research is a small sample of a bigger intercultural picture – a broader project in which educational and social science researchers in Aotearoa – New Zealand aim to understand the dynamics (personal, social, cultural and political) of dominant culture involvement in indigenous learning environments. Two families (four adults and three children) were involved in sharing their experiences of kōhanga reo and subsequent bilingual or rumaki units. While the family sample for this research was relatively small, there is an engaging depth in the reflections from the parents and children about their experiences. Four sections constitute this thesis:

## **1. Literature review:**

The literature review is structured into two sections:

**1.1** An introduction to the political and social movement of kaupapa Māori education. Kaupapa Māori pedagogical issues are discussed;

**1.2** Two case studies of Pākehā people who have worked and learnt in Māori settings are analysed, followed by an eleven year statistical snapshot of Pākehā enrolments in kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa and Māori language settings.

## **2. Methodology and method:**

The methodology and method for this study includes:

**2.1** Salient features that underlie constructivism, which is the conceptual framework for this study. This is followed by a discussion of the differences between qualitative research and quantitative research;

**2.2** Principles of transformation theory and narrative inquiry are introduced as useful theoretical frameworks for this study. This is followed by a discussion of an adapted narrative inquiry structure that was used for this research;

**2.3** How this research up-held its ethical approach is explored, including an application of key research ethics such as validity, reflexivity and representation;

**2.4** A description of the research in practice is given, which outlines how the research was carried out.

### **3 Findings and discussion: Two families, two generations**

Two sections present the central themes and quotes from semi-structured in-depth interviews with the two Pākehā families involved in this study:

**3.1** Parent's experiences; and

**3.2** Children's experiences.

Their separate experiences are represented and assigned into three narrative categories that examine *situation* (place and context), *interaction* (personal, social and cultural), and *continuity* (reflections on the past and present).

Each dimension includes a discussion of the common themes that arose out of our semi-structured conversations. Following discussion of these mutual findings, individual experiences are presented as sub-themes. A summary of the findings is provided at the beginning of each section.

### **4 Conclusion:**

Finally, the conclusion has three sections that include:

**4.1** What can be learnt from the experiences of Pākehā immersed in Māori education?

**4.2** What are the implications of this study for society?

**4.3** What have I learnt?

This research has been carried out in the hope that it will contribute to further dialogue between Pākehā, non-Māori and Māori about the impacts and future of bicultural and bilingual education in Aotearoa – New Zealand communities.

# 1. Literature Review

## Introduction

Two sections make up this literature review. Each section is explored as an attempt to illustrate how discourses intersect, and how understanding this interconnectedness is a useful means of exploring and understanding the lived experiences of members of the dominant culture who have been involved in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education.

### 1.1 Kaupapa Māori Discourse

Kaupapa Māori as a broad political and social movement is introduced. Key principles of kaupapa Māori pedagogy in *kōhanga reo* and *kura kaupapa* are put forward. A current critique of kaupapa Māori is also explored, with further analysis on the issues this critique and current pedagogic thinking raise.

### 1.2 Pākehā Learning and Working in Māori Environments

Two case studies of Pākehā people who have worked and learnt in Māori settings are explored, with an analysis of the political contexts these experiences are situated within. A statistical snapshot and analysis of Pākehā enrolments in *kōhanga reo* and *kura kaupapa* from 1992-2003 is given.

These two terrains are linked by *struggle, theory* and *practice*. ‘Struggle’ refers to the community and organisational dynamics that pose barriers to Māori knowledge(s) being accepted in their own right within social and public policies in Aotearoa – New Zealand. In particular this struggle continues to be led and made visible by multiple Māori leaders and people occupying various sites (education, health, justice, the environment, activist movements etc). In relation to these on-going movements to validate Māori realities, growing numbers of the dominant Pākehā population continue their attempt to arrive at an understanding about how members of the colonising group can support Māori knowledge(s) and be part of an interdependent relationship based on co-operation with a vision for social and cultural justice.

‘Theory’ refers to the theoretical movements that correlate to Māori epistemologies such as critical and anti-colonial theory, which influence the shape of kaupapa Māori movements.

‘Practice’ describes the means by which indigenous-centred educational initiatives have been made ‘real’, and in parallel how people from the dominant culture have reacted and have attempted to participate and support these kaupapa Māori educational settings.

Each aspect – struggle, theory and practice – has a relationship with the other, and can be seen as an interconnected collection of discourses that relate theory with personal experience. Combined, each strand of literature creates a setting in which this study, exploring the experiences of Pākehā in kaupapa Māori education, can be better understood.

In providing a review and analysis of each of these theoretical and practical movements it is not the intention to confine them, or to claim a *total understanding* of their underpinnings and practices. Naturally, each discourse included here continues to evolve at local, national and international levels.

## 1.1 Kaupapa Māori Discourse<sup>4</sup>

The ‘real’ revolution of the 1980s was a shift in mindset of large numbers of Māori people - a shift away from waiting for things to be done to them, to doing things for themselves; a shift away from an emphasis on reactive politics to an emphasis on being more proactive; a shift from negative motivation to positive motivation. These shifts can be described as a move away from talking simplistically about ‘de-colonization’ (which puts the colonizer at the center of attention) to talking about ‘conscientization’ or ‘consciousness-raising’ (which puts Māori at the center). These ways of thinking illustrate a reawakening of the Māori imagination that had been stifled and diminished by colonization processes. (G.H. Smith, 2003, p. 1).

Kaupapa Māori philosophies have transformed various social, cultural and public initiatives in the arenas of health, education and research. At the forefront of these transformations have been Māori whānau, hapū and iwi intent on revitalising, developing and retaining control over their own culture, lives and destinies (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; G.H. Smith, 1992; Smith, 1999). As Graham Smith (2003) explains, the emphasis of kaupapa Māori philosophies is on putting “Māori at the center” (p. 1), which has initiated a change in how cultural politics of Aotearoa – New Zealand are framed, discussed, understood and acted upon.

The common ground underpinning kaupapa Māori philosophy and theory is a resistance to, and an informed understanding of how the cultural, social and political landscape in this country is directly related to its colonial history and neo-colonial reality (Bishop, 2005; Jackson, 1998; Smith, 1999). A recent example of how kaupapa Māori discourse is challenging the colonised landscape of Aotearoa – New Zealand is in the field of research. A variety of core kaupapa Māori research characteristics have been identified by Māori researchers and practitioners involved in the field (Bevan-Brown, 1998; Bishop, 2005; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Cram, 2001; Powick, 2002; Smith, G.H. 1990; Smith, 1999; Teariki, Spoonley, Tomoana, 1992). For example, Jill Bevan-Brown (1998) has identified the need for kaupapa Māori research to be “conducted within a Māori cultural framework, it must stem from a

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<sup>4</sup> Aspects of this section have appeared in a previously published article written by myself. See Barnes, A. (2004).

Māori world view and be based on Māori epistemology and incorporate Māori concepts, knowledge, skills, experiences, attitudes, processes, practices, customs, reo, values and beliefs” (p. 231). Underpinning these positions is the resistance to imposed colonial and neo-colonial structures, and a struggle for *tinu rangatiratanga*, which promotes an intervention and active participation by Māori people within the design and implementation of research with various Māori communities, iwi, hapū and whānau (Smith, 1999). Aroha Harris (2004) and Ranginui Walker (1990) claim that the socio-political movements and struggles of Māori people throughout the 19th and 20th centuries up until the present have assisted in shaping these resistance strategies.

Internationally kaupapa Māori discourse has been clearly related to international philosophers, critical theory and social justice thinkers. These international scholars include the emancipatory politics of educationalists Paulo Freire and Antonio Gramsci (see Bishop & Glynn, 1999; G.H. Smith, 2003; Walker, 1993), the decolonised thinking of Frantz Fanon, Ngugi wa Thiong’o and Edward Said (see Bishop, 2005; L.T. Smith, 1999, 2005), the post-modern deconstruction project of Michel Foucault (see Himere, 2002), the analyses of power and representation by various feminist theorists (see Irwin, 1992; Johnston, 1998; Pihama, 2001; Te Awekotuku, 1991), and the cultural theory and politics of Pierre Bourdieu (see Jenkins (with Tania Ka’ai), 1996; Pere, 1982). In combination with traditional Māori epistemologies, these critical discourses have contributed to an emergent pool of Māori-centred practices and approaches that are in the domains of governance and constitutional issues, environmental protection and sustainability movements, the legal system, local government, tertiary education, health and Māori health-gain, housing issues, community development, Māori economic management and so on. While the emergence of kaupapa Māori approaches has been wide reaching, the focus of this thesis is on *one* key element of this broad kaupapa Māori movement – the kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa educational movements.

*Kaupapa Māori education: A critical response and experience*

Assimilation, and later integration, sought to socialize Māori into the modern urbanized world and the social and economic life of the nation. While arguably an innocent and even desirable goal, in practice it seemed to require Māori to forsake their identity and did little if anything to support the integrity of Māori society (Harris, 2004, p. 15).

When we asked parents what they thought the purpose of *kōhanga reo* and *kura kaupapa Māori* were, they were clear that it was to maintain *te reo Māori me ōna tikanga* (Cooper, Arago-Kemp, Wylie, & Hodgen 2004, p. 24, their emphasis).

Literature on the emergence of kaupapa Māori educational alternatives within the socio-political and cultural environment of Aotearoa – New Zealand is well documented by a number of Māori educationalists and historians such as Russell Bishop (2005), Aroha Harris (2004), Kuni Jenkins (with Tania Ka'ai) (1996) Wally Penetito (1996), Graham Smith (1991 & 2003), Linda Smith (1997 & 1999) and Ranginui Walker (1990 & 1991). A common theme identified amongst these kaupapa Māori practitioners and theorists is their analysis of the historic and present state of power relations in Aotearoa – New Zealand as a result of colonisation. They have focused on documenting and illustrating the detrimental dynamics of the colonial and neo-colonial situation for Māori people. As a result of the colonial context, kaupapa Māori education theorists have actively critiqued present Western educational philosophies, while also offering localised strategies for resistance and action in order to intervene in the current Māori educational crisis (G.H. Smith, 1991 & 2003). Therefore the aim of the next sub-section is to focus more on the following literature(s):

- Kaupapa Māori pedagogy and Māori experiences; and
- Current critique of kaupapa Māori education.

### *Kaupapa Māori pedagogy and Māori experiences*

The teacher is a “Māori” (or has a “qualification” in “Māori language”), the word is a “Māori” word, the class is a “Māori language” class. But is it learning “Māori”? (Hireme, 2002, p. 12).

In brief, Graham Hingangaroa Smith (1999) argues that a kaupapa Māori approach to education should encompass the following elements:

- *Self-determination*: the ability to have increased control and autonomy over the meaningful education decisions which impact on one’s life;
- *Cultural aspirations*: the emotional need for Māori language, knowledge and culture as a basis for one’s cultural identity;
- *Culturally preferred pedagogy*: learning and teaching which is couched in and positively reinforces the values, behaviours, customs and cultural capital of the Māori home;
- *Mediation of socio-economic impediments*: the mediation of the socio-economic impediments which impact in disproportionate levels on Māori;
- *Extended family social structures and practice*: the employment of Māori collective cultural practices built around extended family structures and responsibilities; and
- *A collective vision*: a shared vision supported by all of the participants and that provides direction and impetus for the struggle.

Alongside these Māori-centred educational visions, Wharehuia Hemara (2000) in his book *Māori Pedagogies* (2000) identifies traditional or pre-European forms of Māori learning and knowledge. In doing so, Hemara (2000) emphasises how these traditional ways of learning and knowledge are captured in current kaupapa Māori initiatives such as kōhanga and kura kaupapa Māori. Through reviewing *Te Whariki*, the national guideline for early childhood education, Hemara (2000) identifies four key principles that show how traditional indigenous pedagogy continues to inform modern day practice in kōhanga reo<sup>5</sup> (p. 67).

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<sup>5</sup> See [www.kohanga.ac.nz](http://www.kohanga.ac.nz) for more information on kōhanga reo principles, aims and curriculum.

*1. Whakamana: a process that empowers children to learn and grow*

Traditionally learning and reciting whakapapa, waiata and whakataukī integrated children's positions and status into the community, which informed the community of their obligations to those children. This practice continues in kōhanga today as knowing ones whakapapa and learning waiata and whakataukī teaches children about "their communities' histories and offers them a variety of options for their futures" (p. 71).

*2. Kotahitanga: co-operation and support*

Prior to European settlement Māori hapū and whānau lived in communities that were linked by a common genealogy. This meant there was a large degree of interdependence between the local people. Within kōhanga, *kotahitanga* has come to be interpreted as a common purpose, which is inclusive of children and the community and encourages a holistic learning approach (p. 73).

*3. Whānau Tangata: the wider world of family and community*

Traditionally the interdependence between Māori families, the wider community and the natural environment was very strong: it linked individuals with the metaphysical world and it strengthened alliances and communal unity. Children often represented these interdependent relationships. Today the interdependence exists between "the wellbeing of children, whānau, education deliverers and communities" (pp. 74-75), which transpires into a sense of security and belonging to a community.

*4. Ngā Hononga: learning through responsive and reciprocal relationships*

Te Whariki places an emphasis on children learning through mutual relationships with other people, places and things. In a traditional sense this learning was done through a set of rights and obligations shared amongst members of the community, which again ensured a sense of security through co-operation.

Kura kaupapa initiatives continue the culturally preferred pedagogy established in kōhanga reo, while re-affirming the collective visions of the various whānau involved in the schools. Graham Smith (1992) acknowledges the important role of the Māori educational charter *Te Aho Matua* for kura kaupapa in this process:

Kura Kaupapa Māori have a collective vision which is written into a formal charter entitled 'Te Aho Matua'. This vision provides the guidelines for excellence in Māori; what a good Māori education should entail. It also acknowledges Pākehā culture and skills required by Māori children to participate fully and at every level in modern New Zealand society. 'Te Aho Matua' builds on the kaupapa of kōhanga Reo, and provides the parameters for the uniqueness that is kura kaupapa Māori. Its power is in its ability to articulate and connect with Māori aspirations, politically, socially, economically and culturally (p. 23).

Parallel to these principles of a kaupapa Māori childhood education, *Te Rerenga ā te Pīrere*, a phase one report on the longitudinal study of kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori students by Cooper, Arago-Kemp, Wylie, & Hodgen (2004), offers teacher and parental insights into how kōhanga and kura learning environments meet the key principles described by G.H. Smith (1999) and Hemara (2000). Examples of these insights recorded by Cooper, Arago-Kemp, Wylie, & Hodgen (2004) included:

- *The importance of te reo me ōna tikanga*

Te reo Māori me ōna tikanga, not surprisingly, was what both tumuaki and kaiako most wanted the children to be confident in before they left kura. This included knowledge of karakia, waiata, and whakatauki. This was closely linked to developing a strong sense of pride and identity, and a sound grasp of Māori values such as manaaki and ātawhai, so that these children will become leaders for their iwi in "Te Ao Hurihuri" (p. 23).

- *A safe and happy learning environment*

...that the children are happy and safe in their environment. It is through play that they learn. This is our learning approach. This is all done in te reo Māori. We don't measure their performance by how many Māori words they know. Kids move from one activity to the next based on what they want to do... 'organised chaos'. We operate total immersion under the guidelines of *Te Whariki* (kōhanga reo teacher, their emphasis, p. 22).

- *What parents liked most*

The things parents most liked about kura were that it was whānau orientated (37 percent), it was supporting a safe environment (36 percent), and they liked their child learning *te reo Māori me ōna tikanga* (13 percent) (their emphasis, p. 26).

Regarding the guiding philosophies of kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori, these research findings are consistent with key kaupapa Māori educational principles highlighted by Wharehuia Hemara (2000) and Graham Smith (1992 & 1999). The examples indicate a strong motivation for Māori people to maintain their language and cultural preferences in a culturally safe environment, which subsequently become intermingled with the learning approach of the children and their parents and teachers. Therefore this culturally centred curriculum is dependent on a strong set of collective rights and obligations towards the wellbeing of students, whānau and teachers. These factors were also prevalent in research conducted by Sheridan McKinley (2002) on Māori parents and education:

Kura kaupapa Māori appeal to parents who value te reo me ngā tikanga Māori as essential to their identity, and to their everyday life. Kura also offer the chance for Māori to be the essence in schools – not to be marginal, or different, or identified in relation to Pākehā dominance. Māori and education are synonymous (pp. 27-28).

In asking why 18 Māori parents preferred to send their children to kura kaupapa as opposed to a mainstream English-medium school, McKinley found the following (p. 28):

- They wanted an immersion education for their child;
- They wanted their child to learn Māori language and tikanga;
- They wanted to continue what their child had learned at kōhanga reo;
- Other family members were already attending the kura.

### *Current critique of kaupapa Māori education*

Recent critique of kaupapa Māori education has revolved around a rejection of the ‘cultural fundamentalism’ of these initiatives (Poata-Smith, 1996; Rata, 2001 & 2004). In particular Elizabeth Rata (2004) has argued that kaupapa Māori educational initiatives are based on cultural assumptions that neglect the realities of a modern democratic New Zealand, which Rata argues should be based upon rational thought and critical reasoning:

Kaupapa Māori’s advocacy for an identity formation based upon a kin-based communal-self rather than an individualised-self has consequences both for the maintenance of liberal democracy and for the continuation of the critical reasoning that such a political system requires. Its pedagogical principles are in direct conflict with democratic pedagogical principles including the principle that rational thought must be acquired through the critical reasoning (‘the reason that ‘puts itself on trial’ [Habermas, 2001: 30]) of the autonomous individual (p. 16).

Rata (2004b) argues that privileging the ‘race-culture identity’ or ‘culturalism’ is dangerous because it neglects the foundations of a democratic society, defined by Rata (2004b) as “contracts between individuals and associations of individuals” (p. 9). Rata (2004b) argues further that the active involvement of whānau in the child’s education promotes private interests and concerns in the public sphere. For Rata (2004b) such private interests and concerns are not relevant to the development of

“the national culture of the public sphere” and therefore threaten liberal democracy (p. 10).

Rata (2001) states that as a form of culturalism kaupapa Māori education ignores the economic and material realities of Māori people. Citing studies by van Meijl (1999) and Webster (1998), Rata claims there is a “conflict between the materialist perspective and the essentialistic perspective of culturalism” because of the overwhelming focus on cultural identity in Māori education (Rata, p. 253, 2001). According to Rata (2001) this situation creates further class divisions in modern Māori society:

It is possible that cultural enhancement programmes will actually benefit the middle-class Māori child by providing a repertoire of cultural resources. This will increase the growing division between Māori middle-class and Māori working-class children in the same way that cultural capital acts as a resource differential between the classes of other cultures (pp. 154-155).

Rata’s arguments regarding the ‘dangerous nature of culturalism’ are related to traditional forms of political liberalism, which Heywood (1992) has critiqued as ‘the ideology of the West’ (p. 16). Liberal ideologies give primacy to a set of key values and beliefs such as the rights of the individual, freedom, reason, justice and toleration (Heywood, 1992, pp. 18-26). In refuting the role of collectives such as whānau in the decision-making of a child’s education and in establishing the culturally centred learning of kōhanga and kura, Rata (2004) is arguing that classic Western liberal priorities such as individualism and rational scientific thought are being undermined in kaupapa Māori education.

The divide between culturally centred pedagogies of kaupapa Māori education, and the recent challenges posed by conservative liberal ideologies illustrates a gap in understanding. For example, in considering the role of Pākehā in kaupapa Māori environments, there remain a number of important considerations that are not addressed in either position:

- How are the cultural assertions of kaupapa Māori upheld and maintained when members from the dominant culture, Pākehā or those ‘other’ than Māori, are involved?
- What can the public learn from intercultural relations between Pākehā and Māori as result of kōhanga, kura and bilingual education, and how will these relations mature and relate to wider issues such as governance, policy, research and social cohesion?
- In what ways will the participation of Pākehā in kaupapa Māori impact on ‘the national culture of the public sphere’?
- What are the broader implications of Pākehā involvement in kaupapa Māori for whānau, iwi and hapū?
- How do Pākehā reconcile their sense of ‘individual-self’ and personal identity when participating in culturally specific collective environments?

These questions remain unanswered because of the binary positions taken up regarding the perceived benefits and costs of kaupapa Māori education: one side advocates a culturally preferred holistic pedagogy in the hope of cultural revitalisation and maintenance; the other promotes a Western scientific individualistic pedagogy that promotes liberal and Western thought. Therefore, there exist grey areas that remain unaddressed by both positions.

A wider perspective from the international research literature suggests a number of positive learning outcomes for bilingual students. Cooper, Arago-Kemp, Wylie, & Hodgen (2004) cite the work of bilingual researchers such as Baker (2001), Cummins (1983), Cummins and Danesi (1999) and Dutcher (1994) as providing an optimistic analyses of bilingual education:

According to these reviews, children in community language bilingual programmes: (1) maintain their ability to speak the community language; (2) perform as well as – in most cases better than – other children who are also native speakers of the community language but who were “mainstreamed” in “dominant language” programmes from the beginning of their schooling; (3) develop positive attitudes – to the language, to schooling, and to themselves; and (4) perform better in

the dominant language than other community language-speaking children who were mainstreamed (p. 3).

However Jim Cummins (2000) notes that there are a number of quality and cognitive issues that continue to face Māori medium and bilingual educators:

Discussions in the summer of 1999 (and subsequent correspondence) with Māori educators Toni Waho and Penny Poutu brought home to me the difficulties of developing what Toni Waho calls ‘real Māori and not a mish-mash of English and Māori’. Similar concerns have been frequently expressed in the context of Welsh and Irish language revival efforts. Research on these issues is lacking and thus educators must carefully observe the outcomes of different program options in order to work towards optimal development of both languages (p. 22).

Cummins (2000) argues further that an understanding of cultural, social and political relations and how these intersect and influence the politics of bilingualism is complex and can be understood from a variety of different perspectives (p. 47). In acknowledging these complexities, the politics of bilingualism cannot be separated from wider socio-cultural and political changes and movements (Cummins, 2000; May, Hill, & Tiakiwai, 2004). Diverse debates about Māori self-determination and what constitutes ‘kaupapa Māori’ will continue within and outside of this educational movement as the political and social climate changes.

What follows are examples of Pākehā responses to the wider kaupapa Māori movement. While the setting remains in education, the intercultural experiences explored through the use of two case studies represent a broader Pākehā political project: a sphere where Pākehā individually and collectively are open to reflection and dialogue on the benefits and limits of Māori aspirations in education.

## 1.2 Pākehā Learning and Working in Māori Environments

I've been overseas and it's a funny thing, that I don't have a defined identity as such. When you're raised Māori but you've got white skin it's strange. I find it hard to relate to either Māori or Pākehā. I suppose if Māori was night and English was day then I'd be the twilight or something (David Gendall in Carol Archie, 2005, p. 227).

### *Contemporary Pākehā experiences in Māori educational settings: Two case studies*

The accounts of Pākehā living and working in Māori environments offer a rare and important context in which Pākehā and Māori relations can be better understood. In this section two current examples of these relations are explored through the use of two case studies. Each case study is followed by an analysis of the issues raised and their on-going implications. Firstly, one Pākehā family's experience of being involved in kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori is reviewed: why they were involved and how their participation impacted on them. Secondly, Deborah Radford (2001) a Pākehā teacher working in a Māori tertiary educational department, offers a critical reflection on being from the dominant culture and holding a teaching position within another culture.

In her book *Skin to skin: Intimate true stories of Māori – Pākehā relationships* Carol Archie (2005) presents ten family stories of primarily Māori and Pākehā relationships. In presenting these Māori and Pākehā stories, Archie (2005) aims to emphasise how such family stories “cross the cultural divide” through focusing on “the two peoples whose relationship has largely shaped New Zealand's colonial history and development” (pp. 8-9). This first case study provides reasons identified by Betsan Martin in speaking with Archie (2005) as to why she put her son David Gendall and his older sister Suzanna into kaupapa Māori education as Pākehā. Following this, key aspects related to her son David's experience in kōhanga and kura are identified and explored further.

As recorded by Archie (2005), Betsan Martin's choice to send her children into kaupapa Māori learning environments were based on the following factors (pp. 254-256):

- Involvement in a reformed Anglican church that emphasised a bicultural structure and relationship between Māori and Pākehā;
- Community work experience alongside Māori and Pacific Island leaders;
- Self-learning about the relevance of the Treaty of Waitangi, and subsequently holding Treaty education workshops in her work;
- Developing close relationships with the local marae through community work, which had established a kōhanga reo and went onto setting up a kura kaupapa.

Located within the social context of the time, the early 1980s, particular literature on the role churches and community groups had in creating practical bicultural relationship models, advocating for social justice and organising a Pākehā anti-racism presence is well documented (see Black, 1997; Consedine, 2005; Huygens, 2004; Jenkins & Martin, 1999; Margaret, 2002; Nairn, 1989 & 2002; Yensen, Hague & McCreanor, 1989). Educationalist Mitzi Nairn (1989) states that during the 1980s community groups such as Project Waitangi played an instrumental role in initiating an educative forum to support Pākehā to learn more about themselves, the Treaty of Waitangi, the process of colonisation, and their place in Aotearoa – New Zealand:

Pākehā anti-racism work, especially the efforts of groups like Project Waitangi, has contributed much to Pākehā awareness and understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi, and to discussion about partnership, sovereignty and biculturalism. It has continued to address historical amnesia through revealing the impact of racism as colonial oppression. In the early 1980s the Treaty of Waitangi began to be perceived in a new way by Pākehā, and questions of Māori sovereignty, self-determination and autonomy were raised (pp. 87-88).

These social movements alongside changes and challenges by an emerging politicised Pākehā movement within the church and throughout Aotearoa – New Zealand are an important part in understanding why Betsan Martin became involved in kaupapa Māori education in the 1980s. At this time there was an increasing awareness and

response by Pākehā to Māori calls for tino rangatiratanga (Huygens, 2001; Nairn, 2002). This helps to explain why Betsan Martin exposed herself and family to kōhanga and kura kaupapa as supportive Pākehā. Therefore the rationale for her involvement can be partly understood by placing it within the wider socio-political context of that time, as previously advocated for by Cummins (2000) and May, Hill, & Tiakiwai (2004).

Arising out of this social and political setting Betsan's son, David Gendall, reflects with Archie (2005) about his experience of being the only Pākehā involved in a kōhanga and kura during the late 1980s and early 90s. Core themes of David Gendall's experience can be described as follows:

*Living in dual worlds*

- I was brought up differently to the rest of my friends and obviously being the only white kid in class wasn't easy. It was like being in another country and sort of isolated because, for eight or nine hours of the day, I was a Māori and then I'd get home and I was a Pākehā again. I used to ask Mum, "Why can't I be normal?" (p. 275).
- I've got two perspectives on the world. I feel sometimes it sort of isolates me because a lot of my friends aren't necessarily in tune with that kind of thing. For example, the foreshore and seabed issue – my Pākehā friends have the classic uninformed perspective on it. I think I have an informed one because I know Māori values and customs (p. 275).

*Reflecting on the learning benefits*

- I went to a mainstream high school and carried on with Māori in the third and fourth forms at bursary level. In academic terms it was good. I could do university-level things when I was about 13, because I could speak and spell written Māori (p. 277).
- I was in Ireland for six months and I met a lot of other foreign people there who said I could pronounce their names as well as they would pronounce them. That's because I have the experience of a different language and I suppose my mind isn't just limited to a single thought process. When you approach another language and perspectives, you have to forget what you already know and be open (p. 277).

### *Understanding Māori values*

- It was funny because, at one stage, for a year at primary school, I led the kapahaka group. The whole time I guess people were asking, “Why’s the white guy leading the Māori dance?” I must have looked ridiculous (p. 276).
- I have been brought up with Māori values, so I have respect for elders and regard for the land and so on. The unwritten rules of Māori customs are ingrained in me. Unlike my Pākehā friends, I’m totally comfortable on a marae (p. 278).

David’s reflections about living in Māori and Pākehā worlds, reassessing the learning benefits of his kaupapa Māori education, and a confidence in understanding Māori values are unique and rare. These reflections offer a number of relevant considerations with regards to Pākehā participation in kaupapa Māori education, some of which include:

- How can Pākehā students, with the support of their families and possibly the whānau of the kōhanga and kura, better manage their understanding as to why they are involved?
- Would ‘extra support’ for Pākehā students ease their feeling of isolation, or would that impose or complicate the particular philosophies of the kōhanga and kura?
- Are there obligations and responsibilities for Pākehā and their families learning Māori values and customs at such a young age, and when they mature?

These questions loom large for some Pākehā and are yet to be addressed within kaupapa Māori education discourse by Pākehā, Māori or other educationalists. This may be due to the relatively early evolution of the kaupapa Māori education movements, as the first wave of graduates have only recently reached adulthood and Pākehā involvement to date has been small (see next subsection). But as the kaupapa Māori education movement matures alongside the revitalisation and promotion of te reo Māori nationally, Pākehā general interest in the language and these movements is

likely to increase: who then is responsible for answering these and other questions of dominant culture involvement?

In relation to the complexities of Pākehā dominant culture involvement in Māori educational environments, Deborah Radford (2001) explores the ethical dilemmas she faces as a Pākehā middle-class woman practicing in a tertiary level Māori educational department. She begins this understanding with an analysis of cultural power relations in her tertiary institution:

Issues of institutional power and authority are multiplied for members of the dominant group, especially when working in contexts managed by the dominant group, because Pākehā tend not to see Pākehā culture. To some extent I am advantaged in considering these issues because of my work context where my assumptions of what is normal/Pākehā are constantly disrupted by an alternative/Māori ideology strong enough to throw them regularly into sharp relief (Radford, 2001, pp. 3-4).

Of particular interest is how Radford explores her own middle-class Pākehā upbringing, and the ethical implications this (in combination with her prior teacher training) has had on her teaching practice of Māori and Pacific Island adult students. Through critical reflection Radford (2001) attempts to “write my way to an understanding of my position and my obligations as a teacher in a specific context” (p. 4). In doing so Radford also considers the problematic issues associated with such a personal reflection:

Theorising our own lives raises questions about to whom we are accountable, especially if this theorising is part of our professional lives. Further, in doing so, we may be engaging in the reproduction of existing privilege (p. 6).

Radford demonstrates an awareness of the dangers of self-reflection, especially in regard to perpetuating her own class and cultural privilege. She also deliberates with her own privilege, and questions whether her attempts will actually guide her towards an ethical teaching practice. In taking this ethical reflection a step further, Radford is concerned with asking herself key questions that relate to being Pākehā and working/teaching in a Māori environment (pp. 15-16):

- How clear am I about what I think education is for?
- Who decides what is good for students and how do I know if what I am doing is worthwhile?
- How often do I assume that students learn best the way I teach and that the knowledge's and beliefs that I value are appropriate?
- Do my practices have an assimilating tendency?
- How explicit am I, and explicit should I be, about my values and my beliefs as they affect my practice?
- To who am I really accountable?
- How clear am I about my own identity and how do I communicate that to students?

Such questions offer a framework for acting and behaving that are based on critical reflexivity; action and care for those she works with. To conclude, Radford (2001) offers insights into ways that could help guide her practice as a Pākehā working in Māori educational settings:

Transparency about who I am, what I do and why, my personal limits and the institutional limits to my actions are fundamental to this ongoing process. I need to do more about addressing the inherent power and authority I embody as a teacher within the pedagogical relationship. I need to be conscious of the language of my own discourses and continue to interrogate my own use of language because the meaning and power relations of the institution find their expression through the kinds of language I use. This may be as close as I come to being able to describe what might constitute ethical practice in my present situation (pp. 34-35).

Radford (2001) has applied critical theory as an attempt to better understand her own ethical position as Pākehā teaching in a Māori environment. However, of broader interest is how Radford's critical reflections *also* offer an ethical framework that could be applied by other professionals or practitioners who hold positions of power and influence. In what ways can Radford's reflections be used in other areas, for example, what ethical role should Pākehā play in furthering a kaupapa Māori research

project? Within mainstream Western Universities how might a Pākehā researcher who hopes to support a kaupapa Māori research project reconcile issues of transparency, accountability, communication/language and values? Similar questions can be asked in relation to policy formation or implementation: is the policy cycle grounded in a framework that is accountable and representative of Māori? Is there sufficient trust and accountability in the policy relationship for robust implementation? Similar critical issues are explored by educational researchers Bishop and Glynn (1999) regarding the initiation, benefits, representation, legitimation and accountability of evaluating research in Māori contexts (p. 129).

Radford's reply to these critical issues is incomplete, however she implies that an ongoing awareness of existing power relationships, and how these relationships are played out personally and institutionally are very important. Being conscious of personal and institutional power relations and their effect on others is a beginning to becoming an 'ethical practitioner' – a person from the dominant culture working in culturally marginalised environments.

In considering the dynamics of each of these case studies, it could be argued that the responsibility for extending kaupapa Māori initiatives to Pākehā rests with Māori and Pākehā in differing ways. The micro level offers one example. If Pākehā families understand the benefits and skills gained by learning te reo me ōna tikanga, they must also be aware of their role and responsibilities to the people that pass on that knowledge: the respective whānau, hapū, and iwi. In this case, it is perhaps the Māori whānau, hapū or iwi who determine how Pākehā and Māori family roles and responsibilities are given life. By Māori determining and maintaining authority over their educational systems and processes, and hence the scope of Pākehā involvement in kaupapa Māori, this may maintain the integrity and control over their own philosophies, knowledge bases, pedagogies, financial and community resources.

More importantly, coming to a point of mutual understanding about differing and potentially complementary roles will change depending on the individual

circumstances of all those involved: the kōhanga/kura dynamics, the history of the area, the historic and present state of local relationships, the economic and human resources available to the local community and so on.

Therefore, it can be argued that as the kaupapa Māori movement develops further and as more Pākehā become interested and involved in the language and culture, finding practical and constructive ways of engaging Māori and Pākehā in navigating these educational environments is important. While complex in their nature such ethical issues of involvement should be considered seriously as this will ultimately benefit the growth of the movement and wider Pākehā – Māori relations.

*A statistical snapshot: Pākehā enrolments in kōhanga and kura kaupapa (1992 - 2003).*

In providing narrative accounts of some Pākehā working and learning in Māori settings, this review has illustrated some of the questions these exposures raise. In addition to these questions, broad political and management issues must continue to be negotiated regarding Pākehā involvement in kaupapa Māori education. However, another important part of the puzzle is interpreting numbers: what can people learn from statistical trends regarding Pākehā enrolments in kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa and Māori language units?

Official Ministry of Education statistics on rolls of licensed kōhanga reo began in 1990, and kura kaupapa in 1992. The statistical trends given here are sourced from annual Ministry of Education statistical publications, *Education statistics of New Zealand* for the years 1992, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2003. In this section Pākehā enrolment trends in kaupapa Māori settings are given, while those Pākehā involved in curriculum instruction undertaken in te reo Māori from 1992 – 2003 is also provided.

### ***1. Pākehā involvements in kōhanga reo: 1992 – 2003***

*Total European/Pākehā<sup>6</sup> enrolments in licensed kōhanga reo: 1992 – 2003*

- In 1992 there was a total of 9.6% non-Māori<sup>7</sup> enrolments (Table 6 p. 20, 1993).
- Since 1992 there has been a steady drop in European/Pākehā enrolment numbers: in 1995 there were 2.2%, in 2000 there was under 1%. In 2003 there were just over half a percentage enrolled in licensed kōhanga (Table 6 p. 20, 1993; Table 7, p. 21, 1996; Table 10 p. 25, 2001; Table 10, p. 25, 2004).

*European/Pākehā gender<sup>8</sup> differences in licensed kōhanga reo: 1995 – 2003*

- On average, the proportion of European/Pākehā males and females enrolled in kōhanga is the same. In 1995 there were 50% male 49% female, in 2000 this number reversed to 49% male and 50% female, and in 2003 it reverted back to 50% male and 49% female (Table 6 p. 20, 1993; Table 7, p. 21, 1996; Table 10 p. 25, 2001; Table 10, p. 25, 2004).

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<sup>6</sup> Prior to 1994 the Ministry of Education distinguished only those of ‘Māori descent’ and ‘Pacific Islander’ as unique ethnic categories in its statistical records. This changed in 1994 with the introduction of terms that included ‘European/Pākehā’, ‘Asian’ and ‘Other ethnic groups’ in regular rolls of early childhood education services.

<sup>7</sup> This subtotal is derived from the difference between those of ‘Māori descent’ and the total number of enrolments, hence the term ‘non-Māori’ is used because there is no other ethnic category provided for this year.

<sup>8</sup> Since 1994 differences in gender have been recorded for enrolments in licensed kōhanga reo providers.

## ***2. Pākehā involvements in kura kaupapa: 1992 - 2003***

### *Total non-Māori<sup>9</sup> enrolments in kura kaupapa: 1992 – 2003*

- From 1992 – 2003 the total non-Māori enrolments in kura kaupapa have consistently stayed under 0.6% (Table 37 p. 62, 1998; Table 43 p. 66, 2004).

### *Non-Māori involvement in curriculum instruction undertaken in Māori<sup>10</sup>:*

- In 1998 the highest non-Māori percentage undertaking curriculum instruction in the Māori language was 9.6% in the 12-30% level, 5.1% in the 51-80% level and only 1% in the 81-100% level (Table 36 p. 61, 1999).
- High non-Māori representation in the lower levels of Māori medium education has steadily grown since 1998. For example in 2003 a total of 27% were enrolled in the low 12-30% level, while only 3% of non-Māori were represented in the medium 51-80% bracket, and less than 1% participated in the highest 81-100% level (Table 42, p. 65, 2004).

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<sup>9</sup> 'Non-Māori' is the standard ethnic category used by the Ministry of Education in its ethnicity statistics on Māori medium education.

<sup>10</sup> Since 1992 the Ministry of Education have recorded statistics on 'Levels of Māori Medium Education' by ethnicity. These percentages represent the curriculum instruction undertaken in te reo Māori. This means that many schools, while not kura kaupapa, have committed a proportion of their curriculum to the Māori language and culture. The levels are based on the proportion of Māori language curriculum delivery, i.e. 12-30%, 31-50%, 51-80% and 81-100%.

*Total non-Māori enrolments in Māori medium programmes: 1992 – 2003:*

- From 1992 to 1998 the total proportion of non-Māori enrolments in Māori medium education programmes, ranging from enrolments in kura kaupapa, to taking Māori language classes generally more than doubled. The statistics show a steady increase from 9% in 1992, to 13% in 1995, to a peak of 22% in 1998 (Table 37 p. 62, 1999).
- However from 1999 to 2003 there was a steady decline of total non-Māori enrolments in Māori medium programmes. For example in 1999 it was 15%, in 2000 it dropped to 10%, and in the year 2003 there was a further drop in numbers to 8% (Table 41 p. 64, 2000; Table 42 p. 65, 2001; Table 42, p. 65, 2004).

In summary, there are several statistical trends that can be identified here. Firstly, there has been a steady decline in Pākehā kōhanga reo enrolments, from up to 10% in 1992 to only half a percent in 2003. Over an eight-year period the gender difference in kōhanga for Pākehā males and females has generally been balanced.

In terms of kura kaupapa the numbers of non-Māori has been at a consistently low level for over eleven years. This small number also corresponds to the small number of non-Māori learning in kōhanga reo and those learning in higher-level Māori immersion settings (80-100%). In general, enrolment numbers of Pākehā in kura and other high levels of Māori language immersion do not go any higher than 1%.

However, it is interesting to observe that the numbers of non-Māori in the lower Māori language immersion level (12-30%) is increasing. This suggests that non-Māori are taking an interest in the language, but not committing to a whole curriculum based on te reo and tikanga Māori. Finally, the change in *total* numbers of non-Māori enrolments in Māori medium education steadily grew from 1992 peaking in 1998 at 22%, and then dropping drastically to 8% in 2003.

The statistics recorded by the Ministry of Education on Pākehā enrolments in kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa raise a number of issues and critical questions. The first regards ethnic categories, and the ethnic classification system used to distinguish Māori from other ethnic groups. How ethnicity is accounted for in kōhanga reo is very different in comparison to kura kaupapa. For example, the kōhanga statistics began to distinguish ethnicity in 1994, including ‘European/Pākehā’, ‘Pacific Islander’, ‘Asian’ and ‘Other ethnic groups’. However for kura kaupapa there are no ethnic classifications, rather the blanket ‘non-Māori’ term is used. Using the simplistic ‘Māori’ and ‘non-Māori’ categories makes it very difficult to determine what proportion of ethnic groups other than Māori have continued through or are currently participating in kura kaupapa or Māori immersion programmes. In relation to these difficulties in determining ethnicity, Paul Brown (2003) has identified that “considerable misclassification of ethnicity over a range of official statistics (population, vital statistics, health, crime, education, welfare) has rendered the production of useful ethnic-based analysis very difficult” (p. 337). Brown’s (2003) findings affirm that an uneasy dynamic exists in relation to effective classification of ethnic statistics by the public service.

Secondly, there are no clear definitions of the terminology used to distinguish kura kaupapa from other schools. For example the terms ‘kura teina’, ‘immersion school’, ‘bilingual school’ and ‘kura kaupapa’ are not defined, and are often used interchangeably throughout the Ministry’s publications. What are the differences in curriculum and philosophy between these different school types, and how do ‘kura teina’, ‘immersion school’ and ‘kura kaupapa’ differ? Another obvious difference in statistical information between kōhanga and kura kaupapa records regards *gender*. Since 1994 kōhanga reo have included differences of gender, however there are no gender categories for kura kaupapa enrolments. This results in an absence of a gender break down for Pākehā/European and other ethnicities as well.

Tracking the changes in Māori medium education statistics in kōhanga and kura could be made far more accessible by attempting to be consistent with different categories (inclusive of ethnicity and gender), and by defining the different terminology. Defining these differences is not a simple process, as different philosophies and resource bases underpin each school or kura. Statistical categories may also differ between the Ministry of Education and other educational institutions. However, it is important that some effort is made to explain these differences and inconsistencies so that enrolment numbers can be sufficiently tracked over time and the information accessible and easily understandable. What is clear is that non-Māori have had high participation rates in the lower levels of curriculum taught in te reo Māori, while Pākehā and non-Māori involvement in higher levels of Māori immersion learning is very rare, and possibly declining.

## Summary

This literature review has spanned two related discourses inclusive of theory, practice and human experience. Firstly, kaupapa Māori as a broad political and social movement was introduced. Following this an analysis of the key principles of kaupapa Māori pedagogy in kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa were presented. A current critique of kaupapa Māori was also put forward. An analysis followed of the issues raised by the critique and current pedagogic thinking included ethical considerations regarding Pākehā involvement in kaupapa Māori, and what effects Pākehā and other non-Māori involvement may have on the continuity of Māori-centred educational initiatives.

Secondly, two case studies of Pākehā people who have worked and learnt in Māori settings were illustrated and supported by an analysis of the political contexts these experiences were situated in. Based on the two case studies, key understandings were discussed including; being conscious of personal and institutional power relations and their effects on others, and a Pākehā family's reflection on their experience in kaupapa Māori. As Pākehā continue to be interested in Māori education, it is important that key governance issues regarding the purpose and practice of these initiatives be theorised and explored further by educationalists.

Following this a statistical snapshot (1992 – 2003) of Pākehā enrolments in kōhanga reo kura kaupapa and immersion settings was given. It was found that non-Māori have had high participation rates in the lower levels of curriculum taught in te reo Māori, while there is a declining trend in non-Māori participation in kaupapa Māori education. From this snapshot it was suggested that enrolment statistics need to be clearly defined and better categorised in order for them to be more accessible and better monitored over time.

The next section introduces the research methodology, theoretical framework and method for this study: constructivism, transformation theory and narrative inquiry. In

describing these theoretical underpinnings of this qualitative research project, the underlying assumptions of the research are explained, key principles outlined, and the methods and the relevant ethical considerations as a novice qualitative researcher are put forward.

## **2. Methodology and Method: Constructivism/Transformation Theory & Narrative Inquiry/Ethics/Practice**

### **Introduction**

This section seeks to describe and give a rationale for the qualitative research methodology and method of this study, while also addressing relevant ethical considerations regarding qualitative research. The chosen methodology draws from the qualitative *constructivist* paradigm(s)<sup>11</sup>, while the research method incorporates principles underlined by *transformation theory* and *narrative inquiry*. Therefore four key aspects form the structure of this methodology section, and include:

### **2.1 Conceptual Framework: Constructivism**

Salient features that underlie constructivism as proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1989, 2005) are examined. How the constructivist paradigm and qualitative research disconnects with dominant forms of Western scientific inquiry, namely positivist/postpositivist research are explored.

### **2.2 Transformation Theory & Narrative Inquiry**

The conceptual parallels between transformation theory and narrative inquiry principles are put forward, which offer a shared set of values regarding collecting and understanding human experiences. Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) *three-dimensional space narrative structure* is discussed and adapted as a useful narrative inquiry model for constructing and interpreting the educationally bound experiences of Pākehā who have been involved in kaupapa Māori education.

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<sup>11</sup> Of note here is the discourse distinguishing *constructivism* from *constructionism*. For example, Crotty (1998) states that constructivism centers on *individual* experience and meaning making, whereas constructionism refers to *collective* meaning making and transmission (p. 58). However, Guba and Lincoln (2005), who heavily influence the conceptual framework provided here, primarily use the singular 'constructivism' which refers to a broadly defined constructionist position that combines *both* constructionism and constructivism and maintains that the meaning-making of groups and individuals are of central interest to qualitative researchers (p. 197).

### **2.3 Ethical Practice: Validity, Reflexivity & Representation**

Three key qualitative research concerns are considered, all of which relate to narrative inquiry and include *validity*, *reflexivity* and *representation*. Why these are important issues for consideration, and how these are addressed in this research project are put forward.

### **2.4 The Method In Practice**

Finally, a description of how the research was carried out is provided through explaining six practical aspects, including: (1) the intergenerational approach taken; (2) having a flexible interview schedule; (3) utilising personal networks; (4) keeping regular contact and providing opportunities for feedback; (5) family profiles and backgrounds; and (6) respecting confidentiality.

## 2.1 Conceptual Framework: Constructivism

Inquirers are human, and cannot escape their humanness. That is, they cannot by an act of will set aside their own subjectivity, nor can they stand outside the arena of humanness created by other persons involved. The values of the inquirer (and those who influence him or her, especially funders, sponsors, and professional peers) inevitably enter the inquiry in connection with the whole series of decisions involved in designing, mounting, and monitoring (Guba and Lincoln, 1989, p. 88).

In contrast to the prevalence of scientific inquiry known as *positivism* and/or *postpositivism*, which asserts a universal truth and purports to be objective and free from human bias, *constructivism* claims that knowledge is local and specific, co-created by individuals and groups and center on human conversation and experience (Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Mishler, 1986). Based on the model of constructivism articulated by Guba and Lincoln (2005), characteristics showing how this conceptual framework is positioned in contrast to positivism and postpositivism is provided below in Table 1:

**Table 1 Paradigm Positions on Selected Issues - Updated<sup>12</sup>**

Issue	Positivism	Postpositivism	Constructivism
<i>Nature of knowledge</i>	Verified hypotheses established as facts or laws	Nonfalsified hypotheses that are probable facts or laws	Individual and collective reconstructions sometimes coalescing around consensus
<i>Knowledge accumulation</i>	Accretion – “building blocks” adding to “edifice of knowledge”; generalisations and cause-effect linkages		More informed and sophisticated reconstructions; vicarious experience
<i>Goodness or quality criteria</i>	Conventional benchmarks of “rigor”: internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity		Trustworthiness and authenticity including catalyst for action
<i>Values</i>	Excluded – influence denied		Included - formative
<i>Ethics</i>	Extrinsic – tilt toward deception		Intrinsic – process tilt toward revelation
<i>Inquirer posture</i>	“Disinterested scientist” as informer of decision makers, policy makers, and change agents		“Passionate participant” as facilitator of multivoice reconstruction
<i>Training</i>	Technical and quantitative; substantive theories	Technical; quantitative and qualitative; substantive theories	Resocialisation; qualitative and quantitative; history; values of altruism, empowerment/liberation

<sup>12</sup> Adapted and sourced from Guba and Lincoln (p. 196) in Denzin and Lincoln (2005).

Constructivist positions represent a shift away from the distant objective researcher, where the researchers values, ethics and belief systems are ‘silent’ because such characteristics are believed to be obstacles to research objectivity, rigour and validity (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Rather, the constructivist paradigm as articulated by Guba and Lincoln (1989) promotes a research position where the inquiry is co-constructed by all the parties involved; the researcher and the participant engage in a dialectic process:

...the naturalistic [constructivist] paradigm rejects the controlling, manipulative (experimental) approach that characterizes science and substitutes for it a *hermeneutic/dialectic process* that takes full advantage, and account, of the observer/observed interaction to create a constructed reality that is as informed and sophisticated as it can be made at a particular point in time (p. 44, their emphasis).

Constructivist or ‘new paradigm’ positions have been taken up in a variety of social and cultural studies disciplines, such as feminist research and indigenous-centred research (see for example Bishop, 1996; Chase, 1995; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Mutua and Swadener, 2004; Lather, 1991; L.T. Smith, 1999). Feminist and indigenous groups have embraced constructivist approaches to research because they maintain that the conventional scientific mode of research has failed to address issues of self-determination for socially and culturally marginalised groups (Bishop and Glynn, 1999; Lather, 1991; L.T. Smith, 2005; Reinharz, 1992; Scheurich and Young, 1997). Constructivist theories offer ways of addressing key issues of power and control throughout the research process. Power and control issues are of paramount importance to groups that have historically been disempowered and controlled via conventional research based on colonialism and patriarchy (Bishop and Glynn, 1999; Reinharz, 1992). Bishop (1996) explains how a constructivist approach to his research created space for collaboration and a sharing of power for participants:

This process of co-joint construction of meaning, that is of creating collaborative stories, was predicated upon mutual respect and commitment to the outcomes of the research between the participants. Methodologically, the project did not intend to offer descriptors of predictability (that is advice), or replicability (that is a formula), or to consider reliability and validity external to the projects themselves. Rather the approach was to allow for a multivoiced construction of meaning, in a manner that promoted self-determination by the research participants *through a process of power sharing* (p. 23, my emphasis).

Further to these points, prominent qualitative researchers Denzin and Lincoln (1994) articulate key points of difference that exist between the positivist/postpositivist and qualitative approaches with regards to knowledge creation. As such, these differences are illustrated in five divergent belief systems which underpin ones' approach to the meaning of research and its outcomes (pp. 5-6):

1. *Uses of positivism/postpositivism*: Utilises physical and social sciences; a belief that there is a reality "out there to be studied, captured, and understood"; emphasis on discovery and verification of theory; use of statistical measures, methods, and documents to locate a group of subjects.
2. *Acceptance of postmodern sensibilities*: The positivist/postpositivist science-based research criteria is believed to be irrelevant as it reproduces "only a certain kind of science, a science that silences too many voices"; emphasis here is on alternative methods that include "verisimilitude, emotionality, personal responsibility, an ethic of caring, political praxis, multivoiced texts, and dialogues with subjects".
3. *Capturing the individual's point of view*: Both approaches are concerned about an individual's point of view, however qualitative researchers use detailed interviewing approaches; positivists/postpositivist disregard this and claim these approaches are "unreliable, impressionistic, and not objective".
4. *Examining the constraints of everyday life*: Qualitative researchers "confront the constraints of the everyday world", whereas quantitative researchers "abstract from this world and seldom study it directly"; quantitative

researchers seek universal laws through the study of “large number of randomly selected cases” whereas qualitative researchers are committed to interpretations of data that are based on the “specifics of particular cases”.

5. *Securing rich descriptions*: Rich descriptions of the social world are valuable for qualitative researchers; quantitative researchers are less concerned with this detail and prefer a commitment to universal truths.

These five points generally illustrate the binary contradictions between these paradigms of thought regarding research. Further discussion as to how these differences conflict or in some cases are commensurable are beyond the scope of this section, but are identified elsewhere (see Guba and Lincoln, 2005).

Of particular importance here is the acknowledgement that undertaking research that explores the richness of human experience must be conducted within conceptual frameworks that foster and provide appropriate methodologies, methods and interpretive tools of engaging with people and representing their stories and experiences ethically. This task is best fulfilled within a constructivist paradigm that is ultimately concerned with individual and collective reconstructions of human experiences, and the research relationships between researchers and participants.

## 2.2 Transformation Theory & Narrative Inquiry

This section explores the constructivist theoretical framework of *transformation theory* and the method of *narrative inquiry* and how they can be understood as disciplines within the constructivist and qualitative paradigms. Key concepts of transformation theory are explored as a useful theoretical basis for this study, which includes a local example of this theory in practice. How transformation theory lends itself to the research method of narrative inquiry is also given. Narrative inquiry represents an intersection between ideas that explain social phenomena as socially constructed (constructivism) and beliefs in research approaches that are based on human stories and experience (qualitative research). Finally, qualitative educational researchers Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) model of the *three-dimensional space narrative structure* is described and subsequently adapted for this study, which concerns Pākehā experiences of kaupapa Māori and bilingual education.

### *Transformation Theory*

Our need to understand our experiences is perhaps our most distinctively human attribute. We *have* to understand them in order to know how to act effectively (Mezirow, 1991, p. 10, his emphasis).

Jack Mezirow (1991, 2000) has been an instrumental force in developing theories about how adults learn, and the ways their learning impacts on their understandings and actions in the world. For Mezirow (2000) *transformation theory* offers a framework in which human learning and experience can be put into context, critically reflected on, and subsequently transformed:

Transformation theory's focus is on how we learn to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others – to gain greater control over our lives as socially responsible, clear-thinking decision makers (p. 8).

Building on the ideas of German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, particularly his theories about different types of human learning such as *instrumental learning* (task-oriented problem solving) and *communicative learning* (learning how to interpret

peoples communication), Mezirow (2000) combines these two domains into what he terms *transformative learning* (pp. 9-10). The transformative learning process maintains that when people collectively reflect on their frames of reference, or the assumptions they make in seeing and interpreting the world, they begin to “use the experience of others to assess reasons justifying these assumptions”, which transpires into making *action based decisions* (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8).

What follows is one case study that illustrates transformation theory in practice locally in Aotearoa – New Zealand. This section will illustrate how a Pākehā community psychologist Ingrid Huygens (2004, 2004b) facilitates an action research process that is connected to Mezirow's process of transformation theory. Huygens' (2004) research is based on how Pākehā and Tauīwi Treaty of Waitangi and decolonisation educators theorise about how Pākehā change in response to learning about te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi. Focusing less on the outcomes of her research and more on the process of collective critical reflection, this study aims to make the connection between Huygens' research approach and the critical reflection and meaning construction located in transformation theory.

*Transformation theory in practice: 'Co-theorising' changes in Pākehā consciousness*

We were spell bound as layer upon layer of our history, our connections with each other, our understandings about our practice and our dreams for the future unfolded (Huygens, 2004b, p. 7).

As indicated earlier, since the 1970s and 1980s various Pākehā groups have pro-actively supported and responded to collective Māori assertions of authority and autonomy over all things important to them (Consedine, 2005; Nairn, 2002; Nairn, 1993; Yensen, Hague & McCreanor, 1989). These Pākehā anti-racism groups evolved out of church groups, unions, feminist, lesbian, bisexual and men's groups in the 1970s and 1980s. Eventually, a national network of Treaty educators known as Network/Project Waitangi was formed in the mid 1980s (Hoult, 2000; Huygens, 2001).

Being an inside member of this grass roots element of the adult education movement in Aotearoa – New Zealand, and as part of her PhD research, Huygens (2004b) initiated a collective research process with her fellow adult educators/activists. Huygens' (2004b) aim in conducting this research was to focus “on the critical knowledge available from Pākehā who work as Treaty change educators with organisations” (p. 3). As such Huygens (2004b) interest is in helping to conceptualise, record and contribute “a particular source of knowledge about how Pākehā change” based on these adult educator experiences (p. 3).

As part of her research methodology Huygens organised, facilitated and recorded national pilot meetings with different members and associates of Network/Project Waitangi. These focus groups were held all over Aotearoa – New Zealand, and incorporated artistic imagery and oral testimonies that articulated different groups theories about how Pākehā change in response to learning about the Treaty of Waitangi (Huygens, 2004). As the research process evolved, different groups began to show interest in what their peers in different centers were theorising about, which evolved into a collectivist approach:

As the method grew from isolated groups theorising their own work to an inter-group and eventually national process, my role changed from sole carrier of interpretation to become a co-theoriser with my peers, resourcing their theorising alongside my own. The methods I adopted from the movement culture and ethics were critical in maintaining a sense of collective endeavour, and in giving participants direct access to each other's expressions, so that it became a (continuing) country wide conversation (Huygens, 2004b, p. 9).

The following points derived from Huygens' research process provide examples of how it relates to elements of critical reflection outlined in Mezirows' (2000) transformation theory:

- *Gauging personal and collective experiences:* Framing questions about how Pākehā and Tauīwi change in response to the Treaty of Waitangi, Huygens (2004, 2004b) proactively contributed to the development of the political and cultural analysis of the adult educator Pākehā/Tauīwi Treaty movement.

- *Assessing the political context*: Located within the wider context and discourse surrounding dominant culture/Pākehā social change and cultural analysis in Aotearoa – New Zealand, Huygens research process provided a cumulative reflection on how politicised members of the dominant culture believe changes in Pākehā/Tauīwi consciousness can take place. These cumulative reflections sit alongside other Pākehā and Tauīwi social justice theorists such as Black (1997), Consedine (2005), Herzog (1996, 2000), Kirton (1997), Nairn (2002), Nairn (1993), Spoonley and Fleras (1999), and Yensen, Hague and McCreanor (1989).
- *Grasping collective benefits*: According to those involved the cumulative theorising approach helped to develop confidence in each other; it offered opportunities for reflection, discussion and learning; it confirmed collectively held concepts, tools and ethics; it re-emphasised a common direction; and it inspired greater cooperation and confidence in working with the Treaty (Huygens, pp. 8-9, 2004b).

This process termed by Huygens (2004b) as ‘cumulative theorising’ emerged from Pākehā and Tauīwi activists themselves – a locally developed process arising out of their own interest in each others meaning-making about their own histories, experiences, ethics and future visions (Huygens, 2004b, pp. 2-3,). Huygens (2004b) attributes her methodological framework to the collectivist ethics of the Treaty movement, and to liberatory notions of knowledge development (Freire, 1975; Park, 1993).

Huygens cumulative theorising is related to core concepts of Mezirows' (1991, 2000) transformation theory. Particularly through initiating a collective critical reflection with fellow Pākehā and Tauīwi Treaty educators on how Pākehā/Tauīwi change, Huygens engages in a central tenant of transformation theory, through contributing to collectively held meaning(s):

Formulating more dependable beliefs about our experience, assessing their contexts, seeking informed agreement on their meaning and justification, and making decisions on the resulting insights are central to the adult learning process. Transformation theory attempts to explain this process and to examine its implications for action-oriented adult educators (Mezirow, 2000, p. 4).

### *Transformation Theory & Narrative Inquiry Principles*

The emphasis on critical reflection in Mezirow's (1991; 2000) transformation theory, examining one's former experiences and assessing the context(s) in which these experiences took place, provides a way of understanding how cultural, political and social contexts and experiences impact the way one views and takes action in the world. These key aspects of transformation theory also contribute to a research framework. Mezirow's theorising illuminates one of the main tenants of the constructivist paradigm and qualitative research: reflecting on human experiences via dialogue with others, which assists to re-construct meaning and new understandings of the self/others, while developing "a catalyst for action" (Guba and Lincoln, 2005, p. 196.). The conceptual parallels between constructivism and transformation theory create one theoretical thread for understanding human experiences. This interconnected set of values around understanding human experiences offers a shared constructivist framework for collecting and interpreting people's stories. However with regards to the method of collecting, facilitating and 'voicing' these experiences the method of *narrative inquiry* is most useful. As Creswell (2002) explains, narrative inquiry has a focus on identifying the "experiences of a single individual or several individuals and understanding their past, present, and future experiences" (p. 539). Susan E. Chase (2005) provides the following three flexible meanings of what constitutes a 'narrative' (p. 653):

1. A short topical story about a particular event and specific characters such as an encounter with a friend, boss, or doctor;

2. An extended story about a significant aspect of one's life such as schooling, work, marriage, divorce, childbirth, an illness, a trauma, or participation in a war or social movement;
3. A narrative of one's entire life, from birth to the present.

In relation to Chase's definitions of narrative, narrative inquiry as part of the constructivist research paradigm and method is practiced within a number of different social science settings such as psychology (Polkinghorn, 1995; Prilleltensky and Nelson, 2005), sociology (Chase, 2005; Guba and Lincoln, 1989), anthropology (Watson and Watson-Franke, 1985) and education (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). Within these various disciplinary settings narrative inquiry has come to be most useful in exploring peoples 'storied lives' regarding historical events, cultural change and social structures (Chase, 2005).

Core assumptions and principles that guide narrative inquiry are based on "epistemologies that view reality and knowledge as socially constructed", where "knowledge is situated within contexts and embedded within historical, cultural stories, beliefs and practices" (Etherington, 2004, p. 75,). The belief in socially constructed knowledge that is directly related to peoples' experiences in certain environments derives from constructivist discourse. This is illustrated well by Etherington (2004) who uses narrative inquiry according to the following constructivist assumptions (p. 75):

- We live storied lives and our world is a storied world;
- Narrative represents, constitutes and shapes social reality;
- Competing narratives represent different realities not simply different perspectives or the same reality;
- Telling and re-telling one's story helps a person create a sense of self and meaning.

In a similar vein to Mezirows' transformation theory (1991, 2000), Etherington's (2004) guiding narrative framework shares the constructivist belief in an on-going dialogic relationship between people in order to share socio-cultural meanings, while attempting to co-create a particular reality:

Because there is a complex interaction between the world in which a person lives and their understanding of that world, narratives are particularly suitable for portraying how people experience their position in relation to a culture: whether on the margins, in the centre, or on becoming part of a new culture. Embedded in people's stories we hear their feelings, thoughts and attitudes, and the richness of the narrative helps us to understand how they understand themselves, their strategies for living and how they make theoretical sense of their lives (p. 75).

These aspects are consistent with Chase (2003), who maintains that an analysis of narrative includes combining a "focus on people's actual stories with some form of analysis of the social character of those stories" (p. 80).

Therefore through combining a transformation theory framework with narrative inquiry methods, a critically reflective dialogue can take place where Pākehā parents and former students can consider their experiences of kaupapa Māori and bilingual education. Placing these unique Pākehā experiences into a context where they can be better understood will offer valuable contributions to a wider set of contemporary Māori – Pākehā intercultural relations, while also adding another layer of impact to this unique educational initiative.

#### *Narrative Inquiry Method: Three-Dimensional Space Narrative Structure*

As a method of research in the field of education, narrative researchers Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have played a significant role in applying the narrative principles explained above in the field of education. Their development of the three-dimensional space narrative structure provides a means by which researchers can collaboratively assist students and teachers to construct and reconstruct their lived stories and experiences. In this thesis, this model is adopted as a useful guide to

analyse and explore local narratives of Pākehā families who have learnt and been involved in kaupapa Māori and bilingual educational settings.

The three-dimensional space narrative structure is based on educationalist Dewey’s theories of experience; that one’s previous experiences and contexts impact and influence on ones current actions and beliefs (Clandinin and Connelly, p. 50, 2000). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) share a common interest and concern for notions of situation, continuity, and interaction, and consider these to create the means in which people experience things (p. 50). Creswell (2002) offers the following breakdown of three-dimensional space narrative structure in table 1.1:

**Table 1.1 Three-dimensional space narrative structure<sup>13</sup>**

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Continuity</b>	<b>Interaction</b>
<i>Place:</i> Look at context, time, and place situated in a physical landscape or in a setting bounded by characters’ intentions, purposes, and different points of view	<i>Past:</i> Look backward to remembered stories and experiences from earlier times	<i>Personal:</i> Look inward to internal conditions, feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, moral dispositions
	<i>Present:</i> Look at current stories and experiences relating to actions of an event	<i>Social:</i> Look outward to existential conditions in the environment with other people and their intentions, purposes, assumptions, and points of view
	<i>Future:</i> Look forward to implied possible experiences and plot lines	

This structure helps narrative inquirers situate themselves in relation to those participants with whom they work. The three-dimensional space narrative structure gives weight to the co-construction of stories between researcher and participant, as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) explain:

<sup>13</sup> Source: Clandinin and Connelly (2000) adapted by Creswell (2002).

...as narrative inquirers we work within the space not only with our participants but also with ourselves. Working in this space means that we become visible in our own lived and told stories. Sometimes, this means that our own unnamed, perhaps secret, stories come to light as much as those of our participants... In narrative inquiry, it is impossible (or if not impossible, then deliberately self-deceptive) as researcher to stay silent or to present a kind of perfect, idealized, inquiring, moralizing self (p. 62).

Acknowledging the active role of the researcher throughout the narrative inquiry process creates a situation where “not only the participants’ stories that are retold by a narrative inquirer”, but inquirers’ stories “are open for inquiry and retelling” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 60,). In relating the narrative structure proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) to the study of exploring Pākehā involvement in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education, some key considerations become apparent. In particular, a ‘cultural field’ needed to be applied in the interaction dimension, whereas the ‘future field’ in the continuity dimension proved not to be useful for this study. These considerations resulted in a modified structure, as illustrated below:

**Table 1.2 Modified Three-dimensional space narrative structure**

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Continuity</b>	<b>Interaction</b>
<i>Place:</i> Examine the <i>context</i> of involvement include the <i>time</i> people were involved and <i>where</i> .	<i>Past:</i> Each individual looks backward remembering unique <i>past</i> experiences and stories.	<i>Personal:</i> The researcher alongside participants reflect on the feelings regarding involving ourselves in Māori educational initiatives; reflecting on our personal hopes and aims as a result of involvement/participation.
	<i>Present:</i> Experiences as a result of past involvement are examined in the present.	<i>Social:</i> We engage with the conditions of individual/collective involvement and reflect on the human relations with others involved.
		<b><i>Cultural:</i> We reflect on our experiences of learning in a Māori cultural context as members of the dominant Pākehā culture.</b>

Not including the ‘future field’ in the continuity dimension was more consistent with the way the informal semi-structured interviews were conducted: the participants were given an opportunity to reflect on the past and understand what the experiences mean to them in the present. Adding a cultural dimension to explore cultural understandings of one’s experiences also adds to the usefulness of this study, and compliments the social and personal elements of the narrative structure proposed. Through including a *cultural interaction* dimension to the three-dimensional space narrative it is possible to examine the cultural shifts that take place for different individuals and families at different times. For example, in relation to the former students, I theorised that a cultural interaction dimension may provide a means in which their culturally bound experiences are explored and given cultural and political meaning across the spectrum of the past and present. The inclusion of cultural interaction may also provide space for exploring issues such as personal and collective cultural identities.

The next section explores in more depth ethical issues regarding the practice of narrative inquiry. Issues of validity, reflexivity and representation are explored as valid considerations for this mode of research, which also form a code of practice for myself as a novice narrative researcher.

### 2.3 Ethical Practice: Validity, Reflexivity & Representation

Issues of validity, reflexivity and representation are identified as important for a qualitative researcher to consider throughout the research process (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Chase, 2005; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Etherington, 2004; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Lather, 1991). These three considerations are intertwined with an ethical ‘best practice’ approach to research, and have been underpinned by a ‘postmodern turn’ in qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln, 2005).

Guba and Lincoln (2005) argue that the postmodern turn resists and questions general truths that arise out of conventional positivist research. In contrast to scientific conventions postmodern approaches argue that truths are partial, social reality is constructed and identities are fluid and not fixed (Guba and Lincoln, p. 204, 2005). Understanding the influences of postmodernism on contemporary qualitative research is important as they highlight questions about navigating research fields and paradigms that are continuously evolving. In recognition of this unstable and unpredictable terrain, this section addresses key interrelated ethical issues regarding my own research practice, the first of which is *validity*<sup>14</sup>.

#### 1. *Validity*

The *way* in which we know is most assuredly tied up with both *what* we know and our *relationships with our research participants* (Guba and Lincoln, 2005, p. 209, their emphasis).

The ethical validity that I subscribe to breaks away from the type of validity and rigour used in conventional research techniques, which apply generalised scientific measurements of validity to ascertain authenticity. The definition of validity applied for this narrative inquiry project emerges from what Guba and Lincoln (2005) discuss as “validity as an ethical relationship” (p. 209). My position is that *validity is embedded in the types of relationships formed and maintained with research*

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<sup>14</sup> It is important to acknowledge that examples of the ethical approaches taken in this narrative inquiry project are but a ‘snapshot in time’. This means that as the research process evolves, relationships change form. For example, even though my ‘formal’ involvement may end when I submit this thesis, my relationships and accountabilities with Tauranga Moana whānau, research participants and members of my family do not: I and others will continue to live and take responsibility for this research.

*participants, and with those Māori families that passed on an understanding of te reo me ōna tikanga to me and my Pākehā family.* To evaluate the form of ethical validity being taken up in this project in more depth, three ethical criteria come to mind:

- *Accountability to Tauranga Moana whānau:* Without the affirmation and support of key Māori families in Tauranga Moana this research could not have taken place. This is because it has been those Māori families involved in kaupapa Māori education who accepted and allowed me and my wider family to be involved and exposed to pan – Māori and local tribal/sub-tribal knowledge and thought. Being exposed to this body of knowledge is a privilege for my family and I. This engenders in me a deep respect and humbleness for those that passed on such sacred knowledge. Therefore, maintaining relationships with those Māori families and individuals involved in kaupapa Māori schools is vital. Examples of how I attempted to maintain a form of accountability to Tauranga Moana whānau include: signaling to key whānau and my old kura kaupapa my intentions of embarking on this research; welcoming their critique, feedback, advice and/or encouragement about the project; and a willingness to share the collective findings with interested whānau as a former Pākehā student from the area.
- *Collective reflection and reciprocity to the research participants:* As a Pākehā participant of kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori initiatives, I am an ‘inside member’ of a small group of Pākehā people who have engaged in this educational movement. Through conducting this research with other Pākehā who have had similar experiences, I initiated a collective forum and network where those Pākehā who share a similar background can explore these issues. Initiating this process created personal and working relationships where trust, reciprocity, accountability, confidentiality and transparency needed to be maintained between the participants and myself. Examples of how these virtues were incorporated into the research design included: meeting with participants face-to-face to explain myself (who I am, where I am from); discussing with participants what the vision of the research was (to better

understand Pākehā involvements in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education); inviting participants to help shape the focus of the research; meeting with participants in environments comfortable for them; arranging for participant informed consent; having the proposed research reviewed and subsequently accepted by the relevant ethics committee; accepting that participants were free to change any information shared, gathered and distributed; respecting privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of the participants; and working with participants individually and collectively to reach consensus on matters regarding our work.

- *Bridging a research 'gap'*: Little analysis has been done on how kaupapa Māori educational initiatives have influenced Pākehā people and culture, and vice versa. This study intends to fill part of this gap and add to a broader understanding of how kaupapa Māori and bilingual education impacts on Pākehā in Aotearoa – New Zealand. The experiences collected will hopefully help educationalists and members of the general public understand why, where and how Pākehā are involved in these settings, and what some of our key learnings' from these experiences are. Addressing this gap adds weight to the validity of this research.

## 2. *Reflexivity*

We ask for revelations from others but we reveal little or nothing about ourselves; we make others vulnerable but we ourselves remain invulnerable (Behar in Etherington, 2004, p. 22).

In her book *Becoming a Reflexive Researcher*, Etherington (2004) explores the concept of reflexivity and using the self in research. In doing so she engages with colleagues and students about how they interpret and apply the concept of reflexivity in their research and professional practice. For Etherington including the self in research “seems like a moral and ethical approach” because being an open researcher “is also an attempt to balance the power relations between myself and those whose stories I have used” (p. 22).

My understanding of researcher reflexivity is influenced and guided by Etherington's approach. With regards to my own reflective practice, I have a commitment to an ongoing understanding of the connection between my personal and professional work in the area of intercultural relations, research and education. Therefore, in this study I personally attempt to come to terms with the research issue/question, work as collaboratively as possible with participants, *and* attempt to reach an understanding of the self (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). In sustaining this type of reflexivity, key frames of reference become important to me, including:

- *Speaking with my own family:* Because my immediate and wider family cannot be separated from, and have been actively involved in my intercultural learning through *kōhanga/kura* and subsequent exposures, I have relied on them to reflect with me about my prior experiences and current work. For example, we often talk about where and how our exposures fit into our work and thinking now and how it impacts on us collectively.
- *The role of peer mentors and formal supervision:* Through helping to establish a network of 'peers' who are engaged in similar cross-cultural research or work, space was created where my ideas, approaches and philosophies were tested and given support and critique. These peer-mentoring forums were regular, informal and encouraged a sharing of thinking, strategies and approaches. Alongside these informal spaces, I received formal supervision from my academic supervisors who were versed in the language of academic research and who suggested pathways, theory and structure for the research. While less regular, these meetings gave me a sense of continuity and academic confidence.
- *Maintaining a research diary:* Keeping a regular diary where I wrote and journaled significant meetings with people directly involved in the research, or those who are interested in my work and who offered constructive comments or critique, allowed me to reflect on changes and progressions in my thinking. A research diary also contributed to the construction of research

methods and gave me somewhere to write about anxieties and challenges that I encountered throughout the research process.

While these strategies assisted in my reflective practice as a novice researcher, I continued to heed Deborah Radford's (2001) concerns about the dangers of personal reflection. For example, attempts were made to be self-aware of my own position of privilege as a middle-class male member of the dominant Pākehā culture, while continuing to develop my awareness of the privileges and cultural blindness that come with that. As part of this self-awareness, I also felt it imperative that I overcame and continue to manage feelings of 'analysis paralysis', and replace these anxieties with constructive pathways forward that draw on advice from others while forming a humble approach to complex cross-cultural issues and questions.

### 3. *Representation*

Social relations mediate the construction of knowledge; who speaks for whom becomes a central question (Lather, p. 91, 1991).

Questions of 'representation' are multilayered and complex, and in many ways have become one of the key analytic lenses for critical theorists and constructivists. Lather's (1991) analysis of 'who speaks for who' remained an important concern for me throughout the research process. For example, while I am at liberty to reflect on my own experiences of being a middle-class Pākehā male exposed to Māori world-views from a young age, I am also aware of the importance of gathering similar and different Pākehā experiences from those who share a common background or experience. With regards to this awareness, feminist analyses of representation are useful in terms of understanding the power of the researcher in designing, collecting and representing the project and its findings. For example, Chase (2005) explains that as feminists pioneered approaches to qualitative and narrative inquiry, they posed critical questions that addressed issues of definition and power in research practice:

...as feminists incorporated postmodern influences, they began to ask questions – which are still pertinent today – about voice, authenticity, interpretive authority, and representation. What does it mean to hear the other's voice? In what sense do – or don't – women's life histories and personal narratives "speak for themselves"? How do interactional,

social, cultural, and historical conditions mediate women's stories? Under what conditions do women develop "counternarratives" as they narrate their lives? How should researchers represent all of these voices and ideas in their written works? (Chase, 2005, p. 655).

Acknowledging the connections between these critical analyses and progressive feminist thought is important, and has played an influential role in the emergence and shaping of critical and kaupapa Māori theory and research practice in Aotearoa – New Zealand (see Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Du Plessis & Lynne, 1998; Graham, 2003; Hireme, 2002; L.T. Smith, 1999; Te Awekotuku, 1991; Weiler & Middleton, 1999). Drawing from these ideas and relating them back to this project, the issue of representation led to the following ethical considerations:

- *Textual representation*: Linking to issues of validity and authenticity, having the words and expressions of the participants correctly represented in their own terms was essential to ethical textual representation. In assuring this, the following ethical steps needed to be taken with the participants: the participants were provided with all the information arising out of their involvement in the research; each participant was free to edit records so that their intended meanings were accurate; each participant had a choice about identifying themselves and others, or whether to remain anonymous through using a pseudonym; all the information shared was held in a secure location and used only in ways deemed appropriate to individual participants and to the participant group as a collective; participants are to be involved in any future decision-making regarding the use of their information beyond this study; individual participants received electronic and or hard copies of the information they choose to share in the process of the research; and participants had opportunities to confirm and add further changes and additions in the final draft of the thesis.
- *A snap shot in time*: In applying an interactive voice - combining my own voice with those of the participants - it is vital to be conscious that these multiple representations are but a snap shot in time. This means that the

findings given in this report are not official, seminal or generalised; rather they appear in the recent present and are influenced by a range of past and present experiences and interactions with people and organisations. In this respect, there must be room for the emergence of ‘new participants’ and new stories, which contribute to a dialogic process where peoples’ thoughts and experiences can be taken into account, and a diversity of experience expressed.

- *Multiple future representations:* As this project’s focus has been under-theorised by educationalists in Aotearoa – New Zealand, there is room for a multitude of representative frames to be used in documenting, articulating and in some cases translating the experiences of Pākehā who have been involved in kaupapa Māori education. These differences may include audio-visual representations of these experiences in te reo Māori and English language mediums and diverse representations within the arts including dance, fine arts and drama (just to name a few).

Overall, addressing the multiple issues of validity, reflexivity and representation assisted in informing the on-going research process. Beginning to understand these qualitative research issues maintained an ethic of practice for a novice qualitative researcher that was self-reflective and accountable to the research participants, and to the many others involved in helping to shape the focus and implications of this research now, and into the future.

## 2.4 The Method In Practice

The approach for conducting this research consisted of six aspects:

*1. An intergenerational method:* In working with the two families, semi-structured informal interviews were used with the parents and their respective children. The decision to interview the parents and their children separately was based on the comfort levels of the participants, and in particular some of the children's desire to be interviewed separately from their parents'. This process also allowed for the individual voices of the young adults to be heard equally alongside their parents'. Therefore, providing the themes in this way gave all the participants an opportunity to share and voice their unique stories: the parents agreed to be interviewed together, their respective children agreed to be interviewed individually. Also, in separating the experiences of the parents from the children particular insights from both generations are represented. For example, the parents' motivations for involving themselves in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education are articulated. In addition, the children share and reflect on their understandings as to why their parents involved them. Intergenerational parallels such as this can be found throughout the findings and discussion section.

*2. Utilising personal networks:* Prior to engaging on this study, both sets of families were known to me through our participation in various social change/anti-racism networks. While I had not met either of the families personally prior to starting the research, I had knowledge of who they were through mutual friends and colleagues. I used these personal networks to approach each couple/family individually. A month before beginning the semi-structured interviews I met with all the participants to explain who I was, the aims of the research (to better understand Pākehā experiences of kaupapa Māori education), the interview process, outline the ethical aspects and relevant confidential issues regarding the research, and to provide a list of the interview questions (see Appendix A).

*3. Having a flexible interview schedule:* I traveled to meet with the couples and their children in their own homes/residences and communities, as these spaces were most comfortable and practical for them. I recorded each interview using a dictaphone tape-recorder. The interviews generally lasted just over an hour and were not subject to any imposed time constraint unless otherwise organised between the participants and I. Each couple and their individual children were interviewed once. However, on one occasion I had to repeat an interview with one couple as interview information was lost due to my home being burgled and research material stolen. While this was an unfortunate setback in the research process, the couple and I were able to renegotiate a way to recover the lost information.

*4. Keeping in regular contact and providing opportunities for feedback:* Following face-to-face meetings with the participants I proceeded to transcribe the interview tapes verbatim and in full. I sent these interview transcripts to each of the participants by e-mail. On request I also sent hard copies of the interview transcripts by mail. As I began to analyse the interviews, I organised key interview themes into the relevant categories outlined within the adapted three-dimensional narrative structure. Once these themes were organised into the narrative structure I sent the relevant themes to each of the couples and individuals for feedback. Any feedback received was then added into further thesis drafts. Finally, two months prior to presenting the thesis for examination, a full draft of the thesis was sent by e-mail to all of the participants, my immediate family, academic supervisors and my peer mentors to comment on. Through sending regular up-dates such as this to my 'research community', contact with the participants was maintained, and the participants and others involved formally and informally were given opportunities to provide feedback on the research and pose their own questions. It is intended that each of the families will have the choice of receiving a bound copy of the final thesis or a summary of the research findings. Conversely, key Māori whānau and my former kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori in Tauranga Moana will also be offered copies of the thesis or a research findings summary.

5. *Family profiles and backgrounds:* The families in this study identified as non-Māori or Pākehā. All the participants are/were over 18 years at the time of the study and had been involved in kōhanga reo and subsequent bilingual or rumaki (immersion) units between 1983-1998. Neither of the parents or children were involved or enrolled in kura kaupapa Māori or wharekura. The families did not know of each other prior to the research commencing.

6. *Respecting confidentiality:* The parents and children have asked that pseudonyms be used in place of their real names. In respecting this, their real names have not been used, neither have real place names or the names of other people the families mentioned during our conversations. Changing the names of people and places means that unwanted identification of the participants and those who have not consented to being involved in this research is maintained. When introducing a common theme or when using direct quotes the person's pseudonym is used, however my name remains unchanged throughout the dialogue(s).

## **Summary**

This methodological section examined key characteristics of constructivism and how this research paradigm differs from the dominant Western scientific inquiry – positivist and postpositivist research. It explained how socially and culturally marginalised groups have taken up constructivist paradigms as a flexible research methodology, which has evolved into transformative research and practice.

Transformation theory and narrative inquiry has emerged out of constructivism alongside other qualitative theories. How these frameworks are interconnected via their focus on understanding human experience and reconstructing people's storied lives was illustrated. Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space narrative structure was introduced and subsequently adapted as a means of constructing and interpreting Pākehā experiences of kaupapa Māori and bilingual education.

Postmodern qualitative research concerns such as validity, reflexivity and representation were explored and addressed in relation to this project. I provided an account of my ethical map as a novice qualitative researcher.

Finally, the method of research was given. Six practical aspects that describe how the research was conducted were provided.

In the next chapter key findings and discussions arising out of semi-structured in-depth interviews with the parents and children is given. The findings and discussion relate to their experiences of kōhanga reo and subsequent Māori language initiatives, primarily bilingual and rumaki units.

### **3. Findings & Discussion: Two families, two generations**

#### **Introduction**

Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) modified three-dimensional space narrative structure is used in this section to help represent central themes and quotes from in-depth interviews with the two Pākehā families who have been involved in Māori education. The family experiences arose out of their exposures to different kōhanga reo, and subsequent bilingual/immersion units in different mainstream schools.

The three core categories that make up Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) adapted narrative structure are in a particular order and include *situation* (place and context), *interaction* (personal, social and cultural) and *continuity* (reflections on the past and present). Using these three dimensions, key themes and experiences from the two families were assigned into each appropriate category. Each dimension includes a discussion of the common themes that arose out of our semi-structured conversations. Following discussion of these mutual findings, individual experiences are presented as sub-themes. A summary of the findings, including the common and sub-themes is given at the beginning of each section.

In analysing the key themes for this chapter many of the categories in the narrative structure proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) over-lapped each other. For example 'situation', which examines the context of involvement, has strong parallels with 'interaction'. This is because the contexts people talked about were often underpinned by their personal hopes, social actions and various cultural exposures at different times. Therefore, while the dimensions are demonstrated separately, in reality and in accordance with peoples' stories, all of the dimensions are interdependent. The summaries, findings, and discussion are presented in two sections:

#### **3.1 Parent's experiences (two couples); and**

#### **3.2 Children's experiences (three children).**

### 3.1 Parent's narratives

Seven common themes emerged out of the parent's narrative regarding their experiences in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education. In terms of the parents *situation* or context the following themes were identified:

- **Being social change agents:** Each couple were politicised through their involvement in the anti-apartheid movements during the 1980s, which evolved into an active interest in intercultural relations between Māori and Pākehā in Aotearoa – New Zealand.
- **Importance of community development and peer relations:** The emergence of kōhanga reo was seen as part of a wider local community development project. Within these local communities the parents peer groups influenced their choice to have their children learn in a Māori immersion and bilingual setting.

The various *personal, social and cultural* elements resulting from the couples involvements and interactions included:

- **Seeking the benefits of bilingualism:** Each couple believed that their children would benefit from learning in a bilingual environment, as this would enable them to operate within Māori and non-Māori worlds.
- **Being Pākehā in a Māori setting:** Different social and cultural relations such as social-class and being members of the dominant culture impacted on how each couple were perceived by Māori, and how they understood their individual and collective roles.
- **Learning alongside the children:** As parents of children who had been involved in kōhanga reo and bilingual/immersion education, both couples learnt from and were exposed to Māori language and tikanga.

Reflecting on *past experiences* and *understanding them in the present*, the couples identified the following:

- **Importance of formal representation:** Involvement in administration through the Board of Trustees of their local primary and secondary schools allowed the couples to advocate and support Māori-centred activities and bilingual education.
- **Supporting tangata whenua:** To different degrees, both couples found that supporting tangata whenua is an on-going political and personal commitment with different family and professional benefits.

Alongside the common themes expressed by the parents, sub-themes from individual experiences also emerged, and included:

- Exposure to kōhanga reo and Māori educational initiatives allowed for opportunities to work cooperatively with Māori whānau and students;
- Generally there was support from whānau and kaiako regarding them enrolling their children in kōhanga;
- Being involved in kaupapa Māori education also meant being exposed to different types of Māori community collectivity, such as attending Ringatu faith gatherings, tangihanga and fundraising.
- Concerns were identified about child discipline practices and the lack of material resources at one kōhanga;
- Because of the children's peers and local community relationships, there was an easy transition from kōhanga into bilingual primary schooling for the children.

## 1) Situation

- **Place: examining the context of involvement; the time people were involved and where.**

Social change work, community development and the influences of peers featured most prominently in relation to why the parents became interested and involved in Māori education.

### **Social change agents**

Both families were involved in the anti-apartheid movement of the late 1970s and the South African Springbok rugby tour of 1981. These protest movements emerged in defiance of the New Zealand government's consent to having friendly political and sporting relations with a South African regime that actively promoted discriminatory public and social policies against its majority black population. Each of the parents were involved in protesting and organising against the New Zealand government's passive support of the pro-apartheid South African regime:

***Scott:** It was part of being in Halt All Racist Tours [HART], close to the Polynesian Panthers, with the Citizens Association of Racial Inequality. We worked in the cooperative labour movement... It was a left political community.*

***Mary:** Yeah particularly around that Princeton area, coming out of that combined action together, but it didn't last to some extent. Well I don't know, for our kids it did.*

***Peter:** The reason that it [kaupapa Māori education] came up at all was following on from involvement in the protests, the Springbok rugby tour in 81. When I went back to University I wanted to try and make sense of some of the challenges that were coming at me in my intense involvement in the anti-tour movement, particularly from Māori. So when I went to the psychology department I steadily gravitated in the direction of Māori studies.*

### **Community development and peer group relations**

Kathleen and Peter felt that Peter's association and exposures to the anti-apartheid movement, combined with the dynamics of their local neighbourhood, solidified their families' involvement in kōhanga reo. This couple saw the establishment of kōhanga reo in their local community as part of a wider development project, where this

initiative actually contributed to the socio-cultural development of their local neighbourhood:

**Kathleen:** *It was partly a conscious sort of direction following the Springbok tour and a whole lot of issues coming up there. It was about the combination of ideology or a set of beliefs and happening to have bought a house in this neighborhood at that time. It was quite a strong community, and the community wasn't based around ethnicity as such, but around a group of families with young children who were very working-class and struggling.*

**Peter:** *But for whom the kōhanga reo movement provided a focus...*

**Kathleen:** *Yeah. Two of the mothers of young children subsequently went on to train as teachers and to become teachers in bilingual classes. So it also set up a career path for a number of the families that had children when they were quite young. They subsequently went on and completed high school education. Having had their kids in the kōhanga they went back to school, went to university and went to training college.*

**Alex:** *In some senses a vehicle for transformation was it?*

**Kathleen:** *Yeah, yeah... I suppose enduring relationships were set up within neighborhoods.*

Maintaining the local community relations meant keeping their children in the same neighbourhood and attending the same schools as their children's peers:

**Kathleen:** *The parents were all working-class and there were a number of single parents as well. But all the kids were the same age and some of those kids went to kōhanga and ended up going to the local primary school at a time when there were more white middle-class families sending their kids to Sunnydale School in Whitcombes Bay. When we shifted in people said "Oh you wouldn't want to send your kids to the local primary school, send your kids to Whitcombes Bay" but that just seemed ridiculous.*

**Peter:** *I think we either overtly or covertly resisted from the outset, and in-fact our immediate neighborhood of families were all really clear that they were going to Eastmore, and I never had any doubts about that at all. These kids had been to kōhanga reo together, they were going to primary together.*

**Kathleen:** *The local school.*

**Alex:** *A keep that crew intact kind of idea.*

**Kathleen:** *Yeah...*

**Peter:** *There was a definite sense of that... I think we had by that stage increasingly crystallised and solidified ideas about the importance of neighborhood to schooling and the quality of childhood relations.*

In addition to the importance of community relations, Māori peer group influences were an important factor for both families in deciding to enrol their children in kōhanga reo. Both couples spoke about their adult relationships with different Māori

people and how these relationships influenced their decisions to enrol their children in kōhanga reo:

***Mary:** They [our Māori friends] were determined that children would not hear English until a certain stage, they were determined to make Māori their first language and I could see that their children were speaking English to our kids. I thought that even if our children became passive bilinguals you know, so as not to undermine [their children's] language acquisition.*

***Peter:** It was spending more time around Māori people who were talking about what was happening for them in their lives and kōhanga was definitely one of the biggies. So Curtis was born in 82, probably by about 84 we started putting him in. He was two or two and a half.*

## **Discussion – Social change; community development and peer groups**

The first common theme amongst the couples, that of involvement in the 1981 Springbok tour protests, illustrates a time of transition in the thinking of the dominant Pākehā culture about anti-racism in Aotearoa – New Zealand, as Harris (2004) articulates:

Māori alliances with Pākehā activist organisations had been enduring, but were sometimes uneasy. In 1981 the Patu Squad continued the distinct Māori voice that features in New Zealand's anti-apartheid movement. Pākehā anti-tour protestors were challenged to consider not just South Africa's apartheid, but also the racism that occurred in New Zealand's backyard (p. 106).

Arising out of these self-examinations, Pākehā and non-Māori began education programmes in their local communities using national networks as an outreach to other Pākehā/Tauīwi and the public service (Huygens, 2001). While slight differences existed between the programmes, it is widely acknowledged that the programmes emphasised collective responsibility of Pākehā and non-Māori in order to validate Māori rights under Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Consedine, 2005; Herzog, 2000; Huygens, 2001; Hoult, 2000; MacNamara, 2001; Yensen, Hague & McCreanor, 1989). These anti-racism social movements set the scene for each of the parent's political motivations and anti-racism commitments. The power of these movements to affect the future educational choices of the parents illustrates the politicised nature of these parents, and the role these and other social movements have played in shaping Aotearoa – New Zealand society.

That *kōhanga reo* is viewed as synonymous with community development supports a wider perspective of this indigenous community-based education initiative: one that is less focused on individualistic childhood development and more on the advancement of communities and community relations. For example, Munford & Walsh-Tapiata (2000) clearly place the *kōhanga reo* movement within a community development model. In this instance Munford & Walsh-Tapiata (2000) argue that a key principle of community development is when people work alongside communities in order to strive for the development of their own resource base:

The development of kōhanga reo was not only an attempt to rectify these negative indices but was an initiative that was developed in communities, by grass roots people (kuia, wahine, young parents, our unemployed and so on) against numerous odds (funding and other resources) (p. 7).

The fact that the establishment of kōhanga reo offered training and further academic opportunities to the parents of children enrolled speaks to the transformative elements of kaupapa Māori education also outlined by Graham Smith (2003):

One of the critical elements that ought to be understood here relates to the renewed commitment of Māori adults and parents to the potential of education to make a positive difference. This change of attitude to schooling and education is a major turn around for many Māori parents to reinvest in education and schooling despite their own stories of hurt and humiliation from their own schooling encounters (p. 8).

These elements of community development are similar to the experience of Betsan Martin (see Archie, 2005), who choose to send her children into kaupapa Māori learning environments partly as a result of close relationships with the local marae through her community work during the 1980s.

Local community relations and the influences of social peer groups is another shared theme for the parents. These relations are an important factor that should not be underestimated. Both families spoke about the role their peers had in influencing their choice to send their children to kōhanga; either as a result of linguistic development or as a means of supporting the wider kōhanga movement. With respect to groups and social issues, Brown (1997) posits that the sway of social peer groups is dependent on a number of factors:

Intra-group social influence processes may generate conformity to the majority view. The extent of conformity will depend on the interaction of various factors: task ambiguity, group structure, *individual differences and cultural expectations* (p. 26, my emphasis).

Therefore, the fact that these parents were engaged with Māori peers who were committed to the revitalisation of Māori custom and language speaks to the cultural expectations held collectively by their peer groups and personal networks at that time.

Overall, involvement in social change and anti-racism movements, a commitment to the socio-cultural development of their local communities, and the influential role of their Māori peer groups combined to create the setting in which these families decided to participate in kōhanga reo.

## 2) Interaction

- **Personal:** reflect on the feelings, personal hopes and aims as a result of involvement in Māori educational initiatives.

Personally the parents reflected that they had an understanding of the benefits of bilingualism. There was also an acknowledgement by one of the couples that kōhanga reo was a new and important movement, and that exposures to Māori academics at University provided motivation and interest in Māori educational issues.

### Seeking the benefits of bilingualism

As a result of overseas work and travel or their exposure to Māori culture, both couples felt that their children would benefit from learning te reo and tikanga Māori:

*Mary:* We had been teaching in Portugal for a year and had seen kids who were multilingual. We were in an environment where we had started travelling and were frustrated with our monolingualism. We understood that children could be brought up bilingually and not suffer. That was important for us. We had seen the practical example of kids in our [English language] classes who could speak three or four different languages at nine years of age. Looking back, that gave us a lot of confidence. We were tossing the ideas around and the kōhanga movement was just starting. Our eldest daughter was born in 1981 so we were talking about this in 1985.

*Scott:* There was debate about whether bilingualism is an effective model. It was pretty clear to us that it was.

*Kathleen:* When our son was a baby he'd been to various hui and stuff... I was struck then by thinking or wishing that I spoke fluent Māori and realising what an advantage that would be with the work that needs to be done. I was feeling that as a New Zealander, it was one of the languages of New Zealand and we should all speak it, or that it would be great if the kids were fluent.

### Kōhanga reo: an important Māori institution

Peter believed that the development of early childcare and the emergence of kōhanga reo in the early 1980s were important institutions to be part of. It corresponded with a wider regeneration and revitalisation of Māori language and culture. Through his involvement in the rapid development of childcare (Māori and non-Māori), he could see the advantages of each setting, and was especially interested in the possibilities of this new Māori-centred initiative:

*Peter: The political involvement in the development of childcare even aside from my interests in anti-racism, fueled my interest and commitment to kōhanga reo because it was a stage when a number of Māori institutions were starting to emerge. Here was another one that in terms of Pākehā institutions and Māori institutions seemed really important to me.*

### **Exposure to Māori thinkers at University**

Through University study, Kathleen and Peter reflected that they were exposed to and influenced by critical Māori intellectuals such as Dr. Patu Hohepa (Ngā Puhī/Te Atiawa), Dr. Meremere Penfold (Ngāti Kuri/Te Aupouri) and Professor Ranginui Walker (Te Whakatōhea), all of whom offered challenges and inspiration:

*Peter: The people I was in touch with through going back to University and starting to study not necessarily Māori language, but the issues around Māori in psychology. For example people [who gave guest lectures] within the psychology department, crucially people like Patu Hohepa and Meremere Penfold, she actually taught that course...*

*Kathleen: Yeah she did.*

*Peter: Ranginui Walker and those people were absolutely boiling over with ideas and inspirations and challenges. That was all a crucial part of the mix for me.*

- **Social: engage with the conditions of individual/collective involvement and reflect on the human relations with others involved.**

Socially the parents' had differing reactions by Māori regarding their involvement.

### **Reactions to Pākehā involvement**

Because of their diverse and urban community setting, Mary found that her local kōhanga became gradually supportive of Pākehā being involved:

*Mary: We zoomed along to the kōhanga with great trepidation and went in and the old Nanny was there. She was lovely because she rather liked Pākehās [laughter]. I said, "I want to enrol my children". Everybody else looked at me, and she [Nanny] was lovely. It was very interesting when she left. She talked about us and our Samoan friend, she said "I can understand why Māori parents bring their children to kōhanga but I think it's really wonderful that Pākehā and Samoans have done that too."*

*There was coolness from some of the younger mothers, but not the old Nannies; they were welcoming. As we went on, as weeks turned into months we became part of the whānau.*

While generally uncommon at the time, Scott and Mary observed that other Pākehā families were putting their kids into kōhanga and it was a ‘normal thing’ in their local community during the mid 1980s:

**Mary:** *When we got there we discovered that there was a whole crowd of Pākehā children there, with well-meaning liberal Pākehā parents from around Princeton and so we were not the only ones. It was normal. It wasn't an odd thing to do in Princeton-Woodford...*

**Scott:** *A lot of our friends did it. I remember people sent their kids, but they didn't follow through.*

In contrast to the sense of normality that Scott and Mary felt about putting both their children through the kōhanga, Peter as the primary caregiver of his first son, had a different experience. There were a number of issues that came up including parenting styles and class differences between himself and kōhanga kaiako:

**Peter:** *A crucial part of our particular circumstance was that I was effectively the primary caregiver for the kids. There were no other Pākehā at all and it took me a little while to get my head around that, especially as they basically wanted me to leave my baby there and go away! I had to negotiate with them that I was actually the primary caregiver of my children (which they found very very strange), and that I was really keen to stay and I wanted to learn the language as well.*

*I was definitely an odd fish as usual, but somehow or another they catered for me. They accepted, or probably they made far more allowance for me than they would have for other Māori families. I remember realising that when I saw other Māori families were quite firmly treated in the way that they had tried to treat me to start with. There was definitely extra allowance for this weird Pākehā dude...*

*That was partly a class thing I think. The family who were central to the running of the kōhanga reo were completely working-class people. Most of them barely had a secondary education let alone University stuff. I suspect that me being able to prevail and say “Well I wanted to do this and I want to do that” was partly about me being a Pākehā but partly about where I come from in Pākehā society as well.*

Noticing these cultural and class differences was the beginning of a new awareness for Peter:

*Peter: Putting myself into the picture with a thoroughly working-class Māori family and the people who they attracted, many of whom were pretty similar was just a complete eye-opener.*

- **Cultural: Reflections on experiences of learning in a Māori cultural context as Pākehā**

Reflecting on the cultural dynamics of their involvement both couple's spoke about being Pākehā in a Māori setting and learning alongside their children. Each of the couple's also identified specific experiences, ranging from noticing their children's commitment to learning te reo Māori, an ability to work alongside Māori whānau, collective play and new exposures to Māori cultural traditions.

### **Being Pākehā in a Māori setting**

Both couples discussed how they were conscious to varying degrees about not being Māori. This means that each couple was aware of being one of the few Pākehā involved, and they experienced this in different ways. For example, Mary felt that they were viewed by Māori as different from 'other Pākehā':

*Mary: I used to go to whānau meetings and he [my husband] used to go to the school board things. I remember one whānau member was talking about wairua and she said "We've got wairua and it's one thing that Pākehā can't have because they're learning everything else about us, they're learning our reo and tikanga." And I went "Oh, is she talking about me?" But she was always lovely to me, so I didn't feel I was included in that [statement] really, so I didn't take offence.*

*Alex: So it was the 'other Pākehā out there' but you were ok.*

*Mary: Yeah I think that's how we got over it.*

Because of the children's level of involvement in Māori education, Kathleen and Peter had to explain to one of their children that they were not Māori:

*Kathleen: The other thing I've been aware of all the way though, very much so, is that our kids are not Māori.*

*Peter: There's this fascinating little window on this from our daughter who at age seven or eight button holed me and said "Dad I'm Māori aren't I?" because that's how immersed she was in that local community. I had to say, "Well actually no honey you're not", and gave a reasonably detailed explanation on who we were and why we were doing what we were doing, and she seemed completely reconciled to*

*that. She was genuinely astonished, a bit disappointed that she wasn't Māori. Do you remember that?*

**Kathleen:** *Yeah I do, in fact she still talks about that and being surprised.*

### **Learning alongside the children**

Both sets of parents found that as their children were learning te reo me ōna tikanga they also learnt alongside them through use of te reo Māori, Māori metaphors, immersion situations and school trips:

**Mary:** *I was learning Māori and trying to keep up with the kids, trying to speak Māori to them. I could do little things; “He pikitia mau” [a picture for you] and all that sort of stuff. “He inu mau?” [would you like a drink?], but they [the children] eventually asked me to stop speaking Māori at home, or even try to... They explained to me: “You speak English at home and Māori at school.”*

**Alex:** *So they [the kids] already had that separation in their heads?*

**Mary:** *Yep, and on the marae.*

**Scott:** *They got pretty good at it didn't they, they never had any problems with it.*

**Mary:** *I think their Māori was just so advanced, it was like me stuttering along and they were just fluent speakers - give us a break!*

**Alex:** *Don't try!*

**Scott:** *Try hard!*

**Mary:** *Looking back we learnt an amazing amount about how Māori operate. We learnt about how hui are run, fundraising, battons up! [laughter]. We learnt a hell of a lot about the culture really. We were also immersed in the Māori culture. It's been fantastic.*

*I remember noticing her [our daughter] learning things first in Māori rather than in English. So that number for her was waru before it was eight. I was really interested to watch it because it was really exciting. And our son, when it rained he'd say, “Rangi is crying”. So they were absolutely inculcated with concepts, our son from much younger than our daughter, well obviously he was two years younger than her when they started [at kōhanga] together. Their whole worldview was completely coming from a different direction.*

**Kathleen:** *There was some good stuff, particularly with the kuia. She was the fluent Māori speaker there wasn't she?*

**Peter:** *Yes, and her daughters were also good speakers, some of them better than others. She [the Kuia] would have the kids around her without any controversy or making a fuss about it, just speaking Māori to them all the time. That was a bubble of immersion and when we got over trying to do the abc and god knows whatever else, those things and the kids playing together and speaking in Māori mainly was really valuable. Also various trips that we went on.*

### **Establishing their place ‘on the waka’**

Throughout their involvement in kōhanga and subsequent bilingual units, Mary and Scott spoke about the levels of commitment shown by their children to their Māori education:

*Mary: We went along [to the rumaki unit] and the head teacher said to our son in the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> form, “Are you on the waka or not?” He said “Yeah I’m on the waka” and the teacher said, “Yeah well that’s good enough for me.” Our son always had that commitment.*

*Scott: Well they [the Māori teachers and whānau] certainly wanted our son to be part of it too, he would have been accepted.*

### **Ability to work with Māori whānau and students**

As a result of his involvement in the local kōhanga and then in local bilingual unit, Peter found that he was known by the local Māori families and could work well with them. Being self-aware of who he was, combined with the student’s and whānau knowledge of his abilities, made it possible to form a good working relationship:

*Alex: Coming back to your feeling of being a freaky Pākehā family, were you still one of the sole Pākehā people involved in establishing those things?*

*Peter: I had been around that scene for long enough that I was fully resigned to the fact that there wouldn’t be many other Pākehā involved, and had worked out ways of working with Māori families, Māori teachers, Māori kids that meant that it wasn’t really much of an issue that I was a Pākehā there. Of course they learnt about me as well. They knew what I could do and couldn’t do and they basically didn’t ask me things I couldn’t do, which was great!*

### **Children playing collectively**

Mary noted the difference in the children’s play, especially in comparing the specific dynamics at their local kōhanga and another local early childhood centre:

*Mary: They’d [the children] all run up to you and hug you and then run off. It wasn’t like they were individuals at all, they were just this mob who would rush around together.*

*Alex: Yeah, doing everything together...*

*Mary: There wasn’t that separation, and of course that was encouraged. The parents or the teachers made them all do things together, whereas at the other place I saw parents making the kids do things separately.*

### **Exposure to another world and its traditions**

Through his involvement at the kōhanga Peter learnt about new Māori cultural and religious traditions, previously unknown to him:

*Peter: It was really obvious that this [Ringatu hui] was part of a long-standing tradition which reinforced it for me, that I was actually so bloody ignorant about what was underpinning their experience and feeding into the practices that they were engaged with. And tangi, a whole range of things, all of them had this other infrastructure backing them up and keeping them going and leading into them. So that was a total eye-opener*

## **Discussion – Bilingualism; being Pākehā in Māori settings; learning alongside their children**

Through cultural exposures at home and abroad, the couples' common belief that learning a second language would benefit their children was based on the improved cognitive development of their children, and a wider awareness of socio-cultural relations. These two themes are consistent with international research on bilingualism, which states that bilingualism has a number of cognitive benefits such as language flexibility, good levels of comprehension and greater social awareness than those raised in monolingual environments (see Baker, 2001; Cummins, 2000; May, Hill & Tiakiwai, 2004).

Of interest here is that both sets of parents *elected* to have their children taught in kōhanga reo and then bilingual/immersion units. In choosing to do so, these families broke away from 'the norm' as they decided they wanted their children to learn a 'less desirable' second language. May, Hill & Tiakiwai (2004) explain the common means by which language choices are made:

...elective and circumstantial bilinguals often have very different language choices. Elective bilinguals have the luxury of choosing the languages they want to learn. These in turn, are often high-status languages that are deemed to add significantly to their cultural and linguistic capital. Circumstantial bilinguals are most often migrants and refugees who almost always *have* to learn another language, simply in order to survive and function in a new society (p. 16, their emphasis).

Why these parents opted for their children to learn te reo Māori during the mid 1980s, which at that point (and currently) was perceived as 'less desirable' than 'elite' or 'trade' languages such as French, Japanese or German is a *distinguishing feature*.

Cummins' (2000) argument that people's wider understanding of cultural, social and political relations heavily influences bilingualism is also central. For example, the couples' choice of bilingualism over monolingualism is apparent because of their earlier exposures to anti-racism movements, their exposures to politicised Māori peer

groups and academics, involvement in their local communities and a set of beliefs about social change.

The second common theme was the different social and cultural relations between the respective parents and whānau/kaiako of their local kōhanga reo. These differences exemplify the social and cultural complexities of their involvement. As kōhanga sites differed in terms of the social-class of their members and the numbers of participating Pākehā families, these differences impacted on the way each Pākehā family perceived Māori reactions to their involvement.

These differences are best illustrated through two key observations including that:

- (1) Social-class difference existed between the kōhanga reo families and one of the Pākehā families; and
- (2) The Pākehā families who participated were perceived by Māori whānau as different from the dominant Pākehā culture.

Firstly, in terms of class difference sociologist Melvin Kohn (cited in Dale, 2000) offers a starting point for understanding the impact of social-class difference:

Members of different social classes, by virtue of enjoying (or suffering) different conditions of life, come to see the world differently – to develop different conceptions of social reality, different aspirations and hopes and fears, different conceptions of the desirable (1963, p. 471).

Differences between the Māori working-class majority who established the kōhanga reo and a middle-class Pākehā family meant that class power relations shaped their interactions. In light of these social differences, Māori kaiako and whānau gave more decision-making power to this middle class Pākehā family.

The second observation concerns the discourse of cultural difference, which is well established within critical theory and cultural studies. Within these fields positions of ‘the Other’ have been based on inequitable power-relations resulting from

imperialism and colonisation, which result in marginalised positions of indigenous and minority groups (Hall, 1992; Said, 1993; Spivak, 1990; L.T. Smith, 1999). The experiences gathered here illuminate a paradox in this discourse. For example, as a result of their ethnicity and background the Pākehā families involved are members of a dominant culture whose social and economic power is highly represented in the public sphere. Their language and belief systems prevail. Yet as a result of their choice to send their children to kōhanga reo, these Pākehā families were perceived by members of the Māori whānau as different from ‘other Pākehā’. Because of their support of ‘the kaupapa’ or philosophy of the kōhanga reo, these Pākehā families were not associated with the dominant culture by the Māori parents. Rather, they experienced an alternative position determined by the Māori whānau and kaiako.

This alternative position, that of being ‘other Pākehā’, meant that in one couple’s case they were witnesses to the concerns of Māori whānau, and became sensitive to the cultural and social struggles of the kōhanga reo movement to retain its self-determination. Conversely, because of their close relationships with the local Māori community one couple’s youngest children was not aware of their Pākehā cultural and ethnic background. Indeed, she thought she was Māori. There was a paradox between the Pākehā parents’ position in the dominant group, and the Māori practices of creating a collective unity. Each of the couples were welcomed as collective members of a larger ‘whānau’ network, and yet they continued to be part of the dominant Pākehā culture where they existed less as a collectivity and more as an individual family.

The finding that both parents learnt aspects of te reo me ōna tikanga alongside their children is consistent with research conducted by Cooper, Arago-Kemp, Wylie, & Hodgen (2004) on kōhanga and that by Hemara (2000) on contemporary Māori pedagogies. For example, Cooper, Arago-Kemp, Wylie, & Hodgen (2004) found that over half of the parents involved in kōhanga liked “the kaupapa of the kōhanga reo and the whānau environment” (p. 25). In parallel, Hemara found that intergenerational learning is expected of whānau in kōhanga (2000, p. 66). As a result of their involvement both sets of parents found that their knowledge of Māori

language and processes were enhanced because of their involvement in kōhanga reo and bilingual/immersion units.

While intergenerational learning took place, it was also found that for one set of parents their children's fluency was advancing faster than their own. In this case their children interestingly requested that their parents stop speaking Māori at home, as that is what they did 'at school'. Also, their children were displaying a deep knowledge of the Māori world-view, which differed from that of the parents. This illustrates how complex a family situation may become when adults are non-native speakers of the language, while their children are learning concurrently in another cultural immersion environment.

The idea of social and cultural inclusion is uniquely apparent in each of the individual experiences of both parents. This concept is particularly evident in the following four findings:

- the opportunity and ability to work cooperatively with Māori whānau and students;
- the children learnt and played collectively;
- there was a feeling of support from whānau and kaiako of Pākehā enrolling their children; and
- exposures to Māori community collectivity, such as attending Ringatu faith gatherings and tangihanga.

These experiences of inclusion and support are closely related to the Māori concept of *kotahitanga*. As one of the key principles of *Te Whariki*, the national guideline for early childhood education, Hemara (2000) describes *kotahitanga* as:

...community unity. It can be confined to whānau, hapū, iwi and ethnic groups or be extended to encompass a unified society or world. In this context, *Kotahitanga* is shaded depending on emotional, socio-economic and political relationships.

Because *Kotahitanga* expresses unification, it can be extrapolated to a unity of purpose. This entails the holistic way in which children learn (p. 73).

### 3) Continuity

- **Past: look back remembering unique past experiences and stories.**

In remembering unique past experiences both couple's spoke about how important formal representation was in furthering bicultural initiatives in their schools and communities. Individually, one of the couples' shared that the transition from kōhanga to primary level bilingual education was smooth. While the other couple reflected that they had concerns regarding child discipline and material resources at their kōhanga.

#### **Formal representation important**

Both couples felt that their formal representation roles on the Board of Trustees of their local intermediate and high school was an important part in their advocating for Māori language and cultural initiatives:

*Scott: We were very staunch and very supportive while we were at the high school of the rumaki, so we got on the board. We made sure we were on the board; I don't think they [whānau members] really respect that to be honest. They certainly needed someone on the board that was coherent in terms of wider strategies relating to funding to that area.*

*Alex: So you saw your role as supporting that as a part of a general member, so it's kind of a strategic role.*

*Mary & Scott: Yep, yeah.*

*Peter: That whole advocacy thing within the school...*

*Kathleen: Managing some of those complainers who said "Oh there are too many Māori items in the end of year concert and where are the Pākehā ones?" We'd say "Well come and do them, I mean that's what the other parents did. They came and did it. If you want an item come and do it."*

*Peter: Managing those [community] perceptions was always a local political issue. The headmaster, to his credit was actually great, what a relief.*

*Kathleen: It would never have got off the ground without him.*

*Peter: He was a brilliant community relation's person anyway, although he didn't necessarily know. He was bit older than us and he didn't have the first hand experience of this kind of stuff, he just fully supported it. He wasn't about to argue it or question it or whatever; he saw it as a real plus for his school.*

## **A comfortable transition from kōhanga**

Mary spoke about how the transition from kōhanga to the bilingual unit was not difficult, and their child's kōhanga reo peer group was maintained into primary and high schools:

*Mary: The kōhanga was in the primary school so they just went next door. They were all prefab classrooms. The kōhanga kids always went to the assembly with the big kids and played in the same playground. There was no transition at all.*

*I think they had a choice at Primary if they were going into bilingual. No they didn't really, there was no choice for them because all their friends were going off next door! It was really when they hit intermediate that we discussed it, and they said they definitely wanted to be in bilingual and then they made that choice again when they went into secondary.*

Mary recalled that their family's involvement in kōhanga and bilingual/rumaki units throughout primary and high school set a foundation of belonging for their children:

*Mary: We were talking about funerals and I asked my son "What would you like, where are you going to be buried?" he said "Probably the local marae". I said "Is that right?" He said, "Yes, our teacher said that's my marae, and as far as I'm concerned that's my marae!" So he's very sure of himself in that environment... Our daughter did these wonderful series of paintings of Victorian corsets with the local Māori tupuna behind. It's all about restriction of women, how different cultures restrict women, and they were in her portfolio when she went for her interview at the art school. All the lecturers wanted to say to her was "Are you allowed to, aren't you a Pākehā using Māori motifs?" and she said, "Well this is my marae. My teacher said this is not an issue for us".*

## **Managing discipline and material concerns**

Kathleen noted that while she supported the ideals and principles underpinning the kōhanga reo movement, at the time of her son's involvement she had particular concerns about the discipline used at their local kōhanga:

*Kathleen: There were some things there that I was concerned about, and I don't think they were kōhanga specific, I think they were this kōhanga specific. I think the particular people that were running that kōhanga with the best of intentions had quite different ideas than I did about child development, about what kids could do and couldn't do at certain ages. I was concerned on the periphery that children were disciplined for wetting their pants, things that I regarded as being entirely normal in a three or four year old and I would never have punished a child for... I felt like there were incredibly good intentions and idealism but not much knowledge about how you might go about engaging kids other than saying "Do it because I'm telling you to do*

it". I don't think that was part of the kōhanga movement. I think that was very much the personal resources of that particular whānau.

In addition Kathleen had concerns about the level of material resources:

*Kathleen:* Because it wasn't government resourced it was really impoverished which again, wasn't necessarily a reason not to send your child there but there wasn't much in the way of materials for kids. I had concerns about that.

Alongside these discipline and material concerns, Peter also reflected on how practical and innovative the kōhanga whānau members were in getting things done:

*Peter:* The other thing was the realisation that these people knew about survival in the contemporary setting, in practical and down to earth ways. If you wanted something you did it yourself. They decided they needed to build a marae at the local College. Instead of applying for grants they went and found the things they needed. I got completely involved in that. I had an old truck...

- **Present: current experiences as a result of involvement**

In thinking about their experiences in Māori education and what that means to them now, both of the couple's spoke about how supporting tangata whenua was both a personal and political path.

### **Supporting tangata whenua: personal and political**

Mary and Scott spoke about how their children were given the opportunity to succeed, but that was also dependent upon their political support as Pākehā parents:

*Mary:* We were part of a support group for it; we were consumers of that product. Just by demanding it we were part of the demand, and we supported it being there. In terms of numbers we were part of the critical mass, and we supported Māori families who wanted that. As Pākehā we also said this is a commitment.

*Scott:* In terms of our kids I think it's been very positive... Mind you, part of it was the ratio of teachers to kids, so they had that opportunity.

*Alex:* The amount of support for students?

*Scott:* Yeah, the world is your oyster. The other thing is the commitment to tangata whenua and basically respect.

*Mary:* Personally for us there was achievement in terms of the kids, but I think politically too in terms of supporting it.

*Alex:* Your own roles politically...

*Mary:* Yeah, the kōhanga, at the primary school and at the secondary school... The reality was that to maintain or provide immersion education in Māori in the city you

*needed Pākehā support, the support of the Pākehās. So we played that role, and I think it was an important role to play wasn't it?*

**Scott:** *Its normalised it in a way.*

Expanding particularly on the personal benefits, Mary believes that their children's exposures to kōhanga reo and then bilingual and rumaki units achieved their aims: bilingual and bicultural children:

**Mary:** *I think that was a really worthwhile thing. It also achieved our original plan, which was for our children to be bilingual. They both picked up languages really easily since didn't they? What we achieved are two Pākehā New Zealanders with an understanding and a deep commitment to tikanga Māori.*

The personal benefits for Scott and Mary have not been contained within their immediate families and exposure to Māori education. Rather, their experience has also meant that they have been able to support extended family in their decisions to get involved in kaupapa Māori education:

**Mary:** *My niece is Kai Tahu and they came to Māoritanga late. Our experience means we are able to support them, to be able to operate in that world when they are in that world. Family members were incredibly supportive of it.*

*I remember when my niece married into a Māori family from Opotiki. It was very tense and after the ceremony there was the reception and the groom's father got up and spoke. He was really his grandfather, he was a koro you know a lovely old guy, a beautiful old guy and he gave a lovely kōrero. But it was still kind of them and us, and our daughter was 4 and she stood up and did a waiata for him afterwards. He was just overwhelmed, it was so wonderful and he came over and started kōreroing to Josie and asking all these questions in Māori and she was just answering away. It was just gorgeous! That was the first time that we saw how valuable it was. So you can just see how little things like that, if you start with children. If you commit your children you're committing an enormous amount of your life; that is the biggest commitment you can make.*

**Alex:** *So that opened doors for you then...*

**Mary:** *It did open doors, and for the family.*

**Scott:** *To see it as a normal thing. Don't see it as something that's unusual. I just think it was a worthy project because it basically creates a normal situation for our relatives and chips away at the whole sort of cultural divide from a negative point of view. Like you won't do it, it's not even in your curriculum, because you're in a different position to see it.*

In terms of the political dimensions of being involved, Peter explained how much he had learnt as a Pākehā parent who had no previous experiences of the Māori world.

These exposures impacted on Peter's professional practice, as he has been able to feed his experiences of working with/in Māori communities into his professional work:

*Peter: It's a political world-view. There's a whole lot of stuff tied up with this that means I learnt through those types of formative experiences that I talked about; of suddenly realising that there's a whole bloody world out there that I knew nothing about, yet had been moving in this parallel universe for 25 years without coming across it. It sort of pervades everything that I do, and my life prior to engagement in the kōhanga network had almost no relationship; almost no points of connection with the Māori world.*

*My involvement unquestionably became the basis for a whole range of other activities, we've talked about the school related ones, but in fact all of my subsequent career type stuff was greatly influenced by it. In every institution that I've participated in I seemed to have gone "Oh, so where's the Māori stuff happening here?" Like in the psychology department at the University, like the Diploma of Clinical Psychology training programmes up and down the country, like the psychological society I'm going "Now how about that Treaty relationship, how about that partnership? What are we actually doing here?" That same model that I've picked up in relation to kōhanga reo and then learnt especially in relation to getting things going in a primary school and intermediate school, its all followed through in so many other sites.*

Lastly, Peter and Kathleen felt that the present debates about perceived 'special Māori benefits' have little validity. For them this was especially true when they related such politically charged sentiments back to how their own community functioned:

*Peter: While there are always tensions it's fascinating for me to see the kind of national level rhetoric from Trevor Mallard, Don Brash and Helen Clark going one people, one law for all, and yet the lived reality at the level of that school at that time was quite different. If people heard that political rhetoric and started looking at the Māori in their peer group and thought "These are bad people" it just unravels because the actual connections are there; they are sedimented into the years of shared childcare and fundraising...*

*I don't feel particularly worried about that kind of rubbish ['one law for all'] coming from politicians because it doesn't ring true at that community level. For a huge array of ordinary New Zealanders, the reality of kōhanga reo, part of what that broad Māori renaissance contributed too, is far more fundamental and entrenched than politicians dreamed.*

*Alex: Getting along with life...*

*Peter: Absolutely, getting along with life.*

*Kathleen: Oh absolutely.*

## **Discussion – Formal representation; supporting tangata whenua**

The Board of Trustees school management system was established as part of the recommendation of the Picot report of 1988 and the subsequent 1989 implementation of *Tomorrow's Schools* by the fourth Labour government (Codd, Gordon & Harker, 1997). The justification for establishing the Board of Trustees was part of a wider government initiative to increase efficiency and representation in schools, whereby decision-making powers were devolved away from central government to local communities in the hope of greater school flexibility and responsiveness (Codd, Gordon & Harker, 1997).

While critiques of these educational reforms revolve around its neo-liberal ideological foundations and its failures in catering for collective forms of Māori representation (see Codd, Gordon & Harker, 1997; Johnston, 1992), this study shows that these families found school boards useful in changing school responses to Māori cultural and language initiatives.

The Board of Trustees system enabled these couples to support Māori-centred projects. Administering funding, creating new resources and promoting the bilingual/immersion units in the school via the board was a useful advocacy tool. The boards also provided an avenue where constructive working relationships with other Pākehā members could take place. For example, while not overtly involved in Māori education, other Pākehā board became helpful collaborators in advancing school inclusiveness. These formal positions of representation, while based on individualism and dependent on local community resources, played a useful role in mediating cultural and social relations.

Presently each couple identified personal and political benefits resulting from their involvement in kōhanga reo and their work regarding Māori educational issues. Both couples identified five points in relation to these benefits. The first regards the political motivation of being part of a critical mass of people demanding kaupapa

Māori and bilingual education alternatives. While this critical mass emerged out of a politicised grass roots Māori movement that sought to retain and revitalise Māori language and customs, Ranginui Walker (1990) argued that during the 1980s Pākehā social change agents were important allies to Māori:

The Māori, as a minority of 12 per cent in a population of three million, cannot achieve justice or resolve their grievances without Pākehā support. For this reason, Pākehā are as much a part of the process of social transformation in the post-colonial era as radical and activist Māori (p. 234).

A second political dimension relates to the present professional work of one of the parents and his understanding of how to work with Māori effectively. In this case, an understanding of how a Treaty-based relationship can apply to fields of work other than compulsory education was highlighted as a political advantage. In describing a ‘Treaty-based approach’ for the non-profit health provider Health Care Aotearoa (HCA), Patrick Snedden (2005) also found that a Treaty-based approach contributed positively to HCA’s organisational development:

The conceptual framework HCA developed to guide its provision of care to Māori, Pacific and low-income people came through a policy of cultural inclusion. The metaphor for that inclusion is the Treaty. But such a sophisticated understanding was not immediately present in the early days of its development. It needed time to emerge (p. 123).

Snedden’s acknowledgement that applying a Treaty approach ‘needed time to emerge’ is a reminder that such a professional commitment is not simple. The findings from this research also demonstrate this, as it was through early exposures to Māori organising in kōhanga reo that knowledge about a Treaty-based approach was able to be applied to other fields and put into practice.

The third political theme relates to one of the couples resistance to the recent political rhetoric regarding perceived ‘Māori special benefits’. This political rhetoric arose in early 2004 when the leader of the conservative National Party, Don Brash, made a speech arguing that there should be ‘one law for all’ and calling for an end to ‘race-based privileges’. These sentiments of ‘equality under the law’ and a call for ‘one

people' held sway with a large number of non-Māori New Zealanders, and subsequently the support of the National Party drastically increased (Bell, p. 104, 2004). The experiences represented here challenge the conservative sentiments espoused by Brash and the National party. For example, there is a clear acknowledgement of the contributions Māori and non-Māori have made through community organising in the field of education. Therefore, the arguments that Māori-centred education is 'separatist', holds little validity with regards to these parent's grass roots experiences.

The last two themes regard the personal benefits of involvement in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education. In this case one of the families felt as though their original vision for putting their children into kōhanga was achieved – their children have become bilingual and bicultural members of society. Alongside these immediate family cultural and linguistic gains, extended family have also been able to draw on their support as they made the decision to be involved in kaupapa Māori education. This wider family benefit illustrates the social and cultural capital gains of these exposures.

The concern about child-discipline practices while one of the children attended kōhanga illustrates the conflict of interest that arose between whānau/kaiako and one Pākehā families. While acknowledging that other kōhanga reo sites may not have used similar discipline practices, one family identified that it was uncomfortable with the kōhanga reo staff hitting children as a means of correcting child behaviour.

The second concern about the lack of material resources for kaupapa Māori educational projects has since been highlighted by the Education Review Office (ERO) in 1999 and subsequent research into effective teaching and learning materials in Māori-medium education (Bishop, Berryman & Richardson, 2001). While not specifically focused on kōhanga reo material resources, Bishop, Berryman & Richardson (2001) found that "inadequate teaching and learning resources are barriers to enabling teachers to cater for the individual interests, linguistic abilities

and learning needs of students” (p. 16). Therefore, the concerns about the local kōhanga struggling to provide adequate learning resources for the children during the mid 1980s continue to be a concern today, not only in early childhood but also in primary total immersion school settings.

Illustrating a paradox, this study also shows that the ‘do-it-yourself’ attitude experienced by the families while at the kōhanga was an invaluable contribution. It was found that the whānau/families used their own personal resources such as money, transport and practical skills to provide for their particular resource needs. This do-it-yourself approach is consistent with the grass roots foundations of the kōhanga reo movement (see Hohepa, 2002; Jenkins with Ka’ai, 1994; L.T. Smith, 1986). Margie Hohepa (2002) shows how this close parental involvement is part of the kōhanga reo structure:

...Te kōhanga reo is structured so that parents, as part of the whānau who are collectively responsible for the operation of the kōhanga, could be involved positively in the educational planning and development for their children at practical and political levels. As te kōhanga reo was Māori initiated, instigated and operated, whānau did not have to put themselves in the position of trying to influence state educational structures to meet their needs and desires for their children’s pre-school education (p. 8).

Finally, this study found that the transition for one of the couple’s children from kōhanga into a primary school bilingual unit was smooth, primarily because the children’s peer group relations were maintained. This suggests that childhood peer relations were aided by the on-going development of Māori education options in their local community.

### 3.2 Children's Narratives

Six common themes arose out of the Pākehā children's narratives regarding their experiences of learning in a kaupapa Māori and bilingual/immersion setting. In terms of the children's *situation* or context the following theme was identified:

- **Unorthodox families:** All of the children were acutely aware of their parent's political beliefs and protest backgrounds. The children believed that these political beliefs combined with their peer groups influenced their parent's decision to put them into kōhanga reo and bilingual education.

The various *personal, social and cultural* elements resulting from the children's interactions included:

- **Three personal reflections:** Each of the children had distinct personal reflections about their kōhanga and bilingual experiences that included: acknowledgement that kōhanga reo was a new educational phenomenon in the mid 1980s; because of bilingual exposures throughout school, a feeling of pressure to pursue a role in race relations or intercultural relations developed; and there was family commitment to learning te reo Māori at school.
- **Difficult social dynamics:** As with one of the adult couples, two of the children identified harsh discipline practices in their kōhanga or bilingual unit. One of the children also highlighted the fact that their kōhanga was materially under-resourced.
- **Peer group influences:** As with an adult couple, all the children identified the influential role of their peer groups. Peer group dynamics identified by the children included: forming supportive friendships and networks while at kōhanga and in bilingual settings; and the realisation that the children had a complex understanding of intercultural relations in relation to their non-Māori peers.
- **Learning from Māori cultural traditions:** The children expressed that knowledge of tikanga Māori helped them to develop respectful relationships

with the natural environment and/or with other people. It was also noted that learning te reo Māori during school was natural and taken for granted.

Through reflecting on *past experiences* and *understanding them in the present*, the children identified the following:

- **Value of learning te reo me ōna tikanga:** All of the children believed that their exposures to kōhanga reo and bilingual education was valuable. Reflecting on the present, one of the children identified that exposure to te reo me ōna tikanga at a young age has the potential to bridge the intercultural division between Pākehā/non-Māori and Māori; presently one of the children believes that there is an obligation and responsibility to pass on te reo Māori to future generations; lastly one of the children has found that their bicultural exposures helped them to develop critical thought.

Alongside the common themes expressed by the children, the following sub-themes from individual experiences also emerged, and included:

- One of the children observed that because he was no longer in regular contact with the language, his competency in speaking Māori language was diminishing;
- The decision to move out of bilingual education for one of the children was partly based on feeling inadequate as one of the few Pākehā involved;
- One of the children expressed feelings of detachment to Māori culture, which was based on:
  - little Māori influence/contact at her tertiary level fine arts school;
  - feeling *obliged* to speak te reo Māori more often;
  - observing an uneasiness between Māori-Pākehā relations as a result of Don Brash's 2004 Orewa speech; and
  - feeling like an 'object' within her peer group because of her unique intercultural situation.

Collectively understood, the themes represented in this findings and discussion chapter offer a unique means of understanding why these Pākehā families decided to be involved in Māori immersion settings, and what these experiences mean to them now.

## 1) Situation

- **Place:** examining the context of involvement including the time people were involved and where.

The main situational theme that arose from the children's narratives was their awareness of the unorthodox nature of their families.

### Unorthodox families

All of the children had an awareness of their parent's political aspirations. They identified that their parents were committed to the 'left' of the political spectrum, which meant in many cases they were exposed to 'unorthodox' social, political and cultural beliefs:

*Josie:* Mum and dad were involved with teaching in low socio-economic areas and got involved in the Māori language while they were there. They were involved in politics - left-wing stuff.

*I do remember mum and dad asking me if I wanted to go into kōhanga and be in the Māori system. They wanted to do Māori in some way, I think that's how it happened.*

*Curtis:* They're pretty unorthodox when it comes down to it. They're not married. Dad has quite an active desire to break out of the stereotypical kind of Pākehā way of doing things.

*I think my father's academic background was an influence. He did his PhD in race relations and he's always been fully into that stuff. He got his arm broken at Bastion Point... It's kind of debatable whether I still would have had the education about te reo and Māoridom if I hadn't had the kōhanga thing because my other brother and sisters didn't do that.*

Mark identified that his parents were socially liberal, which he believed impacted on their peer group:

*Mark:* I never really knew why [my parent's put me into kōhanga], I just say it was my mum and my dad's friends - their opinion on the way that New Zealand should be run and the way that everyone should be. I think it is that whole left wing thing to tell you the truth. It is that kind of building a nation and not bloody sitting around...

## **Discussion – Unorthodox families**

An awareness of the social and political beliefs of the children's parents included:

- Being conscious of their parents work in low socioeconomic areas;
- Awareness of parents involvement in the Māori protest movements; and
- A consciousness about the interdependent relations between local communities and the parents' peer group.

This research found that all of the children were aware of their parent's political backgrounds and beliefs. Collectively they identified that their parents were either 'left-wing' or not like 'stereotypical Pākehā'. The children believed these political elements influenced their parents' decision to put them into kōhanga reo and bilingual education.

The children's awareness of how the values and beliefs of their parents shaped their educational experience is echoed by a review of family influences on children's educational achievement by Biddulph, Biddulph & Biddulph (2003). In their review, Biddulph, Biddulph & Biddulph (2003) found that family and home environments contribute to children's development and learning:

Research has shown that parents and families play a particularly important role in the development of the gifted child – especially in the effective domain, in the nurturing of self-concepts, values, attitudes, motivation, interests and commitments (Monks et al, 2000, cited in Biddulph, Biddulph & Biddulph, p. 66).

While this study does not attempt to draw conclusions as to whether these children were gifted or not, it is not a surprising finding that family and parents play an influential role in determining a child's educational opportunities and aspirations. However, it is a unique finding that the children collectively demonstrated an acute awareness of their parents' political persuasions.

## 2) Interaction

- **Personal: reflect on the feelings, personal hopes and aims as a result of involvement in Māori educational initiatives.**

Individually the children gave three unique personal perspectives about their involvement in Māori education; an acknowledgement that they were part of an experiment; a pressure to pursue a role in race relations or intercultural relations developed; and there was family commitment to learning te reo Māori at school.

### Three personal reflections

Curtis reflected that his experience of kōhanga reo and his bilingual unit at the local primary school was a type of experiment. While his memories of kōhanga are patchy, he has come to understand that being Pākehā involved in kōhanga was a new thing at that time:

*Curtis: My memories are very basic because I was quite young. I think it made it a lot easier for me to slip into the bilingual unit kind of set-up because I had that kind of foundation.*

*When they put me into that environment they weren't necessarily prepared for what it would entail. It was like it was an experiment in the true sense of the word; lets try this out it seems like a really good idea, but not necessarily understanding the implications of what it was all about.*

Josie felt pressure to pursue a career related to social change or race relations. She mentioned that this pressure might be due to her achieving highly in kōhanga reo and throughout her involvement in bilingual/rumaki units at primary and secondary school:

*Josie: When I was at school there was an assumption, some sort of pressure that I would as an adult do something, cause I'm quite academic, that I would move in some sort of area where I would be influential, in race relations or something like that.*

After taking a year off because his intermediate did not offer a te reo Māori option, Mark (Josie's younger brother) was anxious that his time away from learning in a bilingual unit would put him at a disadvantage when enrolling in the rumaki unit at high school. Mark wanted to go to the same school his older sister went to:

*Mark: I remember being a bit worried that I wasn't going to be allowed in. I remember thinking "Crap what if they don't let me into the kura that my sister went to?" I had a whole year off from speaking Māori that I thought they might think "Sure you've learnt this much but we've got all these Māori people who have learnt so much."*

- **Social: engage with the conditions of individual/collective involvement and reflect on the human relations with others involved.**

The main social themes in the children's narratives centred on difficult social dynamics, peer group influences and depth of political and cultural understand.

### **Difficult social dynamics**

Curtis recalled how his kōhanga had a rough beginning, echoing his parents' experience of their local kōhanga having disciplinary practices that they disagreed with. He also reinforced his parents' view that his kōhanga was materially under-resourced:

*Curtis: I don't know what kōhanga is like now, but my gut reaction and impression of the one I went to was that it was a wee bit ummm... It seemed a bit rough. It was kind of unregulated. It wasn't like kindy which is strictly regulated by government. It was a new thing, especially in the urban environment.*

*It was a bit of a test kōhanga; cause after I left it became more refined. They got new buildings. I think that's part of the problem my parents had with it; it was a bit rough. I think it was reflected in the whole smacking thing, which isn't acceptable at the kindergarten. It was just the dynamics of the site, of that particular kōhanga.*

Josie also found that her bilingual unit had harsh disciplinary practices:

*Josie: The Māori bilingual unit was huge and was run by 3 or 4 male teachers. I remember it being pretty hard, like hard, macho hard! That may have grated a bit. They were all young teachers as well. I think they were just out of school, so that may have had something to do with it.*

### **Peer group influences**

Another parallel experience to that of the parents was the common theme of peer group influences. The power of peers included solid and supportive friendships and networks that were formed as a result of involvement in kōhanga/bilingual education.

For example, as Mark went through kōhanga and subsequent immersion units he observed that the numbers of Pākehā involved began to diminish. Regardless, Mark spoke about how his kōhanga peer group have remained consistent and supportive friends:

*Mark: They [Pākehā] all just slowly dissipated out. I think it was because they were finding new friends in other places. I found lifetime friends at kōhanga so they were my boys. I felt so proud to be a white guy speaking Māori, I always have really. Nowadays I kind of go “Oh come on guys” cause I’m not the one that says it, it’s everyone else that knows me that goes “You know this guy speaks Māori!”*

For Josie her peer group at kōhanga flowed into the bilingual unit at primary school and was maintained through to intermediate:

*Josie: I had 1 year without it [te reo Māori] and then I went to intermediate, Woodford intermediate where there was a bilingual unit.*

*Alex: So there were Pākehā there as well?*

*Josie: Yep, it was probably the same I guess. I had quite a few mutual friends.*

*Alex: So you kind of just kept going as a crew moving through?*

*Josie: Yeah, which I think became a bit of a problem at some point cause we’d go to a new school and I wouldn’t want to make friends with anyone else [laughter]!*

Through high school Josie was once more enrolled in the rumaki unit, and observed that there was a big separation between the rumaki students and mainstream students:

*Josie: High School was a lot of different people. I remember in my first year it [the rumaki unit] was a very definite thing. It was tight and once you were in you were in. I think I quite liked that. The first year we went to high school they started the rumaki, so we were the first graduates.*

*Alex: Was it strange being one of the few [Pākehā] or did you notice that “Oh I don’t have many friends that are in the mainstream”. Did you start to think about that?*

*Josie: I definitely thought about it. I didn’t think it was strange cause that’s the way it was. They would always talk about the mainstream and us being separate from the mainstream. It wasn’t competitive, it wasn’t as if you were against the mainstream but there was always that comparison. You were either something or you were the other thing, you couldn’t be both. There was a lot of separation.*

## **Depth of political and cultural understanding**

The children generally had a more complex understanding of intercultural relations in relation to their non-Māori peers. For example, outside of the schooling system Curtis and Mark both expressed that their kōhanga and bilingual experiences gave them a depth of political and cultural understanding that differed from their non-Māori social peers:

*Curtis: Just talking with my mates in general I would say they adhere to the mainstream Pākehā view. Don Brash's mainstream.*

*Alex: Being a 'mainstream New Zealander'?*

*Curtis: Yeah, no gays, no Māoris, no PI's, especially no Asians. I'm not sure if I got a different view because of the political upbringing through my father, kind of extra knowledge of the Treaty issues and things. I just find it a lot more interesting to understand issues in a deeper and comprehensive way, and some of my friends wouldn't really want to know.*

*Mark: I don't get into too many debates about it [race relations and the Treaty]. It's a very hard thing to debate. Race relations and the Treaty is the main thing we end up talking about, and usually they're ill-equipped to talk about it. They don't really know what they're talking about, so that's all you end up doing...*

*Alex: Trying to inform them?*

*Mark: Yeah.*

*Alex: So you must have realised then that you've got another knowledge source to gain from your exposures...*

*Mark: I do. I've heard both sides of the story.*

- **Cultural: Reflections on experiences of learning in a Māori cultural context as Pākehā**

The central cultural themes that arose in the children's narratives were learning from Māori cultural traditions and maintaining te reo Māori.

## **Learning from Māori cultural traditions**

Mark, Josie and Curtis found that their learning in Māori cultural environments exposed them to the language and its values in different ways. For example, Mark explained that he learnt how to respect others through Māori customs:

*Mark: Being in the kōhanga it's respectful to pray to the god of the forest when you take a tree. It made you care more about trees just in that prayer: thank you tree for*

*letting us build a boat out of you. That whole thing made you appreciate a lot more instead of “Oh don’t worry cut down the forest, we wanna make some farms”.*

*I gained a lot of respect. With the traditions respect came, and it wasn’t just for one thing it was for many things. It was respect to the elders. I still see people to this day and I can’t remember their names, but who I knew I grew up with, like Whaea and Matua. Now I’m like “Oh kia ora Whaea, kia ora Matua” and they’re like “Oh kia ora boy!” You have a hongī or a kihi, and if they say jump ball I do it all right!*

*Alex: So you learnt that respect, you learnt it through tikanga...*

*Mark: I learnt when to act an ass as well and when not to. I learnt when things were appropriate and when they weren’t. For instance in powhiri you know, I’d shut up and listen. I learnt how to tautoko people when they deserved a good little tautoko.*

Curtis explained that early exposures to the Māori culture and learning how to pronounce Māori words correctly made a real difference in relating to Māori people in his work. However, this did not mean he publicly announced his experiences of kōhanga reo:

*Curtis: The other thing is obviously language and pronunciation; it makes things a lot easier for me, especially in terms of relating to people and the work that I did in social research with my old man. It just made it easier working with Māori co-workers.*

*At the same time I don’t go brandishing around the fact that I went to kōhanga reo, because for all intents and purposes I haven’t done that thing for over 20 years. I think it would be a little bit vulgar if I went “yeah, yeah, I’m a kōhanga reo person and I understand exactly what you’re going through!”*

Josie found that learning Māori was natural, especially after her time at kōhanga reo and in the bilingual unit at primary school:

*Alex: When you were learning te reo at kōhanga and then later on in primary and secondary school did you notice any differences?*

*Josie: At kōhanga it was rote learning, cause of Nanny Whetu! In these other places it wasn’t. It was more learning songs. I don’t remember being instructed in Māori in any way. It was just spoken and we picked it up.*

*Alex: So it was kinda natural?*

*Josie: Yeah it just kinda happened.*

### **Maintaining te reo Māori**

Mark spoke about his te reo Māori maintenance and the difficulties in sustaining it now that he is not in regular contact with the language:

**Mark:** *For me to speak Māori to somebody nowadays I actually have to be careful about how I phrase it. Some of it just flows out, the sentences just click and go right through my mind, but then other times I'm like "Blah, blah" and then that word comes. I can see the meaning, but I can't see the word anymore.*

*I can still read Māori and understand it. I can still hear Māori and understand it, but it's just getting harder and harder to actually get my point across. I can imagine that after a time I'll just be talking like a lame ass, like "I want, we go, shop, I want" and it's all going to be broken Māori! I'm going to sound fresh! It is a worry actually.*

When asked if he spoke te reo with his older sister Josie when they were younger, Mark said it did not happen often. However, having his older sister go through kōhanga and subsequent bilingual/rumaki units ahead of him did have an influence on Mark being accepted in the same environments:

**Alex:** *So did you speak Māori to her [your sister] when you were younger?*

**Mark:** *No that was the other thing about being at home. I always thought that it would be a bloody genius idea if me and Josie talked to each other in Māori. But if I brought it up she'd be like "Ohhh here we go again Mark." It was always something I wanted to do but it was her opinion. I couldn't tell her how to live her life; "You have to speak Māori to me, I'm not going to speak English to you!"*

**Discussion – Individual reflections; difficult social dynamics; peer group influences; political and cultural understanding; maintaining te reo Māori.**

The three personal reflections began with an acknowledgement that kōhanga reo was a new phenomenon on the educational landscape in the mid 1980s. Again, this suggests that a set of personal and political beliefs held by the parents regarding the advantages of bilingualism and support for Māori educational initiatives took precedence over conventional or mainstream educational options for their children.

A second reflection regarded pressures to pursue a role in the field of race relations, which can be linked to key family and socio-cultural assumptions. In this case, exposures to bicultural education resulted in a type of pressure as to what professional vocation would suit this educational exposure and background. Arising from this pressure it could be maintained that the overtly political vision of kaupapa Māori, that of challenging dominant cultural practices that marginalise Māori interests, transformed into a pressure or expectation by their parents that bilingual and bicultural graduates would overtly challenge oppressive practices of power.

The third reflection pertains to family commitment to learning te reo Māori at school. This experience is illustrated by the anxiety of one of the children at the prospect of not being able to follow his older sister through the same bilingual unit. In this scenario nervousness arose because he had taken a year off learning te reo, which resulted in anxiety about not being eligible to enrol in the bilingual unit. Alongside feelings of anxiety, this also represents self-motivation to continue to learn te reo Māori from a young age, while committing to family involvement in bilingual education.

Socially, two of the children were aware of harsh discipline practices in either their kōhanga or bilingual unit. This further supports the experience of one couple, and reiterates that the severity of these environments was related to the community dynamics of each site.

For example, that the female felt the bilingual unit used severe discipline was based on the observation that young male teachers were administering the unit at that time. This finding implies that gender had a role in determining levels of punishment and what was, or was not acceptable behaviour. With regards to the discipline at *kōhanga* it was acknowledged that the site had just been established, and that issues such as discipline of children and material resources had yet to be determined by the administering *whānau*. Both of these discipline and material issues represent the difficulty of establishing a grass roots educational setting with scarce community and human resources.

With regards to peer group influences and the supportive friendships formed as a result of involvement, notions of *kotahitanga* identified by Hemara (2000) and *whānau* by Bishop & Glynn (1999) are demonstrated here. Two examples illustrate these Māori notions.

Firstly, with regards to Hemara's notions of *kotahitanga* ('oneness', 'singleness' or 'togetherness' p. 72) this is represented by the affirmation received from Māori peers because of the ability of their Pākehā friend to speak well in *te reo Māori*. In this instance there is a solid cultural connection shared between these friends because of their learning of *te reo Māori* through *kōhanga* and subsequent bilingual/*rumaki* units together.

The second example regards the finding that separation existed between students in the *rumaki* unit and those in the mainstream school. As one of the children identified strongly with the *rumaki* unit as opposed to the mainstream school during high school, a *whānau*-style relationship developed, as Bishop & Glynn (1999) explain:

Where the establishment of *whānau*-type relationships in the classroom is primary, a pattern of interactions develops where commitment and connectedness is paramount, where responsibility for the learning of others is fostered and where the classroom becomes an

active location for all learners to participate in decision making processes... (p. 172).

While this research did not engage with participants about decision-making processes in their rumaki or bilingual units, the findings in this research do suggest that there were whānau-type relationships that were not restricted to the classroom but to the unit as a whole. In Bishop and Glynn's (1999) terms, there was the development of "commitment and connectedness" between peers and teachers (p. 172).

Differences in peer relations with other Pākehā/non-Māori, also relates to the peer group experience of David Gendall cited in Archie (2005). Gendall found that because he went through kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa as a Pākehā he has "two perspectives on the world", which often makes him feel isolated from his Pākehā friends (p. 275). The findings from this research support Gendall's experience of isolation from his non-Māori peers. Two of the children explained that their Pākehā friends were "usually ill-equipped" to talk about cultural or political issues, alternatively their friends "wouldn't really want to know" about such issues. In one case, discussion about Treaty issues was often avoided, as this would result in debate or disagreement. Conversely it was found that Don Brash's 2004 Orewa speech about 'race-based privileges' created more of a social divide in one of the children's peer groups.

In reflecting on learning in a Māori cultural context as Pākehā, the children expressed two themes that connected past learning experiences to the present. These included:

- The role of tikanga Māori in mediating respectful relationships with the natural environment and other people; and
- Learning te reo Māori in a 'natural' setting.

This study found that learning through tikanga Māori developed into learning how to have respectful human relationships with the natural world. This element of tikanga is demonstrated through one of the children speaking about the use of ritual when

taking things from the natural environment. In this instance the term *kaitiakitanga* may be used to describe the relationship between humans and the physical environment, as Māori Marsden (2003) explains:

All natural resources, all life was birthed from Mother Earth. Thus the resources of the earth did not belong to man but rather, man belonged to the earth. Man as well as animal, bird, fish could harvest the bounty of mother earth's resources but they did not own them (p. 67).

Another key aspect of *tikanga* Māori found in one of the narratives, is that of *whānaungatanga*, which can be identified in how relationships with past teachers and peers has been maintained, and perceived as important to uphold. In this case Hirini Moko Mead's (2003) description of one form of *whānaungatanga*, that which goes "beyond actual *whakapapa* relations" and includes "relationships to non-kin persons who become like kin through shared experiences" (p. 28) becomes central.

Each of these findings, the importance of upholding the dignity of human relationships and acknowledging one's relationship to the physical environment, further support Gendall's (Archie, 2005) experience of learning in a *kaupapa* Māori setting. For Gendall, because he was raised with Māori values through *kaupapa* Māori education, he has developed a "respect for elders and regard for the land" (p. 278).

The second finding, that learning *te reo* Māori was 'natural' and was easily 'picked up', is consistent with Graham Smith's (2003) analysis of the principles of a *kaupapa* Māori learning setting:

In *kaupapa* Māori educational settings, Māori language, knowledge, culture and values are validated and legitimated by themselves – this is a 'given', a 'taken for granted' base in these schools (p. 8).

While the reflection expressed in this research project arose out of experiences within a bilingual class and not within a *kaupapa* Māori educational setting, the finding that learning *te reo* was natural illustrates that the language was used as a 'given' as Smith (2003) alludes. This means *te reo* Māori was the key language of instruction and

incorporated within classroom pedagogy – which is illustrated by one of the children learning te reo Māori through the use of waiata Māori.

The finding that it is difficult to maintain te reo Māori when one is no longer in constant contact with the language, can be linked to Baker's (2001) assessment of cultural and linguistic factors that encourage language loss. These factors (amongst others) include (pp. 61-62):

- Cultural and religious activity in the majority language;
- Low emphasis on family and community ties. High emphasis on individual achievement;
- Acceptance of majority language education;
- Cultural and religion similar to that of the majority language.

While te reo Māori has been legislated as an official language of Aotearoa – New Zealand under the Māori Language Act of 1987, the findings of this study suggest that te reo continues to be under used in the home and in public spaces.

### 3) Continuity

- **Past: look back remembering unique past experiences and stories**

In the children's narratives a clear connection evolved regarding the past and present: the children highlighted feelings of distance regarding bilingual education, nevertheless all of them valued their past bilingual learning and saw its value in the present.

#### **Moving out of bilingual education**

Curtis recalled that his move out of bilingual education at primary school was partly because he did not want to 'stick out' as one of the few Pākehā students:

*Curtis: After primary school I went to an intermediate school and just went into the general stream.*

*Alex: Can you remember why? Were you given the choice?*

*Curtis: I'm not sure. My intermediate school didn't have a bilingual unit when I went there, so my old man set one up! By that time I think I was caught up with my own preadolescent stuff.*

*Alex: Those awkward years...*

*Curtis: Yeah exactly. I felt that there wasn't any need for me to stick out more than I already did.*

Curtis went on to attend a wealthy private co-educational secondary school. While no longer involved in bilingual education he was aware of prejudice against Māori people at his school:

*Curtis: I don't think there were any Māori people at that school. Oh maybe part-Māori but they were annexed Māori and fully integrated. Basically Pākehā-Māori.*

*Alex: 'Pākehāfied'?*

*Curtis: Yeah. I remember hearing something, it was like a questionnaire, a local social questionnaire. It asked "How would you feel about Māori moving in next door, or what kind of reaction would you have if you had Māori as neighbors?" A real large number said "I'd rather anyone but Māori move in..."*

- **Present:** current experiences as a result of involvement are examined

### **Value of learning te reo me öna tikanga**

Presently, Curtis believed that his experience puts him in a different position from other Pākehā. He suggested that if children are exposed to Māori language and culture from a young age, there may be less social and cultural divisions:

*Curtis: I'm pretty proud of the fact that I was fluent in Māori at the same time that I was in English. Basically I have no memory of it whatsoever, but I kind of like the idea that I could pick it up fairly easily if I really tried. It sets me apart from other Pākehā people, I actually feel slightly superior!*

*For people to accept this stuff it needs to be given to them young. You can't force people or parents to send their kids to kōhanga reo, but I think it should be a larger part of kindergarten education. Get it out there early. Try to get them while they're young. A lot of racial divisions come from a lack of understanding, particularly from Pākehā. I think kōhanga reo has been valuable for that.*

*There needs to be less division between Māori and Pākehā education. It needs to be more integrated into mainstream education. It needs to be a core subject.*

*Alex: Normalised?*

*Curtis: Yeah normalised and accepted, cause at the moment you've still got bilingual units which is great; immersion units for the people who really want to be there, cool. But at the same time it doesn't really help with education generally in terms of changing the general populace's perception of Māoridom and te reo.*

Mark explained that his experiences learning the Māori language and customs gave him self-confidence and a sense of identity and belonging to Aotearoa – New Zealand. As part of his feeling of connectedness to this place, he said he would like to pass on te reo Māori to his children in the future. In this sense Mark felt that he had a responsibility to 'give back' what he had received to his children in the future:

*Mark: It brings me closer to this country. It gives me a sense of patriotism. It feels like I've done it by accident, but what a bloody good thing to ensure my role in this country. Just in case anyone does try and say that I shouldn't be here, I can say I also speak Māori and I know a lot more about it than a lot of Māori people do. I'm very proud to have learnt Māori, it's one of my main highlights.*

*Alex: So if you had kids you'd want them to learn?*

*Mark: Of course. I wouldn't talk to them in Māori every now and then, I'd rather they learn Māori first so they come up in it.*

*I feel a weight of responsibility because of the gift that I've got, what I've been given. I feel that I have this huge responsibility to give it back. Pass it on. It's*

*a little hard though. The best thing I can think of doing it is to pass it on my children. With my parents not speaking Māori, it could have been better for me if they did. Not that I blame them at all, they gave me the opportunity to learn te reo. That's my hope for the future, that te reo Māori would also be a recognised thing around the world.*

Josie maintained that her kōhanga and bilingual exposures helped to foster a critical analysis. She said this was because she had to move from one set of beliefs about the world to another:

*Josie: I think it does produce a kind of critical thinking when you move between different cultures. You're forced to think about things a lot more. You're forced into having a type of thought and having a wider picture of something.*

### **Feeling distanced**

While Josie felt as though her experience helped her to develop critical thought, and since leaving high school and rumaki education Josie has taken up te reo and tikanga Māori papers at university. However, she also expressed her feelings about not being as involved as she previously was with Māori language and culture. While not a common theme held between all the children, Josie believes that not being as active in the Māori world is to do with going to art school and therefore pursuing a career in a middle class environment:

*Josie: I feel a little sad sometimes that I don't have a lot to do with Māori things that I used to. It's a bit of a class thing, cause I went to an art school. There wasn't a lot of lower class people who go to art school, not a huge amount of Māori involvement. I'm just not involved in that world anymore. I find it frustrating that I should make such a big effort to be involved, or to speak Māori with other people. I think that something has failed at some point. But at the same time it's something that just happened, and since leaving the rumaki unit I pursued learning te reo and tikanga Māori at university.*

She went on to explain that her feeling distanced was partly due to the recent heated political debates about Māori receiving 'special privileges'. She felt as though this rhetoric contributed to the polarisation of Māori-Pākehā relations:

*Josie: I distanced myself a lot because of the politics that are going on at the moment. My friends ask me if I'd put my kids into kōhanga or not. I'm not sure if I would. I can't imagine at the moment being a Pākehā child in one of those situations would be particularly good. I think it depends on where you are, but it just feels like there is a lot of antagonism from Māori towards Pākehā at the moment. I don't know*

*whether it was just brushed off when I was younger, or whether it just didn't exist so much. I think it's because of the whole Brash thing.*

Finally, Josie explained that while her current peer group believe that she is lucky to be able to speak te reo Māori, she did feel like a 'an object' at times:

***Josie:*** *A lot of my friends are kind of liberal "free thinking" people so I don't hear all of that [negativity about Māori language and culture]. They think it's really cool that I can speak Māori. I do feel like I'm under some sort of little object, and I don't like it. I'm a guinea pig!*

## **Discussion – Valuing bilingual education; Feeling distanced**

All of the children felt they benefited from their experiences of learning in a Māori immersion setting, whether that be in *kōhanga reo* or later in bilingual/*rumaki* units. Arising out of this common belief about the value of learning *te reo me ōna tikanga*, three distinct ideas arose about what the experience means to them now, and included:

- That exposure to *te reo me ōna tikanga* for all children from a young age has the potential to bridge the intercultural division between Pākehā/non-Māori and Māori;
- There exists an obligation and responsibility to pass on *te reo Māori* to future generations; and
- Bicultural exposures helped to develop critical thought.

The first belief, about the potential benefits of exposing all children to Māori language and Māori beliefs during pre-school, is a fundamental principle of the early childhood curriculum guideline, *Te Whāriki* (1992). A fundamental part of its vision for the future of early childhood education is to work towards a bicultural society which “contributes towards the sustaining of Māori language and *tikanga*, including them as visible and of value to children from other cultural backgrounds” (*Te Whāriki*, 1992, p. 14, their emphasis). Based on one of the children’s experiences, this bicultural principle of *Te Whāriki* has been given life, and is believed to be a positive means of developing social and cultural cohesion between Māori and non-Māori from a young age.

The finding that graduates of *kōhanga reo* and bilingual/immersion settings felt an obligation and a responsibility to ‘give back’ or ‘pass on’ knowledge given to them as a result of their experience is not explicit in the kaupapa Māori and bilingual education literature reviewed for this research. However, Cooper Arago-Kemp, Wylie, & Hodgen (2004), Hohepa (2002) and G.H. Smith (1992) clearly identify that

*taonga tuku iho*, those Māori values and customs that have been passed on from generation to generation, is a fundamental principle that needs to be maintained and revitalised via kaupapa Māori education. Ironically, this obligatory feeling of giving back can also be related to the theme identified earlier regarding a feeling of pressure to be involved in an area of intercultural relations because of previous Māori educational exposures as Pākehā. While the motivations are different, the general assumption is the same: because of the children's involvement in Māori immersion education a sentiment has evolved that makes them feel like they should be more involved in the area of promoting Māori values and language in some way, and continue their role in the culture.

The final reflection, that kaupapa Māori and bilingual education has assisted in developing critical thought concurs with Radford's (2001) experience of working and learning in a Māori environment. In exploring the complexity of her role as a Pākehā woman teaching in a Māori educational setting, Radford (2001) found it helpful to constantly reflect on her cultural and institutional position(s). These reflections developed into a critical means of understanding her role personally, while also questioning her position institutionally in relation to her Māori colleagues and students. Therefore, having an ability to be or work in Māori environments and non-Māori environments offers real challenges and poses questions which develop a type of critical awareness of the self.

Deciding to leave the bilingual unit for one of the children was explained by a feeling of awkwardness – of avoiding visibility and 'not wanting to stick out'. This uneasiness about belonging to the unit has interesting parallels with Borell's (2005) research on cultural identity for young Māori in South Auckland. In her research Borell (2005) found that Māori students were often put into an 'all or nothing' situation when taking te reo Māori at a mainstream school:

For example, if a participant felt that the discipline required to be in the whānau unit was too great a commitment, they were unable to be in kapa haka or take Māori as a school subject. Similarly, if a

participant wanted to learn Māori language but did not want to participate in kapa haka they were unable to take Māori as it was not offered to students in the mainstream (p. 197).

While this study centers on Pākehā experiences of Māori education, the uneasiness to participate because of a feeling of awkwardness represents a similar dynamic found in Borell's study. For example, David Gendall in speaking with Archie (2005) also reflected on how his involvement in kapa haka as a Pākehā may have been perceived as "ridiculous" by others (p. 276). Although the move out of the bilingual unit was partly due to feeling uneasy about being visible as one of the few Pākehā, this transition into mainstream did not detract from an acute awareness of cultural discrimination. This was clear from the objections to anti-Māori attitudes in the school and its local community.

Finally, the fall out from Brash's Orewa speech in 2004 and a pressure to speak te reo Māori and be more involved in the Māori world have been previously identified as having an impact on the parents and the children. The influence of peer groups is identified once again, however in this case the peer group are supportive of her ability to speak te reo, although this led to feelings of being objectified by them. The finding that little Māori influence in her the tertiary institution resulted in less involvement in things Māori, demonstrates the cultural divisions that passively influence peoples' social and cultural relations later in life.

## **4. Conclusion**

Three sections will make up the conclusion of this study, and include:

**4.1 What can be learnt from the experiences of Pākehā immersed in Māori education?**

**4.2 What are the implications of this study for society?**

**4.3 What have I learnt?**

**4.1 What can be learnt from the experiences of Pākehā immersed in Māori education?**

As discussed in the previous chapter, there were numerous common themes and sub-themes that arose out of Pākehā family experiences of kaupapa Māori and bilingual education. However, the following features were highlights of the contextual, personal, social, cultural, and present intergenerational reflections of these families:

- *The power of social movements*: Underpinned by their political visions for social change and cultural justice, anti-racism protest movements during the early 1980s clearly mark the foundation for each of these Pākehā families involvement in Māori education. Over the last 20 years the parents were active in the organising of these movements. The children demonstrated their insights into the effects these politics had on their formative education as a result of their parent's involvement. Therefore, the power of these social movements should not be underestimated as an important influence in the social and cultural development of Aotearoa – New Zealand in the past, but also presently.

- *The importance of community:* Through supporting Māori education the families demonstrated a belief that local organising and commitment to their communities was a vital element in the development of their local neighborhoods. Practical work such as fundraising, being members of the School Boards of Trustees, going to hui, and supporting Māori-centred school projects, were all expressions of their commitment and sense of belonging to kōhanga reo and bilingual education within mainstream schools. Consequently, the family's emphasis on supporting local school communities through maintaining human-relationships, were crucial to the development of these educational initiatives.
- *The role of peer groups:* Māori and non-Māori peer groups shaped the parent's and the children's experiences powerfully. The influence of politicised Māori peers and mentors were influential factors in the parents supporting Māori educational initiatives. Alongside the influence of Māori peers, it was also valuable to work with other Pākehā peers in supporting Māori initiatives. The Pākehā children formed strong bonds with their Māori peer groups as a result of their involvement in different whanau-type learning environments. As a result of their Māori immersion the children developed a depth of social and cultural awareness that set them apart from their non-Māori peers. Thus, peer groups contributed significantly to the identity, educational directions and choices these families made in the past, and make in the present.
- *Learning through te reo me ōna tikanga Māori:* The parents were committed to their children learning in a bilingual environment because they believed this would give them the ability to co-exist in Māori and non-Māori worlds. The parents were exposed to Māori tikanga and language through participating in different Māori hui and tangihanga. The children valued their experiences of learning in Māori immersion settings, and subsequently became inculcated with the language and various world-views, beliefs and protocols from a

young age. This helped them develop respectful relationships with the natural environment and other people, while also developing a critical analysis of their world. Te reo me ōna tikanga played a significant role in creating an understanding of how some Māori perceive relationships with others and the natural environment.

- *A personal and political passage:* The impact of involvement in the Māori world had been personal and political for the families. Personally it affected their relationships with their extended families; it contributed to a strong feeling of connection to Aotearoa – New Zealand; feelings of obligation and responsibility arose amongst the children towards furthering bicultural education. Politically, the children and the parents have become wary of political rhetoric surrounding perceived Māori “special needs” or “privileges”, as they generally believed that such sentiments attempt to fracture local communities and polarise Māori and non-Māori relations. Involvement in educational settings such as kaupapa Māori education and bilingual education generally included a personal and political commitment to these educational projects being valid and progressing further.
- *Collectivity despite difference:* Social and cultural factors played complex roles within the narrative experiences of the parents and the children. Class differences were particularly strong in relation to the Pākehā families belonging to the middle class, while paradoxically working alongside and being exposed to Māori working class people and beliefs. Culturally the families were perceived by Māori whānau as different from other Pākehā, as they supported the philosophies underpinning Māori education by offering practical and strategic help. This meant that moving out of middle class comforts and ‘mainstream’ culture challenged and enriched these families, as they became aware of different ways of interacting with people who held differing expectations and beliefs. Cultural and social factors meant that each family became immersed in a collective web of relations with diverse Māori

whānau. This meant that the independence of the individual family changed, and that collective responsibilities and obligations became an important consideration.

#### **4.2 What are the implications of this study to society?**

When I combine my own family experiences and understandings of kaupapa Māori and bilingual education with those of the families represented in this research, there exist both *benefits* and *limits* to Pākehā involvement in Māori immersion education.

##### *Benefits*

One of the parents' reflections that prior to involvement in kōhanga reo, he had no active connection to the Māori world, illustrates that the growth of the grass roots movement of Te kōhanga reo and of Māori immersion education has opened up a *choice of access* for Pākehā families into the Māori world. These educational initiatives have sought and continue to seek the revitalisation and reconstitution of Māori knowledge bases, in so doing they have also become sites of intercultural contact between Maori, Pākehā and non-Māori. These sites of common connection provide an intercultural means of sharing knowledge and developing community, with the potential to foster greater social and cultural understanding between different peoples, while also supporting the self-determination of marginalised people.

One parents' general observation of the deep level of immersion in the Māori world view by her children, such as her daughter understanding "waru before it was eight", reveals that Pākehā involvement increases the dominant culture's awareness of Māori practices and preferences. As such, this research demonstrates that those Pākehā who have had a level of immersion in Māori environments have a greater bicultural awareness than those who have been raised and who operate in a monolingual/monocultural environment. Depending on the level of immersion, people exposed to more than one language and culture tend to have a more complex

understanding of how different cultures can relate and work with each other – as opposed to working past each other. An example of this complex understanding was also highlighted by one of the children when she explained that because she had moved in and out of two cultural environments from a young age she had developed a form of critical thought. Pākehā people in this situation then have the choice to broaden the thinking of other Pākehā who may be unaware of the damaging effects of their ignorance on others.

Involvement in Māori immersion contexts contributes to feelings of personal and cultural connection to Aotearoa – New Zealand. On reflection, one of the parents explained that as a New Zealander she felt that raising her children with a level of Māori cultural fluency would be respectful and advantageous. Leading on from this one of the children felt that his exposures to Māori education gave him a role to play in Aotearoa – New Zealand, while also developing a sense of patriotism and self-identity. Therefore, having an understanding of the indigenous culture and language shared with the knowledge of ones own ethnic and cultural background contributes to a unique sense of identity in this country.

Formal positions within schools - such as being members of the Board of Trustees - offer opportunities to support cultural inclusion through promoting Māori-based projects. These roles can be valuable in securing funding and resources for particular projects that benefit the wider cultural diversity of the school. These positions can be seen as a strategic and useful tool in working alongside Māori and non-Māori to further progress school cohesion.

### *Limits*

In describing the multiple benefits and possibilities of Pākehā involvement in kaupapa Māori and Māori education generally, it is not the intention of this thesis to romanticise Māori education. Neither is it the intention of this research to imply that all Pākehā should “put their children into kōhanga reo or bilingual units”. Rather,

there remain a number of critical considerations and limits of Pākehā involvement that have emerged from this research, but also as a result of the past and present political and cultural environment of Aotearoa – New Zealand. This sub-section aims to highlight some of the limits of Pākehā involvement.

A parent's reflection on the good intentions and idealism of the kōhanga movement, but not much knowledge of how to work cooperatively with children, highlights the lack of material and human resources that can exist in these settings. Consequently, having a clear awareness of the resources - both human and material - of the local community or whānau involved in the immersion setting is a vital aspect to consider prior to deciding about involvement. As demonstrated in this research, choosing to exist as an independent family involved in kaupapa Māori education serves to unknowingly undermine collective obligations and responsibilities to the kōhanga, kura or indeed the bilingual unit. The key principle and experience of collectivity within these learning environments is an ideal that may take time to eventuate or sustain, especially if particular beliefs about child development and the uses of resources differ from other whānau members. It is not enough to function within these settings as a sole family; rather considerable extra effort and work may be needed to function within a collective framework.

It is also important to think about how best to work within the collective as a person who, in most cases, may be considered as 'an outsider'. Being an outsider may be attributable to a person's inability to speak and comprehend in te reo Māori. It may also relate to one's uninformed position on local tikanga and kawa. More clearly, as a member of the dominant culture, there may be scepticism about one's cultural background, agenda and motives for involvement. Feelings of exclusion and paralysis may arise in these situations. An ability to work cooperatively and uphold local relationships with a degree of self-awareness of one's role, position and commitment offer some tools for managing this outsider identity. In parallel, there is power in offering a reciprocal approach within the relationships formed with kaiako and whānau members. The best means of achieving this type of reciprocity may lie

in simply being present to participate and offering practical help at different events or hui.

Finally, there is a cultural risk element that should be considered seriously as a result of Pākehā involvement in Māori education. Although intended humorously, the expression by one of the past students that he can speak Māori and “know a lot more about it than a lot of Māori people do” is an example of this risk. As Pākehā and non-Māori involvement in the Māori language and culture generally increases, there is a danger that control of the culture’s belief systems and language may become misappropriated by the dominant non-Māori culture. In this case, Māori cultural resources become open to be used and abused by those who do not have a whakapapa link to Māori people, or those who are not versed in understanding key Māori values that serve to protect and balance Māori thought and interests.

The issues and complexities of cultural misappropriation are not new within indigenous discourse or the stories of those who have been marginalised and displaced by colonialism and neo-colonialism. For this reason it is imperative that warnings be raised by those located within dominant culture about the dangers of our involvement in these valuable *but* vulnerable environments.

As I have found, supplementing my on-going learning of te reo and tikanga Māori with intensive learning in Treaty education and decolonisation work, use of the Māori language by identifiably non-Māori people without an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge is dangerously powerful and offensive within Māori and non-Māori environments. As members of the dominant culture who become knowledgeable of the Māori world, this new knowledge becomes an ‘added extra’ that has the potential to be used in ways that are not reciprocal and that lack accountability, responsibility and obligations to those who passed that knowledge on. The historical context of colonisation and its subsequent detrimental effects on Māori people’s language and culture means that it is not a simple *choice* for Pākehā to become involved and active in Māori education; rather Pākehā must continue to be mindful about their positions

of power in relation to Māori, and how their attempts to become involved are benefiting Māori people.

#### **4.3 What have I learnt?**

It's good that you Pākehā are who you are, and it's important that you know who you are; but you need to understand how you are, who you are - and how powerfully you are who you are (Sir Apirana Ngata, translated by Hone Kaa, personal communication (February 16, 2006)<sup>15</sup>).

Throughout this research process I have come to recognise and better understand the benefits and limits of Pākehā involvement in kaupapa Māori and bilingual education. Personally it has been a privileged and liberating experience to explore this area alongside Pākehā families who have a similar educational background to members of my own family. Our shared collective experiences have challenged and strengthened my own beliefs about the value and support of Māori-centred education for the dominant culture. While there are many similarities held amongst us all – there are also differences, including the length of time involved in kaupapa Māori education (kōhanga reo and bilingual units vs. kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa), localities (rural vs. urban environments) and family constitutions (solo parents vs. couples). While this thesis has not explored these differences, it is important to acknowledge that these did exist and impact on our individual experiences.

The influence of academic research on personal experiences, experiences that have come to be perceived as ‘normal’ over time was challenging and interesting. At times it was as if the participants and I were being objectified by the research, and therefore encouraged to become detached from experiences that for the most part ‘just happened’. This clearly demonstrated to me the power of research into shared personal experiences, and how exploring issues of personal significance for others, also means coming to terms with issues of my own self-identity. This research has shown me how important the community organising and the development of social

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<sup>15</sup> Source: E-mail communication from ‘TreatyPeople’, an e-list of Pākehā/Tauīwi Treaty workers that I am part of.

movements in the early 1980s by politicised Māori and their non-Māori allies was – it created an unknown foundation for a new generation of bilingual and bicultural people to emerge.

I believe that in light of the benefits of Pākehā involvement, there also needs to be a mindfulness of its limits. For example, I believe strongly that the future direction and agenda of kaupapa Māori education needs to remain within Māori hands. Conversely, there remain important considerations about how to continue to support these unique initiatives as non-Māori: to develop a supportive stance that maintains the integrity and vision of all parties and the children involved. Respecting the decision-making roles of Māori whānau does not leave Pākehā families without a place to stand; rather their role is enhanced by being concerned with continuing to understand at what level their involvement is most useful and respectful. For example, at some points Pākehā families may be happily invited to participate in the administration or fundraising for the kura or kōhanga by whānau, however at other times the whānau may be less enthusiastic and wish to work amongst themselves. Measuring the climate, reflecting on one's own position, trusting existing relationships with others, and having regard to the broader philosophy of the kura or kōhanga offer important frames of reference in understanding what involvement Pākehā may have. I hope that this thesis has offered some means of achieving this supportive stance through the sharing of experience.

While the word 'decolonisation' was not used by any of the families with regards to their experiences, the parents' visions of bilingualism for their children and a bicultural Aotearoa – New Zealand has parallels with the politics of decolonisation for the dominant culture. Therefore, an important issue to consider further is whether *the experiences of Pākehā learning in Māori immersion education environments can be used as a tool for decolonisation or colonisation*. In response to this, I hope that this study be used as a platform for dialogue amongst Pākehā, non-Māori and Māori about the future direction of bicultural education in Aotearoa – New Zealand.

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## Appendix A: Interview Guide

Kia ora,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about your involvement in kōhanga/kura. Below is a list of questions I'd like to talk with you about when we meet within the next few days.

The questions are a basic guide to structure our conversation, however any issues you would like to raise are welcome and encouraged.

- What were the circumstances behind your involvement (why, when and how?)
- What are your memories and thoughts on what you or your children learnt from participation in kōhanga/kura?
- What was it like transferring from kōhanga/kura to a mainstream school?
- At this point, what does your involvement in kōhanga/kura mean to you?

Our time together should take an hour or so, although it could take longer depending on how we go!

If you have any questions, my and my supervisors contact details are below. Again, thank you for agreeing to meet with me to discuss Pākehā involvements in kōhanga/kura.

Nāku iti nei,

Nā,

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