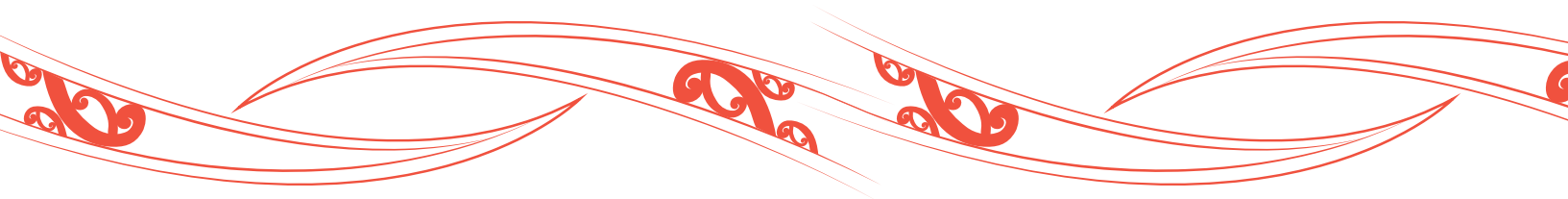




# Kaupapa Māori Research- Some Kaupapa Māori Principles

Linda Tuhiwai Smith



# Kaupapa Māori Research- Some Kaupapa Māori principles

Linda Tuhiwai Smith

## Preamble

This paper was first presented at a conference of Māori academic staff at Massey University in 1996. It predates the publication of *Decolonising Methodologies* in 1998. You will note that since this paper was first presented our understandings and experiences in using Kaupapa Māori have deepened and we have significant capacity in Kaupapa Māori research. In 1996 there were many topics we could not imagine in depth as we had not completed the work to realise the potential of Kaupapa Māori. Also, our thinking was tentative and we were searching for the pathways to research that made sense in Māori ways. In looking back on the paper I can see my own naïve explorations into ideas that I thought were important. I have resisted the urge to rewrite this paper entirely as I think it stands as a good historical moment of where we were and where we are now. It needs to be read in the context of the 1990s.

## Introduction

It is not my intention in this paper to describe the entire Māori epistemological framework. Rather I intend to discuss the kaupapa or philosophies which I believe are beginning to redefine the way we think about Māori research. The fact that the term 'Māori research'<sup>1</sup> is used more freely and that Māori Research units and centres are in operation around different parts of Aotearoa<sup>2</sup> does indicate that there has been a shift in the way research is regarded by many Māori. My own interest in research is not so much in the detail of method but in the underlying theories and assumptions upon which method is based. What we call empirical research assumes that there is a world which can be reached through experience i.e. through empiricism. However making sense of the world and of what constitutes reality relies on how we view the world. It also relies on how we are positioned within the world. There is a wider politics to research which concerns indigenous people, women and other cultures of difference.

I prefer to use the term 'Kaupapa Māori research'. Kaupapa Māori research is research by Māori, for Māori and with Māori. It is very different, in my mind, from other forms of research in which Māori may participate but over which we have no conceptual, design, methodological or interpretative control. The term 'Kaupapa Māori' and my use of it comes from my involvement in the establishment of Kura Kaupapa Māori and the on-going struggle to define and control a term which was meaningful for us as a group. If we can not control the definition we can not control meanings and the theories which lie behind those meanings. As an example Kura Kaupapa Māori is a term which Māori control and have theoretical control over. 'Total Immersion schooling',

1 in this regards, the paper by Evelyn Stokes (1985) marks a significant shift in the way social scientists were prepared to think about Māori research and also in the way funding agencies were moving.

2 Two health research units (Nga Pumanawa Hauora) are funded by HRC, The Sir James Henare Centre and Research Unit for Māori Education are at Auckland University, the Ngati Awa Research Unit is one example of an iwi based research unit.

LT Smith/1994

'bilingual education' and 'Second Language Learning' are terms which have originated elsewhere and which have a literature, research base and theoretical definition, which centre it clearly in the West. When the term Total Immersion is used to describe Kura Kaupapa Māori it invokes a whole range of meanings which simply do not apply in our minds, as advocates of Kura Kaupapa Māori, to what we are on about. It is government's term not ours. It takes away our imagination, our creative control over who we are, what we are and where we are.

The paper will revisit some familiar territory but my purpose is to show you that much of what I am referring to as Kaupapa Māori approaches to research is embedded in a wide range of taken for granted practices, values, beliefs and attitudes towards knowledge and towards the ways we view our relationships within the world. These occurred in the past as I intend to show and are currently part of the practices of Māori researchers today. This is not a definitive account but the beginning of an exploration to which many of you, I am sure, add and shape and redefine according to your own experiences, knowledge and tikanga. Kaupapa Māori Research is neither fixed nor rigid. It is open-ended, it is ethical, systematic and accountable. It is scientific, open to existing methodologies, informed and critical. BUT, it comes from tangata whenua, from whānau, hapu and iwi. It is undertaken by Māori. It is for Māori and it is with Māori. I will address what that means for non-Māori later on in the paper.

## Re-Centering Kaupapa Māori Important Principles

That Māori people had a complex knowledge system has never been contested by people who have worked or researched in the field of Māori 'culture'. However this knowledge was generally held by the public at large to be irrelevant and no longer valid for Māori in a world which was modern, progressive and civilised. The education system has played a vital role in this process through policies directed at the assimilation of Māori. These policies and practices marginalised and de-legitimated most aspects of Māori knowledge, language and culture. Selected aspects of the culture, i.e. 'the more attractive' items such as performance and artistic endeavours were 'permitted' into the school curriculum after the 1930s and into the 'public consciousness' through concert 'parties' and ritual tributes or welcomes for royal and other state dignitaries. Other aspects of culture and identity have been appropriated as national symbols belonging to the character of New Zealand.

## Kaupapa Māori Research- Some Kaupapa Māori principles

Linda Tuhiwai Smith

---

From the 1970s however Māori people have struggled to regain, reconnect and re-centre what it means to be Māori.

This struggle has coalesced around a number of different ideas for example; whakapapa, Te Reo, Tikanga Māori, Rangatiratanga and Mana Wahine: Mana Tane. These concepts are all inter-connected but each one has been the focus of a particular type of struggle which has been articulated in both Māori and Pakeha contexts. One of the difficulties of the politics associated with these struggles is that they have involved educating Pakeha about the nature of our oppression or colonisation, about the meaning of the Treaty of Waitangi, about who and what we are. This form of education is important, it is what Paulo Freire and others might call emancipatory education or put another way 'humanising the oppressor', it is a form of education which means that ideas and definitions have to be arranged in a form which is recognisable and therefore potentially understandable to Pakeha. That work has to continue but alongside another form of education namely the education of ourselves. This is particularly pertinent as so many of us have had to learn and carry out research skills 'on the run' and more importantly as Māori academics have had to prepare increasing numbers of Māori students to carry out research. The work of the Waitangi Tribunal has signalled a major dearth of skilled Māori researchers in the science and social science arena. It is in this area that I see the developments of what I call Kaupapa Māori research.

Instead of fitting research methods into a Māori framework, Kaupapa Māori assumes the existence and validity of Māori knowledge, language and culture and asks a simple set of questions:

- (i) What research do we want to carry out?
- (ii) Who is that research for?
- (iii) What difference will it make?
- (iv) Who will carry out this research?
- (v) How do we want the research to be done?
- (vi) How will we know it is a worthwhile piece of research?
- (vii) Who will own the research?
- (viii) Who will benefit?

The answers to these questions are not straightforward nor is there a direct and instrumental relationship between each question and the answer to be provided by a particular research project. Nor are the questions to be confused with matters of property rights or of material rewards. They are to do with a set of principles which should underpin the way research involving Māori is thought about.

The following is a very brief discussion of each principle.

### The Principle of Whakapapa

John Rangihau for example wrote about the difficulty that the term 'Māori' actually presents for him as a person with specific whakapapa which locates him in whānau, hapu and iwi. The pan- Māori approach to all things Māori was an identity imposed externally upon all Māori people. Other definitions of identity such as race classifications were equally problematic. The identity question is complex. It has psychological and political meanings for individual Māori, often positioning them in an insider/outsider quandary or state of confusion. It means something different however for researchers who need some conceptual and empirical control over the classification systems which underpin their work. Statistical attempts to define just who is Māori are also fraught with problems. The last census attempt to record iwi statistics has ended up with a large pool of Māori who have not identified an iwi. It would be dangerous to read into those numbers any assumptions about why that number of people did not choose to name an iwi. Personally I objected to being asked to nominate a primary iwi as I take seriously my rights to claim bilineal descent and resent the state imposing definitions through census on how our identity is shaped. In brief these external measurements of identity are significant at an ideological level because they become normative, they set the norm for what it means to be Māori. Anyone who has worked with urban based adolescent Māori will know how powerful those normative criteria are.

Identity is also inextricably bound to whānau and whenua relationships, to the marae and the value system and language which holds these things together. The move away from pan-Māori approaches to political and economic development and the reassertion of whānau, hapu and iwi criteria have required a re-orientation by all Māori back to the iwi. Accompanying this re-orientation has been a strategic shift in political alliances, economic resources and the locus of accountability. In many ways this devolution nicely coincided with a larger crisis of legitimation affecting the role of the state. The splintering of Māori interests has allowed for a greater degree of state control. All this has a direct relationship to research as a public good.

# Kaupapa Māori Research- Some Kaupapa Māori principles

Linda Tuhiwai Smith

## The Principle of Te Reo

The threat of imminent 'language death' spelled out by the research of Richard Benton in the 1970s and reinforced by Māori experiences has meant a major community driven struggle for the revival and retention of Māori language. In this struggle Māori are not alone as other indigenous people have suffered the same fate with their languages slowly dying as community languages. Māori language has been tied very closely to issues of knowledge, identity and education. In fact education and schooling were major sites for the development of initiatives aimed at reviving Māori as a spoken language between the 1980s and the now. Two such initiatives are Te Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori. Other attempts need to be acknowledged as well, for example the simple act of placing an advertisement in Māori language in a newspaper has not been easily done in the past. There have been attempts to increase the use of Māori in the court system, the media, training programmes and even on the floor of the House of Parliament. None of these attempts have been as successful as the models of Te Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori. That situation may change over time. For research and for health research however the principle of Te Reo Māori can be seen to be exercised in the development of better quality bilingual resources, consent forms and information sheets and the employment of researchers who are skilled in this area. A cautionary note however relates to the training of Māori researchers, as fluency in Māori language does not equate directly to fluency in research skills or indeed in the understanding of epistemological issues.

## The Principle of Tikanga Māori

Notions of tikanga are embedded in the ways people often think and behave. It is an area in which young people or people with little understanding of their identity often get challenged. The politics associated with this are complex and often stressful for participants. It is an area in which Māori researchers need training because they often carry the 'kanohi kitea' or face to face side of research. Issues of tikanga are part of the dynamics of a living culture and should not be regarded as recipe or formula which can be learned at a single professional development course. Kaumātua still discuss and disagree on matters of tikanga.

## The Principle of Rangatiratanga

This principle is interpreted in a number of ways:

- (i) as partnership with the Crown
- (ii) as self-determination
- (iii) as Māori autonomy and control over resources (iv) as a symbol around which ideas are organised.

All of these interpretations have implications for research at a number of levels. For example many Māori willingly

enter and participate in research with Pakeha in various forms of partnership. Other communities wish to undertake their own research completely independently of either an agency or an individual research consultant. 'Bicultural' models of research have been developed to encourage Māori to participate in research and clearly Māori people are developing their own models. A critical issue relates to the question as to the extent to which Māori are still the 'objects' of research or the subjects in a meaningful way. There is increasing concern by Māori for example that new forms of research enhanced by the powers of the GATT agreement will simply result in new forms of colonialism which will see the patenting of indigenous knowledge and life forms by overseas companies (Mead, 1993). Under these global agreements New Zealand is regarded by many informed Māori as having already sold out the 'rangatiratanga' of their Treaty of Waitangi partners.

## The Principle of Mana Wahine: Mana Tane

This area is important on a number of grounds. At one level Māori women have been absent from the way research about Māori has been conducted, for example tribal histories. In other ways Māori women have been present but as a subtext to the major story, a good example is in the rewriting of stories such as the Maui story. Thirdly Māori women have been the target of research and of subsequent interventions. This has been particularly true in the health and education areas. A critical issue to consider here is the extent to which researchers are employed on hidden gender grounds because there is a perception that either a man or a woman will be able to do one thing or another simply because of their gender. This can over simplify a complex area of Māori social relationships.

## Who Carries Out Kaupapa Māori Research?

From what I have said so far it should be fairly clear that the primary researchers are Māori. I have suggested elsewhere that the issues for Māori researchers can be very different from the research issues faced by Māori. I am not saying that one set is more or less difficult. However there is considerable international literature on cross-cultural issues for researchers in a number of disciplines. In New Zealand there has been some material on such topics as bicultural research and on culturally sensitive research. The assumption in these papers is that Māori are the silent research partner, having insider knowledge but lacking actual research skills. Graham Smith (1992) has provided some of the more helpful models of this kind of research. He posits three types: a Tiaki (mentor model) where authoritative Māori mentor a researcher; a whangai model where researchers are adopted by a whānau or community and a power-sharing model where the community takes greater charge over the research from its conception to its outcomes.

# Kaupapa Māori Research- Some Kaupapa Māori principles

Linda Tuhiwai Smith

Principle	Nature of the struggle	Implications for Research
Whakapapa	in Te Ao Māori: (i)related to identity (ii)whānau, hapu, iwi in Te Ao Pakeha: (i)race classifications (ii) ethnicity	classification whānaungatanga micro/macro credibility of researcher
Te Reo	in Te Ao Māori: (i) identity (ii)education (iii)knowledge in Te Ao Pakeha: (i) rights (ii)protection (iii)national identity	kanohi ki te kanohi the researcher/s research process conceptual work
Tikanga	in Te Ao Māori: (i) authenticity (ii)mana (iii)marae (iv)representation (iv) accountability in Te Ao Pakeha (i) authenticity (ii)conformity (iii)access	research process research design place people interpretation representation accountabilities credibility
Rangatiratanga	in Te Ao Māori: (i) mana whenua (ii)mana tangata (iii)Treaty of Waitangi	research policy research activity research funding definition/design priorities

Evelyn Stokes 1985 paper 'Māori Research and Development' breaks new ground in this whole area with a systematic mapping of Māori attitudes to research and to knowledge. I have circulated a paper I wrote originally in 1985 which has subsequently been revised and was published again in 1991 raising similar questions about knowledge and asking critical questions about research activities. These papers signal a subtle but significant shift in the way Māori research was framed. The shift occurs at the level of knowledge rather than at the level of different methodologies. It is significant because ideas about the nature of knowledge and of science and the way we might pursue those ideas underpin all forms of western research. To carry out research is to seek knowledge, insight, clarification and understanding. It assumes a concept of knowing and is embedded with understandings about the ways in which we gain or come to know knowledge.

On the other hand however there is next to no research, no literature, no guidance on the issues which concern indigenous, minority group researchers carrying out research within their own communities. This was partly because we, as Māori for example, have usually been 'the researched' not 'the researcher'. It is partly because education has failed to produce Māori people with the right balance of Māori and research skills. It has also been and continues to be because not enough recognition is made of the benefits to be gained from having Māori research. For example the field of feminist research in the social sciences is acceptable across a wide range of disciplines. Feminist research theorists are seen as having advanced our understandings of the relationships between knowledge and power, and of the nature of science.

What Māori people have, as with other indigenous people is a distinct knowledge tradition which lies outside western views of knowledge. It is still located in a cultural framework and lived by real people. I certainly believe that coming from a Māori conceptual framework makes spaces for new ways of looking at and seeking understandings of some of the research issues we confront in our work. In other words understanding Māori knowledge is not just about getting access to more co-operative Māori. It is about enhancing our understandings and strengthening our knowledge base in ways which will help us and others.

## Māori Knowledge and Issues for Māori Researchers

Within the realm of Māori knowledge there exists the notion of levels or phases of knowledge ie taumata which are helpful concepts for thinking about Kaupapa Māori research. The notions of mohiotanga, waananga and maramatanga for example indicate levels and processes by which we gain insight and deep clarification of what we are seeking. Matauranga ('ma' and 'tau') is said to be attained when it is held or comes to rest within us. These ideas are important because they provide a conceptual framework and signal standards of excellence to which Māori research must aspire. These ideas are contained within the language but are often manifested in the taken for granted behaviours of Māori people. For example;

- (i) why do we seek out kaumatua?
- (ii) Why do we value wānanga as a shared learning process?



## Kaupapa Māori Research- Some Kaupapa Māori principles

Linda Tuhiwai Smith

- (iii) Why do we stay up late at night to listen to kōrero?
- (iv) Why do we have karakia?
- (v) Why do some of us talk about 'holistic' views?
- (vi) What is a wairua and what does a wairua do?
- (vii) Why is tapu important and how is it linked to knowledge?
- (viii) Why does a Māori researcher want to feed his/her visitors?
- (vix) Why does a Māori researcher want to hold a hui or take an issue to the marae? (x)what does utu, koha, manaakitanga mean?

The answers to all these questions relate back to Māori views about knowledge. They are important because Māori researchers are assumed to know the answers to them, both by their employer agencies and by the community into which they enter? They are part of the research process and methodologies which many Māori researchers simply take for granted and incorporate into their practices. The danger is that these beliefs and values are often seen as idiosyncratic behaviours of an individual rather than as a cultural process which influences in a number of ways a piece of research. In other words they are linked to method and to the interpretation of data. They are a qualitative dynamic which is frequently overlooked and under-rated. Linked to this is the question of access to knowledge and the assumption of western research paradigms that if well trained we will gain access to the knowledge we require, it is matter of skill, of being systematic and of being sensitive. For many Māori, other dynamics can cut across this ideal. These are tied up with age, whānau position, gender, the esteem with which other members in your whānau may be held and individual personalities. At one level simple 'being Māori' or 'being Ngati Porou', being a mokopuna for example does not necessarily make you an 'insider' in terms of research. The multiple positions we hold and the different relationships which each of those positions binds us to make our own research encounters problematic, dynamic and rich.

### Māori Cultural Ethics

Linked to the points raised above is the question of cultural ethics. These ethics relate not just to existing questions of informed consent and the rights of individuals. They also relate to the 'conduct' of a researcher and of a research project. I think we are finding that each discipline, each community of interest is being confronted with issues related to Ethics. This area needs further development in terms of how Māori researchers negotiate ethics, let alone other non-Māori researchers who work with Māori people. At one level the insider networks that Māori researchers have are personal networks based on the concept of whānaungatanga. These are not necessarily close whakapapa relationships. The ethical issue is related to the

extent that these networks are personal to the researcher or are professionally linked to the research. What are the rules, either explicit or implicit, for the feedback, support and contribution that these networks make?

The issue of power remains one with which researchers must always wrestle. Power in itself is always present in relationships and power is not necessarily a negative force. The ethical question for Māori people is related to the masking of power relationships through other devices. Most Māori communities do accept that researchers will publish their work, that they will often do this in complex and technical language but they get highly annoyed if they find that results disseminated overseas or in inaccessible journals say something counter to what was told to their faces by the researchers. There are a number of examples I could draw upon which highlight how easily and unthinkingly this occurs. It is important to discuss these forms of dissemination so that misunderstandings do not occur. What some researchers I know of failed to realise is that many Māori people live overseas, travel widely, have wide circles of acquaintances and often attend conferences. Furthermore many Māori are assertive and will challenge. Dialogue and feedback continually inform research as an activity and is part of the new ethics and social realities for researchers.

### Working With Kaumatua

This is an interesting area of thought. My questions are simply these;

- (i) Why do we need kaumatua?
- (ii) If we need them for their knowledge how are we using that knowledge?
- (iii) If we need them for legitimacy how are we using them?
- (iv) If we need them for protection how are we using them?
- (v) If we need them to take karakia do we understand what karakia is about?

I personally resent seeing my own kaumatua put at risk, spiritually as well as in terms of their credibility at home. This is because I have lots of memories of having seen my nannies and koro get up in the early hours of the morning, put on their best clothes, travel long hours, wait often in cold conditions for various things to happen and then get treated like they are of marginal consequence. This use to happen when they came to Wellington to do things on behalf of the whānau or hapu or iwi. I will not say more but rather leave the thought there for you to consider. If you can answer the questions to your own satisfaction well and good, if you can't then perhaps more thought needs to go into the practice.

# Kaupapa Māori Research- Some Kaupapa Māori principles

Linda Tuhiwai Smith

---

## A Community of Māori Researchers

I know because of my own networks that there are a number of Māori engaged in research. This forum of Matawhānui would probably be the most significant organised group of Māori researchers. Not all of us carry out empirical research but in many ways our own teaching is constantly informed by research and the exploration of new ideas. Many of you are heavily committed to iwi based research especially around Waitangi Tribunal claims and many of you carry this burden on top of your own full-time work. This overload of research is not dis-connected from our roles. I would argue that it is an essential part of our roles. Furthermore as some of us move into the new area of working in Wānanga and attempting to re-conceptualise what may count as the general field of Māori studies our research becomes integral to the development of and support for these new initiatives. An Algerian revolutionary writer in the 1960s, Frantz Fanon, referred to what he called 'native intellectuals' as lazy and alienated from the work they should be doing. I know we are not lazy but perhaps the one area of our work which has been most neglected is research and the dissemination of our research across community, scholarly and policy contexts. I think that is the challenge ahead.

## In Summary

This paper has just raised the issues and some challenges related to Kaupapa Māori as an approach to research by Māori, for Māori and with Māori. It is not an absolute approach but the beginning of an exploration of what research means when the researcher and the researched are Māori. If we take other examples of Kaupapa Māori then we know that the potential is great, the struggle is difficult but the process is exciting. Hopefully, this paper will help to advance these ideas and encourage us to think openly about new possibilities for research.

## References

- Benton, R. (1988) *'Education, Language Decline and Language Revitalisation: The Case of Māori in New Zealand'*. Wellington: NZCER.
- Craig, E.W.G (1964) *Man of the Mist*. In A.H. & A.W (Eds.), Wellington: Reed.
- Grey, George (1853) *Nga Moteatea* and (1855) *Polynesian Mythology* manuscripts in Auckland Public Library.
- Jackson, S. (1987). 'Mana Gobblers'. *METRO*, 190.
- McClellan, J. (1985). *Science Reorganised: Scientific Societies in the Eighteenth Centuries*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Mead, A., 'Misappropriation of Indigenous Knowledge: The Next Wave of Colonisation', in Barbara Nicholas (ed), *Otago Bioethics Report*, 3, 1, (Dunedin, Bioethics Research Centre, 1994), pp. 4-7.

Mita, Merata (1989) oral source

Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Salmond, A. (1991). *Two Worlds*. Auckland: Viking Penguin.

Smith, G. (1992). 'Research Issues Related to Māori Education'. *The Issue of Research and Māori RUME*, monograph 9. University of Auckland.

Stokes, E. (1985). 'Māori Research and Development'. Paper presented at the National Research Advisory Council, Wellington. Republished in, *The Issue of Research and Māori, RUME monograph 9*. University of Auckland.