TE WĀHANGA
HE WHĀNAU MĀTAU HE WHĀNAU ORA
NZCER

Ka whānau mai te reo

Honouring Whānau Upholding Reo Māori

Nicola Bright, Alex Barnes and Jessica Hutchings

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New Zealand Council for Educational Research
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Wellington 6140
New Zealand

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Photographic images have been given with consent by whānau.
He mihi nui tēnei ki ngā whānau Potaka, Hutchings, Mau, Taumata, Nairn, Ohia, me Te Maru.

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He Mihi

E ngā iwi o te motu tēnā koutou katoa. E tangi ana te ngākau ki ngā mate huhua o te wā. Kua wehe atu koutou ki tua, kua haumūmū ō koutou reo, kua piki atu ki te pae o maumahara. Haere atu koutou ki Paerau, koutou kua whetūrangitia moe mai rā, whakaoti atu.

Kei ngā tini whānau o te motu, e ngā puananī o te reo, ka nui ā mātou mihi ki a koutou katoa i tautoko mai i te mahi rangahau nei. Kua whakarewaina tēnei kohikohinga hei āwhina, hei whāngai, i a tātou katoa, otirā hei whakapakari i ngā mahi hanga ara hou mō tēnei reo kāmehameha. Tēnā koutou katoa. He mārama tonu ki te titiro kua korikori ngā iwi o te motu ki te kimi i te mātauranga, me te whai tonu nei i ngā tapuwae o rātou kua wehe. Tīhei mauri ora!

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Kupu Whakataki

Preamble

E ngā iwi o te motu tēnā koutou katoa. E mōhiotia ana i tēnei wā ko te huarahi whakapiki mō te tini o ngā whānau mō tō rātou whanaketanga ā-reo, ko te akoranga reo Māori i roto i ngā kura mātauranga. Ko tā tēnei rangahau kaupapa Māori mō te toru tau, he arotahi ki te whanaketanga reo Māori ā-whānau, otirā ki ngā whakawhitinga a ngā tamariki mokopuna mai i tētahi momo horopaki akoranga ki tētahi, ahakoa i roto, ahakoa i waho i ngā kura tūturu nei.

Ka noho tēnei kaupapa hei rito, i roto tonu i te kaupapa whakaora reo Māori whānui ake, i roto i Aotearoa New Zealand. I tēnei kaupapa whānui he rerekē ngā mahi a te whānau, a te Kāwanatanga tētahi i tētahi. Ahakoa rerekē, he tūnga whakahirahira tō te kāwanatanga, he tūnga whakahirahira tō te whānau, hei kaupare atu i ngā tukunga iho o te nohonoho mai o tauiwi me ōna raruraru, i raungaiti ai te noho o te reo i roto i ngā whakatupuranga. Kua hē noa iho ngā huarahi tukutuku i te reo mai i te pakeke ki te tamaiti. Ka tae tēnei ki te tau 2013, ko te nuinga o ngā kaikōrero pakeke i ako kē ki te kōrero Māori i waho anō i ō rātou kāinga. He mea tēnei e herea ai te kaha o te whānau ki te whāngai i te reo ki ā rātou tamariki i roto i ngā mahi o te kāinga, e tupu māori noa mai ai te reo.

E rua ā mātou whāinga matua mō tēnei kaupapa:

1 He whakahōhonu i tō tātou mārama me pēhea te tautoko i te whānau reo Māori i roto i ēnei whakawhitinga whakahirahira, i te neke haeretanga o te whānau i waenga i ngā kura tūturu, i waho anō hoki i te pūnaha kura.

2 He tautoko i te whanaketanga o te whānau reo Māori mā te hora i ngā mōhiohio whai take ki ngā whānau rerekē, hei āwhina i a rātou ki te whakatau tikanga mō rātou anō.

E arotahi ana mātou ki ngā whakawhitinga ki ngā wāhi ako hou i roto i tēnei kaupapa nā te mea koinā ngā "whatinga ngaru" e huri ai te whānau ki te whiriwhiri mehemea kei runga rātou i te huarahi ako tōtika. Hei reira hoki ka whakatau anō te whānau mehemea koinei te huarahi hei whakatutuki i ō rātou tūmanako mō te reo Māori me te mātauranga, me ērā atu mea nunui ki a rātou.

He maha ngā whakatau, he matatini hoki ngā whakatau, ina whiria ko tēhea te horopaki hou e tutuki ai ngā hiahia me ngā wawata o ngā ākonga me ō rātou whānau.

E tika ana kia whiwhi ngā whānau i ngā mōhiohio ngāwari noa te kimi atu mō te katoa, mō ngā whāinga wāhi e wātea ana ki a rātou. Kei tēnei pūrongo te tīmatanga o ētahi mōhiohio whai tikanga mō te whānau, ki tā mātou titiro: Kua oti te tautohu ētahi ritenga whakawhitinga papai i runga anō i ngā tāhuhu kōrero pakari e puta mai ana i ngā pukapuka me ngā kōrero mai i ngā whānau, ā, he whakaaro anō ō mātou me pēhea te whakapai ake i te huarahi whakawhitinga.

He mea tino nui tēnei momo mōhiohio nā te mea mā konei ka āwhinatia ngā whānau ki te whiriwhiri i ngā momo akoranga reo Māori ka whāia e rātou, me pēhea hoki e puta ai he hua i tā rātou i kōwhiri ai hei whakatutuki i ō rātou moemoeā mō te reo Māori.

Kupu Arataki

Introduction

Ka Whānau mai te Reo: Honouring whānau, upholding reo Māori is a 3-year (2012–2015) kaupapa Māori research project that investigates how best to support the continuity of whānau reo Māori development during key educational transitions. We have two main aims in the project.

1

To deepen our understanding of how whānau reo Māori development can be supported during key educational transitions as whānau move within the compulsory education sector and beyond.

2

To support the continuity of whānau reo Māori development by providing diverse whānau with useful information that informs their decision making during key educational transitions.

We focus particularly on the transition points in Māori-language development because these can be important determinants in creating or maintaining a stable language foundation.

This project sits within the larger kaupapa of reo Māori revitalisation in Aotearoa New Zealand. Here, whānau and the government each have essential roles to play in counteracting the negative impact of colonisation and ongoing settler colonialism which has left the language in an endangered state. The natural processes of language transmission have been disrupted to the point that, in 2013, most adult speakers of Māori have learned Māori as a second language outside the home environment. This mode of learning restricts the ability of whānau to transmit the language to their tamariki in a naturally sustainable way. Although recent governments have promoted strategies to support Māori-language learning, institutional racism entrenched in the education system continues to undermine whānau wellbeing, educational achievement,[1] and reo Māori aspirations.

> An examination of mainstream and Māori education in Aotearoa New Zealand indicates that the two worlds are not equal, that while the Māori world is expected to subsume itself to and be completely familiar with the Pākehā, the Pākehā world is not expected to open itself to the Māori. In this context of inequality, social justice cannot be realised: there are neither the means nor the principles in place by which it could be. Transformation has occurred that is therefore about a loss of identity, culture and mana, rather than an addition to a way of being in the world.[2]

In this report, we describe institutional racism as the power of one group to embed monocultural structures and systems in the institutions of society, thereby disadvantaging one group and privileging another. These monocultural structures can become customary through practices and law, which can result in differential access to material conditions and power, such as access to information, resources, and public voice.[3] Challenging institutional racism is not about focusing on the conscious or unconscious prejudice of individuals, although this is important too. In this regard, Paradies writes that:

> oppression is systemic in society and is unwittingly and unconsciously (re)produced by many people who have no racist intentions whatsoever ... [4]

We suggest that a focus on institutional racism is about understanding how racism manifests in the structures, policies, and rules that shape the Aotearoa New Zealand education system.

Oppression is systemic in society and is unwittingly and unconsciously (re) produced by many people who have no racist intentions whatsoever ...

By identifying how monocultural systems and processes have become embedded in educational systems, people concerned about Māori educational wellbeing, achievement, and success can become proactive in undoing systems that marginalise Māori educational aspirations. Focusing on institutional racism allows people to rethink and deconstruct learning systems that advantage one group over another.

We acknowledge that the Crown, through its government agencies, promotes strategies that are overtly intended to improve Māori learners' success within the education system:

1 Penetito, 2010; Hutchings et al., 2012, p. 1
2 Penetito, 2010, p. 66
3 Jones, 2000, p. 1212
4 Paradies, 2006, p. 147

> Māori educational success is important for New Zealand. By 2030, about one third of our students—and, therefore, one-third of our future workforce—will be Māori. For Māori students to succeed and for our country's prosperity, the education system must perform well for Māori.[5]

The Ministry of Education's *Ka Hikitia—Managing for Success 2008–2012*,[6] for example, and its successor, *Ka Hikitia—Accelerating Success 2013–2017*,[7] have the strategic intent that Māori enjoy education success as Māori. While positive, so far such strategies have not been well co-ordinated or well operationalised. In a 2011 briefing to the Minister of Education, the Secretary for Education stated that the Ministry of Education had never had a strategy to guide the way in which it thinks about Māori language, and characterised their investment in this area as "somewhat reactive and ad-hoc".[8] In addition, the Waitangi Tribunal described the Crown's *Te Rautaki Reo Māori—Māori Language Strategy* as "neither effective nor efficient", noting that in the absence of clear targets, agencies have floundered.[9]

We focus on transitions in this project because they act as 'trigger points' for reflection where whānau have the opportunity to assess whether they are on the right learning pathway to fulfil their aspirations for reo Māori and education

The lack of well-operationalised support from government is why Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust brought a claim to the Waitangi Tribunal in 2012. The Trust alleged that the Crown had failed to understand the purpose and nature of kōhanga reo and its role in reo Māori revitalisation—and had sought to assimilate kōhanga reo as mainstream early childhood education (ECE) service providers "in a manner inconsistent with the exercise of tino rangatiratanga".[10] The Trust alleged that Crown's breach of its duties under Te Tiriti o Waitangi had had a number of adverse consequences for kōhanga reo whānau and caused a further decline in the status of reo Māori.[11] In its findings, the Tribunal acknowledged the importance of full immersion environments for reo Māori revitalisation. It recommended (among other measures) that the Crown should inform Māori whānau of the "relative benefits for mokopuna attending kōhanga reo with respect to reo Māori and education outcomes", and of the "importance of bilingual/immersion programmes if reo Māori is to survive as a living language".[12]

The Ministry of Education's newest strategy, *Tau Mai Te Reo: The Māori Language in Education Strategy 2013–2017*,[13] identifies the Ministry's and education sector agencies' responsibilities to Māori language under the Treaty of Waitangi, legislation and *Te Rautaki Reo Māori,* the government's Māori-language strategy. Tau Mai Te Reo recognises that the responsibility for the revival of reo Māori is shared between iwi, Māori, the Crown, and its agents,[14] and recognises the Ministry's responsibility to support iwi efforts to encourage reo Māori use in homes, within whānau, on marae, and in communities.[15]

While strategic thinking and improved coordination across the education sector are being encouraged, it is also important to critically analyse implementation of strategy at an institutional level where systems and resources are put into effect. Identifying and challenging the structural barriers in the education system that can marginalise whānau is an important component of *Ka Whānau mai te Reo*. As a form of critical analysis, identifying and countering institutional racism provides practical ways that whānau, and those engaged in the education system, can positively contribute to the revitalisation efforts of reo Māori, and support Māori whānau wellbeing generally. It also provides ways for educational researchers to challenge ongoing practices of settler colonialism that operate in the everyday as institutional racism.[16] Discourses of settler colonialism remind us that:

> settler colonialism is an ongoing project that must continually code, decode and recode social norms and social spaces so as to secure a meaningful relationship to the territories and resources at stake.[17]

In the context of reo Māori revitalisation, we choose to view the education system as a transitional space

5 Office of the Auditor General, 2013, May
6 Ministry of Education, 2009a
7 Ministry of Education, 2013c
8 Waitangi Tribunal, 2012, p. 118
9 Ibid., pp. 114–116
10 Ibid., pp. 5–6
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid., p. xix
13 Ministry of Education, 2013b
14 Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 7
15 Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 28
16 Wolfe, 2013
17 Smith, 2011, pp. 111–131

for supporting reo Māori development. The education system has an important role now. Over time, as intergenerational language transmission in homes and communities becomes normal again, the educational system's role will change. In the meantime, many whānau are in the position of relying on formal Māori-language education in one form or another to support their early reo development.

Most whānau—adults and tamariki—have to make a conscious decision to learn reo Māori and once that decision is made, over a lifetime they may make multiple decisions about how, and when they will learn it. Within the compulsory education system, they can choose between a wide range of immersion and bilingual programmes that support reo Māori development with varied degrees of effectiveness. Most Māori speaking adults are second-language learners themselves, so we are interested in what potential the system has to better recognise and support the reo Māori aspirations of adults, so that they can better support the reo development of their tamariki.

While whānau are participating in the education system, they transition between different learning environments and, in some cases, different language environments. We focus on transitions in this project because they act as "trigger points" for reflection where whānau have the opportunity to assess whether they are on the right learning pathway to fulfil their aspirations for reo Māori and education, and for other things that are important to them. The move from one learning environment to another involves making complex decisions about what environment is going to best meet the needs and aspirations of ākonga and their whānau. These decisions are based on a set of criteria determined by each whānau, of which reo Māori may be one of many competing priorities. Other priorities may include school culture, location, transport options, presence of other whānau, range of subjects, extracurricular activities, decile rating, achievement statistics, school reputation, and more.[18] In addition, research has shown that transitions are a time when learners are particularly vulnerable because of the significant types of changes that occur at these times.[19] These changes can include becoming familiar with a new school and new teachers, experiencing new ways of learning, and dealing with the onset of puberty.

Whānau are entitled to accessible information about the learning opportunities that are available to them. This is an important element of challenging

institutional racism and fracturing the "everydayness" of settler colonialism because it encourages cultural responsiveness within the education system that addresses the diverse reo Māori aspirations of whānau.

Ka Whānau mai te Reo presents some of the kōrero that whānau have shared with us about their aspirations for, and experiences of, Māori-language education as they move through Māori-medium and English-medium learning pathways in the compulsory education system and beyond.

The first part of this report explains our kaupapa Māori research approach in terms of the methodology of whanaungatanga, and the method of kōrero ā-whānau. The second part provides an overview of the current Māori-language education environment and unpacks some of the issues that whānau encounter during transitions. It suggests some critical questions for whānau to think about as they are making decisions and choosing their learning pathways.

This report is the first in a set of three. The second report (due in 2014) will focus on the experiences of whānau who are in the preparation stage of a transition, and the third report (due in 2015) will focus on whānau who have completed the transition into a new learning environment.

18 Hutchings et al., 2012
19 Education Review Office, 2012, p. 7; Rivers, 2010, p. 15; Cox & Kennedy, 2008, p. 13

Kaupapa Māori

Research Approach

Kaupapa Māori can be described as a dynamic, evolving thinking space for exploring new ideas and approaches that contribute to mātauranga Māori. Smith has described kaupapa Māori research as related to "being Māori" and connected to Māori philosophy and principles.[20] It takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori, the importance of reo Māori and tikanga Māori, and is concerned with "the struggle for autonomy over our own cultural well being".[21]

In *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* we locate whānau aspirations, priorities, realities, and worldviews at the centre of our rangahau, because it is the perspective of whānau that matters most in the journey to revitalise our language. Any change that will significantly impact on whānau must come from whānau. This study builds on the kaupapa Māori work Te Wāhanga undertook in 2011/12 with diverse whānau that resulted in the publication of *Kia Puāwaitia Ngā Tūmanako: Critical Issues for Whānau in Māori Education*.[22] Whānau who participated in that study identified ngā moemoeā (whānau aspirations), rangatiratanga (whānau authority and autonomy), and te reo rangatira (learning and maintenance of reo Māori) as foundational to a kaupapa Māori analysis of education issues that concern whānau.[23] We use these three key kaupapa to investigate the relationship between reo Māori development and transitions, as experienced by diverse whānau.

20 Smith, 1992
21 Ibid.
22 Hutchings et al., 2012
23 Ibid., p. 1

WHANAUNGATANGA

Whanaungatanga as both a theory and a practice is transformative. Whanaungatanga as a methodology focuses our research on whānau engagement in education, and is whānau driven.[24] Methodologically, whanaungatanga acts as a deliberate counter-narrative to the way that colonisation and ongoing settler colonialism negatively impacts on the concept, diverse practices, and role of whānau.

Whanaungatanga has become the way of operating throughout the project both in our kanohi kitea encounters with whānau, and in the way we as kairangahau orientate ourselves to the analysis and to this report. As kairangahau we critically reflect on

24 Bishop, 1995. p.221

our role in representing diverse whānau voices. We work to counter "writing over" or "re-narrating" kōrero ā-whānau. Aligning ourselves with whanaungatanga means we present verbatim quotes from whānau to privilege their voice and experiences to ensure that whānau can see themselves in our research. We also engage whanaungatanga-centred processes for our analysis. For example, wānanga bring processes of collectivity to our rangahau.

Te Aronga: Ka Whānau mai te Reo conceptual framework

The *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 shows how we have thought about the project at a high level. The framework makes our starting premise in te ao Māori clear, locates diverse whānau at the centre, and shows the connections between the ideas and philosophies we are drawing on as kairangahau to inform our whanaungatanga approach. The three central kaupapa—ngā moemoeā, rangatiratanga, and reo Māori—form the lens through which we understand and learn from diverse whānau experiences.

The framework is grounded in te ao tūroa, which locates the cultural geographies of whānau within the landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand. It also derives from kaupapa tuku iho which whānau express and give living meaning to through multiple and diverse expressions of mātauranga. This grounding gives us a secure foundation where we can identify and challenge the place of settler colonialism in the education system.

The entrenchment of colonial attitudes in our society which manifest as institutional racism continues to hamper whānau reo development. This framework enables this project to hold a decolonial praxis through critically engaging with the kaupapa Māori theory and praxis of whanaungatanga. Whanaungatanga as a research approach creates accountability to diverse whānau communities whose voices have framed the overarching research question of this report: what supports the continuity of whānau reo development during key educational transitions? It also draws from other critical theoretical discourses such as critical theory, critical race theory, and settler colonialism.

Kōrero ā-whānau

> We need to have whānau aspirations as the bottom line. We want to have a different set-up for our kids, and decide collectively as a whānau.[25]

Ngā moemoeā is about the aspirations that whānau have for the reo; both for their tamariki and for their adult members. Whānau aspirations for the reo are as diverse as whānau themselves, so it is important that we acknowledge this diversity and do not make assumptions that one option will fit all. We are

25 Bright et al., 2013

HOW WE ARE THINKING ABOUT OUR RESEARCH

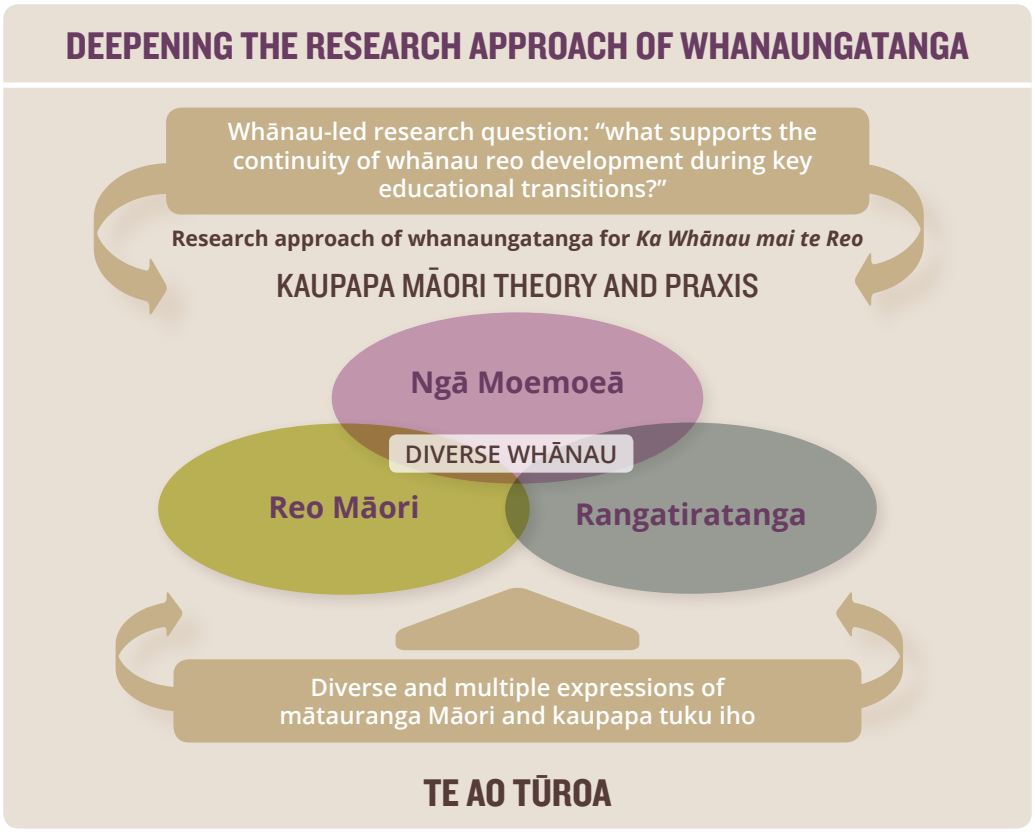

Figure 1: *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* conceptual framework

interested in knowing which Māori-language education options are most likely to fulfil a range of aspirations, and what barriers and opportunities may impact on the fulfilment of these aspirations as whānau transition between learning environments.

Rangatiratanga (whānau authority/ autonomy)

> We start with the assumption that Māori are determined to survive as a people. That is, the speck in the global cultural mosaic that is Māori will be here forever as the following pepehā predicts: E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea—I shall never be lost, a seed scattered from Rangiātea.[26]

Rangatiratanga in the context of *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* is about strengthening the ability of whānau to exercise collective and individual control over elements that will advance their reo Māori aspirations. It is about providing whānau with the knowledge and information to choose their best pathway through the existing education system. Rangatiratanga is also about creating alternatives for whānau learning, as was the case when whānau created Māori-medium entities as an alternative to English-medium schooling.

"Increasing knowledge and understanding increases the potential for improved support for whānau, and for change within the education system itself, both in Māori and English mediums"

While social and cultural networks can influence whānau decision-making,[27] access to information about reo Māori education options can play a complementary role. Such information can help whānau plan their educational pathways within compulsory education and extend to promoting opportunities for rangatahi to maintain and further develop their reo Māori once they have left school.

Te reo Māori (learning and maintenance of reo Māori)

> Ko tōku reo tōku ohooho, tōku māpihi maurea, tōku whakakai mārihi
>
> My language is my precious gift, my object of affection, and my prized ornament

Reo Māori is an integral part of our cultural identity. It is a living treasure that enables understanding and participation in the Māori world. Although the reinstatement of intergenerational transmission in homes is the key to ensuring that our reo remains a living, everyday language, it is also important to understand the issues related to reo Māori development that whānau are experiencing as they navigate their way through the education system and beyond. Increasing knowledge and understanding increases the potential for improved support for whānau, and for change within the education system itself, both in Māori and English mediums.

KŌRERO Ā-WHĀNAU

Our research approach centres around whānau and whanaungatanga, so we chose to use kōrero ā-whānau to identify commonalities and differences in whānau, kaiako, and ākonga beliefs about reo Māori, their roles in reo Māori revitalisation, and the role of the education system.

Whānau

Transitions for Māori learners involve both learners and their whānau. Whānau are connected through "whakapapa and kaupapa—through a shared heritage or a commitment to a particular philosophy",[28] and these relationships do not have to be exclusive. Whānau may come together as mothers, fathers, whānau takatapui, tamariki, mokopuna, kaumātua, whaea, matua; and/or as a collective of people drawn together by a kaupapa or philosophy. For example, whānau associated with a particular kura, along with kaiako, school leaders, or people generally interested in Māori educational issues, may or may not be also related to one another. All whānau with a connection to Māori learners experiencing transitions were welcomed in this research project.

Ākonga

Ākonga are most directly affected by the transition process and so it was important to include their voices in this research project. With the permission of their whānau, we invited ākonga who were in either Year 8, or who were likely to be in their last year of school to kōrero with us.

26 Winiata, 2013, p. 14
27 Wylie, Hodgen, & Ferral, 2006; Colmar Brunton, 2012
28 Hutchings et al., 2012, pp. 5–6

Kaiako

Kaiako play a vital role in developing and facilitating the transition processes that learners and whānau experience as they move between settings. They also provide a view of how the current education system, in both Māori and English mediums, prioritises reo Māori support for learners and whānau during transitions.

Ngā tikanga mahi: Method

The project involved speaking with whānau, including learners and kaiako, involved in three particular transitions.

> **First transition:** from the final year at a kōhanga reo or early childhood education (ECE) service to a kura kaupapa Māori or primary school.
>
> **Second transition:** from Year 8 in a kura kaupapa Māori or primary school/intermediate to Year 9 at a kura kaupapa Māori/wharekura or secondary school.
>
> **Third transition:** from the last year of kura kaupapa Māori/wharekura or secondary school to tertiary study, the workforce, or other options.

We spoke with whānau who were participating in Māori-language education in the compulsory education sector, in either high or low Māori immersion or bilingual environments. Māori medium provides high immersion environments, and English-medium bilingual environments range from high to low immersion. This enabled us to include a wide range of whānau experiences of, and perspectives on, Māori-language education.

Our approach to inviting participation from whānau and education settings was tailored to each situation. New "research relationships" were established by kairangahau contacting a whānau member, kaiako, principal, or director with whom they had an existing relationship. This contact was followed up by a combination of kōrero and written invitations to participate in the research.

The majority of kōrero ā-whānau were undertaken with groups of ākonga, whānau, and kaiako. Individual kōrero sessions were held at participants' request. Every participant received an information sheet about *Ka Whānau mai te Reo*, and gave their written consent to participate in the research. Kairangahau took kai with them to share at each kōrero session, and gave each participant a koha in appreciation of their contribution to the research. Participants were also sent a summary of their kōrero to check for accuracy and amend if they wished.

We plan to talk to learners and their whānau at least two times during the course of the research project. In the first instance, we are interested in the preparation for transition. In the second, we plan to explore the impacts of the completed transition on their reo Māori development.

Tikanga matatika: Ethics

The ethics and approach to developing *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* were based on key principles that guide kaupapa Māori research, and refined through discussions with Te Rōpū Tikanga Rangahau. We also ensured that the project met the requirements of the NZCER ethics process.

He kupu āwhina: External advice

In developing *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* it was important to test our ideas and approach with colleagues internally (at NZCER) and externally. We approached people from a range of backgrounds who would potentially be interested in the research project. As a result, the development of *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* project was co-constructed with, or informed by, advice from:

- whānau who attended the Critical Issues in Māori Education wānanga in Wellington (March and September 2012) organised by Te Wāhanga
- Glenis Philip-Barbara—Chief Executive Officer, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori
- Ani Rolleston—Pouārahi Matua / Senior Advisor, Māori Education, Evaluation Services, Education Review Office
- Moana Jackson, Ani Mikaere, and Lee Cooper—Te Rōpū Tikanga Rangahau, a kaupapa Māori group that guides the work of Te Wāhanga
- Dr Jenny Lee—Head of School, Te Puna Wānanga, Faculty of Education, The University of Auckland
- Dr Karen Vaughan—Project sponsor and Senior Researcher, NZCER.

Mahi rangahau: Fieldwork

The fieldwork for *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* began in September 2012. This involved establishing relationships with potential participants and kura/schools, and then arranging times to kōrero. The kairangahau spoke with the participants about the preparation stage of their transitions in November and December 2012, and then in May through September 2013. We plan to kōrero with participants for the second time in late 2013 and in 2014.

He Tirohanga Whānui

Whānau, Māori-language education, and transitions

Over the past century, the natural process of reo Māori transmission within whānau (between children and their parents, grandparents, and other whānau members) has been badly eroded by the effects of colonisation, urbanisation, and the privileging of English as the language of education, commerce, and broadcasting.[29] Intergenerational transmission of reo Māori, which is one of the most important indicators of a healthy language,[30] is no longer commonly occurring in Māori homes.[31] The 2006 New Zealand Census showed that less than 24 percent of the Māori population were able to converse in Māori.[32] Most adults who are able to speak Māori are second-language learners,[33]and within that group only 14 percent consider their reo Māori speaking proficiency to be at a high level.[34]

Many whānau are now in the position of trying to recreate the conditions for intergenerational language transmission when, more often than not, they are not fluent reo Māori speakers themselves. As Christensen (2011) has observed, this generation's challenge is to ensure that their "learnt" language becomes a language that is "transferred" naturally to the next generation.[35]

This situation raises critical questions regarding what intergenerational reo Māori learning looks like in the 21st century. What is important to carry with us from the past? What do we need to envision for our future? What needs to be put in place to enhance 21st-century intergenerational reo Māori home-based learning?

Whānau must use all the reo resources available to them to their greatest potential, which at this point in time includes the education system.[36] This could include creating an overall strategy to coordinate reo Māori learning for different learners (young and adult) at different levels simultaneously, with the goal of recreating or reimagining natural learning environments for tamariki and mokopuna.

KAUPAPA MĀORI: MĀORI MEDIUM

The Māori language sociolinguistic surveys undertaken by Richard Benton for the New Zealand Council for Educational Research in the 1970s provided evidence that the number of Māori fluent in reo Māori had dropped to only 18–20 percent of the Māori population, and that most of those fluent speakers were elderly.[37] This evidence sparked grave concerns that, without intervention, reo Māori would die.[38] In response to this threat to the language, Māori whānau and communities developed a new approach to Māori-language education underpinned by Māori values, beliefs, and philosophies. In 1981 whānau established the first of the immersion kōhanga reo at Wainuiomata, and by 1985 there were 416 kōhanga reo attended by more than 6000 mokopuna.[39]

These early childhood initiatives, and the emergence of contemporary tertiary level whare wānanga in the

29 Waitangi Tribunal, 1986; Benton, 1978, p. 14
30 Christensen, 2011, pp. 37–38; Fishman, 1991
31 Benton, 1997, p. 15; Benton, 1979, pp. 13–14
32 Te Puni Kōkiri, 2008
33 Christensen, 2011, p. 6
34 Te Puni Kōkiri, 2007
35 Christensen, 2011, pp. 224–225
36 Ibid.
37 Benton, 1981, pp. 15–16
38 Waitangi Tribunal, 1986, 3.3.6.; Benton, 1979, p. 18
39 Hutchings et al., 2012, p. 10; Waitangi Tribunal, 2012, p. 3

1980s, signalled the beginning of contemporary Māori-medium education. Within a short span of time, Māori communities had created a set of Māori-medium entities that included kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori at primary level, wharekura at secondary level, and tertiary level wānanga.

Māori medium provides an environment where tamariki are immersed in reo Māori. Their language development progresses through their interactions with kaiako, peers, and whānau. Whānau who choose to participate in Māori medium are expected to speak Māori at home, which recognises the importance of the whānau role in reo Māori transmission.[40] At some point most adult whānau members (who have learnt Māori as a second language) are likely to need some form of support to further develop their own language skills.

Māori-medium education in Aotearoa New Zealand has been described as an additive heritage (or enrichment) model of bilingual education that provides the high levels of Māori-language immersion necessary for high language proficiency.[41] One of the key goals of Māori-medium education provision is to support biliteracy in both Māori and English, and in both cultural world views.[42] The overarching goal is that literacy in reo Māori and in expressing a Māori worldview frames the learning of all other literacies, including English.[43]

40 Supplement to New Zealand Gazette of Thursday 21 February 2008, Wellington, 22 February 2008
41 May, Hill, & Tiakiwai, 2004, p. 120
42 Supplement to New Zealand Gazette of Thursday 21 February 2008, Wellington, 22 February 2008
43 Potter, 2011, p. 10, cites: Hohepa, M., & Jenkins, K., (1996), Te ao tuhi – Māori literacy: A consequence of racism? Joint paper presented to the Conference on Racism, Indigenous Peoples, Ethnicity, and Gender in Australia, Ngā Kete Kōrero, 4, 5–11

The Māori-medium space is also a relatively new and evolving one, where knowledge about the most effective resources and strategies to be implemented is still being developed.[44]

MĀTAURANGA REO MĀORI: MĀORI-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Whānau have the choice of participating in high-immersion Māori-language education in Māori medium, or in high or low immersion in English medium. They can also move between high- and low-immersion programmes. Figure 2 provides a basic illustration of the options up to Year 13.

The term "level of immersion" is used to describe the percentage of reo Māori used in a classroom. According to May, Hill, and Tiakiwai (2004), kura or schools with the highest levels of immersion (level 1 programmes) are the most effective in terms of supporting reo Māori acquisition. Partial-immersion schools can also be effective, as long as at least 50 percent of the teaching is in Māori (level 2 programmes).[45] In this report we refer to level 1 and level 2 immersion programmes as "high immersion", and level 3 and level 4 immersion programmes as "low immersion".

Whānau have a wide range of aspirations for their reo Māori development. For some, a basic knowledge of the reo may be sufficient. In this case, low-immersion programmes may provide an appropriate level of Māori language education.

44 Bishop, Berryman, & Richardson, 2001
45 May et al., 2004, pp. 127–128

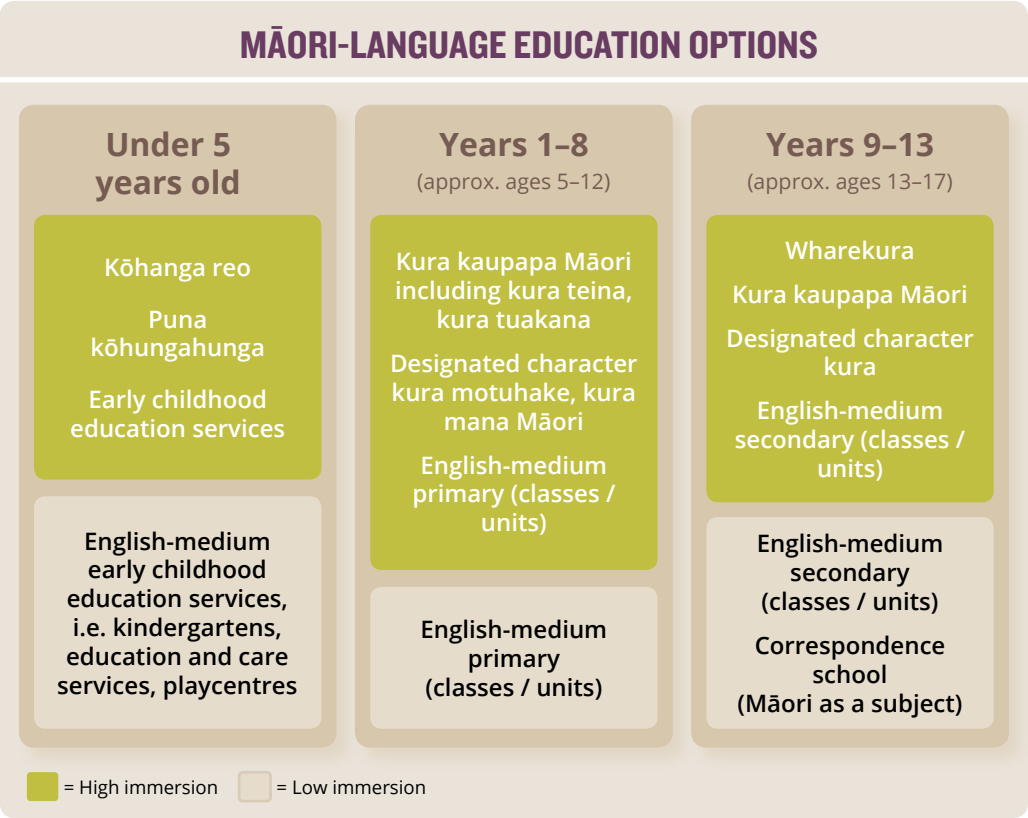

Figure 2: Māori-language education options

High-immersion programmes are the most effective options for whānau who have high aspirations for developing their reo Māori through the education system, as seen in figure 3.

In Māori-medium and English-medium primary, intermediate, and secondary schools, boards receive funding from the Ministry of Education for students enrolled in Māori-language programmes that meet all the criteria for one of four immersion levels. Only learners enrolled in levels 1–4 (including 4b) generate Māori-language programme funding.[46] Early childhood

46 Ministry of Education, 2013, June, p. 14

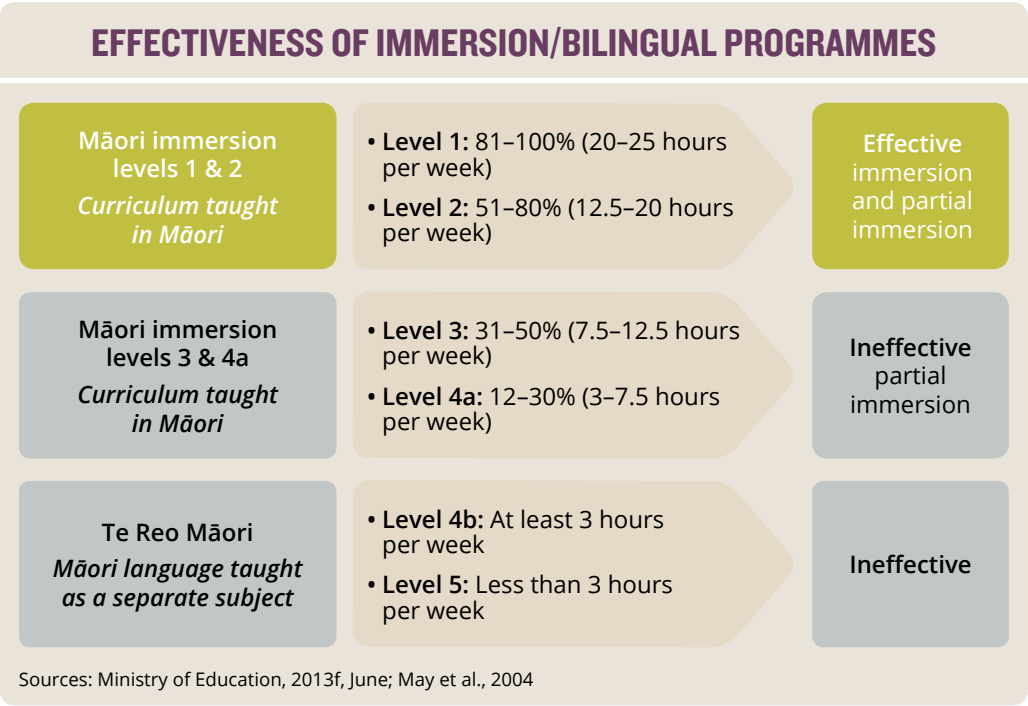

Figure 3: Effectiveness of immersion/bilingual programmes

education services are funded for Māori-language-related activities through a different mechanism, and must apply for equity funding.[47]

In July 2012:

- 12–13 percent of ECE services provided high-immersion programmes
  - 463 kōhanga reo and 10 ECE services provided 81–100 percent immersion
  - 21 ECE services provided 51–80 percent immersion
- 9,366 tamariki were enrolled in kōhanga reo
- 21 percent of all children enrolled in ECE services were recorded as being Māori
- 22 percent of all tamariki recorded as being Māori were enrolled in kōhanga reo
- 5 percent of all children (Māori and other ethnicities) enrolled in ECE services were enrolled in kōhanga reo.[48]

Forty percent of Māori learners (Year 1 and above) were participating in some form of Māori-language education. Twenty-four percent (16,355) of these learners were involved in Māori-medium education in either immersion or bilingual settings. Seventy-six percent (52,700) of these were involved in reo Māori learning in English medium. Sixty percent of all Māori learners were not enrolled in Māori-language education.[49]

47 Ministry of Education, 2013, July, pp. 9–10

48 Ministry of Education, 2013e, February, table MAO15; Ministry of Education, 2013d, February, appendix tables 1 & 2

49 Ministry of Education, 2013a

REO RUA/RUMAKI: BILINGUAL/IMMERSION EDUCATION

"He tapu ngā reo katoa. Nō reira, me whai koha te hunga o ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori ki ngā reo katoa. Mō ngā tamariki, kia rua ngā reo. Ko te reo o ngā matua tūpuna tuatahi, ko te reo o tauiwi tuarua. Kia orite te pakari o ia reo, kia tū tangata ai ngā tamariki i roto i te ao Māori, i roto hoki i te ao o Tauiwi"

Kura Kaupapa Māori "respect all languages and expect full competency in Māori and English for the children of their kura"

Te Aho Matua o ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori[50]

Learning more than one language is associated with many social, cognitive, linguistic, economic, and personal benefits.[51] Being able to speak Māori also brings with it important cultural benefits.

"Ko te reo te waka kawe i te wairua me te whakaaro Māori, e whakatinanatia ai ngā āhuatanga katoa o te ao Māori. He taonga tuku iho te reo Māori, he taonga e tautokohia ana e te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ko te reo te iho o te ahurea. He reo, he mana, he wairua, he whakapono, he tikanga tō tēnā tangata, tō tēnā iwi, tō tēnā rohe. Mā te reo Māori rawa e whakahua, e kawe, e whakamārama te huhua noa o ngā tikanga Māori. Mā te mātau o te ākonga ki te reo Māori, ka mārama tōnā huarahi ki te ao Māori, me tana mahi hoki i roto i te ao Māori. Ko te rumaki te tino huarahi e matatau ai te ākonga ki te reo Maori."

"Māori language is the vehicle for Māori cultural practices and thought, enabling the manifestation of all aspects of the Māori world. The Māori language is an inherited treasure, a treasure supported by the Treaty of Waitangi. Language is the essence of culture. Each person, each tribal group, each region has its own language, mana, spirituality, beliefs and customs. Ultimately it is through Māori language that the full range of Māori customs can be expressed, practised, and explained. Through the learner knowing Māori language, they can access the Māori world and understand their role in it. Being immersed in Māori leads the learner to greater proficiency."

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa[52]

In a synthesis on the benefits of bilingualism Cooper, Arago-Kemp, Wylie, and Hodgen (2004) found that children in community language bilingual programmes maintain their ability to speak the community language, develop positive attitudes—to the language, to schooling, and to themselves—and perform better in the dominant language than other community language-speaking children who were mainstreamed.[53]

50 Supplement to New Zealand Gazette of Thursday 21 February 2008, Wellington, 22 February 2008
51 Ministry of Education, 2009b
52 Ministry of Education, 2008a, p. 12; Ministry of Education, 2008b, p. 10
53 Cooper et al., 2004, p. 3

BENEFITS OF BILINGUALISM

- Being able to communicate with a wider range of people within families and communities, across generations, and in other social contexts.
- Being able to read and write in more than one language opens up new literatures, traditions, and ideas to bilingual students.
- Being bilingual, and being exposed to two languages and cultures, often fosters greater tolerance for other cultural groups.
- Knowing two languages makes it easier to learn additional languages.
- Knowing two languages provides bilingual people with additional skills in the employment market—skills that are increasingly important in our globalised world.
- When bilingual learners also become biliterate (that is, able to read and write well in two languages), they are known to achieve extremely well in education, often better than their monolingual peers.

Source: Ministry of Education, 2013h, August

Figure 4: Benefits of bilingualism

A whānau described their view of the benefits of bilingualism for their tamariki in the following way:

> She [our daughter] became further immersed in reo. As she got older, she's became more aware that there's a Māori world and Pākehā world … She's in a powerful position: to be able to straddle the worlds with confidence, speaking both languages confidently.[54]

To become fully bilingual and get the most advantage out of being bilingual, learners need to begin early and stay in quality reo Māori immersion settings for at least 6 years.[55] This idea is based on the concept of additive bilingualism which promotes bilingualism and biliteracy over the long term.[56] However, Cummins noted a number of quality and cognitive issues facing Māori medium and bilingual educators that are still relevant today:

> 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.[57]

May, Hill, and Tiakiwai argue that level 3 and level 4 immersion programmes are ineffective as they are below the 50 percent immersion threshold required for effective language acquisition. They suggest that these programmes would be more appropriately termed "Māori language support programmes".[58] Their purpose is then clear to whānau who wish to participate in them, and funding could be better targeted for programmes that do lead to effective language acquisition.

May et al. (2004) identify six interrelated factors as being essential to support good outcomes in immersion or bilingual education, as shown in Figure 5.

While there are many ways to teach in bilingual or immersion programmes, the most effective pedagogical means of promoting bilingual language development appears to occur through separating the languages of instruction, Māori and English.[59] This allows for the establishment of language boundaries and, in turn, facilitates language learning and development of metalinguistic awareness (ability to reflect on the use of language) in learners.[60]

54 Bright et al., 2013
55 May et al., 2004
56 Ibid., p. 87
57 Cummins, 2000, p. 22.

58 May, Hill, and Tiakiwai, 2004, p 129
59 May et al., 2004, p. 121, cites: Dulay, H.C., & Burt, M.K., (1978), *Why bilingual education? A summary of research findings* (2nd ed.), San Francisco: Bloomsbury West
60 May et al., 2004, p. 122, cites: Cloud, N., Genesee, F., & Hamayan, E., (2000), *Dual language instruction: a handbook for enriched education*, Boston: Thomson Heine; Baker, C., (2001), *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (3rd ed.), Multilingual Matters; Lindholm-Leary, K, (2001), *Dual language education,* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters

KEY FACTORS FOR ACHIEVING GOOD OUTCOMES IN IMMERSION OR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

1. Early language teaching.
2. Participating in bilingual or immersion education provision for at least 4 years, and ideally 6 to 8 years.
3. More intensive immersion education and a different type of pedagogy (second-language acquisition) for those coming late to language learning.
4. Family use of te reo Māori in the home environment.
5. Productive partnerships between whānau, Māori communities, kura, schools, and government.
6. Quality teaching and programmes involving at least 50 percent immersion in the target language (Māori), taught by kaiako with a high level of competency in te reo Māori and in teaching a second language.

Source: May et al., 2004

Figure 5: Key factors for achieving good outcomes in immersion or bilingual education

In Māori medium, the timing for introducing English language instruction varies widely, as does the approach. Nor does there appear to be consensus about the best timing and method to do this.[61] Some Māori-medium programmes use long-term approaches to English-language acquisition[62] where English is learnt as a subject in order to gain academic English literacy skills.[63] Others use short-term approaches that are timed to coincide with transitions to English medium.[64] According to May et al. the important factor here (regardless of timing and approach) is that some formal English-language instruction occurs before the end of the programme that addresses academic English-language literacy skills.[65] Transitions processes therefore have an important role in preparing learners for different language environments, particularly if learners need to build their literacy skills to a level where they are able to easily transfer them from Māori to English or vice versa.[66]

61 May et al., 2004, p. 125
62 Hill, 2011, p. 719
63 May et al., 2006; Hill, 2011, p. 720
64 Berryman & Glynn, 2003, pp. 10, 70
65 May et al., 2004, p. 125.
66 Ibid., p. 123

NGĀ NEKEHANGA: TRANSITIONS

Learners make many transitions in their lives. In education the term "transition" is commonly used to describe the process of change as learners move from one learning situation or environment to another. Transitions can be described as a process of adaptation where learners work out how to function successfully in a new environment, rather than as an event that takes place over a short period of time.[67]

Successful transitions depend on the nature of the relationships between those involved within each learning environment, and between them. For Māori children in particular, positive, responsive relationships between children, teachers, and families are strong themes in ensuring success:[68]

> It's really important to develop the relationship with whānau when they come to kōhanga so that the tamariki can settle. It also helps with their transition from kōhanga.[69]

A successful transition can contribute to further learning success. However, if education institutions (schools/kura) are not well prepared to support learner transitions, learners' self-esteem and academic achievement may be negatively effected. [70]

The research literature suggests that good practice for managing transitions includes:

67 Education Review Office, 2012, pp. 17, 30
68 Peters, 2010, pp. 2–4
69 Bright et al., 2013
70 Rivers, 2010, p. 23

STRATEGIES FOR KAIAKO, KURA, POLICY MAKERS: SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS FOR ĀKONGA MĀORI

- Set up programmes that involve whānau in their children's learning, and whānau, including ākonga, in developing and implementing transition programmes.
- Provide Māori cultural/linguistic programmes within centres and schools and promote the importance of providing high quality reo Māori role models.
- Promote and practice reo Māori and tikanga within the school (i.e pōwhiri, tuakana/teina relationships).
- Acknowledge students' language abilities as bilingual English/Māori speaking students rather than emphasising any deficiencies in their ability to speak English, when students move from a Māori immersion or bilingual school setting to a monolingual English-medium setting.
- Understand the concept of second-language acquisition—focusing on bilingual English and Māori speakers.
- Develop resources that promote smooth transitions.
- Provide information and training for whānau about how they can support their children to make a successful transition.

Source: Rivers, 2010; May et al., 2004

Figure 6: Strategies for kaiako, kura, and policy makers

STRATEGIES FOR WHĀNAU: SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS FOR ĀKONGA MĀORI

- Keep dialogue open—with children, centres, and schools.
- Discuss different colleges with rangatahi before they choose where to go, so they are actively involved in the process and have a sense of choice.
- Listen to children's views and preferences.
- Promote and/or learn te reo (to support tamariki/mokopuna).
- Promote the valuing of te reo.
- Take the time to be involved with tamariki/mokopuna.
- Share your own experiences of schooling.
- Work alongside centres and schools to be an equal partner in the transition process.
- Be proactive in enrolment processes.
- Become aware of transition programmes and help out with them.

Source: Rivers, 2010

Figure 7: Strategies for whānau

- actively *valuing the knowledge* (particularly cultural knowledge and values) that learners bring with them[71]
- promoting *learning continuity* across the education settings a child is moving between[72]
- establishing *relationships* between all those involved in transitions (focusing on centres/school relationships with each other, and with ākonga and whānau and potentially extending to iwi)[73]
- sharing *information* and good practices.[74]

71 Rivers, 2010, p. 4; Peters, 2010, p. 73

72 McGee, Ward, Gibbons, & Harlow, 2003, p. 7, cites: Croll, P., 1983, Transfer and pupil performance, in M.Galton & J.Wilcocks (Eds), *Moving from the primary classroom* (pp. 63–94), London: Routledge & Kegan Paul; Kruse, D., 1995, Transition and beyond: The Northcote network of schools year 5–8 curriculum project, *Idiom,* 30(1), 35–43. See also: Wylie et al., 2006, p. 13; Hartly et al., 2012, p. 91; Rivers, 2010, p. 4.

73 Bishop et al., 2003, p. 190; Education Review Office, 2012, p. 4; Wylie et al., 2006, pp. 14, 24; Bishop et al., 2007, p. 190; McGee et al., 2003, p. 3; Hutchings et al., 2012, p. 20

74 Wylie, 2012, p. 209; Rivers, 2010, p. 23

Whanaketanga reo: Language development

Language development or acquisition is an aspect of transitions that is especially pertinent for Māori learners and their whānau as they move between and within Māori and English mediums. Skerrett's research on Māori learners' transitions from early childhood to primary and primary to secondary, in Māori- and English-medium settings, provides some useful suggestions for how kaiako, kura, policy makers, and whānau can better support Māori learners.[75] These strategies overlap or are complimentary to those suggested in May et al.'s research on bilingual education.[76]

This kind of information is important because it is forward thinking, and it gives the different participants involved in transitions practical advice about what they can do to support learners' transitions and ongoing language development.

75 Rivers, 2010, p 6. Rivers provides a useful summary of Mere Skerrett's report: Skerrett, M., 2010, *Ngā whakawhitinga! The transitions of Māori learners project*, Wellington: Ministry of Education.

76 May et al., 2004

NGĀ WHIRINGA MAHA: A SERIES OF REO MĀORI DECISIONS

Whānau who choose to participate in Māori-language education have to make a series of decisions at key transition points about where and how they will continue to learn reo Māori.

These times of transition can be viewed as opportunities for whānau to regularly review and reassess important educational and reo Māori goals. Whānau decisions are often based on a host of criteria, such as school culture and reputation, location, transport options, presence of other whānau, range of subjects, decile rating and so on. Deciding where reo Māori aspirations will fit with their educational and other aspirations can be complex and emotional experiences.

At this time, many whānau are in the position of having to make a series of quite isolated decisions at each transition point because of a lack of easily accessible information about their Māori-language education options, and also because of barriers that may mean that not all the possible options are available.

Factors that support successful transitions include valuing learners' existing knowledge and abilities, supporting learning continuity, having good relationships, and being able to access information about Māori-language education options. When making decisions it may be helpful to keep these things in mind and take a holistic overview of the entire process.

One possible strategy is to hold wānanga reo where all centres/schools/kura in a region present their reo Māori programmes to whānau and provide information about the pros and cons of each. In *Vital Connections*, Wylie promotes the benefits of schools working together to deal with shared questions[77] (i.e., how to support learning continuity of reo Māori). This builds the knowledge required through using research and sharing experiences, deciding which strategies are most likely to progress student learning, and then trying them out.[78]

With the "big picture" in front of them, we suggest that whānau would be better placed to plan strategies for the entire education journey. It would also be important for institutions to commit to supporting whānau reo aspirations in tangible ways through funding and resources, and intangible ways such as increasing the status of the language throughout learning environments. These actions would go some way towards strengthening institutional responses to reo Māori revitalisation and counter the structural barriers that whānau currently face.

77 Wylie, 2012, p 209
78 Ibid.

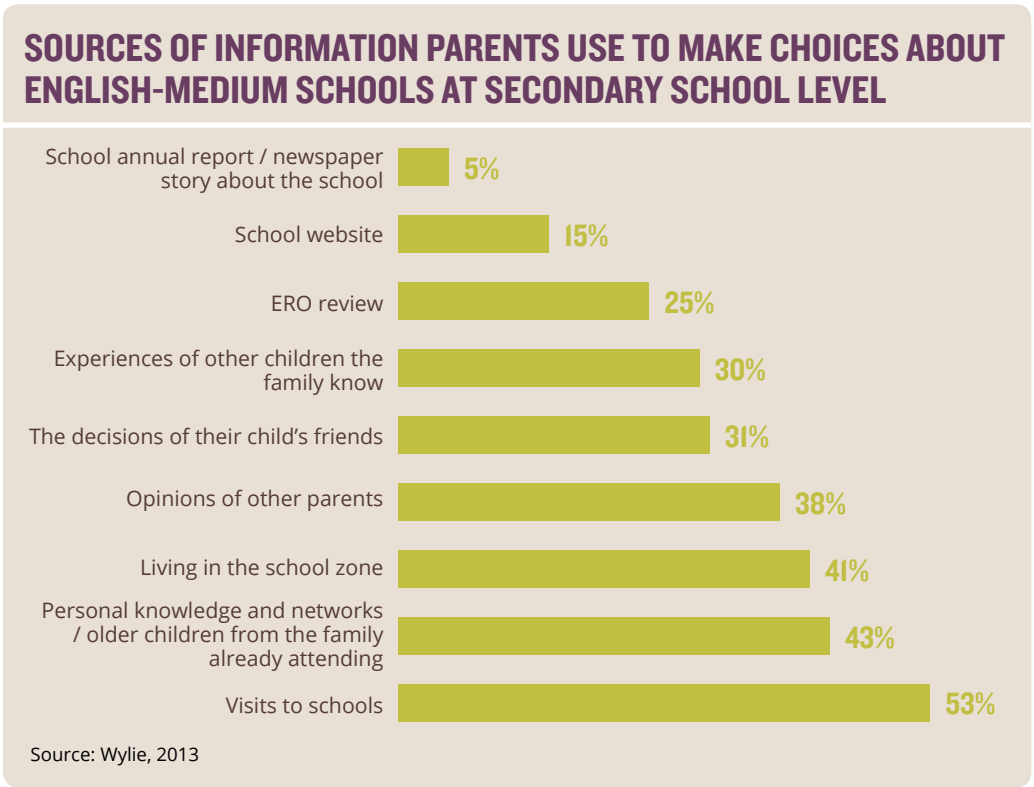

Figure 8: Sources of information parents use to make choices about English-medium schools at secondary school level

Ō whiringa: Making decisions

When whānau are making important educational decisions they need access to knowledge and trusted information. Generally, when choosing primary and secondary schools, word-of-mouth reputation and the school itself are the most influential and important sources of information for parents, families, and whānau,[79] as well as media and other third-party sources. Parents who responded to the New Zealand Council for Educational Research 2012 secondary schools national survey showed similar preferences when choosing secondary schools in English-medium secondary schools.

When choosing a school, whānau are interested in how schools specifically address the needs of their tamariki as Māori learners. This can include the reo Māori opportunities available, schools' responsiveness to bicultural needs, the focus on achievement, and transition support from Māori-medium immersion to English medium.[80]

At the start of a transition period, whānau may find that having specific questions about reo Māori aspirations, development, and support may make the decision-making process easier. The following list includes some critical questions about reo Māori development for whānau to consider.

79 Colmar Brunton, 2012, p. 33, includes parents, families and whānau with Years 1 to 8 and Years 9 to 13 children; McGee et al., 2003, p. 3
80 Colmar Brunton, 2012, pp. 23, 43

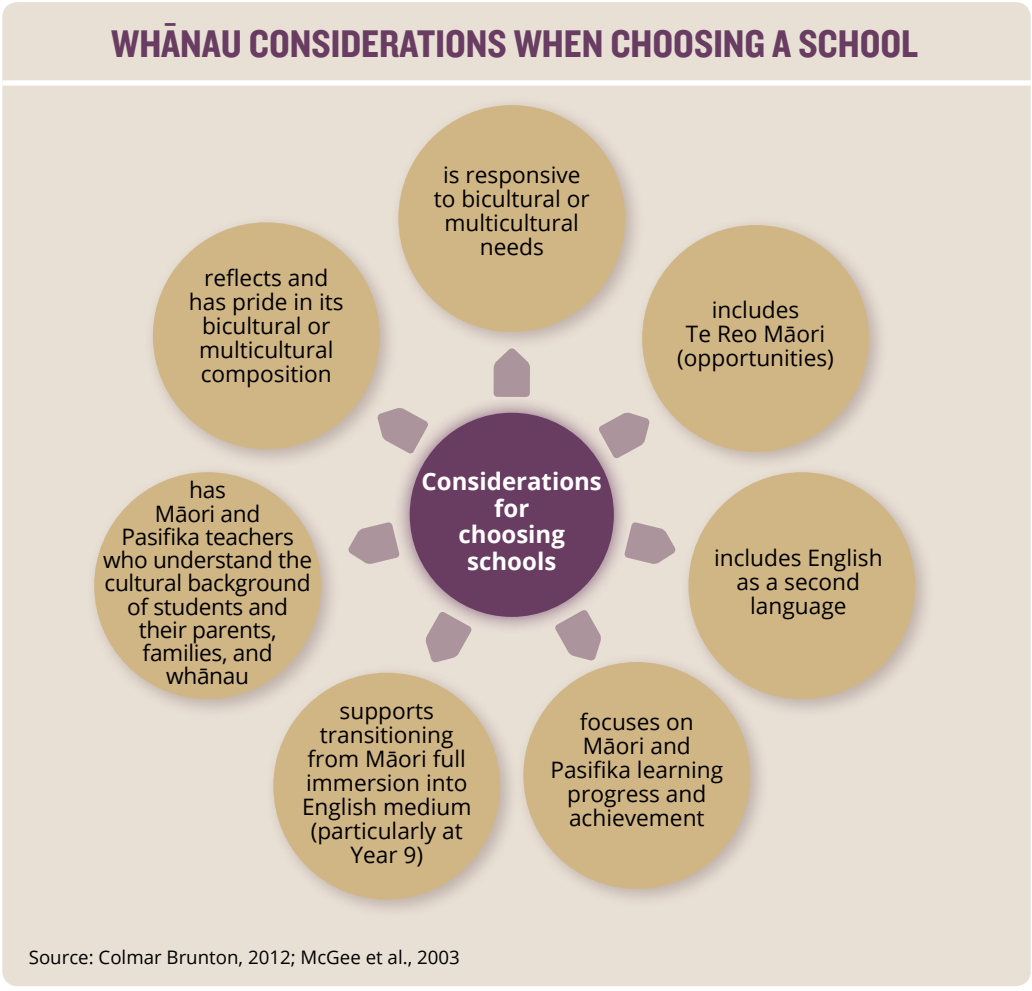

Figure 9: Whānau considerations when choosing a school

REO MĀORI, NGĀ MOEMOEĀ, RANGATIRATANGA
CRITICAL QUESTIONS FOR WHĀNAU

YOUR REO MĀORI ASPIRATIONS

What aspirations does your whānau have for learning Māori while at kura/school and beyond?

Which Māori-language education option is most likely to support your aspirations?

How do whānau aspirations impact on kura/school decision-making about reo Māori learning?

REO AT HOME

How do you support reo Māori development at home?

Who are the reo Māori speakers and role-models in your whānau and community who can support on-going reo Māori learning?

What kind of support might you need to improve your reo?

REO AT KURA/SCHOOL

Does the kura/school provide high- or low-level Māori immersion programmes in one classroom or throughout the kura/school?

How does the kura/school involve whānau in reo Māori learning?

Do kaiako have appropriate levels of reo Māori proficiency and and an understanding of second-language acquisition?

How are reo and tikanga valued and promoted through the school by teachers and leaders? I.e., are there processes in place to welcome and farewell whānau?

TRANSITIONS

How does the kura/school and kaiako involve whānau in planning transitions?

Do transitions include a focus on Māori- and English-language acquisition?

RELATIONSHIPS

Are there good relationships between the kaiako in both kura/schools? I.e. visits, sharing information and good practice.

Figure 10: Critical questions for whānau

TAHI: THE FIRST BIG DECISION—
Early childhood to primary

Transition of 4 year olds to Year 1

The first major educational transition for Māori learners after the move from home to early childhood education (ECE) services, such as kōhanga reo, puna kōhungahunga, playcentres, or kindergartens, is the transition to their first year of kura/school. This is the first natural decision-making point where whānau who have chosen to start in either a Māori-medium or an English-medium learning environment decide whether they wish to continue along a similar education pathway, and where reo Māori fits within that journey.

Transition processes from kōhanga reo or other ECE services to primary or kura kaupapa Māori can support the bilingual language abilities of Māori learners by adapting existing good transition practices. These practices include using mutually familiar language, routines, and practices in each of the learning environments that add to children's learning experiences and development of skills.[81] Kaiako and whānau have suggested that transitions can be enhanced by using reo and tikanga Māori in, for example, pōwhiri processes. Sharing effective practices is likely to be more common where ECE services have good relationships with the local primary schools, and where both ECE and primary school recognise and support bilingualism and the continuity of learning journeys.

81 Hartly et al., 2012

We look here at some of the issues associated with the different pathways which whānau are choosing.

Māori medium to Māori medium

Whānau participate in Māori medium through kōhanga reo for a variety of reasons, including the focus on reo and tikanga Māori for tamariki and the wider whānau, the philosophy, history, quality, and wairua of the kōhanga reo, the whānau and whanaungatanga, and their desire to achieve "ngā moemoeā ā ngā tūpuna" and support future generations.[82] They may then choose to remain in Māori medium and participate in kura kaupapa Māori for similar reasons. Remaining on a Māori-medium pathway is the option most likely to build on learners' knowledge of reo Māori and tikanga, and support learning continuity.

Māori medium to English medium

Whānau who choose to move to English-medium primary do so for many reasons. Some whānau prioritise English-language learning at this point, and some may worry that "too much" Māori may undermine English-language proficiency.[83] Others may not be able to access Māori-medium options at all because of long waiting lists, distance, cost, and other factors.[84]

The concern associated with a move of this type is that if tamariki are not able to continue learning in high-immersion environments, they may lose the reo Māori skills they have acquired. May et al. argue that tamariki will not have had sufficient time in Māori-medium contexts to build their literacy skills to a level where they are able to easily transfer them from Māori to English, which is one of the main advantages of additive bilingual education.[85]

A recent report by the Office of the Auditor General reported just such an example with a Year 13 student, who said "I was in kōhanga reo and then went to mainstream at primary school and lost my Māori

82 Hutchings et al., 2012, p. 11
83 May et al., 2004, p. 123
84 Hutchings et al., 2012, p. 15; Dixon et al., 2007
85 May et al., 2004, p. 123

language."[86] In the same vein, a whānau involved in a bilingual ECE found that at their ECE tamariki had learned pepehā, mihimihi, karakia, hīmene, and waiata, but after transitioning "they [the tamariki] are now asking questions at primary about why they are not learning reo or Māori culture."[87]

English medium to English medium

The majority of Māori children participate in English-medium early childhood services[88] where they are unlikely to experience high-level Māori immersion. They then go on to English-medium primary schools, which suggests at least two possibilities: one, the benefits of immersion or bilingual education are not yet well understood or valued by all whānau, and two, whānau are finding it easier to access English medium.

Whānau have a wide range of aspirations for their reo Māori development

Once in primary, whānau are less likely to experience effective reo Māori support unless they are able to participate in high-immersion units and classes (at least level 2 immersion). Language transmission becomes less efficient over time, and if children do not have the benefit of learning reo Māori during their preschool years, it becomes more difficult for them to do so as the years progress.[89]

English medium to Māori medium

Though it is less common than the move from Māori medium to English medium, tamariki from English-medium ECE centres can make the move to Māori medium. Different Māori-medium settings have their own transition or entry criteria, which may assist or hinder this type of transition.

86 Office of the Auditor General, 2013, p. 45
87 Hutchings et al., 2012, p. 30
88 Ministry of Education, 2013d, February, appendix tables 1 & 2
89 Waitangi Tribunal, 2012, p. 99, cites Higgins, R., second brief of evidence, 22 December 2011, pp. 3, 9

RUA: THE SECOND BIG DECISION—
Primary to secondary

Year 8 transition to Year 9

The move from primary to secondary is a time where whānau again have the opportunity to reassess their reo Māori aspirations and choose the type of reo Māori education they will participate in.

There is no fixed timeframe for transitioning. Each learner and their whānau will experience this period of transition in their own way and time. However, a 2006 study of experiences and effects of transition to secondary school found that, generally, the majority of students settle into their secondary school within two terms.[90]

Years 7 to 10—when learners are moving between primary, intermediate, and secondary environments—can be particularly challenging, because of the social, emotional, and physiological changes of adolescence which occur around that time.[91] This is a vulnerable time when most young people are confronting critical issues of self identity. Rangatahi can find changing schools difficult and, as discussed earlier, some find it difficult to maintain their Māori language.[92] Differing school systems and structures, communication between sectors, teaching and learning, and assessment all add further layers of complexity around this transition.[93]

This transition period can mean greater than usual disruption to learning and engagement for some students.[94] Some studies have suggested that there are often declines in academic achievement, but it is unclear whether this has long-term effects on engagement and achievement.[95] This may occur only for some students, and for a variety of reasons including: students' changing concepts of themselves as learners; the onset of adolescence; attitudes to learning; lack of academic challenge; ways of learning; and relationships with teachers.[96]

A 2006 study found that change in student performance over the ages 12–14 was just as likely to be up as down,[97] except for certain groups of students whose experiences and responses indicate possible emerging issues for the success of their secondary education.

90 Wylie et al., 2006, p. ix
91 Education Review Office, 2012, p. 7
92 Rivers, 2010, p. 15
93 Cox & Kennedy, 2008, p. 13
94 Education Review Office, 2012, p. 5, cites: Hawk, K, and Hill, J., 2004, *Transition traumas, traps, turning points and triumphs: putting student needs first,* paper presented at the PPTA Conference, Wellington, 18-20 April 2004; Wylie et al., 2006
95 McGee et al., 2003, p. 3
96 Wylie et al., 2006, p. 82; McGee et al., 2003, p. 3; Cox & Kennedy, 2008, p. 90
97 Wylie et al., 2006, p. ix

Wylie et al. identify signs of a growing mismatch and discontent with schools in the low-income group, those attending low-decile schools and, to a lesser extent, Māori and Pacific students.[98]

Māori medium to Māori medium

Whānau who participated in *Kia Puāwaitia ngā Tūmanako*[99] identified many advantages associated with remaining in Māori medium through wharekura.

- Wharekura are more likely to nurture the cultural and social health and safety of the individual student, than an English-medium secondary school environment.
- It's part of their long commitment to advancing kaupapa Māori educational initiatives.
- Wharekura focus on learning and valuing reo Māori.[100]
- Some students in Māori medium are beginning to outstrip their peers in English medium in terms of academic achievement.[101]

In addition, there are also the significant cognitive and linguistic benefits that learners gain from remaining in high-level Māori-medium immersion.[102]

The whānau we spoke to in *Kia Puāwaitia* who were participating in wharekura suggested that the wharekura option could be made more attractive by:

- extending the range of subjects
- strengthening careers programmes
- boosting relationships with tertiary institutions
- including te ao Māori in all aspects of the curriculum
- increasing the usage and quality of reo Māori
- extending sports and cultural activities
- providing opportunities for leadership development, preparation, and transition
- addressing related resourcing and financial constraints.[103]

Some wharekura are already addressing these types of issues. However, increasing the use and quality of reo Māori, and addressing resourcing and financial constraints, will require increased commitment and long-term support for Māori medium education from the government.

98 Ibid., p. xiii
99 Hutchings et al., 2012
100 Ibid., 2012, pp. 16–17
101 Ibid., p. 20; Waitangi Tribunal, 2012, p. 111
102 May et al., 2004, p. 123
103 Hutchings, et al., 2012, p. 23

Another challenge for Māori, identified by Hohepa, is the need to raise student achievement in ways that enhance Māori language and cultural development and avoid substituting one for the other.[104]

Māori medium to English medium

A large drop-off in the number of enrolled students in the Māori-medium sector occurs at a national level between Year 8 and Year 9.[105] Common reasons that whānau choose to move to English medium (or remain in English medium) are the wider range of curriculum choices available in English medium, concerns about the lack of specialist subject kaiako at wharekura, and concerns about the place of English language in the Māori-medium curriculum.[106]

Berryman and Glynn identify the move from Māori medium into English medium as one of the most challenging transition points for Māori learners.[107] Māori-medium educators are concerned about the lack of consistent information and resources available to guide this transition.[108] These learners are transitioning between learning environments with totally different philosophical underpinnings,[109] and Skerrett[110] describes transitions across cultures and languages as times of vulnerability with much anxiety. She states that "mismatches in cultural congruency can directly affect children's emotional, social and academic experiences of school."[111] A whānau member from *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* told us:

> It's big thing to choose a school, and you have to keep making choices if you don't choose one that goes straight through [Māori medium]. It's important to agree with the founding principles of the kura and that they are Māori.[112]

This move again raises concerns about learners leaving Māori medium before they have achieved academic reo Māori proficiency, and are able to transfer those skills to learning through English.[113] Academic proficiency (as opposed to conversational proficiency) in a language must be taught; it does not happen automatically. If English has not been taught at all at kura, then transition programmes of sufficient duration can have an important role in preparing learners for English-language learning environments.

Ka Whānau mai te Reo is interested in the continued development of learners' reo Māori ability after the move to English medium. Most Māori-language education programmes in English medium are low-level immersion which are likely to be less effective in supporting the reo Māori development of those from high-immersion backgrounds.

> … we get so few … kids coming from immersion backgrounds, we can't actually warrant having a class just of them. That would be perfect, and I wouldn't even really care, to be honest, what level their reo was at as long as they could all kōrero…. Because you would be able to, within that environment, instead of it being learning like the second language kids learn, it would be in a contextual environment, which is completely different, because they've already got that reo base.[114]

Some learners may have access to high bilingual/immersion programmes. However, these programmes have a more difficult task than whole-school programmes (i.e kura kaupapa Māori) as they operate within a larger English-language environment, and their effectiveness can be compromised without commitment and support from school leadership and the wider school:[115]

> I do believe there needs to be more focus on teaching of the reo and more professional development with the wider staff members of schools.[116]

English medium to English medium

The majority of Māori learners participating in Māori-language education are enrolled in English medium,[117] and are likely to move from one low-level immersion environment to another. Whānau we have spoken to who were participating in low-level immersion programmes have expressed doubts about their effectiveness:

> I think the sad thing is that they had, like, 1 hour a day, 5 days a week—and that's when they have Māori. But there's no other time really that they can use it … We're living away from home. I don't have my whānau around me so they don't really speak it, they don't hear it, you can't go to the shop and kōrero Māori so I think it's quite difficult learning it from that perspective.[118]

English medium to Māori medium

As is the case with the transition from ECE to kura kaupapa Māori, the move from English-medium primary or other high-immersion environments to wharekura is much less common, and it is an area that would benefit from more research. Learners who choose this pathway may take longer (than if they had begun as children) to acquire the same level of reo Māori proficiency as their peers, and would need a transition programme that takes into account their specific language-learning needs.[119] Different kura will address this type of transition in different ways.

104 Hohepa, 2010
105 Campbell & Stewart, 2009, p. 1; McGee et al., 2004, pp. 38–39
106 Campbell & Stewart, 2009, p. 1
107 Berryman & Glynn, 2003, p. 9
108 Ibid., p. 9
109 McGee et al., 2004, pp. 38–39
110 Rivers, 2010
111 Ibid., quotes Skerrett, M., 2010, *Ngā whakawhitinga! The transitions of Māori learners project*, Wellington: Ministry of Education, p. 67
112 Bright et al., 2013.
113 Glyn, O'Laoire & Berryman, 2009, p. 3; May & Hill, 2005, pp. 397, 398; May & Hill, 2003, p. 31; May et al., 2004, p. 123.
114 Bright et al., 2013.
115 May et al., 2004, p. 132.
116 Bright et al., 2013.
117 Ministry of Education, 2013a
118 Bright et al., 2013
119 *Whānau mai te Reo*

TORU: THE THIRD BIG DECISION—
Beyond secondary

Years 11–13 transition out of the compulsory education sector

The last year at secondary school signals the end to 11, 12, or 13 years of intense learning and school-centered socialisation for Māori learners in the compulsory education sector. It also provides another opportunity for whānau to reassess their reo aspirations as their tamariki are about to "leave the nest".

Whānau have expressed concerns about the ways in which Māori learners are being prepared to transition from school into work and study in the non-Māori world, particularly when they have been educated in a Māori-medium environment.[120] This raises questions about the kind of overall impact whānau expect the education system to have on learners' reo development in Māori and English, and how they perceive their own role in supporting reo Māori development at home.

Whānau who have chosen to learn Māori through participating in the education system will have had diverse learning experiences, and will have achieved diverse levels of reo Māori proficiency by the time they leave kura or school. Some learners will be more prepared than others to use Māori outside formal learning contexts in education. Learners who are proficient reo Māori and English speakers when they leave kura will have language skills that will help them to participate fully (and continue learning) within their own whānau, hapū, and iwi, and that are also highly valued in many careers where bilingualism is an essential skill.

An issue that has become apparent in low-level immersion programmes in English-medium secondary schools is the challenge of teaching learners with a wide range of reo Māori proficiency and preparing them to function well as reo speakers outside the school environment:

> First language speakers—survival and probably a little bit beyond, yes. Second language—no, I don't [think they are prepared] … as far as being able to survive as a reo speaker, and this will be very common right throughout the country, I don't feel that [they are prepared] at all.[121]

In these instances, increasing the amount of time concentrating on speaking and learning reo Māori is seen to be essential to supporting learners' reo development. The majority of Māori learners who are learning Māori in English medium at levels 3 and 4, if not lower, are more likely to leave secondary school without having gained a high level of reo Māori proficiency,[122] particularly if there is no other source of language support outside of school.

Māori-medium learners in high-immersion environments are more likely to have achieved higher

120 Hutchings et al., 2012, p. 26

121 Bright et al., 2013

122 May & Hill, 2005, pp. 394–395

levels of reo proficiency before they leave kura. There is some evidence that a learner's confidence in their own competence within their context—in this case, their reo Māori ability—may be also be strong motivator for ongoing active learning post involvement in compulsory education.[123]

Regardless of how well learners are able to communicate in Māori when they leave school, there are opportunities to use, and continue to develop, their reo. Learners who have connections to strong reo Māori communities may have the choice to continue (or begin) high-immersion learning, whether that be in their own homes, at the marae, or in their wider community. Language learning in these contexts can occur both informally and formally in conjunction with learning about tikanga Māori. This is an important pathway for ongoing learning because these are the primary environments where reo Māori use needs to be strengthened to support intergenerational language transmission. Alternatively, learners can choose to participate in the many types of adult Māori-language education available through tertiary institutions, community programmes, or job-related professional learning and development.

As an adult, the onus to continue to develop reo Māori proficiency falls much more heavily on the individual, and there are challenges in terms of motivation, finding opportunities to use the language and accessing resources. However, whānau can still play a significant role in encouraging and supporting young adults to use and develop their reo Māori:

123 Zepke & Leach, 2010, p. 5

> Hemi is the one that I wanted to speak the reo… I didn't force Hemi, but Hemi knew what I wanted … so whether he did it for himself, or he did it for me, he did it … and he did it on his own.[124]

There appears to be an absence of research that directly deals with issues around the continuity of reo Māori development in the transition from compulsory schooling through to tertiary study, employment, or other environments where learners can use their reo skills. This gap in reo Māori research suggests more inquiry must take place regarding how young adults with reo Māori skills contribute and participate generally in Aotearoa New Zealand, and what supports their on-going use and learning of reo Māori. This is one of the areas that *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* may be able to shed more light on as we continue to talk to whānau about their experiences of reo Māori learning.

124 Bright et al., 2013

KI HEA INĀIANEI?: WHERE TO NEXT?

In year 2 of *Ka Whānau mai te Reo* (July 2013–July 2014) we will report on the kōrero with whānau who are in the preparation stage of a transition—when whānau are getting ready to move to the next learning environment and thinking about what Māori-language education options will best achieve their reo aspirations. In year 3, we plan to kōrero again with whānau who have completed their transition, about how they are adapting to their new environments and how well their reo aspirations are being supported.

We are also working on a related project that focuses on how ongoing reo Māori learning is being supported in tertiary institutions such as wānanga.

Kupu Whakatepe

Conclusion

There are many different Māori-language education options in Māori medium and English medium, but they vary in effectiveness and there is very little accessible information or guidance available to whānau about the options. This type of information is important for whānau so they can make informed decisions about the type of Māori-language education they choose to participate in and know how it will contribute to achieving their reo Māori aspirations. This is particularly important during times of transition when learners and whānau have opportunities to reassess their reo aspirations and education pathways. This is also when some whānau choose to leave Māori medium, which is the most effective Māori-language education option, and join the majority of Māori learners in English medium where they are less likely to experience effective immersion or bilingual programmes.

This report provides the beginnings of information that we think will be useful to whānau: we have identified some good transitions practices based on the strong themes coming through the literature and from kōrero from whānau, and we have some ideas about how we think transition processes can be improved (see figure 11).

We have framed these ideas within the idea of challenging the institutionalised racism that has created this situation—a challenge that whānau, centres/kura/schools, and government have a role in meeting. If these things can improve, language transmission can become more stable, and this can contribute to systemic change.

The government's *Tau Mai te Reo: The Māori Language in Education Strategy 2013–2017*[125] intends to address the challenges related to coordination, effective investment, and creating conditions for learners to achieve Māori-language outcomes in the education system. It will require institutional change for the strategy to be fully actioned at the level where whānau are directly and positively affected.

Ka Whānau mai te Reo focuses on the experiences of whānau who are participating in Māori-language education in today's education system, and encourages further thought into the possibilities for reo revitalisation tomorrow.

125 Ministry of Education, 2013b

REO MĀORI, NGĀ MOEMOEĀ, RANGATIRATANGA

"WHAT SUPPORTS THE CONTINUITY OF WHĀNAU REO MAORI DEVELOPMENT DURING KEY EDUCATIONAL TRANSITIONS?"

Having clear long-term whānau reo Māori aspirations.

Knowing your Māori language education options.

Learning reo Māori as a whānau.

Making or influencing decisions about reo Māori learning at home and at kura/school.

Having clear expectations that the kura/school you participate in will:

- involve whānau in planning for transitions
- value, promote, and use reo Māori
- employ kaiako with high reo Māori proficiency and understanding of second language acquisition
- value learners' cultural knowledge and language abilities
- foster relationships between kura/schools to support learning continuity, and share information and practices.

Figure 11: Supporting the continuity of whānau reo Māori development during key educational transitions

Rārangi Pukapuka

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REO MĀORI, NGĀ MOEMOEĀ, RANGATIRATANGA
CRITICAL QUESTIONS FOR WHĀNAU

YOUR REO MĀORI ASPIRATIONS

What aspirations does your whānau have for learning Māori while at kura/school and beyond?

Which Māori-language education option is most likely to support your aspirations?

How do whānau aspirations impact on kura/school decision-making about reo Māori learning?

REO AT HOME

How do you support reo Māori development at home?

Who are the reo Māori speakers and role-models in your whānau and community who can support ongoing reo Māori learning?

What kind of support might you need to improve your reo?

REO AT KURA/SCHOOL

Does the kura/school provide high- or low-level Māori immersion programmes in one classroom or throughout the kura/school?

How does the kura/school involve whānau in reo Māori learning?

Do kaiako have appropriate levels of reo Māori proficiency and and an understanding of second-language acquisition?

How are reo and tikanga valued and promoted through the school by teachers and leaders? I.e. are there processes in place to welcome and farewell whānau?

TRANSITIONS PROCESSES

How does the kura/school and kaiako involve whānau in planning transitions?

Do transitions include a focus on Māori- and English-language acquisition?

RELATIONSHIPS

Are there good relationships between the kaiako in both kura/schools? I.e. visits, sharing information and good practice.