



Boss of Our Story

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When we talk to people about a 'Treaty' education course we get a variety of reactions. Some eyes get glazed, some burn with evangelical fervour, some shoot daggers, and some close while their owners go to sleep.

When we took on the role of joint co-ordinators of the bicultural project at Christchurch College of Education in New Zealand at the end of last year, one of the tasks we faced was the development of programmes within the College. These courses would provide staff and students with the basic knowledge they need about the Treaty and its relevance to teaching and prepare them to apply this knowledge to their own practice.

This paper describes the processes we are engaged in to develop Treaty education programmes and the programme that is evolving. It also describes some of the conceptual incongruities that we are finding associated with Treaty education, and it places these against a wider framework of theorisations of learning, of decolonisation, of participatory and reflective practice, and of Māori approaches to education. It describes an alternative approach that draws upon the arts as springboards for investigation and learning.

TEACHING HOW TO TEACH IN A TREATY-BASED SOCIETY, AND THE FOCUS OF THIS PAPER

In New Zealand, the responsibility to meet the needs of Māori students is anchored in the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty guarantees Māori the right to the same rights and benefits of citizenship as Pakeha¹, and it guarantees Māori the right to retain control of their properties or taonga². The relevance of these Treaty promises is multiple. Māori academic success is one issue. The Treaty implies that Māori have the right to expect that the state education system will address the learning needs of Māori students and enable them to achieve success outcomes to the same extent as it does the needs of Pakeha students. Another issue is the right of Māori to a process of learning and teaching that acknowledges their cultural values and aspirations. The Treaty in its English text guarantees Māori 'the full exclusive and undisturbed possession' of not only lands, forests and fisheries, but also of 'other properties that they may collectively or individually possess, so long as it is their wish and desire to maintain the same in their possession'. The Māori text endorses Māori 'rangatiratanga o...o ratou taonga katoa'. The Waitangi Tribunal's report on the claim for Māori language (1986) makes it clear that the right not only to success

¹ Third clause of the Treaty, and the preamble

² Second clause of the Treaty, and the preamble

in education, but also to education that is culturally relevant is guaranteed by the Treaty. The active partnership of Māori in education is a third component. Not only is this right implied in the clauses already discussed, it is also fundamental to understandings of partnership that are articulated by both Māori (e.g., Durie 1989) and Crown (e.g., New Zealand Government, 1988) and, in practical terms, to the Memoranda of Understanding (e.g. Ministry of Education and Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, 2001) that have been made between the Ministry of Education and various iwi.

As we develop our Treaty education programme in the College there are two focusing questions. How do we educate our College staff and students to be able to teach effectively in a Treaty-based society? Can we do it in a way that allows them to retain a sense of ownership of their learning and to develop goals and understandings to which they are committed?

This paper sets out to share some of our theorising, our process of development and the emerging shape of the programme. It is too early in our process to be able report on the effectiveness of our work and that is not our intention. We write in the belief that in order to teach effectively in the field of Treaty education we need to develop understandings of not only the content issues involved but also of the processes that will lead to learning that is owned by the learners, that extend their previous knowledge and capabilities and that they feel able to translate into their own effective practice. At this stage we lack a body of research, literature, and even debate, to support the evolution of such understandings. This paper does not attempt to fill that void. It does offer one building block made through our own reflective practice, and invites the making of others.

Before looking in more detail at the context in which we work, it may be useful to readers to know how we locate ourselves in the cross-cultural discussion. Liz is Ngai Tahu and Janinka is Pakeha of Czech descent.

LEGISLATIVE AND CONTRACTUAL CONTEXT

The pressure on the College to deal with its obligations to Māori comes from national and from local sources.

On a national front, a governmental audit report (Te Puni Kokiri, 2001) makes a number of firm recommendations. These include the stipulation that teacher education programmes:

- *extend their current curricula pertaining to Māori to include more practical content that will prepare trainees for the reality of the contemporary New Zealand classroom;*
- *develop a prescribed set of competencies to equip graduates to teach students who are Māori.*

The Tertiary Education Commission (Ministry of Education, 2002) stipulates the following among its funding priorities:

- *tertiary educational leadership that is effectively accountable to Māori communities;*
- *quality programmes that recognise te ao Māori perspectives and support the revitalisation of te reo Māori.*

At the local level Ngai Tahu, the tribal group whose mantle covers most of the South Island, have established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education and Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, 2001). This commits both parties to the achievement of a number of specific educational outcomes for Māori. Among the expectations that have been established are the following:

- *by 2004 every school will have established a relationship with its local branch of Ngai Tahu, and involve parents in the education of their children;*
- *there will be monitoring of Ngai Tahu participation in early childhood education, success in reading, writing and maths, secondary school retention and achievement, suspension rates, te reo acquisition, and qualifications;*
- *by 2008 the performance of Ngai Tahu students will show they are achieving equal to or better than the general population.*

It is the College's role to prepare teachers who are able to meet these expectations.

In response, the College has developed a set of strategic goals (Te Aika and Greenwood 2002). These include:

- *recognition of the Treaty partnership by working with Ngai Tahu to deliver on their priorities as well as existing ones;*
- *development of courses that provide students, and staff, with understandings of Treaty obligations;*
- *development of programmes in Māori language and protocol for staff and students with different levels of existing knowledge;*
- *creation of a physical and social environment that is culturally appropriate and welcoming;*
- *development of curriculum content that is up to date and relevant to Māori and to bicultural development;*
- *support and allocation of funding for Māori research projects.*

The development of Treaty education programmes is stated as an explicit goal. In addition, staff understanding of Treaty responsibilities underpins the other goals.

DEVELOPING THE TREATY PROGRAMME

Feedback from staff showed that while many found courses they had attended useful, they did not go far enough in helping them to apply Treaty

issues to their own practice. Many students also wanted to see application of the issues to contemporary classroom needs. Members of the Māori community commented on the unpreparedness of beginning teachers to create effective relationships with students and their families.

At the same time it was evident that there is also a number of staff in the College who consider courses about the Treaty either a waste of time or unnecessarily divisive. Feedback from students indicated that they did not want to be alienated or patronised by Treaty courses and that they themselves had a range of issues that they want to bring to such courses. In addition, there are groups within the College who feel they have a strong ownership of the material that might be included in such courses, either because they have actively taught Treaty history or anti-racism, or because of their familiarity with existing models.

Our first step was to engage some of the key stakeholders in a preliminary discussion, so establishing a first cycle and participatory action (Cardno, 2003). In turn members of this group have met, formally or informally, with others of shared interest and developed overlapping and expanding spirals of discussion.

Our first group contained College staff from each of the sectors of pre-service teacher education and members of the Māori community. All came with substantial experience in the field of Treaty-based education. In terms of purpose, the main theme that emerged was the need to prepare our students to meet Treaty obligations in their schools and to be effective in creating learning situations that lead to success for Māori students (Greenwood & Brown, 2003).

A Treaty course would provide a focus for some of this learning but, clearly, professional studies and curriculum areas would also be needed to prepare students to meet Māori educational needs.

To extend our understandings we turned to what current research says about Māori educational achievement.

WHAT CURRENT RESEARCH ADVOCATES

Bishop, Berryman and Richardson (2001) identify the development of *relationships* as a critical component in determining Māori achievement. This builds on earlier research, such as that by Simon (1986), that showed how the overall as well as the educational well-being of Māori students was negatively affected by the unconscious monocultural bias of teachers. The most common shortcoming by Pakeha teachers today, Bishop (2003) states is a lack of the skills to develop meaningful relationships with Māori pupils and their families.

Durie (2001) articulates what Māori academic success means. It calls for schooling to equip Māori to be citizens of the world, as well as of te ao Māori. Effective teaching can be evaluated by the extent to which Māori students are prepared for careers of all kinds as well as being nurtured in their Māori values. Te Mana's programme (2003) for enhancing the educational success of Māori students puts forward the same expectation.

Smith (1992) describes the cultural values that characterise being Māori and that underpin kaupapa Māori initiatives in education. The values and processes that he describes are argued to be important for all teachers to understand if they are to be effective in relating to their Māori students. Among these are 'social practices such as utu (reciprocity), maanaki (hospitality), tiaki

(nurture), hui (co-operative organisation), and aroha (respectfulness)' (p. 8). According to Smith there is also a wider developmental framework to consider, that includes 'notions of rangatiratanga (autonomy), mana (authority), iwi (tribal support), whanaungatanga (group responsibility), manaakitanga (sharing and support)' (p. 30). In addition, Smith affirms the significance of a number of international constructs of effective pedagogy to achieve social change. He cites Paolo Freire's statement, 'name the word, name the world'; Pierre Bourdieu's notions of 'cultural capital' and 'habitus'; Michael Apple's notion of the 'hidden curriculum'; Antonio Gramsci's notion of 'hegemony' and Henry Giroux's notion of 'resistance'. He suggests that these are consistent with the characteristics of kaupapa Māori education that he has described.

RESOLVING CONCEPTUAL INCONGRUITIES

As we worked towards developing a Treaty education package, we confronted apparent contradictions between the kinds of understandings we want our teacher trainees and our staff to achieve and the processes that are frequently used to teach about the Treaty.

When we worked with curriculum areas in the College we developed a model that asked lecturers and, through them, their students, to look further than content. The model asked them to consider learning processes, classroom climate and awareness of the rangatiratanga of the learner. However, when we came to designing the Treaty course, we found ourselves initially focussing almost exclusively on content. We also found we were falling back on a didactic orientation to teaching. Even though we were designing interactive exercises, we were making unilateral decisions about what needed to be learned and in what order. We felt we were running the risk of alienating or disempowering some of our students, of ignoring what they already knew and of imposing our conceptual preferences on them. We also feared that if we started with a history of the Treaty, we might run out of time before we made connections with the demands that would come from their future classroom practice. We were anxious that the connections that were made would be meaningful for our students.

We want our students to complete the courses feeling motivated about undertaking whatever further learning they need to be able to relate effectively to Māori and to create a classroom climate and practice that leads to Māori achievement. We also want them to feel motivated about creating a classroom climate and a practice that leads to Pakeha, and recent immigrants, finding an effective role within a Treaty-based society. We want them to be equipped to acknowledge the rangatiratanga and the mana of the students within their classrooms. We want them to be able to acknowledge the prior learning that students come with, and to be able to co-construct learning tasks with their students.

We need the courses we develop to be grounded in similar approaches to learning and teaching. Students need to feel valued and respected within the course, and to be able to leave it with affirmation of their potential to continue their learning and with a sense of the direction they might take. They need to

feel that they are active agents in shaping their understandings and the questions that arise. They need to own their learning.

At the same time, there is a significant amount of substantive content that they need to learn. And that too is like the classroom situation in which they will work. It was time for us to revisit some of the learning theory that we taught about in our curriculum work.

LOOKING AT MODELS OF LEARNING

We looked to Freire (1972) who argues that effective learning takes place through passionate inquiry into the world that learners perceive as significant to them; to Giroux (1988) who insists that teachers engage students in a constant critical deconstruction of the society they live in; to Dewey (1938), Kolb (1984), Holt (1964), and Bruner (1961) who explain the importance of problem-solving and experiential learning; to Gardner (1993) who alerts us to the significance of multiple intelligences; and to Vygotsky (1997) who reminds us that optimum learning occurs in the territory that is immediately beyond what learners already know.

Since we are both artists and art educators, we also looked to theorists who explore pedagogy through the arts. Eisner (1996) challenges us to make sure our students have the appetite and ability to think analytically and critically and foregrounds the arts as a site where speculation and imagination are engaged. Boal (1979) positions theatrical process as a means to analyse social oppression and to strategise change. Heathcote and Bolton (1995) show us how to manipulate the art forms of drama in order to challenge students to take responsibility for their learning across a range of subject areas and particularly about social interactions and personal responsibility. In New Zealand, Tovey (Henderson, 1998) shows how learning accelerates when students are engaged at a sensory and subjective level and Patricia Grace (2000) reminds us that we cannot allow ourselves to be mechanistic in our application of Māori concepts to the daily working of our schools. She suggests that we go beyond lip service and find practical and meaningful ways in which students and their teachers can implement interpersonal and spiritual values in their classroom interactions and their dealing with visitors.

We drew on the example of two successful New Zealand models of teaching through the arts. Arnold Wilson's *Te Mauri Pakeaka* programme (Greenwood & Wilson 2003) uses art as a catalyst for cross-cultural learning and shows us how adults as well as young people can enthusiastically explore cultural issues that they may have previously found off-putting and dangerous when they are free to find their own level of engagement and to bring their own creative response. Jim Moriarty's *Te Rakau Hua o the Wao Tapu* (TV3, 2003) programme works with young people at risk and uses the excitement, creativity and collaboration that comes with drama as a means of engaging participants with confronting their own issues and rehearsing change.

Both these models structure learning in such a way that it is learner-centred, holistic, supported by the group and celebratory. The learning processes affirm the mana of the learner. They respect the questions the learner ask and the choices she or he makes in deciding what is important to

learn next. They create a learning situation by posing provocations and by gathering together the people and the resources that the participants need to use.

EMERGING SHAPE

With that framework of examples and theory, we planned our own package. The following became key principles:

- *Using art*
We see art - drama and visual - as a means of opening up different expressive and discursive pathways, and these might allow our participants to bypass some of the verbal and circular arguments they are used to.
- *Building on prior knowledge*
We recognise that participants come with different personal backgrounds of knowledge and life experience, and that they bring valuable questions and a desire to make sense of their social environment. We wanted to be facilitators rather than experts.
- *Working in groups and pooling information*
Group work is a social activity and it can be fun. It allows the participants to share their knowledge and their learning journeys. The members of the group become co-teachers as well as co-learners.
- *Focus on sense-making*
Making meaning is both personal and social. The group has influence, and so do the participants' own questions. We want to encourage and honour both processes.
- *Focus on research*
We pose questions and create challenges. We are less interested in supplying right answers than in opening real inquiry, and in allowing participants to own their investigation and their growing understandings.
- *Developing resources to support the inquiry*
We put a lot of our preparation time into preparing resource packages that are easy to read as well as information rich.
- *Avoiding guilt and cultural cringe*
We see both cultural pedestals and guilt as unproductive. What is needed in our schools are teachers who are really knowledgeable and who are proud to take their place in the emerging bicultural landscape of New Zealand. Having a Māori and a Pakeha working together as facilitators makes this easier.
- *Doing 'homework'*
Out of class tasks are important because they allow groups to meet without our facilitation and they encourage participants to take greater ownership of their investigation. They are also a dramatic symbol of the homework we all need to do to develop our own understandings and to create change.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR FIRST TRIAL

Next year we will be adapting our package for work with the College's Strategic Leadership Group, with its Council, with students in the School of Primary Education, and with a community group of Supergrans.

This year we have had the chance to run our first trial with a staff group who selected the course as part of their professional development. The participants in this trial were all motivated learners and they were eager to investigate and to make sense of what they discovered; perhaps they would have learned just as eagerly in a different kind of package. At this stage we are not engaged in evaluation. What we did gain from the experience was the opportunity to further crystallise our understanding of the learning process, from which would like to share three highlights.

The first is the experience of watching one of the participants who is a member of the administrative staff taking the lead in presenting the results of her group's investigation into the history of Māori education. She had a white board covered with stick figure representations and she spoke authoritatively and confidently about the educational issues. Yet at the beginning of the course she had been unsure about her relationship with a focus on teaching. In the final session when another member of the course asked for advice on how to deliver information to students that they might find threatening, she offered this advice: 'Make sure they are the ones who can tell you the history.' Her comment crystallises the understanding that we may well be more prepared to deal with confrontational material if we are in charge of our own learning process.

The second is the experience of finding that we were redundant for long periods. Purposeful discussions would take place that did not involve facilitators leading. In one session, for instance, groups were building their own maps of some given Māori cultural concepts. They had been given a packet of terms, some resource readings and a varied supply of art materials. At first each of the groups turned to the members who they recognised knew more about the concepts or to ask us for direction. As they continued they became increasingly engrossed in the task, and those participants who had been turning to others to be given meanings began to play with different mapping structures that reflected how they thought different concepts fitted together. The focus had shifted from translation to actively making sense. We had nothing to do until we could join the audience for the presentations. Learning is often most effective, we were reminded, when it is the students, not the teachers, who are doing most of the work.

The third highlight is a shift that occurred when participants stopped talking and began drawing. When they talked about issues participants would often follow a cautious path that led in small steps from their current situation and concerns. When they became absorbed in drawing they would become more and more silent, and when later they reported back the thoughts that were being expressed were frequently complex, tentative and quite new. In the final sessions we asked participants to place themselves into the bicultural landscape. The talk initially tended to be argumentative, discursive. Then the drawings began. Talk then became more infrequent, and more speculative.

The sharing involved quite personal statements of connection with people and places and intricate symbolisations of discovery or growth. There were a number of phrases like: 'I wasn't really sure what these curves meant when I began to draw them, but I think now they are about....' The Treaty's significance for educational practice goes beyond knowledge of its contents and knowledge of the facts of history. It involves a growing understanding of how we want to see our country evolve in the future and the roles we want to take. For our participants these understandings are still nascent. Drawing, rather than talking about the bicultural landscape allowed participants a chance to attend to those growing understandings, with interest, and perhaps without censorship.

CONCLUSION

In our work in a teacher education institution we set out to develop a model of Treaty education in which the aims are not contradicted by the process. In this paper we have shared our understanding of those aims and of the potential contradictions. We have also shared the key principles of the process we are evolving.

Treaty education has little hope of solving all the racist ills and cultural prejudice of our society or of our education system. Nor do we hope, as the result of one isolated course, to shape graduating teachers who have all the necessary insights and skills to be effective teachers of Māori students and effective role models of bicultural interaction.

We do plan to create learning situations in which graduating teachers can access the knowledge of history and of the current situation that they need so that they can be responsible and effective educators. We plan to create learning situations in which they feel free to ask questions, to re-arrange their existing concepts, to take risks in expressing their new understandings. We plan to create learning situations in which they feel empowered to claim a strong personal role in the evolving cultural climate in which we all live and teach.

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