



Whakaritea te pārekereke: Teacher preparedness to teach te reo Māori speaking children in mainstream education settings.

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ABSTRACT

It is essential that teachers are prepared to teach te reo Māori speaking children so that Māori tamariki enjoy equal and equitable opportunities to succeed as Māori (Education & Training Act, 2020). This article draws on research undertaken for my master's degree which investigated teacher preparedness to teach te reo Māori speaking children in mainstream primary schools. Key findings included an awareness of how language and culture impact on identity and educational outcomes. Although participants acknowledged the absolute necessity that te reo Māori and tikanga Māori are included in all aspects of the education setting, they also reported that tikanga Māori is a more comfortable space to be in than te reo Māori as there were clear connections to their own values. Four key themes emerged from the findings which I promote in this paper as key factors for teacher readiness to teach reo Māori speaking children. These are: Kia rite (be prepared), Kia hono (be connected); Kia tātatiako (be culturally competent and responsive) and, Kia whakauruuru (be integrative). This article discusses the four factors listed above and implications for tamariki, their whānau, teachers and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers.

INTRODUCTION

The title of this article originates from the whakataukī,

Kohikohia ngā kākano, whakaritea te pārekereke, kia puāwai ngā hua.

Gather the seeds, prepare the seedbed carefully, and you will be gifted with an abundance of food.

A pārekereke is a seedbed which needs to be prepared (whakaritea) well and nurtured for seeds (kākano) to grow and thrive (puāwai) so we can enjoy the bounty (ngā hua) it provides. Within the context of education, the metaphorical meaning of a pārekereke is the learning environment and ngā hua represents the learners and their learning (Ministry of Education, 2009a). It is therefore essential that learning environments are prepared well so learners are nurtured and have equal and equitable opportunities to fulfil their potential. Just as a

pārekereke needs to be prepared well by knowledgeable people to produce an abundance of food, learning environments should be prepared by culturally and linguistically competent and responsive teachers who have the knowledge and understanding to teach te reo Māori speaking tamariki in meaningful and authentic ways.

This article draws on my master's research which focused on how prepared mainstream primary school teachers are to teach te reo Māori speaking children (Taani, 2019). Participants were invited to consider ways in which an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) primary degree prepares **teachers to teach te reo Māori speaking children**. The purpose of the research was to provide an in-depth analysis of a primary degree programme in relation to the inclusion of te reo Māori with the aim of providing recommendations and suggestions for ITE providers regarding **teacher preparation to teach te reo Māori speaking children** in mainstream primary schools.

The findings of my research included participant awareness of how language and culture impact on identity and educational outcomes. Participants also acknowledged that although they believe it is essential that **te reo Māori and tikanga Māori are included in all aspects of the education setting, they also felt more comfortable and confident with tikanga Māori than te reo Māori as there were clear connections to their own values**. Four key themes emerged from the research findings which are presented in this article as key factors for teacher preparedness to teach reo Māori speaking children. These are,

- Kia rite (be prepared)
 - Kia hono (be connected)
 - **Kia tātatiako (be culturally competent and responsive)** and,
 - Kia whakauruuru (be integrative).
- (Taani, 2019)

Before delving into this discussion, I begin by preparing the pārekereke which in the context of this paper, is the background of my research. I share a brief personal narrative to highlight my positioning within my research. This is followed by an overview of my research which is inclusive of the methodological approach I applied to my work. The cultivation of words in these sections prepares the foundation for the four factors listed above to emerge and flourish in the ensuing discussion.

BACKGROUND

Te reo Māori is the language of my tīpuna, the first language of my paternal grandparents, my second language and the language bond between myself and my tamariki. My childhood memories of language are sprinkled with some te reo Māori experiences but are largely dominated by the English language. When I reached adulthood, I decided to reclaim my language. This language journey continued with the birth of our tamariki. However, it would take another 18 months after the birth of our eldest child before my husband, and I made the **conscious decision to raise our tamariki with te reo Māori as one of their home languages**. For us this means that I speak only te reo Māori with our children. For

a myriad of reasons which are beyond the scope of this article, we chose to enrol our children in English medium education settings. Upon commencing primary school our tamariki were bilingual and on their way to becoming biliterate. We expected the school and teachers to be fully prepared to teach our tamariki, however, although **very supportive of our whānau language and education choices**, it soon became abundantly clear to us that most teachers were simply not prepared. Due to a lack of knowledge, the learning environments provided were **usually not reflective of our children’s language and culture**. My research journey was therefore fuelled by our experiences with our **te reo Māori speaking** children progressing through the mainstream education system.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

The research question I investigated was, how prepared are teachers to teach **te reo Māori speaking tamariki in mainstream primary schools? To develop** responses to the research question, participants were asked to share their perspectives of how an ITE degree programme prepares mainstream primary teachers to **teach te reo Māori speaking children**. A total of ten participants were recruited from a target population of lecturers and third year and/or graduate student teachers with recent teaching or learning experiences in a primary teaching degree from one ITE provider. I was interested in finding out how well **an ITE programme prepared teachers to teach te reo Māori speaking tamariki** hence the criteria.

My research was **grounded in mātauranga Māori** which refers to **Māori knowledges and encompasses past, present, and future knowledge, beliefs, values, and attitudes. Edwards (2012) explains that mātauranga “includes not only knowing, but also how it is known – including how Māori explain, understand, and develop phenomena and reality. In this sense, mātauranga Māori can be described as Māori epistemologies” (p. 42). Mātauranga Māori** underpinned the indigenous, interpretive paradigms within which my research was positioned. There are similarities between interpretative and indigenous paradigms in that both recognise there are multiple truths and realities and, methodologies and methods are people and relationship focused. These paradigms provided the framework and background for the **Kaupapa Māori** theory associated with my research. **A Kaupapa Māori theoretical approach provides opportunities to be guided by Māori values and principles which are informed and underpinned by Māori knowledge traditions such as, whakapapa and mātauranga Māori (Cram, 2001; Pihama, 2010; Smith, 2015; 2021). Kaupapa Māori theory informed a tikanga Māori based model I named *Te Tuamaka* (see Taani, 2019). This model guided the methods of hui and semi-structured interviews employed to obtain the voices of the participants. Tikanga Māori as methodology is informed by Kaupapa Māori theory, situated within indigenous, interpretative paradigms, and grounded in mātauranga Māori. A Kaupapa Māori approach was a natural alignment with my research due to my Māori heritage and the research topic.**

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Key findings of my research included participants highlighting their awareness of how language and culture impact on identity and educational outcomes. The findings also revealed that many participants felt a higher level of comfort and **confidence regarding tikanga Māori than te reo Māori as there were often clear connections between tikanga Māori and teachers' own values. Despite this, all participants reported they were integrating te reo Māori to the best of their capabilities.** Participants noted that to be prepared to teach te reo Māori speaking children in mainstream primary schools, it was important that teachers need to have at least some understanding of the language. They were uncertain, however, **of the language level of te reo Māori required by teachers. Lecturer knowledge and understanding of te reo Māori was a significant factor in relation to the inclusion of te reo Māori in the ITE degree programme. Although te reo Māori was included, the extent of use seemed to be reliant on lecturer knowledge and understanding of Māori language and culture. Understanding and including tikanga Māori in the classroom was also a strong feature in participants' reflections of what being prepared to teach te reo Māori speaking children in mainstream primary schools means.** As with the use of te reo Māori, the extent to which tikanga Māori was included in the teaching degree programme varied and inclusion was dependant on lecturer understanding and knowledge. Cultural responsiveness and working in partnership with whānau and tamariki were also strong themes throughout the findings. There were several barriers highlighted **to implementing te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in the classroom. These included a lack of confidence, time, and degree programme restrictions.** Subsequently teachers often felt **ill-prepared and challenged by the Māori language level and knowledge held by some students in their classrooms.**

An analysis of these findings revealed four themes which I present in this paper as key factors for teacher preparedness to teach reo Māori speaking children. The next section of this article discusses the four factors and how my research and literature informed my belief that these are crucial for teacher preparedness. **Implications for tamariki, their whānau, teachers and ITE providers** are also discussed.

Kia Rite – Be Prepared

Kia rite refers to the requirement for teachers to be prepared. Often heard at the **beginning of Māori cultural performances, this term signals performers to be ready, to ensure that they are fully prepared to participate and contribute to the collective performance.** This concept can be transferred to the context of teacher preparedness by ensuring that teachers are fully prepared to participate in, and contribute to, the collective aim of celebrating and nurturing the linguistic and cultural ways of knowing, being and doing of tamariki in mainstream education settings. But what does this mean and how does one prepare to become a teacher? **Furthermore, what does it mean to be prepared to teach te reo Māori speaking tamariki?** Firstly, I will provide an outline of the training and education requirements to become a primary school teacher in Aotearoa before turning the conversation to the latter question posed above.

To become a teacher in Aotearoa, it is necessary to embark on a programme with an ITE provider. These specialised programmes are designed to equip student teachers with the theoretical and practical knowledge required for their chosen sector (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2022a). Upon completion of the programme, students achieve a qualification such as a diploma or degree, signifying their readiness to progress to the next step in their teaching career. Following a formal ITE programme, teachers are required to register with the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand. There are different stages of the registration process to support teachers throughout their teaching career to ensure **“quality standards are maintained across the teaching profession”** (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2022b, para.1). The standards referred to here are *The Standards/Ngā Paerewa* which “describe the essential professional knowledge in practice and professional relationships and values required for effective teaching” (Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2017, p. 16). The first standard refers to te Tiriti o Waitangi thus fore-fronting **teachers’ commitment to** this document and the teaching profession. The implication here is that educators must ensure this commitment is visible in all areas of teaching practice (Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2017; Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2011; Education & Training Act, 2020; Ministry of Education, 2007, 2009b, 2020a, 2020b). With the expectation that te Tiriti o Waitangi is demonstrated in teaching practice, it is only fair to assume that teachers learn about this document throughout their pre-service teaching programme, and furthermore, that teachers enter the classroom armed with knowledge about how to implement their commitment in practice. I now present a brief overview of the four articles of te Tiriti o Waitangi within the context of education and highlight implications for teachers.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Article one of te Tiriti o Waitangi is *kāwanatanga* (governance) and in education, refers to the documents, policies and strategies which govern and guide teachers, schools, and practice (Gordon-Burns & Campbell, 2014; Network Waitangi, 2018). The implication here is that all kaiako should have a working knowledge of the documents that govern their teaching **practice to ensure Māori authority** and sovereignty is confirmed.

Article two of te Tiriti o Waitangi **promises to protect taonga. Te reo Māori** is considered a taonga and is recognised as such in legislation (Network Waitangi, 2018; **The Māori Language Act 2016**). **Therefore, the responsibility of schools and teachers to include te reo Māori** in their learning environments is paramount (Ngāpō, 2013; Rau & Ritchie, 2011; Ritchie, 2009; Williams et al., 2012). **The expectation that te reo Māori and tikanga Māori are available in all schools is** clearly emphasised in the Education and Training Act 2020 (Bright et al., 2021). The act enables two legislative documents, *The Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP)* and the *Tertiary Education Strategy* (Ministry of Education, 2020c). **Both documents include te reo Māori and tikanga Māori as** priority and action areas. This message is further accentuated in educational strategies such as, *Ka Hikitia* (Ministry of Education, 2020a) and *Tau Mai te Reo* (Ministry of Education, 2020b).

Article three of te Tiriti o Waitangi in education means ensuring there are **equal and equitable opportunities for Māori to achieve success as Māori. Success for Māori is not easily defined and the importance of connecting and establishing relationships with tamariki and their whānau is essential**, so teachers understand **what success means for each whānau**. This point is reinforced in the aforesaid documents and educational strategies. Article four promises protection of all **beliefs in Aotearoa including tikanga Māori (Network Waitangi, 2018)**. The implication for teachers is that they must understand what tikanga is and how to implement tikanga appropriately to ensure it is protected and valued in education settings.

With these four articles in mind, te reo Māori and tikanga Māori must be considered essential aspects of teacher preparedness to teach te reo Māori speaking children in mainstream education settings. This point was highlighted in my research findings and is supported by a multitude of literature, research, and curriculum documents. Ensuring the language and culture of students is visible and normalised in the classroom is significant because of the **positive impacts on students' self-esteem, identity, sense of well-being, belonging and, educational outcomes** (Barback, 2017; Bright & Wylie, 2017; Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2011; Hura, 2016; McKinley, 2000; Ministry of Education, 2007, 2009b, 2011, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c; Stewart, 2014).

Normalising te reo Māori in mainstream schools is essential so children can learn and thrive in environments that reflect who they are as tangata whenua (Berryman, 2018; Bishop et al., 2007; Gordon-Burns & Campbell, 2014; Rau & Ritchie, 2011). For many **Māori**, language is an identity marker and is central to our indigenous identity (Ngaha, 2004; Te Huia, 2015). Thus, it is of upmost importance **that te reo Māori is prioritised** and normalised in education settings and is particularly crucial for tamariki and **whānau for whom te reo Māori is the language of the home**. A degree of critical awareness of the importance of **normalising te reo Māori** is a crucial part of teacher preparedness. Being critically **aware means understanding the issues surrounding te reo Māori** (Ministry of Education, 2020a; Muller, 2016; Ngāpō, 2013). **It also means understanding the impacts these may have on Māori identity. Coulthard (2007) discusses Taylor's view on how identity is formed and deformed,**

A person or a group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning one in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being (p. 442).

The significance of tikanga **Māori in relation to Māori learner success is well-documented and are core principles in several kaupapa Māori frameworks** (Bishop et al., 2007; Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2011; **Rautaki Ltd & Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga**, n.d; Williams et al., 2012). The findings of my research revealed a higher level of comfort, confidence and consequently, preparedness, regarding the implementation of tikanga **Māori** in the classroom. This finding aligned with a national survey of primary and

intermediate schools undertaken in 2016 which reported that “many English-medium schools were paying attention to tikanga Māori and, to a lesser extent, te reo Māori, recognising their importance for the wellbeing and achievement of ākonga Māori” (Bright & Wylie, 2017, p.1). The participants in my research noted that they felt more comfortable implementing tikanga Māori as there were clear connections to their own values. This suggests that tikanga Māori may feel more accessible to teachers, however, te reo Māori and tikanga Māori are interlinked and to pay more attention to one than the other does not align with a holistic Māori world view. It is essential that teachers ensure both te reo Māori and tikanga Māori are implemented in the classroom to uphold their professional, moral, and ethical responsibilities as a teacher. These responsibilities include a commitment to te Tiriti o Waitangi and *The Standards/Ngā Paerewa* (Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2017).

Kia Hono – Be Connected

Kia hono means understanding the importance of relationships to Māori and acknowledging the central position of whānau in the education of their children (Chaffey et al., 2017; Ministry of Education, 2009b, 2011, 2020c). The implications of establishing and maintaining relationships with whānau are increased opportunities to strengthen links between home and school. An Education Review Office (2020) report, *Te Tāmata Huaroa: Te reo Māori in English-medium Schooling*, stated that,

Only in some schools did ERO find engagement with whānau that was focused on the provision of te reo Māori. Whānau engagement tended to pertain more to learner achievement, or just making connections in general (p. 11).

Establishing and nurturing connections with whānau, hapū, iwi and the wider Māori community was highlighted in my research and is essential for enhancing educational experiences for te reo Māori speaking children. Drawing on whānau expertise and knowledge in relation to language and tikanga Māori is important because teachers are then able to draw on students’ prior knowledge and experiences thus ensuring te reo Māori and tikanga Māori are implemented in authentic and meaningful ways (Bishop et al., 2007; Ministry of Education, 2009b, 2020a, 2020b; Ngāpō, 2013; Stewart, 2014; Taani, 2015, 2019).

Whānau, hapū, iwi and the wider community hold a wealth of knowledge and expertise and could be key for preparing teachers to teach te reo Māori speaking children in mainstream schools. Furthermore, many iwi have established language plans and strategies so connecting with iwi enables schools and teachers to contribute to language goals at a school and community level. Some of the challenges faced by schools identified in the Education Review Office (2020) report included: not knowing who to approach; a lack of knowledge and understanding of how to approach key Māori stakeholders; and maintaining contact which impacts on continuity and relationships. The implication here is that the full potential and power of connections with whānau, hapū and iwi may not be realised because challenges become too momentous to overcome and may be viewed as barriers to engagement. Developing relationships with iwi and Māori speaking communities comes with the understanding that a collaborative and reciprocal approach is necessary. Working in partnership and ensuring

ongoing consultation is therefore crucial to sustaining relationships with the shared goal of positive language outcomes (Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2011; Education Review Office, 2020; Ministry of Education, 2020a).

Kia Tātaiako – Be Culturally Competent And Responsive

Kia tātaiako draws on the name of the education resource, *Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners* (Education Council Aotearoa New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2011). Centred around the goal of “**Māori achieving educational success as Māori**”, *Tātaiako* was developed to support teachers across all education sectors, at all levels, to become more culturally competent and responsive to Māori learners (Education Council & Ministry of Education, 2011, Inside Cover).

Cultural responsiveness was emphasised by participants in my research as necessary for teacher preparedness. A culturally responsive approach supports the development of cultural competency. Culture is defined as, but not limited to, the values, knowledge, beliefs, and customs attained by a person or people of a society or community. Culture underpins actions, behaviours, expressions, and ways of knowing, being and doing; how people live and view the world. Culture includes tangible elements, such as art and images. The intangible elements of culture are unseen, but are still an essential aspect of culture, for example, language, values, and customs (Bishop et al., 2007). Being a culturally competent and responsive teacher then, means ensuring students can see and hear themselves reflected in the classroom and school environment. Bishop et al (2007) note that teachers can be culturally responsive by ensuring that “*culture counts: where classrooms are places where learners can bring “who they are” to the learning interactions in complete safety, and their knowledges are ‘acceptable’ and ‘legitimate’*” (p. 15). The literature presents well-informed arguments that positive educational outcomes are achieved if the learning environment reflects **students’ culture and language** (Bishop et al., 2007; Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2011; Gordon-Burns & Campbell, 2014; Ministry of Education, 2011, 2020a, 2020b; Taani, 2015).

Including tikanga Māori in the classroom featured heavily throughout the findings of my research with participants identifying the value of concepts such as ako. **Ako is a Māori pedagogical practice where teachers and students learn in collaborative, interactive ways.** There is no notion of hierarchy attached to the concept of ako as the roles of teacher and learner interchange and are reciprocal. Experiences, ideas, and knowledge are shared and recognised as a collective responsibility. In addition to gaining new knowledge and understandings, ako promotes and strengthens connections between teachers, students **and whānau** (Bishop et al., 2007; Carpenter, 2010; Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand and Ministry of Education, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2009b; Williams et al., 2012).

For ako to be effective, an authentic approach and attitude is required, that is, people must be open and willing to learn regardless of their position in the classroom. This aligns with the views of **Te Puni Kōkiri (2010) who highlighted attitude as a key contributing factor concerning the health of te reo Māori** which can have positive and negative impacts on language. Gkaintartzi and Tsokalidou (2011) argue that “**Teacher attitudes towards bilingualism and language diversity**

are part of the language ideologies which underlie their language practices” (p.588). The Education Review Office (2020) reported a positive attitude and sense of responsibility amongst most of the school leaders they interviewed **regarding te reo Māori**. The implication here is that teachers are more likely to be well-supported in their own learning and **implementation of te reo Māori in the classroom**. Furthermore, leadership support sends a clear message to tamariki, **their whānau and the wider community about the school’s commitment to te reo Māori (Education Review Office, 2020)**.

Kia Whakauruuru – Be Integrative

Kia whakauruuru refers to an integrative approach to teaching and learning where teachers **strive to incorporate te reo Māori across the curriculum rather than teaching the language in isolation**. Following an integrative teaching approach means language is acquired because it is used in more natural contexts rather than learning language in a more formal, structured environment (Begović, 2020; Hill, 2010). Hotere-Barnes et al (2014) assert that,

a multifaceted pedagogical and content approach ensures that those who have a reo Māori background can “see themselves” in the content of their lessons. Those who are new to reo and mātauranga can begin to gain critical awareness of its practical everyday nature (p. 12).

Applying an integrative approach is largely dependent on teacher knowledge, confidence, and language proficiency. Confidence may be viewed as an indicator of preparedness with Darling-Hammond (2000) noting that “the weight of substantial evidence indicates that teachers who have had more preparation for teaching are more confident and successful with students than those who have had little or none” (p. 166). Confidence was a commonly experienced barrier highlighted by the participants in my research and a consistent feature in stories shared by teachers **regarding the implementation of te reo Māori** (Gardiner & Parata, 2004; New Zealand Post Primary Teachers’ Association, 2017; Wyllie, 2016). As noted earlier, the participants in my research felt more comfortable **implementing tikanga Māori than te reo Māori**. It is necessary though to consider the benefits of using the language for tamariki rather than focusing on avoiding discomfort. Educators therefore need to acknowledge their own position and **accountability to ensuring te reo Māori is included in the classroom and ITE programmes**. Trim proposes that, “By normalising the use of reo in the classroom...Māori students will feel more engaged in their learning if they see that everyone is participating” (cited in Barback, 2017). The implication here is that teachers are compelled to confront their personal barriers and find a more holistic approach to integrate **te reo Māori in the classroom and across the curriculum**.

A holistic, integrative approach further supports the normalisation of **te reo Māori in mainstream education settings**. There is a plethora of resources to support teachers to implement **this approach, for example, Te Puni Kōkiri online resources**, Ministry of Education published **te reo Māori readers and curriculum documents**. Stewart (2014) recommends that teachers create their own resources, so the language is applicable to the topic and area in which the school is located. Ngāpō (2013) agrees that **te reo Māori needs to be implemented in authentic and meaningful ways and notes that “Meaningful repetition, rather than a tokenistic one-off celebration, is crucial to normalising and ‘mainstreaming’ te reo Maori”**

(p.8). Additionally, Ngāpō (2013) advocates for a fun approach and encourages teachers to use te reo Māori in everyday contexts.

Consistency is key to normalising te reo Māori in education and society which means teachers need to take responsibility for their own learning by **valuing, learning, and using te reo Māori. However, teachers must also be supported on this journey throughout their ITE studies to sustain motivation for ongoing learning (Wilson, 2002). Moreover, it is important that teachers take personal responsibility for the revitalisation of te reo Māori and realise that for some tamariki, schools may be the only place they experience te reo Māori, a point highlighted by Ngāpō (2013),**

Educators for the future, who will be teaching in mainstream schools, must understand that their personal commitment to provide **opportunities to speak and hear the Māori language may be the only connection many students have with te reo Māori (p.5).**

My research suggests that there is a gap in teacher education in terms of supporting new teachers to develop te reo Māori. **There is currently no definitive level of language competency required by teachers which means it may be challenging for teacher educators to determine the level of reo Māori to teach in ITE programmes.** Whilst this may not be an issue for teachers with existing language knowledge, **for those entering ITE with no knowledge of te reo Māori,** there seems to be no level to work towards or to be measured against. Requirements for ITE providers released by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (2019) places higher expectations on tertiary institutions to prepare teachers to meet and demonstrate *The Standards/Ngā Paerewa* (Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2017). One of these requirements is to assess **te reo Māori levels at the beginning of the degree programme. The intent is to ensure a robust system is in place to track and monitor language growth and progress throughout the duration of the degree programme (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2019). Despite this requirement, there is no Māori language competency requirement prior to entry to English medium ITE programmes. Conversely, there are clear criteria regarding English language competency that potential students must demonstrate (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2019). With no clear criteria in place for te reo Māori, the implication here is that upon completion of their degree, teachers are potentially entering the teaching profession unprepared to teach te reo Māori speaking children. This may also impact on their ability to integrate te reo Māori across the curriculum. Furthermore, it is difficult to determine how teachers could meet *The Standards/Ngā Paerewa*, the first of which requires teachers to “Demonstrate commitment to tangata whenuatanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership in Aotearoa New Zealand” (Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2017, p.18). The use of te reo Māori is one way to demonstrate this commitment.**

As previously alluded to, my research found that connections between **tikanga Māori and teachers’ own values contributed to higher levels of comfort and confidence in relation to the integration of tikanga Māori in primary and tertiary classrooms. The application of tikanga Māori frameworks such as, *Te Kotahitanga*, in mainstream secondary schools was successful and enhanced**

Māori educational outcomes and experiences (Bishop et al, 2007). This demonstrates the potential of transforming mainstream classrooms through **tikanga Māori.** **The implications are that if teachers feel more prepared to integrate tikanga Māori than te reo Māori, this** is a potential pathway towards developing **te reo Māori competency and confidence.** **The recommendation** offered here is for ITE providers to base teaching degrees on existing kaupapa **Māori frameworks or** develop their own. These frameworks could be applied across degree programmes with relevant **te reo Māori connected to each aspect of** the model. Williams (2012) and Williams and Te Rongopatahi (2023) developed sets of resources for the early childhood education sector which includes practice-based **examples of tikanga Māori principles and te reo Māori phrases to use across** the curriculum. These resources could be used in primary and tertiary classrooms. Support may be required initially therefore team professional learning and development is essential.

CONCLUSION

This article presented four factors I believe are essential for teacher preparedness **to teach reo Māori speaking children in mainstream education settings.** These factors are in response to my research findings and included: being prepared, being connected, being culturally competent and responsive and being integrative. **Te reo Māori and tikanga Māori are integral to a sense of identity,** well-being and belonging and, positive educational outcomes (Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2011, 2022a, 2022b). **Integrating te reo Māori and tikanga Māori throughout** teaching degree programmes will demonstrate a commitment to a te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership. Consequently, this approach will then be transferred to schools and result in more culturally competent, responsive teachers who are well-**prepared to teach te reo Māori speaking children in mainstream education settings.**

GLOSSARY

ako

to teach and learn

hapū

sub-tribe

hui

meetings

iwi

tribe

kaiako

teacher

kaupapa

topic

kaupapa Māori

Māori values

mātauranga

knowledge

mātauranga Māori

Māori knowledge

tamariki

children

tangata whenua

indigenous people of Aotearoa

taonga

something of high value; treasure

te reo Māori

the Māori language

tikanga Māori

Māori values, beliefs and customs

tīpuna

ancestors

whakapapa

genealogy

whakataukī

proverb

whānau

family

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