

# EDUCATING NEW TEACHERS FOR CULTURALLY COMPLEX CLASSROOMS

**BRIAN PRESTIDGE**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

*ABSTRACT: New Zealand schools are rapidly gaining complexity as cultural and linguistic difference accelerates.*

*Disparities in learning outcomes for students are often sharply defined, at least in part, in terms of ethnicity. This is unacceptable.*

*Recent research focusing on what actually happens in classrooms, particularly in respect of Māori students, is helping to clarify both the causes of these inequities and the remedies for them.*

*This research indicates clearly that the teacher, pedagogy, and the quality of relationships are key factors.*

*A major challenge facing teacher educators is how to prepare new teachers for this reality.*

*This paper explores that challenge in the context of pre-service teacher education.*

## DIVERSITY

Ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity has increasingly become a feature of the New Zealand population. Since World War II the Māori population has rapidly become urbanised. Immigration by people from Pacific Islands, India, South East Asia and European non-English speaking countries has led to increasing pluralism, particularly in many urban centres. The census figures for 2001 (Statistics New Zealand, 2003) show a total population of 3.8 million, of whom 73.68% are Pākehā/European, 13.88% New Zealand Māori, 6.11% Pasifika and 6.33% Asian and other. It is projected that the Asian population will rise to an estimated 9% by 2016. The trend is such that "by 2040, people of non-European background will be a majority" (Ministry of Education, 2002 p. 2).

The figures for the school population at 1 July in 2001 and 2002 (given in brackets) show that there were nearly 734,000 (748,084) full-time equivalent students attending New Zealand's schools. The proportions of this younger section of population clearly indicate the trend already referred to: Pākehā/European 62% (61.4), New Zealand Māori 21% (20.4), Pasifika 8% (8.1), Asian 6% (6.6), other 3%. Interestingly, there were 10,555 foreign fee-paying students (FFP) in 2001, comprising 1.4% of the New Zealand school population. Over 95% were from the Asian region, with 3,554 from China, 2746 Korea, 1422 Japan, 626 Thailand, 430 Taiwan, 390 Hong Kong, 166 other Asian, 94 Indonesia, 139 Malaysia, 142 Vietnam. In 2002, the number of FFP students had risen to 15,440, comprising 2.1% of the school population. Taken together, these figures do show New Zealand's and New Zealand schools' rapidly growing diversity. They also show Pākehā/European proportionally declining.

## DISPARITY

Academic achievement by secondary school students in 2001 and 2002 can be broadly indicated by results in public qualifications: School Certificate, National Certificate of Educational Achievement, University Entrance, University Bursary (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2002 and 2003). The following charts set out some statistics relevant to the topic for this paper.

*School Certificate 2001 (final year for this qualification)*

Group	Candidate Numbers	And Percentage	Pass rate (Grades C to A)	A Grades
Pākehā	39,832	64.7	68.1%	9.3%
Māori	9,607	15.6	39.6%	2.3%
Pasifika	4,130	6.7	33.6%	2.2%
Asian	5,315	8.7	68.5%	16.8%
Other	2,670	4.3	62.1%	11.6%
Total	61,554	100	62.6%	8.8%

*National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)*

*Attainment of Level One Qualification 2002*

Group	Candidate Numbers	And Percentage	Percentage of total candidates attaining level one
Pākehā	21,326	59.7	69.7
Māori	2,974	14.2	9.7
Pasifika	1,305	7.3	4.3
Asian	2,369	9.2	7.7
Other	2,646	9.6	8.6
Total	30,620	100	100

*National Qualifications Framework Standards (Unit and Achievement) entered by school candidates 2002*

Group	Total Candidates	Net Achieved %	Achieved %
Pākehā	56,333	27.7	72.3
Māori	13,392	41.6	58.4
Pasifika	6,869	43.4	56.6
Asian	8,712	28.9	71.1
Other	9,112	*N/A	
Total	94,418		

\*N/A = statistics not available

*University Entrance, Bursary 2001*

Group	Candidate Numbers	And Percentage	Pass Rate (Grades C to A)	A Grades
Pākehā	16,819	64.2	75.5%	13.9%
Māori	2,078	7.9	58.8%	6.2%
Pasifika	1,410	5.4	47.4%	3.5%
Asian	4,721	18.0	73.8%	20.3%
Other	1,187	4.5	70.1%	16.1%
Total	26,215	100	72.5%	14.2

*University Entrance, Bursary 2002*

Group	Candidate Numbers	And Percentage	Pass Rate (Grades C to A)	A Grades
Pākehā	16,368	59.2	79.4	17.0
Māori	2,015	7.3	61.1	8.2
Pasifika	1,424	5.2	45.4	3.2
Asian	5,462	19.8	77.4	23.6
Other	2,360	8.5	N/A	N/A
Total	27,629	100	76.1	17.4

*University Entrance, Bursary – percentage of group gaining qualification 2001*

Group	Entrance	B Bursary	A Bursary
Pākehā	89.9	40.5	34.0
Māori	71.9	35.4	15.1
Pasifika	60.6	23.0	9.5
Asian	88.0	31.5	43.5
Other	82.7	33.7	36.6
Total	87.0	37.4	33.8

*University Entrance, Bursary – percentage of group gaining qualification 2002*

Group	Entrance	B Bursary	A Bursary
Pākehā	90.3	41.2	34.7
Māori	75.0	36.4	15.8
Pasifika	55.1	24.4	7.2
Asian	87.0	30.8	43.3
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	87.2	37.8	34.8

The figures for stand-downs and suspensions are of similar concern.

*Stand-downs and suspensions 2001*

Group	% of Stand-downs	% of Suspensions	% of School Population (excluding FFP)
Pākehā	46	41	62.0
Māori	40	47	21.0
Pasifika	10	10	8.0
Asian	2	1	6.0
Other	2	0.5	3.0
Total	17,141	4,802	

*Stand-downs and suspensions 2002*

Group	% of Standdowns	% of Suspensions	% of School Population (excluding FFP)
Pākehā	44.8	40.6	62.7
Māori	40.7	46.6	20.8
Pasifika	11.1	10.6	8.2
Asian	2.0	1.2	6.0
Other	1.4	1.0	2.3
Total	17,912	4,937	

Overall, these statistics show that there are sharply defined disparities in educational outcomes at the secondary level in terms of ethnicity, with Māori in particular and Pasifika students under-represented as far as qualifications are concerned and over-represented in actions taken by schools to remove students

for serious behavioural issues. As New Zealand's ethnic mix gains complexity, these inequities become more obvious. This is a far from satisfactory situation. It is an especially acute issue in the case of Māori because rights to partnership, protection and participation afforded to them as the indigenous partner by the Treaty of Waitangi demand at least parity in educational outcomes. The National Education Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 1993, 1999) explicitly embody this principle. It is also now widely recognised that success in addressing bicultural requirements in principle and in practice will have positive effects if applied across the board where there are other ethnic minorities. Hence, the focus in this paper is on Māori educational achievement.

## CAUSES AND REMEDIES

Although there has been increasing acknowledgement of diversity in New Zealand schools and in spite of the presence of "benevolent multicultural educational approaches" in some schools (May, 2002, p. 11) until recently the approach of many if not most "mainstream" schools has been basically monocultural, "tacitly assuming that those who were not Pākehā would assimilate to Pākehā cultural norms" (Hall and Bishop, 2000, p. 2). Initiatives to address shortcomings have included alternative forms of schooling for students of particular ethnicity, most notably kura kaupapa Māori and bilingual and immersion units within mainstream schools. However, the great majority of Māori students together with students from other ethnic minorities attend mainstream schools where they are disproportionately less successful. Most of them will continue to attend these schools for the foreseeable future and in this paper I am recognising that reality.

Explanations for the disparities in educational outcomes already mentioned have tended to focus on major policy, structural and systemic issues to do with power and on socio-economic disadvantages experienced more pressingly by some ethnic minorities than others and impacting on educational participation and success levels. These perspectives are well presented, for example, by Jones et al. (1995), Chapple et al. (1997) and, in relation to the New Right context of the 1990's by Thrupp (1999) and Lauder et al. (1999). It is not within the scope of this paper to critique these viewpoints. In fact I do recognise (Prestidge, 2000) the validity of numerous claims about the negative effects on educational achievement by ethnic minorities, particularly Māori and Pasifika people, of long-standing assimilationist educational agendas and

more recent pursuit of economic and social policies based on a New Right ideology and the 'market model'. Fortunately, the current official policy line seems to have shifted somewhat away from the extremes, although exactly where it is heading remains unclear. However, what I am more concerned about here is to draw attention to some very recent work and research in progress, which offers a significantly different perspective on the causes of educational underachievement and remedies for it.

In *Culture Counts*, Bishop and Glynn (1999) write about

...a system that is in fact designed to promote... underachievement. It is a continuing irony to Māori people that it is the proponents of the very system that perpetuates marginalisation and underachievement who insist they have answers for these problems. (p. 13)

They present a case for changing the power dynamic in mainstream New Zealand schools where Māori seldom comprise a majority. They deal in-depth with issues relating to cultural diversity and in particular to the promotion of self-determination, guaranteed by the Treaty of Waitangi, as a metaphor for power sharing both at an institutional level and in terms of pedagogy. Hall and Bishop (2000) have explored ethical obligations pertaining to schools and teachers faced with increasing accountability in terms of catering for cultural difference and achieving equitable learning outcomes.

This leads me to discuss two projects from which there can be considerable learning about causes of and remedies for the disparities referred to in this paper. The projects have been independent of each other, yet they embody some interesting commonalities.

(a) From May 2001, Russell Bishop (Professor of Māori Education at The University of Waikato) has been directing a major Ministry of Education Research and Teacher Professional Development Contract: *The Experiences of Year 9 and 10 Māori Students in Mainstream Classrooms*, which is now named *Te Kotahitanga*, with the number of schools and teachers involved having been expanded considerably. This project is proving to be highly significant. The research work is being undertaken by a partnership of researchers from the Māori Education and Research Institute (MERI) in the School of Education at The University of Waikato and the Poutama Pounamu Research and Development Centre based in Tauranga. An unpublished Scoping Report (June

2001) two unpublished Milestone Reports (November 2001, April 2002) and a number of other reports have been produced. The scope of this paper does not allow for a detailed account of the background, terms of reference, literature, research methodology, teacher development strategy, or monitoring and reporting arrangements relating to this project. However, a number of points of information need to be stated in order to place comments made later in context:

- The "research project seeks to investigate the influences on Māori students' achievement, in particular how these influences are experienced by students in the classroom" (Bishop et al., June 2001, p. 4).
- Kaupapa Māori theorising and research is the central methodology, in which "self-determination of the participants is operationalised" (p. 6). "Deficit theorising", which locates the blame with students, their whānau, their socio-economic circumstances and so on, is rejected: "research approaches that focus on deficiencies will in themselves continue to maintain Māori on the margins of society" (p. 40). In appendix D, Bishop et al. give an in-depth account of the interviewing approach followed by the researchers. Put simply, this approach provides for the development of "collaboratively constructed stories" in "culturally appropriate ways, ways that fit Māori cultural preferences, practices and aspirations in order to develop and acknowledge existing culturally appropriate approaches in the method, practice and organisation of research" (p. 205). It means establishing relationships "in a Māori context" such that the true voices of students and their parents and whānau are heard, as are those of the principals and teachers who are interviewed.
- The narratives of student experiences have become rich, detailed pictures of "how young... Māori students experience schooling and classrooms and the importance to and impact of these experiences on their educational achievement" (p. 174). These narratives are being analysed, compared with the stories from the other participants and used for an ongoing, participatory action researched professional development strategy. The number of schools within the project has recently been lifted from four to twelve, with a major increase in the number of participants as a result.

A sample of interim findings (Bishop et al., April 2002) is given here to indicate the significance of this project for teacher educators:

- Research participants are well able to articulate and conceptualise their experiences and theorise these experiences when 'collaborative storying', a kaupapa Māori strategy, is used.
- There are marked differences between the descriptions and explanations of the students, the parents, and the teachers. The teachers spoke mostly of students' deficiencies, those that are fundamental to deficit theorising, which "leave unchallenged the notions of the superiority of the dominant knowledge codes and the inferiority of Māori backgrounds and cultural experiences" (p. 6). In contrast, parents and students identified a combination of structural and cultural relationships barriers.
- A number of school structural issues limit student achievement and need to be addressed in conjunction with classroom changes. Examples include: suspensions, streaming, timetabling barriers, special needs classifications.
- Numerous classroom related factors are very significant, including: teacher-student relationships, the teaching and learning dynamic, peer effect and teacher reactions, barriers to parental engagement.

Of crucial importance arising from discourse analyses of the narratives currently being worked on is the sharp difference between the models emerging from teachers on the one hand and from Māori students on the other. Teachers "tend to identify the problem of Māori students' achievement outside of themselves... some 80% of [their] utterances explain the problems in terms of factors over which they have little if any control" (p. 19). In other words, they externalise the blame on to the student or the structure (system). This means that they are "positioning themselves in non-agentic locations" rather than at the central point of influence. In stark contrast the students' view is almost exactly the opposite. They locate the teacher and the classroom at the centre, in the agentic position, as having the major influence on Māori students' achievement. The professional development model being used seeks to focus precisely on that realisation: that the teacher has a vital position in the story. This is an empowering message, even though it is a salutary one.

The narratives of Māori students indicate very clearly that the vital factors are the quality of relationships in the classroom and use of culturally appropriate pedagogy, and a great deal of specific explanation is being gleaned from the research and is given in the reports. It is also being used in the follow-up professional development work with selected volunteer teachers, which includes intensive hui and regular classroom visits by members of the research team. These researchers use an observation schedule that seeks to identify student engagement and how often teachers are using the student preferred pedagogies. This is "ongoing, continuous and side-by-side" professional development (p. 42). Results at a relatively early stage are showing great promise.

Again, the scope of this paper allows for only a brief summary description, but a model is being developed of the teacher's personal characteristics and pedagogical practices identified by the students as those that helped them to learn. The narratives of student experience show that an effective teacher would manifest the following behaviours. Broadly stated they are that the teacher:

- establishes a sound, social, caring, respectful relationship with the Māori students and by association with their families;
- monitors and/or checks that Māori students understand what is expected of them;
- acknowledges and values their prior learning and knowledges (including specifically Māori cultural knowledge);
- provides feedback and feedforward relating to behaviour;
- provides feedback and feedforward relating to academic learning;
- co-constructs the learning process, style, content with students. This is where the Māori student engages in 'conversation' with the teacher, either as a whole-class, group or individual in the decision-making about the learning tasks, curriculum content or learning styles that could be used;
- has high expectations.

The work of, and interim findings from, this particular project will resonate very positively with some teachers and educational leaders. The messages are in some ways disturbing because of opportunities lost for Māori students and their teachers. In other respects, they offer rays of optimism through the daily work of teachers who forge and maintain healthy relationships with their students. There is cause for optimism. What is being described by these Māori students is in fact quality teaching, not something beyond reach. Of course it is not the transmission model of teaching – neither should it be! It is empowering, because it says to teachers that, in spite of the big picture issues to do with history, policies, systems and the injustices of colonisation, they can be effective in teaching Māori students.

(b) Another project has been run during the period August 2001 to May 2002 from the University of Waikato's School of Education, which is particularly relevant to the topic of this paper. This is the *Developing Restorative Practices in Schools Project* in a contract with the Ministry of Education, directed by Dr Wendy Drewery (Assistant Dean Graduate Studies) and involving a small team of colleagues. A 'Kete of ideas and resources' (Drewery et al., 2002) was produced in May 2002 and has been revised and used in a number of settings, but as yet is unpublished. The focus of this project as part of the nationwide 'Suspension Reduction Initiative' (SRI) of the Ministry, has been on 'reducing the number of suspensions of Māori students and introducing and developing the use of restorative practices' (Drewery et al., 2002, p. 2) in the 34 northern secondary schools involved. (Reference has already been made in this paper to the much higher suspension of Māori students from schools than other ethnic groups). Although the precise focus of this project is not exactly the same as that which looks at the experiences of Year 9 and 10 Māori students discussed earlier, there are powerful similarities in some of the central messages.

Restorative justice practices advocated by some members of the judiciary (e.g., Judges McElrea and Carruthers) were adapted for conferencing in schools during 1999 to 2000 by a team from The University of Waikato. They "melded these ideas with some... from Māori hui-making, and also with [their] ideas about narrative therapy and respectful ways of speaking" (Drewery et al., 2002, p. 5). In essence, the approach is based on the view that, in regard to Māori, "our primary aim must be to move our schools' ways of being toward genuine partnerships within which Māori have both equity of access to all resources, and have voice in defining and controlling the content and delivery of education for their children" (Drewery et al., 2002, p. 17).

Restoration is about relationships. It is about restoring connections between people where these have broken down. "The idea behind Restorative Practice is simple. It is that respectful relationships between people is what really counts" (Drewery et al., 2002, p. 26). An important factor in this respect is projection or re-affirmation of identity and a sense of being valued. Another is validation and affirmation by dominant culture people of language and culturally specific processes, which belong to indigenous people whose position is then able to take precedence. This perspective is explained clearly by Glynn et al. (2000) and the values and worldview that underpin Māori kaupapa are elucidated by Macfarlane (2000). Ritchie (1992) also has a great deal to say about this matter in *Becoming Bicultural*. The reality of school life for most Māori, including the classroom context, "is of a Pākehā New Zealand system delivered in Pākehā New Zealand styles aimed at Pākehā New Zealand goals and judged according to Pākehā New Zealand assessments.... It is within the context of this lack of connection and voice that the practices leading to suspensions are much more likely" (Drewery et al., 2002, pp. 16-17).

The Restorative Practices project, which is again to do with action research and professional development for teachers, has paid considerable attention to healthy ways of interacting in school settings, particularly to re-establish connections and heal relationships. Narrative therapy principles and practices have been applied (again note the similarity with the other project dealt with earlier, especially in terms of the research methodology). Drewery et al., (2002) put it this way:

The theory of narrative therapy is not just about therapy, it is about how we interact with one another. It asserts that some ways of speaking are more respectful... and healthy than others. It is a kind of psychology, but in a sense it also challenges western psychology on a very deep level. For example, instead of "fixing" people, we would prefer to look at how they tell stories of their lives, and to see them positioned as far as possible in stories where they are not subjugated and where their knowledge of the world is upheld and foregrounded. (p.13)

Winslade and Monk (1999) refer to guarding against

the tendency of Western counseling (sic) theories to colonise clients' interpretations of

life and produce adherence. Rather the narrative counsellor seeks to convey to the client a deep respect for the person's own knowledge, which is likely to be subjugated knowledge, and therefore undervalued. (p. 30)

They go on to set out steps in "negotiating a power-sharing relationship" which, although the language has a different flavour, are strongly aligned to the views of Māori students about the effective teacher gleaned from the discourse analyses referred to in relation to the other project.

Referring to the section in the Kete (Drewery et al., 2000, pp. 25-30) on characteristics of a Restorative School one senses that the sounds emanating from these two projects resonate even more harmoniously. There is not the space to give details here but a particularly telling category of practices has the heading "Classroom practices that hold relationship (sic) as central to academic achievement" (p.28). The Kete is rich with guidance about restorative conferencing for maintaining or restoring relationships on a community level (Te Hui Whakatika) in classrooms and in student-teacher interviews, particularly in respect of Māori students and their whānau. There are also excellent sections on 'restorative justice' in schools and types of language that can help or seriously hinder restoration of relationships. An especially telling statement, which again accords with aspects of the other project, commences as follows:

The primary shift required for restorative practices to be developed is a shift from thinking in terms of individual character deficits, individual responsibility and the like to an emphasis on relationships in the school community. If offences are seen as damaging to relationships rather than as personal challenges to the authorities of the school, then the path forward changes from satisfying the demands for retribution by authorities to restoring the damage done to relationships. In the process the position of victims in relation to an offence is altered. Their concerns and needs are given more prominence and their mana valued more highly. Young persons are required less to bow to authority than to take up responsibility to repair the hurts they have caused for those they have harmed. Meaningless punishments are favoured less than meaningful acts of restoration. Young persons are offered ways to address the harm

they created rather than branded as deficient more or less permanently. At the same time the common binary distinction between "soft" therapeutic approaches to offending and "tough" retributive punishing approaches is rendered irrelevant. Restorative justice is neither of these. Rather it focuses on a definition of accountability that is situated in the relational context of the offence and seeks to address harm done in ways that will make an ongoing difference. (p. 32)

Thus there is much food for thought in some recent research and teacher professional development work with which I am familiar. It very often blends with reflection on my own experience. Fundamentally, the powerful message is that the teacher, pedagogy and the quality of relationships are the key factors in redressing inequities in educational outcomes for students in culturally complex settings. Of course there are other factors. Yes, there is the bigger picture. But the quality of interactions in the classroom and around the school is crucial. These interactions must be culturally appropriate and essentially respectful. This can happen – indeed it often does. It is an empowering message, and it leaves little room for excuses.

This paper now moves on with the task of exploring the implications of these matters for pre-service teacher education.

### TEACHER EDUCATION

Educating new teachers for the reality of culturally complex contexts in their classrooms, schools and communities presents a major challenge. This reality and consequential challenge is of course prevalent throughout many parts of the world today and will certainly accentuate rather than diminish as the future unfolds. The perspective taken in this paper related to the New Zealand setting acknowledges the particular responsibility in respect of Māori. Partly for that reason, and because of the serious disparities in current outcomes for Māori, the emphasis here is on information, issues, research and teacher development in relation to Māori education. However, there is also an assumption, acknowledged rather than proven, that sound educational principles and pedagogies applied by teachers in bicultural settings will be strongly applicable to even more complex, multicultural contexts. I do think this is a reasonable perspective for pre-service teacher educators to adopt, always bearing in mind of course that successful application of sound principles depends upon acute sensitivity and astute adaptation to specific situations.

In this section of the paper I simply want to outline a position in broad terms, as a basis for ongoing work in teacher education related to the theme of cultural complexity. Undoubtedly this position will continue to evolve, particularly as a result of further collaborative endeavour with colleagues and closer reflection on research and experience.

It is axiomatic that students entering pre-service teacher education bring their experiences and their own construction of those experiences, which some (for example, by Connelly and Clandinin, 2000) refer to as *personal practical knowledge*: "a person can never escape his or her past" (p. 101). Much of that construction is socially and culturally influenced. It certainly exercises a strong conditioning effect on the attitudes, values and even instincts of these pre-service teachers. Whether the particular individual has had experience of interaction with people in culturally complex situations is highly relevant. If so, what is the nature of that experience? Is it seen positively? Does it translate into enjoyment of the company of ethnically and culturally 'different' people? Is there a real rapport with them? These are just a few leading questions. The point is that "teachers hold knowledge that comes from experience, is learned in context and is expressed in practice" (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000, pp. 90-91). Thus, student teachers' *prior life's experience* and *ongoing experience*, including what happens during their teacher education, and how they construct or re-construct it through reflection, combine to have a major bearing on their capacity to be effective in culturally complex settings.

Connecting these thoughts about experience per se to the centrality of relationships, which is a strong theme emanating from the two research and professional development projects referred to earlier, raises important issues for teacher educators; for example, how to:

- identify relevant personal and experiential factors and relate them to applicants at the time of selection for teacher education;
- link personal and professional growth to the development of teacher knowledge during the programme;

- offer direct experiences of interaction with a degree of responsibility for culturally and linguistically diverse groups of people in various settings, including of course classes while on teaching practice;
- assist new teachers to be critically reflective in order to understand their experiences, and exercise responsibility for their own learning and teaching;
- include appropriate coursework which provides for sufficiently deep engagement with literature about culture, particularly in relation to the world views of ethnic groups represented in associated schools;
- ensure that appropriate examples are set by the teacher education institution itself and the people who are part of or associated with it.

Clearly, the concept of teacher education emphasised here sees it as a continuum: "... teacher educators need to imagine their role as part of an ongoing and developing process" (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000, p. 101). This view regards teachers not as technicians but as reflective professionals who are capable of extending their professionalism during a lifelong process. Snook (2000) encapsulates it this way:

Teachers cannot encourage creativity, innovation, critical thought, autonomy, enthusiasm and commitment unless they themselves are creative, innovative, critical, autonomous, enthusiastic and committed. Similarly, teachers cannot be prepared to do this except by teacher educators who possess these qualities... It is the function of teacher education to produce educated teachers, not just technicians. (p.154)

All of this is not to downplay the importance of strategy. Teacher educators who are disposed towards a concept of self-directed professionalism implicit in what has been said to this point, committed to research informed practice and mindful of the complexity of their own professional practice can be equally strong about the importance of appropriate pedagogy used by teachers in schools. Those same teacher educators should be just as aware of the need to exhibit that pedagogy in their own work. In terms of the topic for this paper, the emphasis of course is on education in and for culturally complex settings. Thus, the sorts of messages derived from the two particular projects referred to in this paper can be built into the teacher education programme.

Certainly there are the philosophical and conceptual levels, such as the thinking about classroom and school ethos, the principles of genuine cultural inclusiveness and power-sharing, and respectful relationships. There is also the level of day-to-day work, the actual methods or techniques to employ, which can be worked out and applied coherently in terms of what might be called strategy. Getting alignment of philosophy, principles and practices in classrooms is a challenge but one worth striving for. It is made that much easier if it happens at the whole-school level and where the school community itself is clear about that. Similarly, in teacher education institutions. This is an essential aspect of leadership: getting the culture right; supporting quality teaching; forming and maintaining healthy relationships and being steadfast in restoring them where necessary rather than, for example, pursuing the exercise of power and authority.

Essentially, I am talking here about teachers learning the techniques that do work for students, that facilitate success in culturally complex settings. Some of these have already been referred to. Bishop's project advocates, for example, getting away from the transmission approach, co-constructing the curriculum in culturally inclusive ways, catering for a variety of learning styles, recognising and seeking to build on student prior knowledge, asking genuinely open-ended questions, using the Māori language appropriately, giving clear academic feedback, connecting respectfully with students and their families, using formative assessment effectively, having high expectations and being clear about them. None of this is mysterious. It can all be learned and applied by teachers. These competences can be refined impressively. In fact the professional development side of this project, which includes in-depth discussion and collaborative planning at hui, deliberate follow-up application of some of the techniques by selected teachers, structured observation and feedback by researchers, and repetition of this cycle in a spiralling pattern is showing signs of a major impact on the engagement levels of Māori students. There are clear links between the extent of student engagement and level of achievement. These practical approaches can be included deliberately into pre-service teacher education programmes. Indeed in many cases they are, although not necessarily as part of a coherent strategy for educating teachers to work in culturally complex settings. A more focused approach in that way is likely

to produce worthwhile results, especially when linked with a strong sense of self-efficacy as a teacher (a real capacity in the ability to make a difference) and clear knowledge of as well as confidence in their own culture on the part of the new teachers concerned.

A recent report by the Ministry of Māori Development (Te Puni Kōkiri, October 2001) included in a list, two recommendations that teacher education programmes "develop a prescribed set of competencies to equip graduates to teach students who are Māori; and encourage teacher educators to undertake professional development focused on improving their Māori language skills and their understanding of the Māori world view" (p. 8). While this is obviously far from the whole story for teacher education, there is undoubtedly an element of truth in the need for a focus at times on building up a repertoire of very practical techniques which can be applied in culturally appropriate ways in particular settings. However, this needs to be done in a way that encourages the teachers to take up that responsibility themselves. Developing the craft and artistry of teaching is an integral component of professionalism. Ultimately, reliance on someone else, or an institution to do it by a kind of injection of knowledge, skills and attitudes for pre-service teachers does not lead to high levels of professionalism (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000). Being able to construct and reconstruct one's own knowledge is the real test.

This leads directly to the final aspect for inclusion in the discussion here: the importance of the theoretical underpinnings of learning and teaching. This is the 'Why?' or reason side of the triangle, which connects with the 'What?' (Experience) and the 'How?' (Strategy) to form a balanced structure.

Snook (2000) says that "teachers, if they are to be true professionals, must understand the theoretical rationale for policies and be able to explain these to parents" (p. 148). He goes on to write about the importance of "contextual studies (sociology, history, philosophy and comparative education)" (p. 149) and warns of the dangers of "a narrow, technicist" competency-based first degree for teaching that fails to address conceptual and ethical issues in a manner which leads the new teacher to a point of being able to critique policies, systems, curricular and pedagogy, including their own. Hall and Bishop (2000) deal with this from the point of view of ethics and professionalism in relation to cultural diversity, and right in the classroom situation. All of this is of course, highly

relevant to a range of issues around cultural complexity which now forms the context for the work of so many teachers. Teachers need to have a deep understanding of that context, both in theoretical and in practical terms.

Another angle on theory, is to do with learning and teaching theory. Pre-service teacher education and ongoing professional development must recognise the need for teachers being knowledgeable enough about significant theoretical frameworks and assist them to theorise both their own learning and their teaching. It does seem to me that cultural difference is again relevant, not only in terms of teachers recognising and including the world views of their students but also in taking into account different perspectives on how learning actually occurs. Bird and Drewery (2000) address this issue well in discussing traditional western theories of development and learning, particularly emphasising Vygotsky, and then going on to include Māori and Pasifika perspectives and theories in ways which emphasise cultural issues and heighten critical reflection.

There is also the matter of research informing practice and the value of action-based research on one's own work as a teacher and in terms of institutional practice. For example, the two projects referred to in this paper stress the significance of a Māori world view, a kaupapa Māori research methodology and Māori students' preferences for certain approaches to their learning, which in total require a major effort on the part of teachers to work out in both theoretical and practical terms.

All of this taken together seems a daunting challenge for teacher educators. However, it is also an exciting one and only the best is acceptable as we seek to achieve excellence in educating new teachers for culturally complex classrooms and their futures as education professionals. Their students – all of them – deserve no less. Aotearoa-New Zealand's increasingly pluralistic society needs them desperately and they have the chance to make a huge difference.

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