A KAUPAPA MĀORI ANALYSIS OF TĀTAIAKO

Considering Māori education policy

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Abstract

The overarching policy strategy for Māori education is contained in the document *Ka Hikitia—Accelerating Success 2013–2017: The Māori Education Strategy* (preceded by *Ka Hikitia—Managing for Success 2008–2012*), out of which fall some specific Māori education resources. One of these is *Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*. The Tātaiako framework purports to define behaviours and skills that reflect a teacher's Māori cultural competence to ensure the success of Māori students, as Māori. These competencies are identified as five traditional Māori values and concepts: ako, manaakitanga, tangata whenuatanga, wānanga and whanaungatanga. The purpose of this article is to present a Kaupapa Māori analysis of Tātaiako, which raises questions about its potential to improve Māori student achievement, its underlying political purpose and the challenges inherent in the education system that may affect its successful implementation.

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He whakatakinga

Education has been the site of contested values and beliefs since the establishment of missionary and Western schooling in New Zealand 200 years ago. Māori language and culture have been marginalised by this education system because they were seen to be obstacles to the socialisation and education of Māori (McMurchy-Pilkington, 2008). As a result, political responses to "Māori" education have taken on many forms. We have experienced colonial and assimilationist policies that have rendered Māori culture and language invisible in education, as well as persistent and long-term use of deficit theorising that have maintained the racist ideology that at best has positioned Māori as less capable, and at worst, incapable of abstract, academic ability. Walker (1984) argued that education has been used as a tool to destabilise Māori culture and establish a monocultural, Pākehā society. The purposeful and arguably well-orchestrated colonialist assimilationist policies used to cause this destabilisation are evidenced by New Zealand's education legislation history.

The Education Ordinance of 1847 was the first iteration of British law defining the shape of Western education for Māori, and signalled the official involvement of the Crown in Western education for Māori, previously the sole domain of missionaries. The ordinance was authored by Governor Grey, the representative of the Queen in New Zealand, and reflected his many colonial and assimilationist beliefs. Grey held the view that Māori needed to be fluent in English, not to be able to compete on equal terms with Pākehā for economic growth, as many iwi aspired to do (Henare, 2010), but rather for the purpose of becoming Europeanised (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974). Walker (2016) has argued that the existence of "dispossessed owners of the soil" (p. 23) posed a particular problem for Grey in that they continued to hamper the hasty colonisation of New Zealand. Grey believed that if

Māori became Pākehā, opposition to the dispossession of lands and rangatiratanga would be eliminated. Therefore, Māori needed to be assimilated into British culture in order to accelerate New Zealand's colonisation (Barrington, 1970).

The Education Ordinance initialised a systematic and legal dismantling of Māori social structures, knowledge and language through education by establishing a specific system of education restricted to manual labour and religious studies so as to "civilise" Māori. Māori children were also removed from the protection of their communities in order for them to participate in this limited education system. When the system was modified in 1858 with the introduction of the native schools system, the assimilationist ideals of Governor Grey were widespread and well entrenched.

The Native Schools Act 1867 was heavily influenced by racist perspectives such as those of Inspector of Native Schools Henry Taylor (1863), who perceived Māori as being "unaccustomed to mental exertion" (p. 16) and by nature suited to manual labour. The act and the ensuing thinking and practice in regard to Māori education institutionalised racism in New Zealand education, without the support of any research, evidence or logic, for over a hundred years. The Native Schools Act 1867 clearly indicated that education would be the means by which the government would carry out its agenda for the assimilation of Māori (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2016) by first removing land from within every Māori community throughout the country for educational purposes, then by providing a specific, limited curriculum and removing te reo Māori from education.

The Education Act 1877 was intended to provide a centralised education system for New Zealand children and ratify equitable education. However, it was not explicitly designed to provide equality of education for Māori and Pākehā children; the purpose of the act was to provide equitable education for wealthy and poor settler children. The motivation

was to progress egalitarian ideals for Pākehā. Education for Māori was provided for under the Native Schools Act and therefore would remain a separate entity from the state primary school system for another 90 years (Barrington, 2008). The separate education system illustrated the government's dual and conflicting purposes for education—a free, secular education for all settler children to progress an egalitarian society and, ironically, a restrictive and controlled education to "civilise" Māori children into becoming the underclass of that egalitarian society.

Modern New Zealand education is situated firmly against this backdrop of racist and assimilationist ideals and has from its inception attempted to position Māori as a subordinate, labouring underclass (Walker, 2016). Many years have intervened since the 1800s; however, our educational foundations of assimilation and colonisation arguably continue to tenaciously colour the lens of Western education for Māori. Jackson (2016) has argued that "the education system still continues to fail so many of our mokopuna because that's what it was designed to do" (p. 41). The Māori education strategy Ka Hikitia developed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) is a response to the damage caused for many Māori by the longstanding effects of an education system arguably designed to fail us.

The most current version of the strategy, Ka Hikitia—Accelerating Success 2013–2017, seeks to "rapidly change how the education system performs" (MoE, 2013, para. 1). Ka Hikitia and subsequently Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011) are education strategies specifically developed to positively target Indigenous students in English-medium schools. While this is potentially positive for Indigenous students in English-medium education, there remains a serious need for the issues and implications of education success of Māori, as Māori, within the context of our colonised society to be examined critically from a Māori perspective.

The purpose of this article is to present a Kaupapa Māori analysis of Tātaiako by privileging and utilising the theoretical cultural underpinnings of our language and knowledge (Smith, 2012) to question the potential of a strategy designed to transform Māori education experiences while positioned within educational structures that have an enduring tradition of systematically redefining and excluding Indigenous knowledges (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2012). I raise questions about the authentic implementation of Tātaiako in order for it to deliver on its intentions for both Māori students and teachers of Māori students. In the first section, I overview education policy in relation to Māori, with specific reference to Ka Hikitia and Tātaiako, before briefly outlining the Tātaiako document. I then use mātauranga Māori, te reo and tikanga to analyse the aspects of ako, wānanga and manaakitanga presented in the document. I consider how the current education framework problematises the authentic application of strategies such as Tātaiako. I conclude by arguing that while the cultural competencies in their current form are problematic for both students and professionals, they also potentially offer a starting point for education transformation.

Education policy and Māori

The Hunn Report (1961) was a report on the Department of Māori Affairs that had far-reaching implications for Māori social and education policy. According to Hunn (1961), Māori were struggling to adjust socially and educationally largely because of socio-economic disparities between Māori and Pākehā (Hill, 2009). The "solution" for Māori was to discontinue living in multigenerational family units, move to urban areas and quickly learn to live as Pākehā. Doing so, it was believed, would ensure that Māori had life outcomes equal with those of Pākehā. From the Hunn Report (1961), the public policy of integration began. However, the Māori Synod of the Presbyterian

Church was critical that "integration" according to Eurocentric government policy meant that Māori needed to do all the adjusting (Hill, 2009). A dangerous inference presented by the report was that Māori lack of success in Western education was not due to racist colonial and assimilationist policies, or their having been deprived of access to our economic bases of land and sea, nor to Western-biased education philosophies and racist attitudes, but to the way we lived. So the policy of integration came into being in the same breath as cultural deficit theory.

Walker (2016) has argued that while the Hunn Report (1961) was in many respects useful, it failed to address the moral integrity of an education system that purposely drove Māori away from the professions and into manual labour. The Hunn Report was successful in legitimising the perspective that Māori culture and society was deficient, and fuelled a belief that Māori learners fail in education. This belief arguably remains deep in the psyche of New Zealand education. Indeed, even into the new millennium the government identified a continued need to move away from education policy underpinned by deficit theorising and toward policies with the potential to raise Māori education success. This contributed to the development of Ka Hikitia and Tātaiako.

Two frameworks underpin the first phases of both Ka Hikitia and Tātaiako. First, the Māori potential approach advocates the strengths, opportunities and potential of Māori learners (MoE, 2009a). This approach was developed by Te Puni Kōkiri in 2004 as the government approach to public policy (MoE, 2009a). The Māori potential approach is underpinned by an ideology that views Māori culture as an advantage to education; it recognises that Māori are inherently capable of achieving success, and acknowledges the unlimited potential of Māori learners. The Māori potential approach signalled that perhaps positive change was imminent for Māori learners in English-medium education.

The second approach is ako, which the MoE (2013) described as "a dynamic form of learning" (p. 16) in which teachers learn from students, and utilise research to inform reflective and deliberate teaching practice. Ako "is about seeking the perspectives of Māori students, parents, whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori organisations" (MoE, 2013, p.16) to ensure that policies and practices take into account Māori ways of knowing, identity, language and culture. Ako, in this sense, lays the foundation on which to begin building effective relationships between Māori and the education system. In the current phase of Ka Hikitia, the two original strategic approaches of Māori potential and ako have expanded to include the Treaty of Waitangi; identity, language and culture count; and productive partnerships—collectively referred to as the guiding principles of Ka Hikitia (MoE, 2013).

Utilising Māori potential and ako as frameworks signalled governmental change in the pursuit of better outcomes and experiences for Māori in education. That Tātaiako is underpinned by approaches that look for the possibilities Māori bring to education rather than blaming underachievement on Māori is an effective foundation for a strategy intended to assist teachers in constructing better Māori cultural understandings. However, the same approaches have not been applied to the overarching education framework in which the strategy is expected to function. Smith (2012) has argued that the theories underpinning education are still deficit, and so continue to "position Māori as lacking, as inadequate and problematic" (p. 11). While the approaches underpinning Tātaiako are an attempt by the MoE to move away from deficit views of Māori in education, the education system in which the document is situated arguably continues to maintain deficit ideologies, which consequently presents problems in the positioning of Tātaiako in the current New Zealand education system.

An overview of Tātaiako

The five Tātaiako competencies are bound together by the central theme of "Māori learners achieving education success as Māori" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011, p. 5). The competencies are defined as "Wānanga: Communication, problem-solving, innovation", "Whanaungatanga: Relationships (students, school-wide, community) with high expectations", "Manaakitanga: Values—integrity, trust, sincerity, equity", "Tangata Whenuatanga: Place-based, socio-cultural awareness and knowledge" and "Ako: Practice in the classroom and beyond" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011). The Tātaiako competencies describe "behaviours for teachers at different stages of their teaching career" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011, p. 4). Framed in this way, the competencies are a set of behaviour indicators intended by the MoE and the Education Council of New Zealand to support teachers of Māori learners in early childhood education (ECE) and English-medium primary and secondary schools.

The Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (formerly the New Zealand Teachers Council and the Education Council of New Zealand) do not intend for the competencies to be seen as an exhaustive list; rather, the intention is to encourage schools to develop the competencies alongside local iwi expectations (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011). The competencies describe a range of dispositions teachers should display as their careers progress from initial teacher education through to school or centre leadership. The linking of Tātaiako to the Graduating Teacher Standards and Registered Teacher Standards provides a mechanism by which individuals, management and the Teaching Council can measure professionals' progression through the competencies as they progress in their careers. It is intended that teachers progress from cultural novice during their early career to leading or being cultural experts as experienced teachers.

Tātaiako values the role of cultural locatedness and maintains that Māori worldview's "aspirations, and knowledge are an integral part of teaching and learning, and of the culture of the school or ECE service" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011, p. 4). In the sections that follow, I engage Kaupapa Māori theory by applying Māori concepts inherent in mātauranga, te reo Māori and tikanga to analyse this document.

The silencing of mātauranga Māori in Tātaiako

Tuhiwai-Smith (2012) has argued that the Western academy constructed the rules by which the Indigenous world has been theorised, causing Indigenous voices to be overwhelmingly silenced. Under the traditions of the Western academy implemented in New Zealand, language, culture and education have been treated as separate entities. There is also a void in education for Māori that was formerly occupied by wairuatanga and tapu. The separation of culture and education have been a contributing factor to what Nepe (1991) described as the "structural dysfunction in Māori society" (p. 3). The epistemic perspective that knowledge is bound to spirit permeates Māori language, and yet the Pākehā-oriented education system continues to compartmentalise and isolate knowledge from wairua.

Mātauranga, knowledge based on Māori philosophy, determines that full consciousness can be achieved through complete balance of the conscious and unconscious, between the spiritual and physical, between feminine and masculine energies, and the equal engagement of both hemispheres of the brain. According to Māori philosophy, a full education requires not compartmentalisation but rather deep connection and connectedness. While the cultural competencies are intended to allow Māori learners to experience educational success as Māori, mātauranga, which forms the basis of Māori cultural structures and understandings,

is not specified as a dimension, nor are mātauranga Māori understandings incorporated in the definitions of the dimensions. It seems absurd that an initiative intended to support Māori educational achievement would exclude mātauranga Māori and pedagogical practices. This is perhaps indicative of the minimal value placed on utilising Māori knowledge bases to raise academic success in the current education system.

The two competencies that potentially link to traditional Māori educational constructs—ako and wānanga—have been defined in ways that remove them from the field of mātauranga and reposition them as interactive behaviours. This shift aligns to the Tātaiako purpose of guiding teacher–student interactions; however, in doing so it silences deeper mātauranga Māori meanings. For example, wānanga, the sacred and protected site of esoteric academic learning, is simplified by the competencies into "participating with learners and communities in robust dialogue" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011, p. 4). While robust dialogue with learners and communities is essential in education, the traditional pedagogy in wānanga was listening, not discussing. The Tātaiako definition of wānanga is somewhat ironic in its contradiction of traditional definitions of the concept. Its focus on discussion positions the school as expert; had the focus been on listening, schools could potentially position whānau and parents as experts on their children. This definition also serves as an example of the ways appropriation of cultural understandings can violate cultural integrity. Concepts that have specific and intricate meanings have been appropriated and incorporated into general society, and particularly into education, with a different set of forms and meanings (Tsosie, 2002).

Many Māori continue to access and utilise the often individualised and abstract traditional educational practices of the whare wānanga. Despite this, in the search to rectify educational underachievement for Māori learners, nothing of the kauae runga is reflected in the Tātaiako

definition of "wānanga", in the curriculum or in pedagogical practice, perpetuating stereotypical perceptions that Māori are a "hands-on" rather than academic culture.

The history of highly organised Māori academia (Whatahoro, 1913/2011) is often overlooked and appears to continue to be silenced in current Māori education strategy documents, which instead privilege Western perceptions and assumptions attached to these aspects of our culture. Stereotypes that Māori are kinaesthetic, oral and aural, and learn best in group situations continue to remain strong messages regarding Māori in education (Zapalska, Brozik, Dabb, & Keiha, 2002). Prominent stereotypes about Māori are strongly reflected in the cultural competencies; there is very little emphasis on the importance of the individual and a heavy focus on the group, often referred to in the document as "Māori communities" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011). Stereotypes may be further entrenched through the focus of the competencies on "behaviours for teachers" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011, p. 4) rather than on academic practices.

Translating te reo me ōna tikanga

Part of the continued failure of the current education system to increase Māori education success may be attributed to the continued government practice of collapsing tikanga and mātauranga Māori, which have as many variations as there are iwi, hapū or even whānau, into what they perceive to be manageable and measurable policy packages. As outlined, Tātaiako defines five dimensions that have Māori names, and indeed derive from Māori understandings. However, the superficial definitions provided are a disservice to teachers, to Māori and non-Māori students, and to the Māori conceptual understandings of the dimensions. This is one of the difficulties in reconciling and translating the epistemological differences between cultures. The cursory definitions of in-depth

cultural concepts in Tātaiako are indicative of a standardised approach to te reo and tikanga, and policy in education.

In a 2009 discussion paper, Dr Wally Penetito provided the then Minister of Education Ann Tolley with key messages regarding the development of the competencies—that cultural standards are specific to groups, not universal; strategic goals must be linked to communities as well as school policies if they are to be successful; and teachers must integrate cultural knowledge, relationships, practices and understandings into their teaching (Sue Thomas, personal communication, June 6, 2014). Very little of this is reflected in Tātaiako; instead, it seems the New Zealand Teachers Council opted for a standardised, universal version of cultural competencies that hands the final interpretation of the values depicted in Tātaiako over to schools, not to the Māori communities with the cultural knowledge and language whom the schools serve. A model closer to the recommendations given by Dr Penetito, and aligned to the uniqueness of each hapū and iwi, would require a far more intensive relationship with local Māori communities at all levels of the education system. This is a demonstration of how tikanga and mātauranga Māori can be manipulated, reclassified and then repackaged to appear to be meeting the aspirations and potential of Māori in education. Crucially, this also links to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

In Aotearoa the problematic nature of translating words from one language and epistemological perspective to another has had an enormous impact on the formation and direction of our country. Our social and political structure as a nation was initiated and continues to balance on the contrasting meanings of two documents—Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Treaty of Waitangi. The task of translating words from one language to another may arguably be straightforward; however, there is great complexity in the accurate transmission of cultural meanings and contexts from one language to another.

The fallout caused by the dichotomies that exist between Te Tiriti and the Treaty has been graphically and painfully illustrated in Aotearoa since 1840. One culture took the meaning of the Treaty as permission to establish a settler government under the sovereignty of England and to commence colonisation, while the other culture had confidence that Te Tiriti was a solemn promise given by the Queen of England to protect the absolute sovereignty of Māori. Ongoing tension remains between the Pākehā perspective that there cannot be two sovereign powers in one land, and the Māori perspective that there is only Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the other document being nothing more than a translation which does nothing to capture the essence of the sacred covenant made between rangatira and the Crown (Henare, 2010).

The form of "bilingualism" found between Te Tiriti and the Treaty seems to have set a precedent in our country in terms of appropriating Māori concepts to further a multitude of agendas, which appears to be the case with Tātaiako. In education, the phrase "te reo me ōna tikanga" is a well-known one. The New Zealand Curriculum specifically acknowledges that "all students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge of te reo me ōna tikanga" (MoE, 2007, p. 9); however, little or no reference is made to what is meant by the tikanga associated with the language. For example, the curriculum guidelines for teaching te reo Māori in English-medium schools, *Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i te Reo Māori—Kura Auraki* (MoE, 2009b), are designed to support Ka Hikitia and state that "as students learn te reo Māori, they also deepen their knowledge and understanding of tikanga Māori" (MoE, 2009b, p. 8). The document itself, however, is dedicated to the teaching of language proficiency, which raises questions about how students are expected to deepen their understanding of tikanga.

"Ōna tikanga" refers to the many conceptualisations that underpin te reo Māori; it is the mātauranga component of te reo. Hoping to develop intricate tikanga understandings

as an accidental byproduct of learning te reo is optimistic if not unrealistic; tikanga must be taught in purposeful and deliberate ways. Language is the vehicle by which Māori epistemology has travelled through space and time. Tai Tokerau leader Tā Himi Henare refers to Māori language in a well-known whakataukī as "te mauri o te mana Māori". The language can be learned and translated; more difficult to translate are the underlying tikanga, concepts, lived experiences and worldviews underpinning te reo that contribute to it being the life force of our mana as Māori referred to by Tā Himi.

The concept of manaakitanga in Tātaiako can be used to illustrate the challenge of transferring tikanga and cultural understandings through translation. Tātaiako defines manaakitanga as integrity, trust, sincerity and equity (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011). These are indeed dispositions most would expect of professionals responsible for educating our children. However, this description does not come close to an authentic understanding of manaakitanga, which involves the complex act of ensuring one's personal mana remains intact by protecting the mana of others. To understand manaakitanga, the concept of mana must first be understood. According to Hohepa (1999), "mana comes from the gods; mana flows through the ancestors; mana flows from the sea and the land" (p. 196). Mana can be inherited as well as earned; it can be gained, and can be lost, and it is affected by both internal and external factors. For Māori, mana is inextricably linked to whakapapa—specifically, to the whakapapa of the conception of the universe.

Hohepa (1999) maintained that any adequate definition of mana would expend screeds of paper and that a summary of the concept, as Māori understand it, lessens its potency, its power and its enveloping nature. This is true for all of the dimensions defined in Tātaiako. That these highly specialised areas of knowledge are collapsed into paragraph definitions, then left open to interpretation and modification by professionals who have varying levels of understanding and varying degrees of connection to Māori communities raises much scepticism about the depth of understanding about Māori values and concepts teachers will gain through Tātaiako. This approach of collapsing Māori concepts is particularly dangerous because it potentially gives teachers the impression that to raise the education success of Māori, as Māori, they simply need to engage in non-Māori definitions of concepts, while retaining the Māori names.

"As Māori": The complexities of the Tātaiako identity principle

A key principle forming the basis of Tātaiako is concerned with identity, culture and language. The identity principle of Tātaiako centralises the importance of "knowing, respecting and working with Māori learners and their whānau and iwi" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011, p. 4) to support Māori experiencing education success as Māori. However, what is not acknowledged is that the concept of identity in itself is problematic in the context of New Zealand education, because for the majority of our Western educational history, the role of education has been to remove our identity as Māori. Problematising the salience of Māori identity in education emphasises that the notion of Māori cultural competence and all other issues relating to Māori education will always be complicated, contextual, multifaceted and dependent on whose indicators of identity are valued.

Individuals have numerous identities, perceived by self and by others; identities are fluid and dynamic (Elabour-Idemudia, 2011). Acknowledging the fluid and dynamic nature of identities has been problematic for policy-makers and education professionals. Durie (2005) highlighted that there have been many purposes for non-Māori to develop criteria that define Māori—to measure progress, to compare

with other social groups, to endorse political ideologies. Criteria have included biological indicators, lifestyle (living "as Māori" or "as Pākehā" but with no explanation of what either actually entails), whakapapa and ethnic identity (Durie, 2005). According to Tātaiako, Māori should achieve education success as Māori, but there is little explanation as to what "as Māori" means in this context. There is also a lack of provision for the acknowledgement and management of multiple, fluid and dynamic identities—for both professionals and learners. Nor is there a mechanism by which professionals can develop understandings that might assist them to mediate the loss of identity as Māori caused by the intrusion of colonisation.

Tātaiako leaves the interpretation of both Māori conceptions and Māori identities to schools and professionals who have varying degrees of knowledge and understanding of Māori concepts and culture. Milne (2009) emphasised the dangers and the complexities in doing so:

> "*As Māori*" are the most important words in the whole document [*Ka Hikitia*], and will be the most ignored by schools who have no understanding of what "as Māori" might look like. "As Māori" is destined to become another white space, in that it will be reinvented and seen as no different to "as Pākehā." This is not necessarily a deliberate action on the part of principals and school leadership, but is indicative of the lack of understanding that is endemic in our system. (p. 15)

Penetito (2011) has furthered the complex notion of "as Māori" by highlighting the vast range of people who identify as Māori but who have immensely different perspectives and backgrounds. To ascertain who is to benefit by education strategies such as Tātaiako, clarification must be sought to determine whether there are groups that are privileged and groups that continue to be disadvantaged. Penetito (2011) pointed out that among the many categories

of "Māori" there is an entire group of people who are defined by the fact they have nothing. Does "as Māori" in education initiatives such as Tātaiako mean that it is acceptable for this extremely disadvantaged group to continue to be the have-nots in society? After all, they are experiencing the education system as Māori, albeit Māori who continue to be disadvantaged and disenfranchised. Clarification of these definitions requires the guidance of iwi, hapū and whānau criteria of identity, as well as the diverse norms and measures of individuals who identify themselves as Māori.

A further complexity of the identity principle in the cultural competencies can be related to a dilemma highlighted by Tiakiwai (2015) and her personal struggle as a Māori researcher to align her research to Kaupapa Māori. In her exploration of the various shades prescribed to "being Māori" she questions her right to assume that she knows what it is to "be Māori" (Tiakiwai, 2015). The underlying quandary is that even people who clearly identify as Māori can be reticent to "assume"' to know what it means to "be Māori". In this light, we must then question the validity in expecting that non-Māori education professionals (with hugely varying degrees of contact, interest, knowledge and care for Māori issues, identity and education) be responsible for making informed judgements as to their success in meeting the identity principles of Tātaiako.

Māori, as a diverse group, do have a politicised group identity. This forces us to engage with the state in terms of that group identity, regardless of cohesiveness (Elabour-Idemudia, 2011). However, what constitutes being Māori is complex because there are multiple expressions of identifying as and being Māori (Penetito, 2011). Māori as a diverse group have had to come to terms with defining and redefining ourselves in relation to each other and to non-Māori. We have also had to endure definitions of ourselves imposed by others. The notion that there can be a standardised approach to Māori education success and a standardised

version of education success of Māori as Māori is misguided and must be addressed in order for policies and strategies aimed at raising Māori education success to function effectively and with authenticity.

Hei whakakapi

Bourdieu (2011) contended that institutionalised mechanisms, such as laws and policies, including those in education, have the purpose of controlling the direct transmission of power and privilege. Therefore, the proprietors of that power and privilege have an interest in "resorting to reproduction strategies capable of better-disguised transmission" (Bourdieu, 2011, p. 90). It is important to untangle and identify the political motivations behind Tātaiako to establish whether they are designed to truly make a difference to Māori academic achievement in English-medium settings or whether they are yet another cog in the machine by which Pākehā can maintain power relationships in education, and therefore positions of power in society. The existence of a strategy intended to positively target Indigenous students in English-medium contexts is constructive. However, there appears to be an expectation that Tātaiako will overlay our history of colonisation and the marginalisation and rejection of Māori beliefs and values in education without providing space for professionals to interrogate these deeper issues and the ways in which they continue to affect Māori experiencing education success, as Māori.

Tātaiako is an attempt by government to assist teachers to develop more culturally responsive relationships, learning environments, teaching practices and approaches for Māori learners (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011). However, this critique has illustrated that the difference between the intent and the reality of the policy is problematic, as Māori values and worldviews continue to be at odds with the values of the education system. The

current positioning of the chosen competencies in Tātaiako silences many of the deeper mātauranga Māori meanings and conceptualisations, thus reiterating the underlying assertion of those in positions of power that Māori cultural understandings are only valuable in education as disposition descriptors or to guide interactions. In this way, Māori knowledge bases in their most superficial form are perceived to be useful as a platform from which to build new knowledge (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011), while curbing the validity of mātauranga Māori in its own right.

This article has argued that Tātaiako is, among other things, a strategy intended to encourage teachers to reflect on and modify their pedagogical practice, with the assumption that improved interactions will raise the education success of Māori as Māori. Effective, respectful educational relationships are a prerequisite for learning; they create an environment conducive to learning and should indeed be an expectation in New Zealand schools. However, they do not guarantee education success, especially when that success is measured by culturally biased norms and is carried out in a culturally biased structure, as discussed throughout this article. The cultural competencies currently charge teachers with the responsibility of Māori education success by expecting them to critically examine their pedagogical practice, with no expectation that the curriculum or deeper educational structures also be critically examined. Raising Māori education achievement becomes then the sole responsibility of under-resourced teachers.

Tātaiako gives the chosen Māori dimensions superficial, decontextualised meanings that distort authentic understandings. It gives teachers a misleading sense of the work required of them, while shifting the responsibility for poor Māori education outcomes onto the individual classroom teacher. The logic of the policy collapses social relationships, educational relationships and achievement, and seems to assume that better relationships between

teachers and Māori students will deliver education success. The language of the document leaves much open to interpretation by education professionals with varying degrees of expertise and knowledge of te ao Māori, and fails to address vital issues facing Māori in the current education system, including the existence of a multitude of power relationships, and the connection between culture and longstanding structural and institutional inequities (Lee, 2008). When deeper cultural meanings are not reflected in policies and initiatives, mauri and tikanga are lost, and the ability for teachers to become expert enough to lead others in affirming and validating cultural awareness (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2011) becomes a somewhat fanciful and seemingly impossible expectation.

By applying a Kaupapa Māori lens to the critique of aspects of Tātaiako, a number of questions have been raised about the purpose and genuine function of an education strategy specifically designed to positively target Indigenous students in English-medium education. Webber (2011) cited Mason Durie's assertion that Māori academic achievement should not be at the expense of cultural identity, yet this article has argued that Māori cultural identity has almost always been sacrificed for academic achievement, because in current circumstances the two exist in juxtaposition to each other. Exposing the challenges to academic achievement of Māori as Māori that are inherent in the policies and structure of the education system has also exposed the very areas where opportunities exist for the positive transformation of education. Naming the issues clarifies that change must occur in initial teacher education programmes, in curricula and in the development of authentic and deeply meaningful relationships between education institutions and Māori communities. In this way, Tātaiako has the potential to move from being perhaps another well-intended but poorly executed MoE document to becoming a pretext for the transformation of the way we think

about and conduct English-medium education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Kua tawhiti kē tōu haerenga mai, kia kore e haere tonu. He nui rawa ōu mahi, kia kore e mahi tonu.

(You have come too far not to go much further. You have done too much not to do more.)

—whakataukī, Tā Himi Henare

Glossary

ako	reciprocal learning, a teaching and learning theory
Aotearoa	New Zealand
hapū	sub-tribe
he whakatakinga	introduction
hei whakakapi	conclusion
iwi	people, tribe
kauae runga	teaching/learning of the highest station
kaumātua	eldest living generation (both male and female)
Kaupapa Māori	theory based on Māori epistemology
mana	prestige, status, authority, influence, integrity; honour, respect
manaakitanga	process of showing respect, generosity, care for others
Māori	Indigenous person/people of New Zealand
mātauranga	knowledge
mauri	life force
Pākehā	New Zealander of European (usually British) ancestry
rangatira	chief
rangatiratanga	sovereignty, self-determination

Tai Tokerau	northern part of New Zealand
tangata whenuatanga	socio-cultural and environmental awareness, Indigeneity
tapu	sacred
te ao Māori	Māori world/worldview
te reo Māori	Māori language
te reo me ōna tikanga	the language and its worldviews
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	sacred covenant signed between the Crown and rangatira Māori in 1840
tikanga	set of values and beliefs that guide/govern social norms
tohunga	medium between divine and human knowledge
wairua	spirit, soul, spiritual
wairuatanga	spirituality (not necessarily attached to organised religion)
wānanga	the place and processes of higher order education
whakapapa	genealogy
whakataukī	proverb, proverbial saying often used to describe aspects of human behaviour
whānau	family, extended family
whanaungatanga	relationship, kinship, sense of family connection
whare wānanga	the seat of the kauae runga, higher order Māori academy, scholarship, mātauranga and pedagogical practices restricted to men and women specifically chosen by tohunga and kaumātua for particular dispositions they displayed as very young children

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