

**KO TOKU REO KO TOKU IA MANA:
MY LANGUAGE, MY IDENTITY
THE PACIFIC LANGUAGE NEST
HOW LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND TRADITIONS ARE SUPPORTED AND
PROMOTED FOR PACIFIC COMMUNITIES OF THE COOK ISLANDS, NIUE AND
TOKELAU IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND**

BY

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Abstract

Within the early childhood sector of New Zealand, Pacific language nests have played a pivotal role in promoting Pacific education, language development and building Pacific communities. Pacific Island language nests have emerged as foundational contexts that have facilitated learning, family and community engagement as well as promoting cultural aspirations. This study focusses on the Pacific Nations of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau Islands; all share the status of New Zealand Realm states, and have languages which are at extreme risk of language death.

This research examines the extent to which families and communities engage with the language nests. It investigates challenges that impact on the support and promotion of language, culture and traditions for the Pacific language nest. This study explores practices and processes in the Pacific language nest, and how these practices are evolving and adapting within the contemporary early childhood education sector.

Using a combination of Sociocultural and Indigenous theoretical framings, I apply an ethnographic approach to three case study settings. Applying the methods of observation, *talanoa* (informal group discussion), document, video and audio analysis, and reflective field notes applied in the study, and guidance of a Pacific advisory group I seek out the cultural, social and linguistic conceptualisations and practices that take place in the Cook Islands, Niuean and Tokelauan language nest settings.

Findings from this study reveal that Pacific ECE language services are delivering programmes that embrace cultural practices in which children are immersed in culturally and linguistically rich learning environments. Language experiences are varied and designated mat time music and group sessions provide and are utilised for Indigenous language learning opportunities. The language nest provides a hub for the Pacific Island communities and the expertise of the wider family. Intergenerational participation is a significant feature. Grandparents and elders of the community, in particular, maintain a prominent role in the provision of authentic cultural and linguistic programmes for the Pacific nations of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau islands. The language nest is providing a crucial role in stemming the decreasing use of vernacular language in these nations.

This study provides a framing of valuable knowledge that adds to the body of knowledge and provides an in-depth understanding of the Pacific language nests of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my parents Anne Helen Teurakura Williams Long and Donald Harris Long and my family

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Chapter One

The Pacific Language Nest: The Journey Begins (Hoea Te Vaka (Paddle the Canoe))

Introduction

Hoea te vaka e pīrangi ana koe, kia kore ai e pakaru mai to ngaru

(Paddle the canoe that your heart tells you to and let no great wave destroy it). Maori Proverb

The Pacific communities in Aotearoa New Zealand express mounting concern at the increasing loss of their languages and cultural practices. The process of assimilation has triggered the steady decrease in the indigenous languages and dialects of Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau to the extent that they have all been classified as endangered (McCaffery, 2015). This classification is based on the UNESCO rating scale (Secretariat of Pacific Community, 2010), which states that it is unlikely that severely endangered languages will be carried on to the next generation. The discourse on language and cultural maintenance of Pacific communities reveals increasing concern at the extent and continuation of language loss (McCaffery & McFall-McCaffery, 2010). This trend has escalated and, in the case of certain Pacific nations, has reached a crisis point (McCaffery, 2015).

Pacific early childhood education services, first established in the 1980s, were begun by Pacific communities to stem this increasing trend. At that time, it was the intention of Pacific communities to provide early childhood education (ECE) in Pacific languages, to raise participation rates of Pacific families in ECE, and to maintain Pacific languages, cultural practices, and values. In the intervening years, however, the problem of language loss has continued to worsen. The language crisis is particularly acute for the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau communities in New Zealand, which comprise the Aotearoa New Zealand Realm nations. The decline in language usage, is explained further later in the chapter.

Most of the Aotearoa New Zealand population of these nations exceeds that of the homelands and it can be argued that Aotearoa New Zealand has a responsibility to preserve the languages of the Pacific Realm nations as New Zealand citizens. The numbers of fluent language speakers for each of these Pacific Nations have dropped to a level where their languages are considered inter-generationally extinct. Whilst the language and culture of Pacific communities continues to decline, the Pacific population is one of the fastest growing in Aotearoa New Zealand. Statistics New Zealand (2017) forecasts that the current Pacific population of 0.34 million in

2013, will increase to 0.44–0.48 million in 2025 and to 0.54–0.65 million in 2038. This raises the need to consider ways of stemming language loss, with the ensuing loss of cultural identity, for Pacific communities. There is a scarcity of research on Pacific early childhood education services in Aotearoa New Zealand, and given the increasing crisis faced, further research is vital to address these issues.

This chapter covers the background to the study, and introduces the thesis topic. The thesis topic incorporates a contextual overview, with developments that have taken place in Pacific early childhood education in Aotearoa New Zealand, as well as a scope of traditional Polynesian knowledge and pedagogy. The thesis aims, research questions as well as the research settings are then described leading in to the rationale for conducting the study. The chapter concludes with my personal narrative and how it relates to the topic with an account of personal, professional and historical events. The chapter then concludes with an overview of the thesis chapters in the study and a summary of the chapter.

In this study I employ the metaphor of Te Vaka (the canoe) to represent the journeys of Pacific people in particular people from the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau to Aotearoa New Zealand (Davis, 1999) and the journey of the Pacific language nest communities in this study. A metaphor befitting Te Vaka begins each chapter, and Te Vaka will be expanded on in the Discussions Chapter nine.

Background

Foundation of the first Pacific language nests

In early to mid 1980s the first Pacific language nests emerged and their growth accelerated. Cook Islands, Niuean, Tokelauan, Tongan, and Samoan nests were established by women in each of the respective Pacific Island communities (Burgess, 1988; Morgan, 1995). Observing the consequences for Tangata Whenua (Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand) of the loss of language and culture, and thereby identity and self-esteem, the Pacific communities took action to ensure not only educational success for their children (Mara, Foliaki and Coxon, 1994), but also the maintenance of their languages, cultures, and identity (Glasgow, 2010; Hunkin, 1988).

Encouraged by the efforts of Cook Islands and Samoan communities in Tokoroa, Otara, and Newtown, Pacific Islands communities began to establish early childhood groups in church halls, homes, garages, spare classrooms at schools, and community halls. In 1993 there were

approximately 350 Pacific language nests established throughout Aotearoa New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 1995). These groups were largely community funded with minimal playgroup funding from the government (Burgess, 1988). Mara et.al. (1994) noted the irony that the most important development in Pacific islands education in the 1980s received considerable funding by an overseas trust, the Bernard Van Leer Foundation of the Netherlands. Growing concern for the Cook Islands, Niuean, and Tokelauan communities was expressed in the early 1990s (Mara, et.al. 1994) particularly around language maintenance, which had become a significant concern as well as for cultural survival, given that the majority of all these groups now lived in Aotearoa.

The first language nests were developed in Auckland and Wellington and each was associated with a Pacific Island church (Burgess, 1988). Women from Pacific Islands recognised the consequences of the loss of their language and culture, and they decided that action must be taken to ensure the future of their language and culture and the educational success of their children (Mara, Foliaki & Coxon, 1994). From the outset, the philosophy of Pacific Islands Early Childhood Centres (ECE) was for the child to learn and socialise in the child's first language. From this philosophical positioning emerged the name "language nests", seen to be most fitting as it nestled the beliefs and values of the Pacific cultures within the language (Ete, 1993). The role of the church was pivotal, and should not be underestimated, in the development of the Pacific language nest. Ete (1993) claims that without the assistance and support of the church many Pacific Islands people would have had no access to early childhood education delivered in their own language and culture. The ministers, their wives, church members, and the church premises and facilities were all factors which allowed the services to be provided with at least two thirds of the Pacific language nests being associated with a church in the early days (Burgess, 2004).

The emergence of the Pacific Island language nest followed the establishment of the Nga Kohanga Reo movement by Māori in 1982 (Irwin, 1990; Meade, Puhipuhi, & Foster-Cohen, 2003). Kohanga Reo provided a model for Pacific people to follow as it aligned with the aspirations that they espoused as well as the concerns they shared in terms of language and cultural decline. The Pacific language nest initiative promoted Pacific education services run by Pacific people for Pacific children who were taught in their Pacific languages. Mara's (1998) study identified factors contributing to the establishment of the language nests. A priority identified in Mara's study was Pacific language and cultural maintenance. The perception was that, increasingly, New Zealand-born Pacific children were in danger of losing their heritage

in a largely mono-lingual and mono-cultural society. In response, since the mid-1980s the Pacific communities had become responsible for establishing Pacific Islands language nests throughout New Zealand (Mara, 1998). The venture hailed the beginning of an increasing tide within Pacific education for self-determination with both an increase in ECE attendance of Pacific children alongside an increased involvement by Pacific communities in the education of Pacific children in New Zealand.

Pacific language nests are also referred to as Pacific ECE services (Education Review Office, 2007; Ministry of Education, 1995). This study uses the term “language nest” to represent the purpose and the composition of the collective group (Mara, 1998). Pacific Island language groups offer programmes based on the values and languages of Pacific Island cultures. They range from licence-exempt family playgroups that meet once or twice a week, through to licensed and chartered centres. The language nest programmes emphasise language development, both in Pacific Island languages and in English, and increasing parental involvement in early childhood care and education. The immersion and bilingual programmes of Pacific language nests work towards stemming language loss.

Since its inception, the Pacific language nest movement has played, and continues to maintain, a very crucial role in supporting, maintaining, and enhancing Pacific languages, and cultural practice. Ete (1993) explains that there were several reasons why Pacific communities established Pacific Island education centres in Aotearoa New Zealand. Pacific Island parents desired to provide their children with an equal opportunity to education, and an opportunity to socialise and to experience a wide-ranging early childhood education programme. According to McCaffery (2010) the maintenance of language is very important for Pacific communities in New Zealand, particularly for those whose languages have been classified as “endangered”. The language nest espouses a philosophy, which is a statement of values, aspirations and beliefs, and practices, and is seen as a tangible measure to stem language loss. Importantly, it was a community initiative conceived and driven by Pacific communities. Home language immersion programmes in early childhood are important in developing maximum language ability in children prior to starting school, and for developing their cultural identity and orientation to who they are in the world (McCaffery, 2010; 2015).

However, despite the efforts of the language nest movement to stem both the loss of language and culture, the languages of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau continue to decline rapidly, to the extent that in 2013 they were designated inter-generationally extinct in Aotearoa New

Zealand (McCaffery, 2015). Burgess (2004) noted challenges in the delivery of Pacific language nest programmes, stating that as the language nest movement developed, it needed to convince its own community and the funding agencies that it had the capacity to grow in quality, to successfully interact with regulatory and advisory agencies, and to make a contribution to the early childhood sector. McCaffery (2015) explains that the *Pasifika Education Plan 2001–2009* (Ministry of Education, 2012) perpetuates the view of Pākehā ECE educators and policy makers that Pacific children under five are better off in English-speaking ECE settings. Pacific ECE communities offer another perspective stating that within Pacific communities children are learning to be members of their own cultures, and speakers of their own languages.

In a research report to the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2004) May, Hill, and Tiakiwai found that there is value in having two languages, thus proposing a bilingual language model for young children. Several bilingual models have been developed and implemented in Pacific education with on-going research being conducted into new models that meet the needs of specific language communities. May, Hill, and Tiakiwai (2004) promoted a heritage bilingual model, which is associated with indigenous language revitalisation. This model caters for children who have indigenous language as a first or second language or a mixture of both. Baker (2006) outlined an additive bilingual model to ensure that the addition of a second language will not replace or displace the first language of children. The dichotomy between bilingualism as opposed to language immersion is worthy of investigation, particularly when examining the approach adopted by the case study settings in this study.

The case study centres are located in the communities of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau. The Cook Islands and Tokelau centres are based in Wellington, and the Niuean centre is based in South Auckland. These nations share a common history of colonialism by two major colonial powers, firstly Britain and then New Zealand, at the beginning of the twentieth century. This influence and the process of assimilation for those who settled in New Zealand has been at significant cost. Cultural assimilation is described by Gordon (1964, cited in Banks, 2001) as the process by which diverse ethnic and racial groups surrender their unique cultural and ethnic characteristics and acquire those of Western culture. Chapter four examines and elaborates on historical factors which have impacted on these Pacific nation communities in their homelands and the Aotearoa New Zealand context.

The recent Pasifika Education Plan (PEP) (2013-2017) (Ministry of Education, 2013) asserts that Pasifika success is characterised by Pasifika learners who are secure and confident in their identities, languages, and cultures. This success includes the involvement of parents, families, and communities, who contribute to their children's learning, while gaining understanding of and valuing the importance of early learning. Importantly the Ministry recognise the critical contribution that the Pacific language nest plays. This is evident in the Ministry's 2013-2017 plan which has a key target to increase the number of Pasifika ECE bi-lingual language services teaching in a Pasifika language for over half of the programme. This builds on the previous PEP (2009–2012) which sought more research to improve the education system for all Pacific learners in areas such as families and community engagement (Ministry of Education, 2012). Strengthening and improving Pasifika educational experiences and outcomes for Pacific learners is evidently a key priority for the Ministry of Education, paying due recognition that educational success for Pacific learners requires locating and strengthening Pacific early childhood within a cultural paradigm.

In light of these policy priorities, a key focus of this PhD study is family and community engagement within the Pacific early childhood setting. Alongside this the study explores the constraints and challenges the language nests' encounter in delivering a culturally authentic programme. For example, an Education Review Office (2007) report claimed that whilst Pacific early childhood service programmes were culturally enriching, many children were not getting the quality of education and care government expects of licensed early childhood services (Education Review Office, 2007). Mara and Burgess' (2007) study of Pacific early childhood settings found that quality was increased when teachers were supported to develop professionally. Coxon, Anae, Mara, Wendt-Samu, and Finau (2002) called for "quality" to be considered from a cultural perspective. An investigation of cultural constructs of quality warrants further investigation and, accordingly, through the case studies, this study explores aspects of governance and leadership within the early childhood setting, including the role of the Kaumatua and elders, and, in particular, the Vananga Advisory Group (VAG) members, as mentors and linguistic and cultural advisers.

Thesis Aims, the Research Questions and the Research Setting

In this study I set out to investigate

- What are the practices and process in the Pacific language nests that enable, promote, and preserve language, culture, and traditional practices for the Pacific communities of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau?
- In what ways are families and community members involved in the Pacific language nests, both within the centre and other community settings such as the church?
- What key challenges exist for Pacific language nests operational development?

These questions provided the parameters of the study and determined the theoretical framings, methodological approaches, and the selection of the case study settings for the research.

Rationale

The background material presented indicates that there are several important reasons for this research to be conducted. First, there are few reported studies of teaching and learning in Pacific bilingual and immersion early childhood centres. Mara, (1988) and Mara and Burgess, (2007) conducted studies that determined more research was needed to identify and develop a “Pacific” ECE pedagogy. Coxon et al.’s (2002) study recommended that further research studies be conducted to inform both the development of culturally sensitive measures of quality, and assist in developing policy and implementation of Pacific ECE. A recent review of Pacific literature commissioned by the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2012) noted a significant gap in the research and literature around community involvement by Pacific peoples in their children’s education; this was consistently evident across all sectors of education. Within the wider Pacific as well as in New Zealand there is an increasing desire for Pacific educators to take ownership of and to re-think Pacific education (Pene, Taufe’ulungaki, & Benson, 2001; Sanga & Kidman, 2012). Pene et al. (2001) identify an increasing incongruence between the values promoted by formal Western schooling and those held by Pacific communities, and where Indigenous ways of knowing have long been ignored in the formal education structures (Kidman, 2012). Wooton and Stonebank (2010) found that education in indigenous schools is primarily modelled on the Western education system, reflecting an Anglo-conformity in the pedagogy, cultural/linguistic incorporation, community participation, and assessment. In the process, as pointed out long before by Hau’ofa (1987), Pacific people are becoming not only educationally attuned but also mentally and emotionally attuned to the Western world.

The foundation of the Māori early childhood language nest sought to counter the pervasiveness of Western education in Indigenous communities (Irwin, 1990). In an interview, Dame Iritana Tawhiwhirangi (2012), who spearheaded the Māori immersion movement in 1980–81, stated “We realised that we had to stop expecting the government to revive the language and make it safe, Māoridom had to do it themselves”. She emphasised that Kohanga Reo was never viewed by the elders as being an ECE movement. “It was actually a Māori movement, when you take people’s lives, and let them know they’re important, when you get their support you give them responsibility. It’s a whole different approach”. Tawhiwhirangi explained that it has been difficult to maintain the whānau concept alongside the western construct of ECE “buildings, teacher training and curriculum. What is important is the (Maori) language competency of the speakers”. She felt that the Kohanga reo movement did not fit in an early childhood construct and it was a community initiative (Interview Radio New Zealand, 20 May, 2012). It has been acknowledged that the Pacific language nests were established to stem the loss of language and were fashioned on the Kohanga Reo movement and arguably, one could also claim that these services are more than an early childhood service; rather, they are an initiative for children, families, and the wider Pacific community (Burgess, 2004, Mara, 1998; Podmore & Taouma, 2004).

The Pacific language nests selected for this study are Cook Islands, Niuean, and Tokelauan language nests. They have been selected for several reasons. The Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau have more than half of their populations living in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2004). Statistically, the populations for these three nations have the smallest proportions of those speaking their home language. According to Statistics New Zealand, in 2013, 12.8 % of Cook Islands Māori, 18.7% of Niueans, and 31.9 % of Tokelauan peoples residing in New Zealand were able to speak their home language (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). These figures have fallen from the 2006 figures of 17% speakers of Cook Islands language, 26% of Niuean speakers, and 40% of Tokelauan language users. It is clear that a steady decrease in language use continues. McCaffery, (2015) found that 3% of the population of speakers under the age of 15 can speak Cook Islands Maori, while 8% of those of child bearing age are fluent speakers. In the Niuean community 5% of the population of speakers under the age of 15, and 10% of those of child bearing age can speak the Niuean language. The Tokelauan community fares slightly better with 12% of the community under the age of 15 years, and 26% of those of child bearing age, able to speak the Tokelauan language.

In recognition of the need to support the maintenance and revival of the languages of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs has established “Mind your language” websites which encourage Pacific communities to *Tuatua mai* (learn Cook Islands Māori), *Vagahua Niue* (learn Niuean) and *tau Gagana Tokelau* (learn Tokelau). The statistics referred to above, and subsequent measures implemented by government provide a compelling case for selection of research settings. The Ministry of Education has also allocated a “Language Week” for each of these Pacific Nations which is an opportunity each year for Pacific Services to showcase their programmes to the Pacific community and the New Zealand public as a whole.

Another compelling reason for selection of the topic is that I have a personal connection to each of these nations. I am a New Zealand born Cook Island Māori, and have geographic and historic connections with Niue and Tokelau. In my capacity as Pacific early childhood educator and adviser, I have facilitated workshops and professional development sessions for Pacific early childhood services. Through my community engagement I have become acquainted with the wider Pacific community. I have a well-developed relationship with the Pacific early childhood sector and understanding of the broader and contemporary issues for ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand and the wider Pacific (Glasgow, 2007; Glasgow, 2012; Glasgow, 2014, Glasgow & Rameka, 2017).

As noted, the status of Pacific languages, particularly, Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau, remains of concern (Glasgow, 2010; McCaffery & McFall-McCaffery, 2010). McCaffery and McFall-McCaffery (2010) maintain that the perspective adopted for Māori education embracing a holistic approach could easily be adopted in Pacific education. This would involve a “language as a resource” approach to Pacific education (p. 104). McCaffery and McCaffery-McFall (2010) state that ECE immersion in Pacific languages is an essential part of any strategy to maintain and revive Pacific languages and to provide solid values and a conceptual and academic base for later schooling. It appears, however, that government strategy provides insufficient support for Pacific immersion programmes.

At the time of writing, while research has been conducted on Samoan language nests (*A’oga Amata*) in Pacific ECE in New Zealand (Burgess, 2004; Podmore & Taouma, 2004), there has been no research conducted on the combined early childhood settings of Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau. For these three New Zealand realm states there is a gap in the New Zealand and Pacific-wide research and literature.

Statistically, the Pacific community is the fastest growing population in New Zealand. It is projected that by 2026 Pacific people will comprise 10% of the New Zealand population compared to 6.5% in 2001 (Ministry of Pacific Affairs, 2012). More than 60% of New Zealanders who define themselves as members of the Pacific community were born in New Zealand, with two thirds of Pacific people living in the Auckland region (67%), and with the next largest Pacific population group living in the Wellington region (13%). Of particular importance is the youthfulness of the Pacific population with 38% aged under 15 years. In 15–20 years one in five New Zealand children under 15 years of age will be Pacific (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2012).

According to the Ministry of Education (2009, as cited in McCaffery & McFall-McCaffery, 2010), of the 52 immersion Pacific centres, two were Cook Islands and two were Niuean. Of the 61 centres that self-identified as bilingual, using two languages, 12 were Cook Islands, two were Niuean, and three were Tokelauan (Ministry of Education, 2008). McCaffery and McFall-McCaffery (2010) found that many centres that identified as immersion centres actually used more English language than their Pacific language to teach. Bilingual centres believed that if they had any children who only spoke English, then staff must switch to English for this minority group.

The Pacific language nest model claims to uphold and practice the principles of self-determination, ownership, and immersion in Pacific traditional practices, language, culture, and values. Such espoused measures can act to counter the historical, imperialist, and colonialist policies that sought to assimilate and diminish Pacific and other ethnic groups (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008; Smith, 2012).

The Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau all have historical, political, educational and social connections to New Zealand. Niue and the Cook Islands were annexed by New Zealand; Niue in 1900 and the Cook Islands in 1901. They are now self-governing but retain a free association with New Zealand. Tokelau was annexed by New Zealand in 1926 and remains a New Zealand territory. Constituents of Tokelau voted in 2009 to retain this status along with a well-established historical and political relationship. A secure relationship with New Zealand was seen as being desirable, as this guaranteed administrative support and free access to New Zealand. It is likely, however, that this will further escalate the diaspora from the islands to New Zealand. Historically, New Zealand was where Pacific Islanders all looked to; where all

good things were, such as a better way of life (Vivian, 2012). Unfortunately, it is very difficult to have a nation with few people, and, increasingly, moving back is becoming less realistic.

Personal Narrative

My personal narrative allows insight into my background as a Pacific researcher and provides a rationale for my research topic and the decisions around the research process employed. In keeping with Pacific research guidelines, a key consideration in Pacific research is the relationship of the researcher to the research communities. I engage Rogoff's (2003) plane of analysis, in which I acknowledge my personal journey employing an individual, personal gaze, implementing an interpersonal lens when I consider my family and social connections, and noting the significant historical, educational, social, and cultural events that have impacted significantly on my life, at the wider institutional level. It is important for me to identify the connections and my position in this research, in part as justification for the choice of topic, the methodologies, and approaches taken, and to ensure that fundamental cultural tenets are adhered to from the outset and throughout all stages of the research process. This narrative expresses moments in my life history, events, planned and unplanned, the people, and places that in combination frame and guide my research and the many permutations in its evolution.

I am a New Zealand born Pacific Islander of Cook Island, Tahitian, and Papaa (European) descent. My mother, Helen Teurakura Williams hails from Tongareva, the northern most atoll in the Cook Islands archipelago. Her mother was Tirirai Mateau from Tiare in Tahiti, and her father, William Tapu Ford, from Omoka, which is one of the two villages on Tongareva. My father, Donald Harris Long, was an American Army Air corps serviceman who was posted to Tongareva during the Second World War, in the role of weather reporter. His parents were Sherill Long and Ailsie Harris from Danville Indiana, United States of America. My parents met during my father's posting to Tongareva. They were prohibited from marrying during the war, due to the United States ruling that U.S. servicemen were not allowed to marry "native" women. My father returned to the Cook Islands after the war to marry my mother, and in 1951 made the decision to migrate to Aotearoa New Zealand due to the lack of employment opportunities in Tongareva at that time.

Thus, my parents joined the post second world war migration from the Cook Islands to Aotearoa New Zealand in 1952 finding work in the motor industry factories in the Hutt Valley, a satellite suburb of Wellington, and, alongside the small but increasing Cook Islands and Pacific community, settled and raised their family in the Hutt Valley.

My mother retained strong links to her homeland, striving always to ensure that her cultural practices were firmly entrenched in her children. We would often host family members migrating from the Cook Islands and Tahiti, importantly reinforcing connections with our families in the wider Pacific. My mother was a member of the Women's League of Peace and Freedom. She was very concerned about the effect of the French nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific. I have memories of, as a child, joining protesters at "Ban the Bomb" marches at the time of the French atom bomb testing in Mururoa atoll.

A compelling reason behind my parents migrating to Aotearoa New Zealand was to ensure that their children would be able to receive a "good" education. Education was seen as the key to a good life, and there was no secondary school provision in Tongareva in the 1950s. I am number six of ten children and I was born in the middle of the "baby boom" years when the New Zealand economy was sound and my parents were proud to be able to purchase their own home, accessing a State advances loan. Both held down factory jobs to pay the mortgage and to enable my siblings and I to attend school through to the end of secondary education.

The education system I entered in September 1960 reflected the education policy of the time that all children, without question, would be taught exclusively in English language. This was not a new policy in Aotearoa or in the Cook Islands. The Cook Islands education system had been adapted from the New Zealand model and in 1900 the Resident Agent of the newly formed New Zealand Realm Nations decreed that children would benefit from an education delivered exclusively in English. It is not surprising, then, that parents who had encountered an education system such as this in their homelands were able to accept, if not embrace, the New Zealand Western based, English language medium education system.

My older siblings were Cook Island born and fluent speakers of Te Reo Kuki Airani when they first arrived in Aotearoa. This was seen as an impediment upon starting school and the decision was made that they would only speak English at school and at home. This practice was well entrenched by the time I was born and I was raised speaking only English. My older siblings claim that they lost the reo (Cook Islands language) within a short time of arriving here and starting school and none have reclaimed the language of their birth.

My parents were very supportive of my decision to attend university and I was the first of my siblings to do so. My father in particular knew the value of a university education. His own studies had been curtailed due to his involvement in the Second World War, and even though

he had won a university scholarship to Haverford, a Quaker College in Philadelphia, he did not return to his studies post war.

When I left university, I was offered a consular cadetship with the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Wellington. I was subsequently posted to Apia, Western Samoa, working in the New Zealand High Commission in the mid to late 1970s. This period strengthened my Pacific connections and heightened my awareness of Pacific issues. This was during the period when the notorious “Dawn Raids” were being conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand with Pacific “over stayers”, including many Samoans, being hunted by the police and sent home. From my position working in the High Commission, in Apia, I observed that the desire to migrate was strong, and the dawn raids did not deter the huge numbers of Samoan trying to enter New Zealand; daily there were long queues outside the High Commission Office. I was filled with outrage at the injustice of a system which only a decade earlier was appealing for migrant workers to form the unskilled labour force to meet New Zealand’s expanding industry.

Looking back, these experiences began to raise my awareness of how vulnerable Pacific groups were to initiatives made by other nations, which would have longstanding impacts on these small island states. I pondered on the wisdom of earlier decision making by the Cook Islands Ariki (chiefs) and by the chiefs of Niue, who agreed to cede the Cook Islands, and Niue, to New Zealand, to become New Zealand colonies.

My passion for early childhood teaching began when my own children were in their early childhood years. We lived in a small community and I became involved in Playcentre which formed a hub for families with young children. Playcentre is an early childhood parent cooperative, in which all members are required to assist with centre tasks such as administer the centre programme, and all aspects of the parent led education and centre management. It provided community support for young mothers and often acted as a springboard for those who were gaining skills in teaching, financial administration, and centre management to paving career pathways. I availed myself of these opportunities and rose through the levels of parent helper, assistant Supervisor, and then Supervisor roles. After years as a civil servant, I felt truly blessed to have discovered my love of working with young children, little knowing that this would be the beginning of a life-long career. I continued to train and completed a Diploma of Teaching in early childhood at Wellington College of Education. Training at this time did not include Pacific studies and there were no Pacific lecturing staff employed at this training institution until the early 1990s.

At this time in the early 1980s women were increasingly returning to full time employment and I began to search for full time paid employment. I ventured into business and established an early childhood education and care setting. An important reason was to enable my young son to remain with me whilst I worked. Like many from Pacific families, retaining close ties with my children is of key importance.

In 1992 I accompanied my father, one sister, a niece, and a nephew to take my mother's ashes back to Tongareva, or Penhryn which was a name given to the island by early colonisers. It had been my mother's desire to be buried alongside her ancestors at Motukoiti, on her land, her Turangavaevae (Resting Place). This went against the convention of the village at that time. Those who passed away were buried around the family homes, or at the churchyard in the village of Omoka. The early missionaries had enforced the movement to the villages from the remote areas around the atoll, so that the people would be close to the church. This return home, although laden with sadness, gave me the opportunity to experience life on Tongareva. I was able to have a glimpse of my mother's early life, on a remote atoll eight degrees south of the equator. For example, the ways that water was conserved, and how babies learned to swim in the lagoon with tuakana (older siblings, caregivers) using coconuts as flotation devices. My father who had last been in Tongareva in 1951 was shocked that the coconuts were no longer collected for copra, as this had been a key source of income for those on the outer atolls of the Cooks Islands. In fact, anthropologists had written of the "coconut wars" (Best, 1899) which were fought over territory and coconut trees. Apparently the Motukoiti tribe, my forebears, were the most warlike and fearsome.

The might of my ancestors, however, was no match for the "Blackbirders"; ships sent from Peru, seeking slave labour to work in the gold mines there. Tongareva's population was decimated when, in 1890 all of the able-bodied men and women were enticed aboard the ships anchored in the lagoon, and were captured and taken to Peru as indentured labour (Manville Fenn, 2014). My great grandmother, an infant at that time, and whose parents were taken, was raised by her grandparents.

In 2004-5, I was employed as early childhood advisor to the Cook Islands Ministry of Education in Nikao, Rarotonga. It was a wrench to leave all of my New Zealand based family to work in the Cook Islands, but an opportunity to return home, I viewed, was a way of giving back, and reacquainting myself with my Pacific homeland after my first visit over a decade earlier. It later occurred to me that this was a journey that my parents had made in reverse; both

times making a brave leap of faith into the future, but, for my parents, with uncertainty around prospects of employment and housing.

In 2005, I returned to Wellington to take up my current role as teacher educator and university lecturer at the former Wellington College of Education, now Victoria University of Wellington. In this role, I have been very fortunate to continue teaching and researching Pacific education. Additionally, I work closely with Pacific language nests, and Pacific students in the courses I teach.

My talanoa or personal narrative, and the series of events outlined have impacted on the decisions I have made, in aspects of my PhD study, through all of its steps and permutations. I am unable, and neither would I wish, to dislocate myself from my history. This is who I am as I carve my research journey, from its inception; as I grapple with theory, new understandings gathered and analysed from the communities with which I have had the privilege to work; as I encounter cultural tensions and conflicts; and as I strive to remain closely to who I am, as a New Zealand born and raised Pacific Islander of Cook Islands, Tahitian, and American descent.

Overview of Thesis Chapters

This thesis comprises ten chapters. This chapter has introduced the thesis, and the background as well as the rationale for the study. It has also outlined the thesis topic and the research question and sub questions. The chapter provides a brief contextual overview of the historical, political, cultural and social issues and considerations of the Pacific language nest. My personal narrative portrays my personal and professional background. My background as a New Zealand born educator and researcher are revealed and inform the reader of my positioning within the research process.

Chapter Two provides a contextual account, including historical, social, spiritual, cultural and linguistic factors that sit behind the unique political status as nations of the New Zealand Realm, accorded to the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau. The historical account begins with a description of the annexation of the Cook Islands and Niue into the New Zealand Realm in 1901. The chapter identifies significant events and factors for these nations that have influenced their contemporary situation.

Chapter Three scopes the literature and scholarship that are relevant to the concerns of the study and the research questions posed. The fields of research that I have reviewed are:

The theoretical frameworks which contributed to the conceptualisation of the research, also supported the research process, and guided the analysis are described in Chapter Four. Strong links to aspects of Indigenous theory (Royal-Tangaere, 1996), Rogoff's planes of analysis (1990; 1995; 2003), and concepts from Wenger's Communities of Practice (1998) and cultural historical activity (CHAT) theory (Nussbauer, 2011), strengthen the research from its outset to the emerging theoretical principles that arise.

Chapter Five introduces and discusses the key methodological approaches implemented by the researcher, and presents the rationale behind the selection of the approaches. In keeping with Pacific research guidelines, the Talanoa narrative for gathering data is foregrounded alongside ethnographic data gathering processes of observations, reflective diary recordings, and document analysis. Whilst the term Talanoa is Tongan; the process of collective discussion is commonly practiced by many Polynesian communities.

Chapters Six, Seven and Eight present and discuss the findings from each of the case study settings in this ethnographic case study. The findings are presented in response to the main question and the sub questions, presented above.

Chapter Nine provides a cross case analysis of the previous three chapters, with themes identified noted and discussed with links to literature.

Chapter Ten comprises a summary, discusses the implications, makes recommendations for future research, considers the contributions that this study makes to the literature, and acknowledges the limitations of the study.

Chapter Summary

This study investigates the Pacific language nest and the role that it plays in supporting and enhancing the language, culture, and traditional practices of the people of the Pacific Nations of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau within the Aotearoa New Zealand context. These nations share the specific constitutional status of New Zealand Realm Nations. The Pacific language nest movement has been operating since the early 1980s in Aotearoa New Zealand and each of these three Pacific communities have had significant involvement in the movement.

This introductory chapter introduced the study, and presented the background and rationale for selection of the topic. The thesis question along with the sub questions that emerged from this overview of the background were presented. A narrative of my personal and professional

background and experiences provided further justification for the selection of topic and the processes employed for the study.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two: Contextualising the Study: Traversing the Reef

Introduction

This chapter outlines the sociocultural historical and contextual events for the Pacific Nations in this study. The historical lens is underpinned by a sociocultural historical theoretical frame. In keeping with the third generation of Cultural Historical Activity Theoretical (CHAT) framework, which underpins the study (see chapter three), the activity systems deal with the evolution of collective communities, and nations over time, which incorporate the tensions and contradictions encountered in the process of change over time (Nussbauer, 2011). The process of colonisation has had significant impact and this study has recognised the nations investigated that have been grouped under a banner that resulted from the colonisation process. Clearly, historical colonising policies and practices over time have had substantial impact on these three Pacific Nations within wider Oceania.

The historical events described below follow a chronological order, beginning with the turn of the century, 1900, which is when the process of annexation began. This chapter covers the consultation process, and the events that led up to the annexation of the Cook Islands and Niue in 1901. The annexation of the Tokelau group occurred in 1946, and the background to the ceding of Tokelau to New Zealand will be discussed.

Significant events such as missionary influence, the establishment of the church, the Peruvian slave trade, and the effects of colonial education are discussed before investigation of the next period in history that relates to the study, the escalation of migration after World War Two. The historical account ends in the period in which the first language nests were established and reveals the processes and support that assisted in the development of these Pacific community.

The annexation of the three Pacific Nations which form the New Zealand Realm nations began over a century ago. The desire of the New Zealand Government to extend its territorial boundaries into the Pacific ultimately resulted in the grouping together of the Pacific Nations of the Cook Islands, Niue, and the Tokelau Islands groups. The expansionist policies at the time, in the 1900's, and the mixed responses given by the individual Pacific Islands, reveal a process that was, at times, divisive and lacking consultation across the Pacific communities.

The people of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau were the object of New Zealand's late nineteenth century imperial ambitions (Scott, 1991). This was part of an expansionist policy in which the government of Aotearoa New Zealand sought to encompass these territories and

populations within their governance (Kepa & Manuatu, 2011). As part of the expansionist policy Aotearoa New Zealand actively recruited immigrant Pacific Islands labour, as required by Aotearoa New Zealand's economy, with assurances to the Pacific people that benefits would accrue to the populations concerned by joining with the Aotearoa New Zealand state (Fairburn-Dunlop & Makisi, 2003)

Richard Seddon, the Premier in 1900, proclaimed that, with the commencing of the new century, New Zealand was pursuing expansion into the Pacific. "Our dear old flag will forever float over the islands insuring justice, and freedom for all" (Fairburn-Dunlop & Makisi, 2003, p. 20). In May 1900, the SS Tutanekai left for Tonga, Fiji, Niue, and the Cook Islands to solicit agreement to annexation. Within a few months the Cook Islands responded in agreement. It must be noted that agreement was to annexation to the British Empire rather than New Zealand.

" We the ariki of Rarotonga on the 6th day of September 1900 do hereby petition His Excellency the Governor General of New Zealand to annex the islands of Rarotonga to the British Empire. And whereas we are the same race as the Maori of New Zealand, all our trade is with those islands, we are to become part and portion of that colony (AJHR, Vol., A-31, as cited in Fairburn –Dunlop & Makisi, (2003, p. 21)".

We, the hereditary Ariki of Rarotonga, acting with the approval and consent of the Mataiapo and Rangatira of the islands do hereby cede to Her Majesty Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of India, the sovereignty of the said island, subject only to the condition that it shall be annexed as part and parcel of the British Empire (Crown Law Office, 1905, p. 1).

Thus, the Cook Islands, were annexed and proclaimed part of New Zealand from June, 1901, becoming part of the Dominion of New Zealand and included in its boundaries (Barrington, 1966; Beaglehole, 1947). Beaglehole (1947) informs that the Cook Islands were treated as dependencies of New Zealand and that Pacific Islanders tended to think of themselves as dependent wards of the New Zealand government.

Niue underwent the annexation process concurrently with the Cook Islands. Lord Ranfurly sailed from Wellington on board HMS Mildura on 30 September, 1900, landing in Niue on 18 October, 1900. There he welcomed Lawes the Resident Commissioner, to discuss annexation. After discussion with the Niuean chiefs from all the villages, annexation and ceding to the British Empire was consented to: "We the King and Chiefs of Niue do hereby consent to Her Majesty Queen Victoria taking possession of this island, and in proof thereof have hereto

subscribed our names this 19th day of October, 1900” (Pointer, 2015, p. 154). Lord Ranfurly back in Aotearoa New Zealand cabled the High Commissioner for Western Samoa.

“I have the honour to inform you in accordance with instructions received from the secretary of State for the Colonies, I annexed the whole of the islands in the Cook and Hervey Group, also Niue, or Savage Island. I understand that these islands will be managed by New Zealand, also Penhryn and Palmerston. The intention is that the boundaries of New Zealand shall be enlarged, with the view of extending over this area, and the Secretary of State has informed me that, as soon as the annexation has taken place, Her Majesty would be advised to issue an Order-in-Council to that effect.” (Ibid,p. 157)

The legislation to extend New Zealand’s boundaries went to London for Royal assent and when this was granted through an order in council, the Governor in New Zealand was given the authority to issue a proclamation stating that the islands in question had been annexed to New Zealand. The proclamation was announced on 11 June, 1901, and responsibility for the administration of these islands now shifted from the Western Pacific High Commission in Fiji to the New Zealand parliament.

On Niue there was considerable disquiet. Niueans believed that Niue had been annexed to Britain, not New Zealand, and now they learned that Niue was to be grouped with the Cook Islands for administration purposes, and that a resident agent on Niue would answer to the resident commissioner in Rarotonga.

Frank Lawes, Resident Commissioner to Niue expressed the general opinion when he wrote:

“Seddon’s hobby of Island federation is a case of trying to join together what God has separated by hundreds of miles of ocean. If New Zealand persists in their present policy of federating Niue with Cook and other islands, which is quite different from the agreement made between King and chiefs of Niue and Lord Ranfurly, annexation will be a constant source of irritation and will be anything but a blessing” (Pointer, 2015,p 234).

Lawes put the issue to Seddon; that is, that the king and chiefs (of Niue) accepted annexation on condition that the island should be governed by the British Government and not from the Colony of New Zealand or from Rarotonga. The King and Chiefs who signed the document of annexation were most emphatic in this matter. The island was never a Cook Island, but had been taken over and put under the jurisdiction of the Cook group.

The extreme dissatisfaction with these arrangements was the driving force behind the introduction of the Cook and Other Islands Government Act Amendment Bill, introduced by Mills, a New Zealand Member of Parliament, in September, 1903. This bill, when it was passed, gave Niue what it had wanted: its own resident commissioner answerable to Wellington, with no connection to Rarotonga (Pointer, 2015).

In the case of Tokelau, Aotearoa New Zealand has had administrative control since 1926, following an Imperial proclamation which removed Tokelau from the Gilbert and Ellis Islands (Hooper, 2008). Prior to this Tokelau had been a British Protectorate since 1889 as part of the Gilbert and Ellis Islands colony, and governed by an administrator based in Western Samoa (Fairburn-Dunlop & Makisi, 2003). The Tokelau Act of 1948 declared the group to be “part of New Zealand” (Hooper, 2008, p. 332) and in 1949 Tokelauans became New Zealand citizens, able to move freely to New Zealand. In administrative terms, Tokelau joined the Cook Islands and Niue as the third of New Zealand’s “Island Territories”

Traditional religious beliefs and practices.

All of Polynesia had vibrant religious systems prior to European contact. Ancient Polynesians worshipped Tangaroa, Rangi, Rongo, Tane and many other gods. Some believed in a supreme god, ‘Io, and a self-created World Soul whose name was too Tapu (sacred) to utter, and whose identity could never be revealed to human eyes or ears (Makirere, 2003). The many gods of ancient Polynesia each had a well-defined role and attributes. Chants trace the account of creating and evolution through darkness until ‘Io spoke and told the darkness to become light, and light to contain darkness. ‘Io separated the waters from the heavens and then created earth. Then the moon and the sun “the chief eyes of heaven” were born. The heavens became the sky, which floats above the earth. ‘Io dwelt in Hawaiiki (Earth) and several lands or islands of this world were born. Then, gods and men appeared followed by papa (rocks), then land, roots, and finally the things that grow on the land. All this took many eras and thousands of years. Makirere (2003) draws similarities to the creation story told in Genesis, the first book of the Christian bible. The common themes identified may have assisted the missionaries to convert Pacific peoples to Christianity.

Spirituality.

During his visits to the Northern Atolls of the Cook Islands, Sir Peter Buck, also known as Te Rangi Hiroa (1938) encountered spiritual experiences. He described one episode thus:

“I closed my eyes and I saw a gathering of people with clear, brown skins shining through wreaths and garlands, a high priest making ritual offerings on a coral-gravelled temple to the gods of the sea, and a great double canoe waiting to hoist its triangular matting sail to bear adventurers to some far off isle. The picture was blurred, for it happened so long ago” (Buck, 1938, p.127).

When Te Rangi Hiroa’s party reached Tongareva (Penhryn) Pa, the oldest inhabitant, met them on the shore and held up his hand, to halt them. He then recited an incantation to placate the unseen forces of the land and to remove the taboo of strangers. He then explained “According to the ancient custom of Tongareva, I could not come near to you nor could you come near to me until that was done” (Buck, 1938, p.127). Clearly the spiritual realm of ancient gods was still influential.

This is not surprising; for the pre-Christian Pacific Islander spiritual and physical nature were inseparable. Knowledge of how to influence the gods through the correct rites, ceremonies, and prayers was key to a successful life (Makirere, 2003). Rites began, accompanied, and ended all important activities. Birth, death and all other events of importance were both spiritual and physical, requiring suitable ceremonies and correct actions by those affected. Everything and every event in nature manifested the influence of some invisible being, or force.

Some in the Pacific believe that the spiritual realm of the past is still with us today. Stories shared demonstrate notions of spirituality that co-exist with Christian beliefs. Dreams and visions will herald an event, such as a birth or death, or presence of a spirit (Makirere, 2003).

Missionary influence.

The introduction of Christianity from the early 1800’s had significant impacts on the religious beliefs and practices of Pacific peoples (Macpherson, 2003). Christian missions promoted a body of knowledge and a set of values which mandated social practices which they asserted were divinely ordained and the path to salvation. Most of the peoples of the Pacific adopted this introduced religious culture and adapted earlier world views and practices to bring them into line with the newly ordained ones. The widespread acceptance, over a relatively short period of this religious philosophy had a homogenising effect on the people of the Pacific.

From the 1860s groups which had previously maintained separate existences, such as different village populations, were brought together and required to co-exist. Missionaries had sought to encourage entities which had in the past been sworn enemies, such as certain chiefs and ariki, to abandon hostility and to become Christians.

Peruvian Slave Traders (Black birders).

Historians note the significant impact of the huge losses of population to Pacific Nations due to the trade of Pacific people in the 1860s (Buck, 1938; Fenn, 2014; Maude, 1981; Scott, 1991). The slave trade which decimated the populations of the northern atolls in the Cook Islands (Buck, 1938), the atolls of the Tokelau Islands (Hooper, 2008), and Niue (Pointer, 2015) were devastating.

“The trickery and violence, and the murders, the crime and sorrow, make as sorry a tale of sin and suffering as anything in the shocking history of the African slave trade (Maude, 1981, p. xvii)”.

The Peruvian slave raids of 1862-3 affected the islands of Polynesian, travelling west-wards from the Peruvian port of Callao. It was the low-lying atolls and the unprotected low islands that were targeted (Maude, 1981). The repercussions, particularly on Easter Island, Niue (Pointer, 2015) and the low-lying coral atolls, including the Tokelau group (Hooper, 2008) and the northern atoll of Tongareva in the Cook Islands (Buck, 1938) were traumatic and no other event in the history of Polynesia has had such a widespread effect within the Pacific (Maude, 1981).

An example of the devastation caused by the Blackbirders across the Pacific occurred in the Cook Islands atoll of Tongareva. Tongareva was the first island from which the Pacific Islands labourers were recruited (Buck, 1938; Maude, 1981). The first ship to be fitted out for the Peruvian labour trade was the 151 ton barque *Adelante* chartered by Byrne, the Captain of the ship, on behalf of the Lima company. Byrne’s brief was to recruit islanders from the South Western Islands of the Pacific. The *Adelante* set sail from Callao on 15 June, 1862, for Tongareva. The people of Tongareva were starving. The coconut palms, which provided their main source of food, were diseased. The missionaries from the London Missionary Society gave their blessing for people to go, wishing to use the money earned to build large churches on Tongareva. Within nine days they had a full ship returning to Callao on 13 September with 253 recruits (83 men, 83 women, 30 boys, and 19 girls, 19 male and 19 female infants). The *Adelante* was to return several more times and in total 472 Tongareva Islanders were taken. 130 others had been taken to Tahiti to work on the sugar cane, coffee, and taro plantations. When Reverend Wyatt Gill arrived in Tongareva in March 1863, of the original population of 700 there were approximately 100 people left on the island (Maude, 1981). Most did not return to the island and died in exile in Peru (Buck, 1938).

The story of the Pacific slave trade should be told as it is an essential link, in the common historical heritage of the Polynesian peoples. This demographic catastrophe caused the destruction of the islands' social structure and the impairment of their cultural heritage and ethos. Maude (1981) claims that only through a knowledge of the colonising history can Pacific peoples of today become fully conscious of their regional identity, and thus guard themselves against the piecemeal cultural annihilation which continues to threaten them in present times.

Colonial education.

The model of education that was established by the colonial powers upon annexation has been influential on perceptions of education within Pacific communities. From the time that Aotearoa New Zealand took over the administration of the Cook Islands, Niue, Western Samoa, and Tokelau, education has been a major area of concern (Barrington, 1966). Policy dealt with the amount and kind of education that should be provided, the type of person who should benefit from education, the source of finance, and the aims in educating Island peoples (Barrington, 1966).

Moss, Resident Agent to the Cook Islands in the 1890s, considered education of the Pacific people to be of paramount importance. He noted that the lives of Pacific people had become more complex with Western contact, and he felt that they needed an education that would enable them to cope with the changes. Moss was concerned about the influence of Missionary societies in the Cook Islands. He found that although Christianity was widely practiced and its observance rigidly enforced, there was a void where traditional practices, such as dancing, had been repressed. The Cook Islands people had been taught to read in the Cook Islands language but the only reading material was the vernacular versions of the bible and the hymn book (Barrington, 1966).

The missionaries in Niue had, up until this time, taken responsibility for education, translating the scriptures into Pacific languages, and teaching the "Natives" to read and write their own languages (Pointer, 2015, p.184). In 1906, the Island Council in Niue petitioned the New Zealand government for a school teacher. The petition was initially declined on the grounds of being too expensive. In 1907, however, the decision was made that if Niue could find a school building New Zealand would pay a teacher's salary. A school was established in Alofi, and in 1909 the school was opened with a European teacher and 64 male students.

1940-1960s in Aotearoa.

The post war period saw a huge migration of Pacific people from the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau along with other Pacific Islands nations. The trickle that had begun in the early 1900' increased in number with 2,159 travelling to Aotearoa New Zealand in 1945 and increasing to 3,600 in 1951. Aotearoa New Zealand's labour demands for its expanding secondary industry was an incentive for increasing numbers of Pacific people during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1976 the number of Pacific people had grown to 66,000 or 2.1% of the population (Fairburn-Dunlop & Makisi, 2003). When the 2000 census was taken there had been a four-fold increase to 232,000 or 6.5% of the population (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). Most of the migration has been from the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau, whose citizens hold New Zealand citizenship and therefore have unrestricted right of entry and settlement in New Zealand (Fairburn-Dunlop & Makisi, 2003).

In 1944, Aotearoa New Zealand established a Department of Island Territories which was created to take over the responsibility for Western Samoa, Tokelau, and Niue as well as the Cook Islands which, up to this point, had had its own department. In creating a Department of Island Territories, a "sleight-of-hand" occurred at the bureaucratic level and Niue was quietly slipped back within the Cook Islands for administrative purposes (Pointer, 2015, P.234). Separate acknowledgement of Niue was now often dropped and the bureaucratic mind reverted back to the 1901 notion that Niue was part of the Cooks. There was no longer a separate annual report tabled in Parliament from Niue; it was included in the annual report for the Cook Islands, which now talked about the "Cook Islands (including Niue) or the Cook Islands (excluding Niue)" (Pointer, 2015, p. 235). When Prime Minister Fraser sent a New Year message to the Pacific on 1 January, 1945 he wished "a happy and prosperous year to the Polynesian peoples of the Cook Islands, the Tokelaus and Western Samoa".

Moves to internal self-government.

In 1960, with the United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Peoples and Counties and the establishment of the Committee of 24, New Zealand came under an obligation to offer a measure of self-determination to its non-self-governing Island Territories. New Zealand set in place plans to establish internal self-government in the Cook Islands and Niue. Tokelau was not mentioned as it was considered too small for such innovations (Hooper, 2008). Alternatively, Tokelau was given the choice of joining with either Western Samoa or the Cook Islands. Tokelau vetoed these options, requesting to be allowed to remain with New Zealand, as well as assistance with emigration there, to relieve population

congestion. New Zealand initiated a programme of assisted emigration from the Tokelau Islands in 1965. The scheme continued until 1976 by which time 528 people had resettled; others followed of their own accord establishing communities totalling over 6,000 in 2008.

The Cook Islands became self-governing in 1965, and Niue in 1974. At this point, with no other “Island Territories” remaining, the responsibility for Tokelau was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1976 Tokelau indicated that it did not wish to pursue self-government, but would appreciate support with further development. New Zealand responded by establishing a programme of administrative decolonisation. Tokelauans were appointed to administrative positions and improvements were made in education, health, and infrastructure (Hooper, 2008).

Over the decades the notion of self-government for Tokelau has been revisited. In 1993, the Tokelauans were still maintaining that they had no wish to change the nature of the Tokelauan-New Zealand relationship. The “Declaration on the Future Status of Tokelau” spurred discussion on self-determination, with free association with New Zealand. Measures were put in place over the intervening years and in February 2006 the first referendum was held on whether Tokelau should become a self-governing state in free association with New Zealand. The proposal was rejected. A second referendum, was held in October 2007. Once again, the proposal was defeated, and Tokelau remains a non-self-governing territory of New Zealand (Kalolo, 2007).

Pacific population in Aotearoa New Zealand Post World War 2.

The increase of the Pacific population in Aotearoa New Zealand has been a significant feature in New Zealand society. From fewer than 2,200 Pacific peoples in Aotearoa in the 1945 census, the population had grown to 295,941 people in the 2013 census. This census showed that more 7.4 percent of the Aotearoa New Zealand population identified with one or more Pacific ethnic group. The main Pacific groups in Aotearoa New Zealand are Samoan, Cook Islands Maori, Tongans, Niueans, Fijian and Tokelauans. Other minority groups include Tuvaluans, Tahitians and Kiribati (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Over the last four decades from 1945 to 2013, the Pacific population has grown steadily both through migration and through Pacific infants born in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Pacific population are now mainly Aotearoa New Zealand born and reside in urban centres. Due to the high birth rates in the Pacific population, this group is increasingly youthful and urbanised, with the largest population of Pacific peoples residing in Auckland (Statistics New

Zealand, 2013). There are several reasons for this settlement pattern. Auckland was the main port of arrival for new migrants, there were also employment opportunities and often members of their wider families were located there.

Now days the majority of the Pacific peoples population reside in the Auckland region, with 65.9% or 194,958 Pacific peoples with at least one Pacific ethnicity living in the Auckland region (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). The communal, village lifestyle and cooperative traditions could be reinforced within the larger Pacific communities. Tuafuti (2016) notes that the communal lifestyle, is reflected in the growth of Pacific languages early childhood centres and churches in Manukau. Another reason for settlement in South Auckland was the large number of state houses built in Mangere and Otara in the late 1970's and 1980's for Pacific people who moved from the Auckland inner-city areas, such as Ponsonby and Grey Lynn (Tuafuti, 2016).

Whilst the numbers in the Wellington region were less than Auckland, nevertheless the Pacific community in Wellington also steadily grew from the 1950's onwards (Fairburn-Dunlop & Makisi, 2003). This was a period on increasing industry, in the wider Wellington region, such as the motor industries in the Hutt Valley which required increasing numbers of untrained labour, attracting growing numbers of Pacific people, including those from the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau. Maintaining community links were important to these new migrants and in the early stages the church, such as the Pacific Island Presbyterian (PIC) Church provided a central gathering place. The church held its first services in an old parish hall in Constable Street, Newtown in 1953. As an infant, I was christened in this church in late 1955. It provided a place to meet as well as attend the services. Fairburn- Dunlop & Makisi, (2003) recall the church as a focal point for many social activities for Samoan, Cook Island, Niuean, and Tokelauan groups in Wellington. Activities included Sunday school, youth groups, bible study, and sporting teams. The Cook Islands Vaine Tini (Women's group) coordinated social services, including visits to the elderly and the sick as well as supporting new migrants with food, clothing, and information about life in New Zealand.

The stream of people who moved to Aotearoa New Zealand gathered momentum during the industrial boom of the 1960s and early 1970s (Kepa & Manuatu, 2011) and these have been acknowledged as the peak years of Pacific Island migration, community growth, and consolidation. Pacific Islanders filled New Zealand's labour shortages, usually in lower paying jobs, where a lack of English was not a barrier. The number of Pacific people migrating to

Auckland meant it became known as the Polynesian capital of the world. The increased economic security for Pacific people enabled communities to build and organise their own community institutions.

One such institution was PACIFICA Inc. (Pacific Allied (Women's) Council Inspires Faith (in) Ideals Concerning All). PACIFICA was formed in 1970, and like PIC its aims were for Pacific solidarity and working together. My mother was a foundation member in the Hutt Valley branch. She had recently retired and she became involved in PACIFICA activities– sewing Tivaevae, and attending church and cultural gatherings. Tapaeru Tereora (in Fairburn-Dunlop & Makisi, 2003) says that they were trying to break down invisible fences and create a rippling effect of friendship within the Pacific community. From these beginnings, PACIFICA women came to articulate the Pacific voice at community and national level. PACIFICA also included supportive Papaa (European) women with links to the Pacific.

In the 1980s and the 1990s, the economic downturn in Aotearoa New Zealand brought a critical reduction in the jobs that Pacific peoples had traditionally worked in. Many of the positions were in the lower skilled occupations and meant that those employed in these positions were more likely to be laid off. Between 1987 and 1996 it is estimated that Pacific peoples' participation in the labour force dropped from 70% to 59% (Mara, 2006). Pacific families were hardest hit during this period of economic depression due to lower incomes and family and church obligations. Poverty became a reality for Pacific peoples with the associated problems that accompany poverty, such as overcrowded and unhealthy housing, and inadequate food. The legacy remained of the “dawn” raids that had occurred in the 1970's where over stayers had been tracked down, and added to the Pacific peoples' depressed situation. The invasion of Pacific homes during the dawn raids, was felt to the core by all Pacific peoples and highlighted the precariousness of their place in Aotearoa New Zealand even if they were not over stayers.

The emergence of the Pacific language nests.

There were positive initiatives that were emerging at the beginning of the 1980's for Pacific people. In the early 1980s, with the strong backing of PACIFICA, the first Pacific language nests began to emerge. The role of the church was pivotal in the establishment of the first centres (Ete, 1993) and, as to be expected, most were first established in the main cities of Auckland and Wellington (Burgess, 1988). A Cook Islands language nest was also set up in Tokoroa under the guidance of Poko Morgan, one of the pioneers in the Pacific Language Nest movement. Pacific communities began to identify the cultural and linguistic loss that was

emerging particularly in the younger New Zealand-born generation. Gaining encouragement from the emerging Te Kohanga Reo (Maori Language Nest) movement, and acquiring financial support from the Bernard Van Leer Foundation (Sauvao, 1999), the community set out to establish services. The desire was to stem further loss and to revive the language through guidance provided in the early years, and funding from the Bernard Van Leer Foundation, helped to establish Pacific home based language playgroups, in a project named Anau Ako Pasifika (Mara, 1993; Tuafuti, 2016).

Research was conducted by Bell, Davis and Starks (2000) on Pacific languages in the Manukau region, had a particular focus on the use and maintenance of Pacific languages. They investigated Maori, Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islands Maori and Niuean communities' language. Their findings revealed a significant loss of Pacific languages. 30 % of the Cook Islands Maori spoke their heritage language, 57% of the Niuean population spoke their language, and Samoan and Tongan groups were stronger with 80% of their respective communities using their heritage languages (Bell, Davis & Starks, 2000).

The Pacific language nests have made a considerable impact on Pacific early education. A Ministry of Education Report (1999) noted the growth of Pacific ECE services that used Pacific language as a medium of instruction. However an increasing trend noted by the Ministry of Education (2004) was the shift from language immersion modes of communicating language. To achieve language immersion the centres were required to use Pacific language for 81-100% of the time. Many had moved to a bilingual model of language transmission which was determined by the use of home language up to 80% of the time. Tuafuti (2016) argues that these definitions are contentious and do not consider the complex issues related to bilingual models and programmes.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a contextual account of the period of the early 1860s until the development of the first Pacific language nests in Aotearoa New Zealand. It tracks the process of annexation that occurred for the three nations in this study and traces, in a chronological order, the key events that have impacted on the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau during the colonisation period and the transition into self-governing states. Further events that have impacted on the lives of Pacific people are also discussed. These include the influence of Christianity and the missionaries, the Peruvian Slave traders, the impact of colonial education,

and other key events that led to the emergence of the first Pacific language nests in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Chapter Three

Literature Review: Observing the Wind, Waves and Stars

Introduction

To position the study within relevant theoretical constructs and related research, this chapter examines a range of literature, beginning with an overview of the topic. The first section discusses the literature related to the field of language maintenance, loss, and revitalisation. Within this broad field are sub-sections on bilingualism and language immersion, quality immersion and bilingual language programmes, and bi-literacy development. The second section discusses the literature on Pacific language nests in Aotearoa New Zealand and includes sub-sections on the role of the church and spirituality, notions of quality for Pacific Early Childhood Education (ECE), and the transition to school. The Kohanga Reo Maori language movement is also discussed before investigating the literature on international ECE language programmes. The third section addresses the second question in this study: “the role of parents and community in the Pacific language nest”. It investigates literature relating to parents, community involvement, and traditional models of Polynesian education. This section also focuses on the teacher within this community of learners, investigating studies on teacher training, teachers and staff in the language nest, and the requirements of teacher professional development. The chapter concludes with a summary of the literature and studies covered.

Language Maintenance, Loss, and Revitalisation

Language maintenance among minority immigrant groups needs to be considered alongside the wider framework of social, political, and ideological factors (Grace & Serna, 2013; Pacini-Ketchabaw & Armstrong de Almeida, 2006;), primarily because language is one of the most important practices through which cultural production and re-production take place. Mainstream practices reflect dominant societal values (Apple, 1982; Corson, 1998) that influence attitudes toward languages. Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001) assert that misconceptions regarding the (perceived) inherent superiority of English language often situate minority languages as repressed languages, legitimising the dominant group’s meaning and history as well as negating the cultural capital of linguistic minorities. Language ideologies include the values, practices, and beliefs associated with language use by speakers, and the discourse which constructs values and beliefs at state, institutional, national, and global levels. Blackledge and Pavlenko’s, (2001) study drew on Bourdieu’s model of symbolic value of one language or language variety above others. It rests on the notion that a symbolically dominated group is complicit in the misrecognition of its own language or variety. The official language

or standard variety becomes the language of hegemonic institutions because the dominant and subordinated groups both misrecognise it as a superior language.

It is the participation of dominant and subordinated groups in the establishment of language hegemonies that has resonance in Pacini-Ketchabaw and Armstrong de Almeida's (2006) Canadian study. The authors found that both early childhood educators' and parents' understandings of children's language development were mediated by a discourse of monolingualism in that they came to consider English as the natural and legitimate language of young children. This discourse then became hegemonic.

The value and legitimacy attached to languages by both the dominant and subordinate groups are neither fixed nor static, rather they are multiple and shifting (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001). Language ideologies are connected to a variety of social contexts, times in history, geographies, and multiple locations in which the dominant and subordinated languages are developed. Policy is also ideologically driven and Spolsky (2004) found that even when there is a formal, written language policy within the educational setting, its effect on language practices is neither guaranteed nor consistent.

Similarities around language and ensuing cultural loss for Pacific communities in Aotearoa New Zealand can be drawn to Crezee's (2012) study of Dutch migrants to Aotearoa New Zealand which investigated past and current language use of Dutch migrants who arrived between 1950 and 1965 when they were aged between 18 and 35 years. Like the Pacific migrants at this time, Dutch migrants were expected to assimilate and adapt to the ways of Anglophone New Zealanders. Hence, migration involved the acquisition of a second language and/or much more extended use of an existing second language in a wide range of contexts, including work, education, and public domains.

Crezee's (2012) study expresses the importance of language spoken at home in relation to language maintenance and survival. For similar reasons given by Pacific respondents in Rameka, Glasgow, Howarth, Rikihana, Wills, Mansell, Burgess, Fiti, Kauraka and Iosefo's 2017 study, Dutch immigrants revealed a shift to the use of English in the home within the first few years of arriving in Aotearoa New Zealand. Moreover, Crezee's study discovered that an overwhelming reason for this shift to using English in the home was due to parents' strong desire to ensure their children could take part in the dominant mode of education and culture. Parents wished to act responsibly where monolingual language practices prevailed and, at the

time, there was little information on the advantages of bilingualism (Crezee, 2012). Respondents described how they would always speak English when there were English speakers present. They also perceived a desire by the host society for them to assimilate into Aotearoa New Zealand language and culture, including in the home environment.

The language revitalisation literature is founded on the identification of a growing number of dead or extinct languages (Dorian, 1981, 1989; MacDonald & Moore, 2016) and the work of language maintenance (Fishman, 1991, 2001). Using Krauss' (1992) definition of "language vitality", languages can be divided into four main categories according to their use: (a) extinct languages that are no longer spoken; (b) moribund languages that are no longer being learned by children as a mother-tongue; (c) safe languages that continue to be spoken with large numbers of speakers and/or are protected (i.e., designated as "official" standard languages); and (d) endangered languages, which do not fall into the other three categories and "will – if the present conditions continue – cease to be learned by children during the coming century" (Krauss, 1992, p. 6).

The loss of language occurs when heritage language usage is replaced by the lingua franca, or language of trade – in the case of the three Pacific Nations in this study, the loss of their languages to English language (McCaffery, 2015). Whalen and Simons (2012) argue that language diversity is at risk with individual languages in the Pacific falling silent at a rate that is likely to be unprecedented in human history. The authors explain that language loss carries great social significance for the peoples involved and the resulting gaps in our knowledge of human language limit our attempts to understand language in its ultimate range of expression. The Pacific region is ranked second worst position after the Americas for language loss. The Pacific has 51% of its language stocks in a vulnerable position. With 5% of Pacific languages extinct, 14% moribund, or not likely to be passed onto the next generation, 51% most in danger of language loss and 30% potentially safe, no Pacific languages are considered "probably" safe. The contribution of linguists and others to document these languages will determine the extent to which future theorists will be able to fully understand the range of humanly possible languages (Whalen & Simons, 2012).

A number of studies support Whalen and Simons work. Nicholas' (2016) study of the Cook Islands language found that the favoured language in the main island of Rarotonga is now English. This concurs with Tongia's (2003) earlier observation that English is the language of the government and trade. It is only on the outer islands of the Cook Islands that true models

of the dialects of Cook Islands Maori are used (Nicholas, 2016). Furthermore Albury,(2015) asserts given the statistics on language usage by the Aotearoa New Zealand Realm nations of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau, they currently fit into category (d) of Krause's model, and it is to be hoped that with further research and government policy that language decline can be reversed.

In a Canadian study using 15 years of census data to compare the most common Aboriginal languages with common immigrant languages between 1991 and 2006, Harrison and Norris (2012) propose that the number of mother-tongue speakers is an important indicator of language health, as is the age of those who speak the language at home. They note that endangered Aboriginal language groups in Canada often only have a few hundred mother-tongue speakers, most of whom are typically over the age of 50. A critical mass of fluent speakers is essential for what Harrison and Norris refer to as language continuity, to ensure language viability and natural transmission from parent to child across generations.

In the language revitalisation literature, the distinction between categories of language is essential to deepen our understandings of the function of preservation and revitalisation and the difference between language banking (i.e., recording language for preservation) and training new speakers of an Indigenous language in contexts where normal transmission of language across generations no longer exists (Hinton, 2003). In the latter case new forms of transmission have been introduced to replicate traditional familiar intergenerational language teaching and learning. I review MacDonald and Moore's (2016) study in depth as it is so relevant to my own. The authors draw our attention to the strategies of Te Kohanga Reo, to revitalise Maori language through immersion ECE programmes, with the primary objective being to immerse pre-school children in an environment where Te Reo Maori is the only language of communication. This model of language instruction has been successfully replicated in ECE language immersion programmes in British Columbia, Canada, where fluent speakers of Aboriginal languages are employed in early childhood programmes with the goal of transmitting heritage languages (McIvor, 2006).

MacDonald and Moore's (2016) Canadian study investigated how Halq'emeylem language and local cultural practices were being introduced to preschool and primary school children. Using qualitative ethnographic methods and grounded theory, the researchers investigated the issues that educators faced within the Sto:lo and Sts'ailes communities. The study found that lack of language fluency was a dominant theme, with the language teachers identifying that they

themselves were students of the language. Consequently, it was difficult for individuals to build on or to expand their vocabulary and to check on pronunciation and word usage because of lack of fluent language speakers in the community. This issue creates a challenge for expanding the language repertoire for the teacher and poses a problem for language translation. Another challenge identified was fear of speaking and practicing the language. Even amongst the small group of fluent elders, several speakers were hesitant to use their language. This was seen as the result of experiencing language prohibition at school where the use of Halq'emeylem was punished. Canada's two official languages are English and French and this created stigma around the use of unofficial, marginalised languages like Halq'emeylem.

The language learners in MacDonald and Moore's (2016) study were passionate about keeping their language alive as they saw their language as being integral to their cultural identity. The teachers identified their commitment to their communities and elders as an incentive to teach the language. Hearing the spoken word fuelled their passion to continue the language. The ripple effect of children going home from preschool or school using the language proved an incentive for parents to become interested and learn more about their language and culture themselves and to support their children's new knowledge of the language. Parents and teachers considered that the children were advantaged in learning more than one language, or linguistic code. They felt that it was valuable that the children could "walk in more than one world" (p.57). Language was audio recorded for "language banking" and traditional stories and words were developed into linguistic code to translate words to print. A further strategy involved translating familiar songs from English to Halq'emeylem.

The importance of including traditions and practices based on indigenous ways of knowing has led to an intergenerational curriculum model where the lessons and themes pertaining to the language and culture are vetted by the community elders (MacDonald & Moore, 2016). In this way, curriculum around core cultural values was developed by key community members. A group session was developed where, after morning tea, children took part in a cultural prayer sung in Halq'emeylem. In respect to language and cultural teachings, the children received support from the teachers through prepared classroom environments designed to mediate language learning. This included multimodal cues – including objects, words, or pictures – to accompany language, and language that was used in routines. Teachers also scaffolded understandings by code-switching when necessary.

This documentation of language revitalisation practices within a community identified as having an endangered language has yielded greater understandings of the fragility of the work of the Halq'emeylen language teachers. The teachers have been required to learn the Halq'emeylen language both as a written (linguistic code) and as an oral language to prepare materials and language lessons. Whilst this may seem consistent with the teaching traditions of European-heritage languages, for most Aboriginal-heritage languages, including Halq'emeylen, this method represents a shift in traditional oral ways of transmitting language. Similarly, it is significant that Halq'emeylen cultural traditions are now being taught in a classroom context, whereas the language was acquired through family (mother-tongue) contact and cultural traditions transmitted in the longhouse, the traditional living space.

Ultimately, teaching Halq'emeylen in community programmes and within the school system has been found to have a significant impact in helping keep these fragile languages (and cultures) alive. According to one participant, "Well my outlook on it is that without the language you have no culture. Your cultural identity is gone without the language" (Research participant, McDonald & Moore study, 2016, p. 61). The results of this study suggest the need for heritage-language instruction to include a range of teaching strategies that focus beyond linguistic understanding, so that language can be attended to holistically by including cultural content that connects the language to the way of life.

Language revitalisation in early education programmes was the focus of Iokepa-Guerrero and Rodriguez de France's (2007) study which describes the Hawaiian initiative for indigenous Hawaiians to take ownership of Indigenous education to revitalise Hawaiian language, culture, and values in the Aha Punana (Hawaiian language nest) language immersion programme. In addition, Grace and Serna's (2013) study argues the importance of culturally-based education and care options in Hawaii, and voices strong support for a model which is culturally located, and based on traditional models of education. The historical overview within the study provided insights into traditional Hawaiian models of learning in the early years which could inform the curriculum in the contemporary Aha Punana.

A study conducted with the Indigenous Pezihutazizi (Upper Sioux Community) in Minnesota (Johnston & Johnson, 2006) notes that the community had used a range of approaches to support language stabilisation and reinvigoration. These included mentor programmes, use of dictionary and language recording projects, programmes for middle and high school students, adult language classes, and the development of a CD-ROM and other technologies. The long-

term dictionary project and the CD-ROM were valuable but the community came to believe that the only way that the Dakota language was likely to survive was if it was spoken by the children. Intergenerational transmission was not a realistic option, because few if any of the present parental generation speak Dakota as a first language. Therefore, the language immersion setting was seen to offer the best hope. The stance adopted was a programme that offers intensive exposure to only one language, focuses on learning the language through meaningful content, and is aimed at the youngest members of the community, who are best equipped to learn the language.

The cultural dimension of learning and the different ways that adults and significant others in diverse social and cultural groups mediate learning and support young children formed the focus of Lopez, Correa-Chavez, Rogoff and Gutierrez's (2010) study. They reported that in many indigenous communities, children are expected to pay attention to the various activities and events that are occurring around them in their homes and communities and to learn from them, even when they are only peripherally involved in the activity. This approach differed from what typically happens in Western, middle class families, where adults, or significant others, provide focussed, directed, one-on-one guidance to children. In their study with 19 six to 11-year-old sibling dyads, Lopez et.al., found that the group of US-Mexican Pueblo children, whose parents had little formal schooling, paid considerably more attention to instructions being provided to their older siblings, than did children whose US-Mexican parents had attended school for a number of years. They also found that the US-Mexican Pueblo children have been acculturated to learn through more "peripheral participation", consistent with the indigenous cultural practices of their families and communities. This model of learning encourages and supports US-Mexican Pueblo children to learn by directing and reminding them to pay attention and learn from the daily activities and events that occur around them.

In other communities, families encourage, guide, and support their children's learning quite differently. For example, Anderson and Morrison (2011) documented how, within a family literacy programme, South Asian parents and grandparents with whom they worked guided the four and five-year-old children, hand-over-hand, as the children painted in an art activity. This is an action that many Western teachers would view as being opposite to child-centred, "risk taking" pedagogy, (Dahlberg & Moss, 2006). Li (2016) explains that some Chinese families lend instrumental support to their children by providing resources, such as books and other learning materials. They also have high expectations of them to excel academically, but without

being intricately involved or participating in the various activities in which their young children engage.

Mandating of language instruction for preschool children in the state of Illinois formed the background to Bauer and Guerrero's qualitative study (2016) of a bilingual preschool programme, using English and Spanish, within a mainstream ECE setting in Illinois. They set out to understand the opportunities that students had to construct their sense of self, to understand the politics of language, and to navigate linguistically across different settings within the school. The researchers used a poststructuralist theoretical approach, within which four aspects were highlighted as important: language, identity, culture, and politics. Bauer and Guerrero's study noted that the development of bilingualism within the classroom was influenced by multiple agendas, and constraints. The study also found that the amount of time to explore and use Spanish language is an important consideration. For example students were exposed to 20 minutes of Spanish language, and this was insufficient time and opportunities for them to interact in Spanish broadly. These limitations also impacted on how children perceived Spanish. The bi-literacy journey that students travelled was filled with politics, tensions, and push and pulls, yet students navigated this terrain. No one explicitly guided them on their journey toward developing their identity, but they were affected by all the people they interacted with and the experiences they participated in and/or observed.

Taking a different focus, Brison's (2011) research on kindergartens in Fiji focussed on class-based structures, and found that parents from less affluent families were more concerned about preserving ethnic languages and cultures than the wealthier, upwardly mobile parents. An implication of this study was that preserving ethnic languages and cultures becomes associated with being lower class.

My own earlier study (Glasgow, 2007) with early childhood teachers in the Cook Islands looked at the process of developing an ECE curriculum and how it might serve to prevent indigenous language and cultural loss. It suggested that the language nest model developed in New Zealand was worthy of consideration, as a compelling alternative to the preschool programmes that had previously existed in the Cook Islands ECE contexts and which were often part of the wider primary school programme. In my study (Glasgow, 2007) I discussed measures implemented to preserve language and culture through the development of the Cook Island early childhood curriculum. Such measures included employing fluent dialect speakers in the preschool programmes and ensuring that student teachers recruited were fluent in

Rarotongan and another Cook Islands Maori dialect. My later study with teachers and educators in the Solomon Islands (Glasgow, 2015) discusses the principles supporting the Solomon Islands' early childhood curriculum, the focus being on the ways in which teachers were developing teaching strategies for curriculum implementation, with a particular emphasis on principles of the curriculum framework. The findings revealed that a strong, inextricable connection was made between village, language and cultural identity. The Cook Island ECE programme has progressed significantly in the last decade. Leaupepe (2011) discusses her experience working with teachers in the Cook Islands and, in particular, the challenges for early childhood teachers grappling with a play-based programme upon which the ECE curriculum is based. Teachers contended with pedagogical practices that departed from entrenched notions of a structured educational curriculum with which they were more familiar.

These international, contemporary studies are important in building the body of research in the field of ECE provision within the wider Pacific. They suggest a number of strategies that are important including supporting cultural identity and language through language immersion and bilingual language programmes, strong involvement of parents, families and communities in children's education, engaging fluent language speakers as teachers in the ECE programme, strengthening culturally located practice and using a range of resources and artefacts in the educational programme. However gaps remain around traditional models, how language, culture, and values can be imparted and the role that families and communities might play in this process.

Bilingualism and language immersion.

Confusion exists about what "bilingual" means and why it is important. Skerrett and Gunn (2011) found defining bilingualism problematic and somewhat controversial in pedagogical terms. Baker's (2000) definition of bilingualism is having the ability to speak two languages fluently. However, this definition is open to debate. Some argue that bilingualism begins at the point where a speaker of one language can produce complete, meaningful utterances in another language; others suggest that bilingualism commences when a person begins to understand utterances without necessarily being able to produce them. Others are of the view that bilingualism is the ability to understand and make oneself understood in two or more languages (Alladina, 1995; Baker, 2000; Siraj-Blatchford & Clarke, 2000). De Houwer (2009) expands on this, stating that bilingual first language acquisition is "the development of language in young children who hear two languages spoken to them from birth with no chronological

differences between the two languages in terms of when the children started to hear them” (p. 2).

The focal point of the debate is the degree of fluency one should reach before claiming to be bilingual and where the benefits of being bilingual will therefore accrue (Skerrett & Gunn, 2011). Saunders’ (1988) opinion is that those who have very little proficiency in more than one language are still essentially monolingual and that balanced bilinguals are roughly equally skilled in their two languages. Although they may not be perfect in both languages (one could be more dominant in one language), there is a balance between the two languages in terms of domain usage and the range of purposes for which they would use language in meaningful contexts or in their daily lives.

Tuafuti (2016) posits that debates around bilingualism continue and draws our attention to May (2001) who suggests that discourse about language education is “never simply about language, or even education, but always situated within a wider context of power relationships, and an ongoing contest for recognition, rights and resources” (p. 372). Other factors, such as teachers’ knowledge of bilingual education aims and goals, pedagogical practices and curriculum understanding, and parents support, also impact on children’s level of proficiency in both languages, (Tuafuti, 2016).

The place of language development and in particular how this fosters literacy in the Samoan language nest is discussed by Burgess (2004). She found that children engaging in print experiences in the Samoan language were likely to develop bi-literacy skills in both Samoan and English language. Starks’ (2005) study of language use in Pacific communities in South Auckland reveals differing degrees of self-confidence in bilingual abilities, with effects on reported and observed patterns of language use. Findings suggest that educational settings should promote bilingualism to build self-confidence to preserve Pacific and bilingual language abilities in the home and school communities. Tagoilelagi-Leota Glynn, McNaughton, MacDonald, and Farry (2008) sought to describe the development of Samoan and Tongan children’s home language and to describe children’s literacy knowledge in their home language. A further aim was to analyse the relationships between children’s languages and their literacies. They found that understanding the wider worlds of the children and the role of family and community in supporting children’s developing literacy and linguistic learning was complex, with many factors impacting on the learning process.

Whilst a bilingual approach may be endorsed by some (Burgess, 2004; Cummins, Tuafuti, 2016), McCaffery (2010) reveals that an immersion approach is required for children from families and communities seeking to maintain and revive their languages in minority threatened-language settings. Decades of research informs us that when low status minority languages are under threat of loss by dominant languages, it is important to begin education and especially in ECE, in the first language of the child (Baker, 2006). In these settings, the first language development is still forming and likely to be easily influenced and substituted by English (McCaffery, 2010). Furthermore, McCaffery (2010) states, pluralism or multilingualism will not work for “low status” Pacific languages which are rapidly being lost from the Pacific communities. If two languages are to be used in ECE bilingual/immersion education with strong first language fluent children, they must be strictly managed and separated by time, place, curriculum area, person or purpose with the first language being experienced in at least 50% of the programme (Baker, 2006). It should be noted that the bilingual learner is not a copy of the monolingual learner. Bilingual learners require very different skills and strategies from monolingual learners (McCaffery, 2010; May et al., 2004). Given this growing international and local research evidence for bilingual education, it may be asked why there is not more active support from the Ministry of Education and government for bilingual/immersion education (McCaffery, 2010).

A study by Pacini-Ketchabaw and Armstrong de Almeida (2006) conducted in Canada found that migrant families viewed English as the language of legitimacy, and that this view had been perpetuated in the media and government. The dominance of English was expressed in both implicit and explicit ways. Parents in this study described having English as a “must”, while the acquisition or maintenance of the minority language was perceived as a desire, or a wish, impossible to realise. Again parents’ understandings were mediated by the idea of English as the “natural” and legitimate language. Parents and early childhood educators regarded the development of a language other than English to be parental responsibility. Parents in this study rarely placed the responsibility for the development of bilingual children on ECE institutions. Data show that parents have come to expect institutions to provide support for only English language development. Further, ECE institutions did not provide parents with any guidance that it could be any different (Pacini-Ketchabaw & Armstrong de Almeida (2006).

Pacini-Ketchabaw and Armstrong de Almeida (2006) argue that social relations of power are embedded in how parents and early childhood educators understand issues of bilingualism and

language maintenance among young children. Language ideologies are used as gatekeeping practices to create, maintain, and reinforce boundaries between people in a broad range of contexts. The authors found that discourses that privilege English as the “natural” language over the maintenance of parents’ first language is rarely contested. Monolingual ideologies prevail in multilingual settings and this raises questions of social justice, as such ideology excludes and discriminates against those who may not fit the “monoglot standard” Furthermore Pacinin-Ketchabaw and Armstrong de Almeida found that liberal ideologies explicitly support multilingualism but work toward monolingualism. The early childhood educators who participated in the study, without exception, advance monolingualism. Pacini-Ketchabaw and Armstrong de Almeida maintain that ECE sites should move away from being sites of social and cultural reproduction to become sites of social and cultural transformation; that ECE educators need to acknowledge that continued home-language use in immigrant families is a significant accomplishment; and that practitioners could support and encourage parents’ efforts to maintain their home languages with young children. In this way, two languages can be maintained with equal, and mutually beneficial roles in keeping within the definition of diglossia (Baker, 2006). Bilingual language programmes can also support dual language learning.

Quality immersion bilingual language programmes.

There are many factors that combine to constitute a quality programme fostering bilingualism, bi-literacy, and strong language foundations. In their review of the literature, Skerrett and Gunn (2011) identified key characteristics that demonstrate quality programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand. Firstly, teacher expertise with languages and a capacity to draw upon resources within the language contexts and communities in which they work were pivotal. Language policy planning, curriculum research, development and resourcing, qualified teachers, and additive language practice are key pedagogical approaches. The research found that the optimum percentage for quality early years immersion/bilingual education in the New Zealand context is between 90-100% in the target languages. Immersion programmes hold the greatest potential to increase the intergenerational, mother-tongue, transmission in the home, family, neighbourhood, and community. The authors further note that relationships between the early years’ educational settings, and homes and communities are central to the success of the programme. The transmission of worldviews through the revitalisation and maintenance of languages/s in heritage language programmes is an integral element to the programme. Importantly they emphasise that language shapes, and is shaped, by culture and identity.

Lauvale's (2011) study found that a broad perception needs to be adopted when considering quality ECE programmes from a Pacific perspective. Using a metaphor of a lalanga (woven mat), Lauvale explains that cultural values must be included. In the Tongan context, these values would be *anga'ofa* (loving nature), *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *tāuhi vaha'a* (maintaining reciprocal relationships), *mamahi'i' me'a* (team spirit), and *loto to* (willing heart) (p. 16). Whilst Lauvale's study doesn't specifically refer to language development, it provides a cultural guide indicating that language development cannot occur without the wider cultural considerations also being woven, as a strand, into the learning environment. Tongati'o (2010) further argues that curriculum and pedagogy that enable success for Pacific students' needs to be culturally informed and culturally responsive, and in her study of Tongan quality ECE practices she noted that a Western lens can be pervasive and impact negatively on the learning outcomes of Pacific students and cause the loss of cultural and linguistic knowledge and literacy

In summary, a review of Pacific literature conducted for the Ministry of Education (2012) recommends further in-depth research on Pacific language educational models. While the body of research and literature on literacy and bi-literacy is emerging, there remain considerable gaps in language and culture research in ECE settings, both across the ECE sector and crucially to this study, in Pacific language nests.

Language Nests in Aotearoa New Zealand/ Aotearoa New Zealand studies

In this section are reviewed studies conducted on the Pacific Islands and Maori Kohanga Reo language nests in Aotearoa New Zealand. I begin the section with a discussion on studies conducted on Te Kohanga Reo. The Pacific language nest foundation and journey have mirrored that of the Maori early childhood language immersion models of education.

Maori Kohanga Reo: Language nests in Aotearoa.

In 1981 the Department of Maori Affairs brought together Maori leaders to devise a means to revitalise the Maori language. Te Kohanga Reo (TKR) is an immersion preschool "language nest" (Johnston & Johnson, 2006, p. 109) that is considered the front runner of many other Indigenous language preschool immersion programmes. Here children are immersed in language in order to reattach the language to the people at the community level (Stiles, 1997). The first Kohanga Reo opened in 1982, with significant community support, and by the end of the first year there were 107 language nests in operation (Tangaere, 1997). The philosophy of Te Kohanga Reo is guided by the following principles: total immersion in Maori language (Te

Reo Maori); the imparting of Maori spiritual values and concepts; the teaching and involvement of the children in Maori customs (Tikanga Maori); administration of each centre by the extended family (*whanau*); and the utilisation of many traditional techniques of child care and knowledge acquisition (May, 1999). Such was the success of the programme that Spolsky (1995) calculated that Te Kohanga Reo between 1981 and 1995 had resulted in reversing around 15-20 years of language loss. Linking to the philosophical principles espoused, the language learning included the revitalisation of culture and traditional Maori ways, within a parent/whanau-driven programme, in which collective responsibility prevailed. These all contributed to the success of Te Kohanga Reo (Johnston & Johnson, 2002).

Royal Tangaere (2012) asserts that the Kohanga Reo movement is a nonviolent resistance to the degradation and loss of that language. Her study focussed on language learning practices of the children in Kohanga Reo and their home. The study explores the role that the whanau (family) plays in the construction of language development with the Kohanga Reo child and their socio-cultural context. The study highlights the link between Te Reo Maori, the purpose of Te Kohanga Reo movement, and the philosophical stance embraced by the movement which is founded on the traditional customs of the Maori world and the important role of whanau. Royal Tangaere (2012) emphasises the central positioning of the mokopuna (grandchildren) in the service, signifying the role that they will play as future carriers of the Maori language. Royal Tangaere found that the whanau made dynamic and passionate contributions to children's Maori language development and learning, both at home and within the kohanga reo.

Building on the work of Royal Tangaere, is Hunia's (2016) longitudinal, qualitative case study investigating natural Maori language socialisation and acquisition by children in ECE bilingual settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. Hunia studied how two children were learning two languages simultaneously – Te Reo Maori and English. The children were studied in their homes and in their wider whanau communities. They were video recorded at home when they interacted with their families. Analysis used language socialisation perspectives and revealed that one child chose to use Te Reo Maori predominantly and the other used English as a first language. Hunia drew attention to the important contribution, not only of the language environment, both at home and within the wider community but also of the rich, many-faceted process of cultural socialisation, in enabling a child to become a proficient communicator within their whanau and a first language speaker of Te Reo Maori. The findings contribute to

a stronger understanding of natural socialisation and acquisition of Te Reo Maori, and also carry important implications for the revitalisation of this, and other, endangered languages of the world. By taking a similar approach to Royal Tangaere and Hunia's studies of Maori ECE, my own study with Pacific ECE communities reinforces the significance of this area of research into the impact of ECE language nests in Aotearoa in revitalising and maintaining language and culture.

In the Aotearoa New Zealand context, a number of studies have been conducted on the role of the Pacific language nests in enhancing Pacific children's language, culture, traditional languages and education (Burgess, 1984; Burgess, 2004; Glasgow, 2010; Mara, 1998; Mara, 2006; Pauvle, 2011; Sauvao & Mapa, 2010; Tanielu, 2004; Tapusoa, Podmore, Rameka & Glasgow, 2018; Tuafuti, 2016; Utumapu, 1998).

Burgess (1984) study of the Samoan Aoga Amata provides a historical perspective of the Pacific language nest which discusses the beginning of the Pacific language nest movement. In particular she notes the key role of parents and the Pacific community, including the church, in all aspects of operation and management. Mara's (1998) small-scale study builds on this earlier work, and identifies an ongoing challenge with which the Pacific language nest has had to contend involving the licensing and chartering of Pacific Islands ECE centres. She noted that these centres were often unable to meet the licencing criteria such as trained staff, and structural and process licencing requirements. Mara suggests that many of the issues, concerns, challenges, and successes highlighted by the study would benefit from further investigation. Burgess (2004) addresses the issue of language learning in the Pacific communities. Her research focussed on the place of language and literacy in the A'oga Amata programme. Her study reveals a 24% increase in enrolments in Pacific ECE services between 1990 and 2004, demonstrating the increasing importance of Pacific Nations ECE centres in the New Zealand context. However, since that time, enrolments in Pacific language nests have steadily decreased, (Ministry of Education, 2013) in part due to the licencing challenges but also the financial constraints encountered by Pacific language nests. Significantly, this demographic trend runs counter to the increasing number of Pacific children accessing education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Another increasing trend is the requirement of mainstream ECE to cater for Pacific children and their families in culturally responsive ways (Education Review Office, 2016). Mara (2006) adds to the discussion around change in the Pacific language nest services, acknowledging the

inevitability that Pacific families and churches will continue to change over time. Mara posits that as the population of New Zealand born and educated Pacific Islanders increases steadily, accordingly the demands of employment affect relationships, people's networks, and priorities. Moreover, the maintenance of ethnic boundaries will be affected by changes made by Pacific communities and by wider influences within wider New Zealand society.

In the face of language loss, Mara's (2006) study propounds that speaking Pacific languages can build identity amongst New Zealand born Pacific Islanders. Mara further maintains that Pacific language use is increasingly seen as a sign of re-invigoration of Pacific identities, and works to counter language decline by current Pacific Islanders in New Zealand. At the same time it is now commonplace that being Pacific does not automatically mean you can speak your heritage language. In relation to developing cultural skills, Mara found that the social settings of family and children are where the formation of cultural identity takes place. Rogoff (2003) suggests that social capital viewed from this cultural stance incorporates relationships and interpersonal networks. Within these relationships are sets of obligations, shared norms and mutual trust, which form requisite aspects of social interactions that bind people together.

Furthermore, Mara (2006) found, parents in Pacific language nest communities not only wanted their community language and culture to be used and maintained within the Pacific ECE services, but they also wanted their children to learn social skills, and to be well prepared for school. Mara found that all of the parent participants mentioned the central role of spiritual values in their children's learning, and some parents reported that they wanted their child to learn good spoken English skills. Interestingly, all of the parents from the Pacific centres and community language groups felt that their own culture and identity was sustained through their involvement in the centre, particularly through being in contact with others from their culture. Parents responded that they had learned through their involvement in the Pacific ECE service that language and cultural learning assisted children to learning their community language and a range of associated skills such as songs, games, and language fluency. The parents learned more about their own language and culture themselves and sharing their cultural knowledge and making language and cultural connections with other parents and elders. Rameka and Glasgow's (2017) study built on these findings, noting that parents and community built strong cultural identity through their involvement in the Pacific language nest.

Role of the church and spirituality.

The church has played a significant role in the language nest movement since its inception in the 1980's (Ete, 1990). Utumapu (1998) researched the role of women and the church in the Samoan language nests (A'oga Amata) in Aotearoa New Zealand, finding that in 1992 over half of the A'oga Amata were affiliated to Samoan churches. Utumapu found that the church was – and in many instances continues to be – seen as the most active body behind the growth of the Pacific Islands language nest. The central place of the church was also identified by Tanielu (2004), whose findings reinforce the role of the Samoan church in supporting the development of A'oga Amata, and who notes that the initial involvement of the church had been in response to the concern that Samoan children need to be fluent Samoan speakers. Tima (2013) studied the place of the Samoan church and how it supported the identity of Samoan youth in South Auckland. Tima found that the adult role models and acknowledgement of young people is vital for positive youth participation in the church. Whilst this study is not set within the ECE sector, its significance and relevance is the centrality of the church on Pacific cultural identity.

For many Pacific groups, spirituality is closely associated with the church or religious practice. On the basis of her research exploring the lived experiences of parents and the wider community in the establishment and ongoing operations of A'oga amata, Tuafuti (2016) suggests that a Pacific notion of spirituality moves beyond a simplistic definition, which adheres to a Western Christian model. Often, spirituality may be ascribed a broader meaning, and furthermore these notions of spirituality are related to cultural connections and cultural awareness. Tuafuti found that the use of stories about the environment, ancestors' beliefs, and transmitting cultural knowledge and values from one generation to another were aligned with a Pacific understanding of spirituality. Moreover, cultural scripts, metaphors, idiomatic expressions, hymns, songs, and musical legends all contained spiritual forces that were embedded in the stories. Thus, Tuafuti employs the term “spiritual literacy”, which includes the ability to speak and use words in aesthetically telling ways. Tuafuti's broad definition of spiritual literacy includes the ability to accept, respect, value, and use children's oral and aural traditions in literacy and bi-literacy programmes, supporting their learning pathways and transition into understanding and using print. This holistic view of spirituality and its connection to the spoken and written word, and to traditional “storying” and cultural knowledge-building, significantly broadens the idea of how two cultural world views and dogma may merge. For example, the commonly-held Western notion of Christianity has been

adapted by Polynesian groups to include traditional Fa'a Samoa (Samoan practice) values, legends, and spiritual forces, into a melded view of Christianity. Thus, whilst the connection to Christianity remains in the language nests, the broader traditional links to Polynesian spiritual practices also remain. This is confirmed in Rameka and Glasgow's (2017) study which notes stories of practice that continue nowadays; for example, throwing the first fish back to give thanks to Tangaroa (Polynesian God of the Sea), and burying the enua (infant's placenta) in the ground to connect the child to the Turangavaevae (resting place).

Quality measured from Pacific principles.

Notions of quality in ECE are often measured against a set of Western concepts that do not always align comfortably with Pacific principles and expectations. Pau'uvala's (2011) research explores the definition of "quality" in an ECE setting from a Tongan Pacific perspective. Pau'uvala, used interviews and talanoa sessions to capture Tongan teachers' and parents' perspectives and understandings of what constitutes quality in ECE. She argued that any definition or measurement of quality in the context must be underpinned by a depth of understanding and connectedness to Tongan culture, language, and epistemology. Whilst Pau'uvala's study focusses specifically on the Tongan community, the principles espoused on what constitutes quality ECE provision are useful, and the ideas around cultural, linguistic, and epistemological connectedness are worthwhile considerations in terms of other Pacific ECE contexts in Aotearoa New Zealand.

A key aspiration for many Pacific parents is the retention of Pacific cultural practices and ways of life, and to this end parents contribute to their children's cultural and linguistic learning. In a study of Samoan ECE language immersion and bilingual settings in Auckland, Tuafuti (2016), as noted earlier, investigated the lived experiences of parents and the pivotal role that they have played in the establishment and ongoing operations of A'oga amata. From this study Tuafuti notes challenges such as financial difficulties, resources, and language of understanding about bilingual/immersion education. A clear finding is the resilience shown by the participants in defending what is right as far as Fa'aSamoa (Samoan way, beliefs, and practices) is concerned, and the powerful role of emotions in personal and educational lives.

In Schluter, El-Shadan and Paterson's (2011) longitudinal study of Pacific mothers they found that there are considerable differences between Pacific cultures and characteristics, yet a paucity of empirical information. It was found that the Samoan and Tongan immigrant mothers retained close links with their families in the homelands in practical ways such as returning to

visit relatives and sending remittances. For these migrants their cultural identity is continually reinforced through their participation in institutions, such as church, and adherence to cultural practices and maintenance of their Pacific language at home. However, the study also found that the strength of connection to culture and language by some of the New Zealand born migrants in the subsequent generations is weakening, as they struggle with maintaining a sense of Pacific identity within Aotearoa New Zealand society.

Quality practice was also measured by a small-scale study by Podmore, Sauvao, and Mapa (2010) and included Pacific groups from the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, and Tonga. They sought views on what a high quality transition to school process may involve. They interviewed Pacific parents and found that parents had strong aspirations for their children in education, expressing the desire that their children retain their language, cultural knowledge and identity as they moved into the primary sector. Therefore studies show that a stronger regard of culture and language for Pacific children is imperative, as well as the pivotal role of the church, spirituality, measurements of quality and when Pacific children transition to school.

Parent and Community involvement in the Pacific language nest

This section explores the literature which addresses the questions in my study about the ways that parents and community – including teachers – are involved in the Pacific language nest, as a community of learners. Also included is an investigation of literature on teacher training, teachers and staff, as well as teacher professional development that pertain to the Pacific language nest.

Parent involvement.

Several studies have investigated the involvement of parents and family in the Pacific language nest, each taking different perspectives and ways of being involved. Lauvale (2011) and Tongati'o (2010) Aotearoa New Zealand based studies both affirm the pivotal role of parents and communities in Pacific language nests, noting that parental involvement provided the initial impetus for services to develop and arguing that parents' ongoing support ensures the longevity of service provision. McIntyre's (2008) qualitative study observed twelve Tongan mothers in Aotearoa New Zealand who were involved in their children's learning in the home, in the educational settings of early childhood and junior school, at church, and in the wider community. Whilst there was a perceived lack of support for Pacific families in early childhood education McIntyre noted that two initiatives – PAFT (Parents as First Teachers) initiated in 1993, and increased Ministry of Education funding in 1996 for Pacific language nests –

demonstrated a recognition of the links between home and the educational settings and affirmed the significant role that culture plays in the social and educational development of children. MacIntyre found that Tongan mothers contribute considerably to their children's education in Aotearoa New Zealand and that their contributions are based mainly on their educational experiences gained in Tonga and their ongoing Christian faith, along with the new learning that they had acquired in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Tapusoa, Podmore, Tuafuti, Taoma and Crichton's (2016) Aotearoa New Zealand based research was conducted in a Samoan A'oga Amata. They were investigating the views and aspirations of parents as well as their participation in the language nest. The researchers used teacher and parent questionnaires, teacher and parent focus groups, interviews with children, observations during arrivals and departures, observations of learning and teaching interactions, and a video clip of children during mat time. Their findings reveal an additive approach to bilingualism in action within a language-immersion setting. Almost all of the teachers were fluent speakers of Samoan, and could carry out long conversations with adults, whereas fewer than 30 percent of parents responded that they could carry out long conversations with adults in Samoan. Teachers valued the Samoan language and parents also treasured their heritage/home language. Teachers fostered and valued partnerships and support from parents, especially the parents' encouragement for their children to continue using Samoan in the home. Centre practices emphasised the holistic development of children, including spirituality and identity; for example, teachers expressed that reciting and singing the lotu (prayers) enhanced Te Whaariki's (Ministry of Education, 1996) principle of holistic development. Parents valued the practice of saying lotu before the meal (Tapusoa, Podmore, Tuafuti, Taoma and Crichton, 2016). In this centre, then, holistic learning and development were inclusive of Samoan (heritage/home) language learning, identity development, and spirituality.

The prior experiences of parents were a prime consideration for Cummins (2009) who suggested that negative experiences in language learning can have profound impacts. He argued that teachers can support parents to come to terms with emotional experiences encountered by the use of the dominant language within the context of minority groups such as Samoans in Aotearoa New Zealand. Parents recalled how their experiences of the colonisation of language, such as the historical pressure to use English only, had reminded them to reactivate what they may have lost, and to support their own children to speak Samoan in the home. Parents' aspirations for their children were for them to be: well-grounded in their

Samoan language, culture, and values; respectful; bilingual in Samoan and English, or multilingual; healthy; and to achieve academically. Teachers reflected that the research process had reinforced for them the power of the Samoan language, and how they needed to teach entirely in Samoan. Findings from Cummins' (2009) study show how acceptance of the cultural and linguistic capital that children bring to the centre, recognition of the non-coercive power of the heritage/home language, and holistic approaches support children's learning. For teachers who work in language and cultural immersion settings, this type of values-oriented model may potentially provide a pathway towards supporting young children to learn in more than one language, in partnership with their families. Parents appreciated that teachers spoke entirely in Samoan in the centre, and supported the children to learn through Samoan. Ultimately, a stronger appreciation is needed by Aotearoa New Zealand society of the cultural practices, sociocultural contexts, and home languages which, in combination, form the funds of knowledge of in children and families.

Pacific family participation was a key focus for Dixon, Widdowson, and Meagher-Lundberg (2007) who found that for Pacific communities, a community development approach involving collaboration between early childhood providers and the extended family was related to participation. An important factor for Pacific participation was cultural connectedness (linking families and support for language immersion) and the use of fieldworkers who were from the same cultural background and were fluent in the family's language. It also found that the use of *puna* (Pacific playgroups) was an effective initial step for encouraging families to ensure their child's participation in ECE. An ethnographic case study by Wolfgramm-Foliaki (2006) based on the wider community but with an emphasis on the language as a site of learning, sought to examine the literacies activities of Tongan pre-schoolers at home, in the language nest, and at Sunday school. The research found that Tongan culture underpins parent and caregiver practices and highlights the role of the church as part of the wider community, not only for supporting families but also in maintaining the Tongan language.

Tangaere and McNaughton (1994) followed children's language development in Kohanga Reo. Their findings emphasise the role of the family in working with the preschool to share Maori cultural as well as linguistic knowledge, and the resulting reciprocal learning that occurs from this relational sharing, particularly when the home language is English. Thus, within this learning environment parents gained stronger Maori language skills to support their own and their child's developing skills. This is an important consideration as most of the parents from

the Realm Nations (Niue, Tokelau, and Cook Islands) are now no longer able to speak their own cultural, or home, language and may need to learn alongside their children.

Parental choice is a key consideration, Grace and Sterna (2013) suggest, in selecting an early childhood service. Given the range of educational service provision offered to Native Hawaiian families in Hawaii, those who chose the language nest service were ones whose values aligned with those in the culturally based settings of the Aha Punana. The authors proposed that these preferences must be respected and supported in order to increase the number of high-quality, community and culturally based programmes that include and value family participation.

Whilst not specifically Pacific in focus, Pacini-Ketchabaw and Armstrong de Almeida's (2006) USA study is informative. The authors found that parents are strongly influenced by dominant language discourses when considering their children's language development. They further noted that these influences were evident in the practices of early childhood educators. Thus, parents' attitudes clearly helped to determine the programme implemented following consultation with parents on their aspirations.

As early as 2005, when investigating Pacific parent partnerships in the early childhood setting, Tuafiti and McCaffery (2005) strongly asserted the need for educational programmes that are empowering for parents and families, and which will enable sharing of power in authentic relationships. The researchers suggest that one dominant group in society cannot wholly educate other peoples' children for them. Active, central participation and ownership of the programme in partnership between families and the school is essential, particularly for Pacific families who can easily remain marginalised in the process. This suggest that for my own research I will need to be aware of the partnership with the parents in the language nest settings and the relationships that are developed that empower parents in the educational programme.

Community involvement.

Community involvement is a hallmark of the language nest movement. However, a literature review (Ministry of Education, 2012) notes the lack of research on Pacific community involvement in ECE. In the early days of the movement Burgess (1988) reported on the key role of the community and church, particularly Ministers' wives, in promoting Pacific early childhood education. She notes that Minister's wives often take on many tasks ranging from supervising to arranging the ECE venues, and points out the role that Ferani Ete, a prominent Minister's wife in Newtown, undertook in the initial training of Samoan ECE teachers.

Tuafuti's (2016) doctoral study referred to previously, also noted the involvement of parents and community in her investigation of Samoan immersion preschool (A'oga Amata) and bilingual units covering year one to year eight of Primary school within the wider Auckland area. She noted that parents and community – and, in particular, the support and contribution of the church since the inception of the A'oga Amata – had been pivotal in the ongoing success of these educational services. The results of the study identify the resilience of the participants in defending what they believe is right in terms of fa'a Samoa ("the Samoan way") (Tuafuti, 2016, p. vi) and the powerful role of emotions in personal and educational lives.

As migrant peoples, Pacific communities have had to engage with the education system in Aotearoa New Zealand in different ways. Luafutu-Simpson (2011) recalled that the education system that was imposed on Island nations in the days of colonisation, was both teacher-directed and authoritarian in approach and in structure. The legacy of this colonial approach exists in Pacific homelands and Pacific families in New Zealand who are used to this approach now have to adapt to a more participatory system where families are encouraged to work in partnership with ECE settings.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, too, we need to question whether the educational programmes that most Pasifika ECE teachers are enrolled in promote Pasifika world views, practices, languages, and cultures (Sualii-Sauni, 2008). Likewise, Pauvale (2011) cautions that Pacific ECE programmes, such as the Pacific language nest, require Pacific teachers who are steeped in cultural and linguistic knowledge, and who can weave the intricate lalanga (mat) with traditional knowledge and understandings of the processes and symbolism, as well as having strong cultural knowledge, language, cultural values, beliefs, traditions, and practices. Pauvale asserts that these should be foregrounded in their intentional practice and prioritised across all areas of the ECE programme.

Luafutu-Simpson's (2011) study examined existing teacher education practice, with the goal of enhancing the professional practice courses and the pedagogical processes that focus on the assessment of Samoan children's learning. Findings revealed that mainstream assessment processes for Pacific children were not always culturally suitable. This was reinforced by Education Review Office's (2013) report on Pacific ECE, which highlights serious issues of engagement with assessment practices, such as documentation of narrative assessment. Furthermore, another ERO report (Education Review Office, 2016) refers to centres failing to engage Pacific parents in meaningful discussions about their child's learning. By unpacking

the issues faced by student teachers and their colleagues it was hoped that teacher educator providers would make some modifications to their initial teacher education preparation. A key finding from Luafutu-Simpson's (2011) study was the need to enhance the educational performance of initial teacher education providers, to improve student teachers' practices, to make Pacific ECE more intentional in its learning focus, and for graduating teachers to be better able to extend Pacific children's learning and development. Furthermore, ERO (2013) recommends that training providers strengthen their understanding and promote culturally appropriate pedagogy and strengthen the cultural competence of the trainers in course delivery. Further quality resources to support learning are regarded as fundamental. The use of cultural models such as the Fale Tele model (ERO, 2013) provides a cultural frame for teachers use. ERO's further recommendation is the use of a cultural assessment model for the benefit of Pacific children.

Spiller (2013) found that good pedagogy to enhance Pacific students within a tertiary setting, such as teacher pre-service programmes, included several key aspects. The first calls for respect for the student and being able to scaffold Pacific learning at the right level, as well as engaging Pacific students in active learning. The teacher must be able to establish confidence and trust with their students, and to have high expectations. Spiller doesn't discuss what may be perceived as the "right level", however, and whether this may be measured by the teaching staff or the student. There is little mention of culturally responsive pedagogy as a means of engaging students, and how the funds of knowledge which students bring with them may be incorporated as requisite and valued factors in the initial teacher education programme.

Pacini-Ketchabaw and Armstrong de Almeida (2006) noted that in early childhood education courses, language development is addressed as part of child development discourses that assume the notions of a "universal" child (p. 317). In their pre-service education, early childhood educators learn how to support normal language development and they acquired a "sensitivity" to bilingualism and multilingualism. According to Moss and Petrie (2002), the field of child development has constructed a "true, universal" child who is a monolingual child. Until such approaches are questioned and changed within pre-service education courses, teacher graduates working with Pacific children and communities will lack cultural understanding and knowledge.

A key component in the delivery of a language-based programme requires specialised skill and ability in language delivery (Burgess, 2004; Glasgow, 2010; McCaffery, 2010, Tuafuti, 2016).

Baker (2006) found that in order to deliver an authentic bilingual programme in ECE, teachers need to be native or fluent speakers, readers and writers of both languages. He found that if this is not achievable, the class needs to be shared by two teachers, each of whom is a fluent speaker of their own language. This provides a strong language model in each code. Cummins (2008) proposed that if teachers are not fluent in both languages, immersion in a language will assist language learning for teachers who wish to develop second language proficiency. This suggests that teachers in Pacific language nests will benefit from being immersed in language whatever their level of fluency to begin with; furthermore, working alongside a more able, and knowledgeable tuakana (mentor) will impact positively on language acquisition for the teina (mentee, or novice learner). Therefore, whether the programmes use a bilingual process of language learning (Burgess, 2004; Cummins, 2008; Tuafuti, 2016) or a language immersion model (McCaffery, 2010) they provide beneficial language learning environments for children, teachers, parents, and other members of the community.

The notion of cultural competence forms the focus of Thaman's (2010) work which noted that cultural values, educational ideas, and teachers' role perception in Tonga suggest that teacher education programmes that are designed to cultivate teachers' cultural competence would make Pacific education more relevant and effective. Western cultures and values are often foregrounded, marginalising indigenous, cultural knowledge and practices. Evidently there is a clear need to integrate cultural knowledge into the curriculum. Thaman argues, however, that the process of building cultural content may be hindered by limited literature and resources.

Stucki, Kahu, Jenkins, and Bruce-Fergusson's (2006) narrative inquiry study investigated the lived experience of first-year Maori teachers to ensure an enhanced pre-service preparation for their students. The research found that for most of the Maori graduates, their identity as Maori is central to their lives and their life experiences. The students found a whanau-based approach to study was supported and allowed for increased participation by students. Relationships were pivotal to ensuring that students fitted into the school culture and environment. The researchers found that teachers having a personal sense of agency appears to have been a powerful factor in overcoming challenges

Baker (2006) recommends that in order to deliver a bilingual programme, teachers need to have professional content knowledge and qualifications in bilingualism, bilingual/immersion, education theory, research, and pedagogy. This is considered core content knowledge for all teachers, but in particular for teachers in bilingual and language immersion models. Language

skills and teaching pedagogy in ways to deliver the programme are insufficient on their own, and a deep understanding of the culture is imperative to achieve authenticity. Smith (1999) proclaims that teachers need to be members of their own cultures and communities. Teachers need to be fully conversant with all aspects of the culture, and able to “walk the talk” (McCaffery, 2010, p. 1). Accordingly, Cummins (2008) posits that teachers need to be bicultural and to value and model the way two languages can contribute to bilingualism and biculturalism. Furthermore, they need the ability to role model and to move in two worlds successfully, even when teaching in a single medium setting. Rau and Ritchie (2011) affirm the right for children to not only move in two worlds, but to strengthen their identity. Hence it is a fundamental right of children to have access to their own language, and practice in order to reinforce their sense of identity as Maori. Their study explored the notion of ‘tika’ and ‘tikanga’ and that respectful and reflective practices can evolve from a greater emphasis on Maori ways of being, knowing and doing. Rau and Ritchie’s study refers to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (p.798) in which it is stated that “Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their own educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning’ (p.798).

The professional development processes for Pacific early childhood professionals formed the basis of Sims and Tiko’s (2016) study. Using a social constructivist and narrative-based online survey they found that Pacific early childhood professionals need to engage proactively with community members to create a shared vision: a shared understanding of the importance of finding and establishing their own unique early childhood education system that reflects their cultural values, and supports this aspiration. This is an issue that is shared within mainstream education. Jattan (2016) argues that a lack of confidence in mainstream teachers led to them having a dependence on Pacific teachers and the perception that only Pacific teachers could provide the quality needed for Pacific children. Furthermore, Jattan indicates the need for relevant and continued professional development to ensure teachers are supported in their practice within the area of Pacific education in order to move beyond basic understandings of Pacific children, and what constitutes quality Pacific education.

The role of the teacher and the beliefs they bring to their teaching are relevant, particularly in terms of Pacific values and ways. Spiller (2013) found that teacher’s values can affect their relationships with students. She notes that current Pacific research emphasises traditional

Pacific ways of learning (Fergusson, Gorinski, Wendt-Samu & Mara, 2008; Sanga & Thaman, 2009) and that much of this existing research is described in terms of understanding a Pacific way of learning. Spiller suggests that the emphasis on Pacific pedagogy has resulted in poor teaching for Pacific students, and states that it is time for Pacific research to look at the detail of actual Pacific learning in real classrooms, so that every classroom in New Zealand can be taught by a teacher who knows how to provide the learning environment needed for all Pacific students to succeed. The notion of success needs to be further considered and Hogg (2011) cautions that success that is determined by academic achievement only may pay little attention to students' cultural and language skills, and funds of knowledge. Statistically, Pacific students have not succeeded when measured against criteria that excludes students' linguistic and cultural funds of knowledge (Luafutu-Simpson, 2011) and, arguably, new approaches incorporating cultural competence and responsive teaching practice are called for to stem these educational trends.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has examined the literature and empirical studies conducted in the field of language maintenance and revitalisation. The Pacific language nest is a culturally-founded ECE service and studies of this model as well as others in Aotearoa New Zealand have been investigated to provide a strong understanding of the field. Also aspects that constitute the language nest programme such as the role of the church, quality indicators and transition to school have been discussed. Studies of Maori and overseas models provide a wider view of these specialist services. Studies of parents, community members, and teachers, who constitute the key adults in the Pacific language nest such as Mara, 2006 and Rameka & Glasgow 2017, revealed aspects of their respective roles and involvement.

The review of the literature indicates that the Pacific language nest provision is impacted by a wide range of diverse and complex linguistic, cultural, social factors and across individual, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural levels, encompassed within the language nests. The knowledge generated in the review of the literature informs and leads into the following chapter which outlines the theoretical frameworks for this study of the Pacific early childhood language nest.

Chapter Four

Theoretical Frameworks: The Knowledge of the Navigators

Introduction

The theoretical framework that guides this research informs the selection of methodologies chosen as well as the methods implemented. Likewise, the theoretical frameworks reflect my ontological, epistemological, and axiological beliefs. Ontology is defined as the nature of reality and therefore my ontological viewpoint is tempered by my upbringing and past life experiences contributing to my worldview (Scott & Morrison, 2006). As a first generation New Zealand born Cook Island Maori, raised and educated in New Zealand, my experience has a bearing on my research, both in terms of the selection of the topic and of the research approaches. These elements impact on my epistemological approach. Epistemology refers to the theory of knowledge and studies the nature of knowledge, the justification and rationality of belief. Epistemology refers to how one knows the reality of what one wishes to describe, and, thus, reveals the personal interest or compulsion for a particular research study. The personal and professional interest I bring to this study is my desire to stem language and cultural loss. I have experienced marginalisation within my cultural community and the research confirms that one's identity, language and culture are inextricably linked (McDonald & Moore, 2016). The desire to find ways to stem the tide of linguistic and cultural annihilation and strengthen cultural communities to take control of the education of their children are compelling factors driving the study.

Axiology is the study of values and brings to bear the topic of ethics and moral values (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). This study is located within an interpretive paradigm where my role as researcher and the participants are engaged in an interactive process and where my values are inseparable from the study. These are evident in the selection of theoretical frameworks, the selection of the case study settings, the methodology and methods used in this study.

The rationale for the selection of methodological approaches aligns with the theoretical frameworks. Theoretical frameworks help to conceptualise the research and guide data collection and analysis. To gather and analyse the data needed to answer the questions in the study two theoretical frames have been used: Rogoff's planes of analysis and The Poutama theory of Development. I have also selected certain concepts from Wenger's Community of Practice, and Cultural Historical Activity (CHAT) theory as analytical tools. Rather than draw

on these latter two theories extensively, I have employed specific concepts, to complete a more specific data analysis. Wenger's concept of legitimate peripheral participation provides a key analytical tool when analysing observations of children. I also draw on the concept of community and identity that are encompassed within the Community of Practice framework. In addition CHAT concepts, drawn mainly from the third generation of the theory, enables a more targeted analysis of the tools, resources, and other systems that mediate learning within the ECE environment. The third generation also pays close attention to the notion of history and changes that occur within the learning environment over time.

Rogoff's Three Planes of Analysis

Rogoff's sociocultural approach (1995, 2003) involves observation of communities' development in three planes of analysis, corresponding to personal, interpersonal, and community processes. This framework is appropriate for this study. Each plane directs your attention to the experiences of the participants within the cultural community at the individual level. These include the children, teachers, family and community members within the ECE language nest communities. The interpersonal level directs your attention to the relationships, interactions and daily interplay between the individuals in ECE setting and community events. Such interactions strengthen relationships and impart cultural knowledge, values and practice through cultural activities in conversations, narratives, storytelling and songs. At the cultural, and institutional level your attention is drawn to the experiences and events that are significant and impact on ECE philosophical approach, policy development and programme delivery in the Pacific language nest. At this level, for instance, guidance of the Pacific community enables the ECE setting to strengthen cultural and linguistic programme delivery and policy implementation. The connections between the individual, interpersonal, and cultural processes within these planes is reinforced by Rogoff (1995) who maintains that the planes of development are not separate or hierarchical, and to understand each requires the involvement of the others. Rogoff (1995) writes that 'these are inseparable, mutually constituting planes comprising activities that can become the focus of analysis at different times, but with the others necessarily remaining in the background of the analysis' (p. 139). The development processes that link to these three places are apprenticeship, guided participation, and participatory appropriation. This approach aligns with my study which seeks to find out about the learning and development that occurs in the education setting around culture, language and traditional practices for individuals, in their communities and influences at the wider institutional level.

Rogoff (2003) illustrates these planes by using a series of images to show an individual child's participation in sociocultural activities; the images allowing the researcher to view the learning through a different "lens" for each plane of analysis. The first lens shows the solitary individual, the second shows the social interactions with other people who are involved in the activity, and the third shows the cultural and institutional influences. The personal, interpersonal, and "cultural-institutional" aspects constitute the activity. Rogoff states that no aspect exists or can be studied in isolation from the others. Thus, analysis of what is happening at the interpersonal level could not take place without the researcher understanding the community processes, including the historical and cultural roles and the practices of families and schools. The researcher also needs to attend to the processes that occur at the personal plane, such as the efforts to learn through observation and participation in ongoing activities (Rogoff, 2003, p. 58).

Rogoff (1995) states that the individual and environment are interdependent. She notes that the use of "activity", or "event" as the unit of analysis – with active and dynamic contributions from individuals, their social partners, and historical traditions and materials and their transformations – allows a reformulation of the relation between the individual and the social and cultural environments in which each is inherently involved in the others' definition. None exists separately. Rogoff points out however that the individual parts that make up a whole activity can be viewed separately whilst retaining the underlying interdependence that exists. The existence of the three planes of analysis allows this to occur, "Foregrounding one plane of analysis still involves the participation of the back-grounded planes of focus (p. 140). Therefore, the distinctions about what is in the foreground and what is in the background lie in the researcher's analysis and are not assumed to be "separate entities" in reality (Rogoff, 2003, p. 58).

The following sections describe in further detail what Rogoff regards as three inseparable planes of focus in sociocultural analysis; that is, the personal, the interpersonal, and the community/institutional planes.

The personal plane.

Human development is a process of people participating in sociocultural activities of their communities. Participatory appropriation is the term used by Rogoff (1990) to refer to learning and development in the personal plane where individuals develop their understandings as they participate in and contribute to cultural activities and prepare themselves to engage in similar

activities in the future. Rogoff (2003) emphasises that the participatory appropriation perspective views development as a dynamic, active, mutual process involved in people's participation in cultural activities. In this sociocultural perspective, culture is not viewed as an entity that influences individuals; instead people contribute to the creation of cultural processes and cultural processes contribute to the development of people. Thus, individual and cultural processes are considered to be mutually constituting rather than operating separately from each other. Rogoff (2003) asserts that rather than individual development being influenced by and influencing culture, people develop as they participate in and contribute to cultural activities

The interpersonal plane.

Guided participation is the term that Rogoff applies to learning and development in the interpersonal plane of sociocultural analysis. Rogoff (1990) developed the concept of guided participation indicating that both guidance and participation in culturally valued activities are essential to children's apprenticeship in thinking. She explains that guided participation "stresses the mutual involvement of individuals and their social partners, communicating and coordinating their involvement as they participate in socio-culturally structured collective activity" (p. 146). In addition guided participation focuses on the varied ways that children participate in and are guided by the values and practices of their cultural communities. Rogoff (1990) provides a definition of guided participation as:

Involving children and their caregivers and companions in the collaborative processes of (1) building bridges from children's present understanding and skills to reach new understanding and skills, and (2) arranging and structuring children's participation in activities, with dynamic shifts over the development in children's responsibilities. Children use social resources for guidance, to support and challenge, in assuming increasingly skilled roles in the activities of their communities. (p. 8)

Rogoff (2003) outlines the two basic processes of guided participation. The first is mutual bridging of meanings: where children and their companions support their shared endeavours by attempting to bridge their different perspectives using culturally available tools such as words and gestures, and referencing each other's actions and reactions, mutual understanding occurs between people in interactions. A process of modification takes place for each participant in order to accomplish things together. These modifications are a process of development; as the participants adjust to communicate and coordinate their new perspectives to enable greater understanding (Wertsch, 1991). Bridging between meanings relies extensively on non-verbal means of communication; in social referencing people interpret ambiguous situations from the expressions of others. Rogoff believes that this is a powerful

way to gain and give information. Words provide children with meanings and distinctions that are important in their communities. Mutuality in early language use is evident as infants build discussions with others through successive turns that layer the infant's one-word comments.

The second process of guided participation is identified as mutual structuring of participation. Together, children and their companions structure the situations in which children are involved. The structuring enables children to have choices about which activities they access, observe, and engage in, as well as through shared endeavours, including conversations, recounting of narratives, and engagement in routines and play. In reference to structuring children's opportunities to observe and participate, Rogoff (2003) writes that caregivers, community practices and institutions, and children's choices mutually determine the situations in which children are present and have opportunities to learn. Structuring of children's participation occurs as they choose to, or choose not to, participate. Children's active monitoring of events around them makes clear the importance of the choices of events they are allowed, or required, to be around. Even when events are not staged for children's benefits, or adjusted for their viewing, they gain important information through observing. The propensity to seek proximity to, and to be involved with their elders', assists young children in learning about the activities of the person followed.

Rogoff (2003) provides examples such as learning skills of "cultivation, nurturing, fishing and cooking, with assistance of the adult structuring their participation" (p. 290). As adults demonstrate the whole complexity of the task and provide well-placed pointers during their shared endeavours, the children contribute in steps that correspond to their developing skills. The structuring of children's involvement often takes place within cultural practices that themselves are structured through the contributions of prior generations.

Another aspect of mutual structuring of participation occurs with recounting, elaborating on, and listening to narratives. Science, religion, proper behaviour, and community traditions and history are taught and learned through narratives. Rogoff (2003) believes that stories are central to instruction and learning in many cultures. They are used to focus attention, imagination, for metaphoric thinking, and for flexibility and fluency of thought in understanding the natural and moral world and the meaning of life. Rogoff uses the example of church to demonstrate this point: in church, narratives play a central role in the socialisation of children, assisting them to understand the meaning of the scriptures and to relate the points of the Bible to their everyday lives.

Furthermore, children learn to use the narrative format preferred in their cultural communities to recall events (Ritchie & Rau, 2008). Their participation in narrative story-telling allows them to become familiar with local traditions and practices. Children also extend and modify traditions through their participation and in the involvement of generations of children in routines and play formats. Rogoff (2003) has found that, in some communities, learning by reciting important oral language models is especially valued. This may involve reciting songs and genealogies that are central to family and community life. In the course of demonstrating these routines, elders might intersperse discussions of their meanings. The youngsters, in turn, have the opportunities to use the material they have learned in on-going community events, adapting and innovating, as well as preserving the valued oral texts. They also include their newly acquired learning in role playing.

In role play and socio-dramatic play, children develop greater control and understanding of actions and roles (Vygotsky, 1967). They work out the scripts of everyday life, adult skills and roles, values and beliefs, as they play. Jordan (1988) emphasised the important features of children's daily routines for understanding cultural influences. These cultural influences may be seen as cultural "scripts" used by people to guide the ways that they do things, the type and frequency of tasks and activities in daily routines, and the cultural goals and beliefs of the people involved.

Rogoff (2003) notes that children's play builds on what they observe, but what they have the opportunity to observe differs greatly depending on whether they are included in the full range of their communities' activities, or are segregated. Rogoff found that children in Polynesian communities began to participate in family work at an early age. From the age of three or four they learn household skills. Children grow up in an environment where many adults and children have responsibility for their upbringing in enduring social networks. They can be understood to be learning through guided participation

The community/institutional plane.

Rogoff (1995) uses the metaphor of apprenticeship to describe the learner's learning and development in the community or institution. She writes "In apprenticeship, newcomers to a community of practice advance their skill and understanding through participation with others in culturally organised activities" (p. 143). The metaphor of apprenticeship focuses on the active roles of those who support the developing participation and on cultural and institutional practices. Rogoff states that the "apprenticeship" is a system of interpersonal arrangements

resulting in the apprentice becoming a more responsible participant. Using the community plane involves looking at the institutional structures as well as cultural constraints and values of the community.

The cultural-institutional focus of analysis provides the background detailing the particular people and their relations with each other. For example, at the cultural-institutional level the analysis may reveal the systems in place within a school setting to include parents in their children's learning. Rogoff (2003) uses the example of parent volunteers in the classroom and how the school revises its practices to include new parents joining the school. It also includes how the school connects with the culture and with the national and educational policies. This level of analysis pays due consideration to the dynamic process of this history of activities and the transformation towards the future in which the people and their communities engage.

Rogoff considers that researchers need to recognise the importance of culture but equally important is the role of the people who conduct or participate in the cultural activities. It is imperative when studying cultural processes to consider the contributions of the people involved, keeping them in the background of a focus on cultural-institutional community processes. Key to Rogoff's approach is an emphasis on the processes involved in human activity. This is the "dynamic and mutually constituting nature of individual, interpersonal and cultural-institutional processes" (2003, p. 62).

Although Rogoff's approach provides valuable framing, it does not fully accommodate or address certain significant Polynesian cultural beliefs and practices. These practices include the notion of time and space from a Polynesian world view where time involves looking to the past, to secure a firm guide for future practice. Another aspect of time is encapsulated in the notion of the concept of 'Va' which loosely refers to the use of time and space and the cultural parameters that underpin these concepts (Mila-Schaaf, 2009). Thus Va will determine, for example, the timing and length of certain interactions, when activities may take place and in what order. It may also include decisions of participation and decision making.

Another area that is not included in Rogoff's approach to culture and cultural activities is the spiritual dimension. Within a Polynesian world view spirituality transcends all planes and can be viewed as an omnipresent force that, according to Makirere (2003), determines and provides justification for one's actions. Hence all of the processes involved in human activity, for Polynesian peoples, are encompassed by spiritual elements that, in combination, act to guide the individual, at the interpersonal level, the wider cultural community and guided by spiritual

dimensions. Thus an individual's actions will encapsulate individual, interpersonal, cultural and spiritual factors within a time frame that spans from the past and into the future. Furthermore, these processes work within a spatial element or 'Va'. For these reasons it was mandatory that I employ an Indigenous, Polynesian theoretical framing, which is covered further in this chapter.

Communities are defined by Rogoff as groups of people who have some common and continuing organisation, values, understanding, history, and practices. Within communities there are interpersonal supports for learning. Each generation comes prepared to learn to participate in the practices and traditions of their elders, aided by shared engagement in valued and routine cultural practices. Such cultural practices may include home languages, religion, government and legal systems, ways of teaching and learning, gender roles, skills with specific tools and technologies, and attitudes towards other groups. These practices are central to both the individual and community functioning, and, simultaneously, people build on and contribute to community cultural traditions, and learn through guided participation in cultural endeavours.

Everyday conversations that are not designed as instructional provide children with access to information and involvement in the skills of their community. Rogoff (2003) proposes that an understanding of guided participation in cultural endeavours will broaden our view of the collaborative nature of learning that occurs outside of, as well as within explicit instructional learning situations. Children's learning involves "intent participation" where children are able to observe the ongoing procedures of life and death, work and play that are important to their communities. They are present and are expected to "pitch in" when ready (p. 317).

Lave and Wenger (1991) have a similar concept, which builds on Rogoff's work. They maintain that through the process of observation, children are engaged in legitimate peripheral participation. They are involved in their communities' mature activities, watching what is going on, and becoming involved. Polynesian children in Rogoff's study (2003) were encouraged by adults to observe, whilst also receiving support to participate. Children's learning through intent participation and observation of on-going activities in everyday life, resembles the structure of learning and assisting of mastery in apprenticeship. Learning by "osmosis", picking up values, skills, and mannerisms with close involvement with a socialising agent, can occur, alongside a more intentional involvement in a relationship between the novice and the master (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The apprentice participates as a peripheral but legitimate contributor to the production. An apprentice watches masters and advanced

apprentices until he thinks he understands how to carry out the task, and then enacting this learning (Lave, 1988b, p. 4). Within intent participation apprentices and other learners attend to informative and ongoing events for their instruction. The purpose of the events is often carrying out the important business of community and family life, and the presence and keen observation of the learners is encouraged and often expected (Rogoff, 2003). Learning may occur by children “listening in” (ibid, p. 324), and as “onlookers”, rather than as interacting partners, within cultural communities. Thus, children are provided opportunities to listen and to watch important activities of their communities.

Communities of Practice.

The second theoretical framework that informs/underpins this study is Wenger’s (1998) Community of Practice. A sociocultural notion of situated cognition asserts that knowledge acquisition entails lived practices, not just accumulated information, and the processes of learning are negotiated with people, in what they do, through experiences in the social and cultural practices associated with particular activities (Chaiklin & Lave, 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Moreover, social activities are regulated by normative ways of reasoning and using tasks and other resources in collective activity, or what Lave and Wenger (1991) refer to as a community of practice. In this way, the knowledge of the individual is constructed through the knowledge of the community of practice within which the individual participates. This study explores the lived practices that occur within each case study setting, as well as the role of the family and wider community that constitute the language nest setting.

Within this theoretical construct, learning is not viewed as a straightforward appropriation of skills and knowledge from the outside in. Rather, learning is seen as the progressive movement of external, socially mediated activity, to internal mediational control by individual learners. Accordingly both self and activity are transformed. In this way social activities and language to regulate them are structured and gain meaning in historically and culturally situated ways. Enhanced learning occurs as a result of the physical tools used, and the language practices used by communities of practice gain meaning from those who have come before.

Wenger (1998) elaborated on the notion of communities of practice developing it into a theory of learning which suggests that learning is a social phenomenon occurring when people actively participate in the practices of social communities. Integral to Wenger’s theory are four interconnecting concepts: meaning, practice, community, and identity. I have selected two of these concepts as analytical tools: community and identity.

Communities.

Communities is the third concept in Wenger's theory of Communities of Practice. Communities refers to the social collectives within which we undertake worthwhile activities and are seen as competent. Communities of practice exist in all facets of daily life. They are frequently informal and may be so familiar and prevalent that they go unexamined. Wenger identified three dimensions of practices that are necessary in the formation and continuation of communities of practice; these are mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire.

Wenger elaborates that mutual engagement is what distinguishes a community of practice from a team, network, or social group, and entails the active participation of community members in collective endeavours in order to negotiate shared understandings. Mutual engagement requires the full inclusion of members at the individual level and, at the community level, attention to "community maintenance" (Wenger, 1998, p. 74) to enable and preserve the community's coherence. Mutual engagement does not call for homogeneity between members, and recognises that disagreements and challenge, as well as cooperation, occur between participating members of the group.

The second aspect of community is joint enterprise which refers to the activities that the community negotiates and engages in together. Such activity is not limited to official enterprises expected of the community, but also to the negotiated, unofficial responses to the demands and constraints of outside contexts, resulting in a unique enterprise.

The third aspect of a community, shared repertoire, refers to the shared processes and resources that members of the community use to negotiate shared meaning. These may include the cultural processes and skills used in community and ceremonial events to portray community values and principles.

Identity.

The fourth and final core concept of Wenger's (1998) theory is identity. Identities are constructed out of our negotiated experiences of membership within social communities and therefore are bound to our practice within a community. Wenger elaborates on the five characteristics that shape the development of identities: identity as negotiated experience (where our experiences and others' views of our participation in communities help to define who we are); identity as community membership (where our identities are defined by the communities that we belong to as well as those we do not); identity as a learning trajectory

(where our identities are shaped by our earlier learning pathways as well as our future learning possibilities); identities as a nexus of multi-membership (where our identities are shaped by the ways in which we resolve the different identities that we may have in different communities); and, identity as a relation between the local and global (where we negotiate ways of belonging to both local communities and broader spheres. This in turn contributes to the building of our identities).

Cultural Historical Activity Theory

Cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) informs us that learning is a human activity that is socially situated and artefact mediated (Leont'ev, 1978; Englestrom, 2001; Nussbauer, 2011). Central tenets of activity theory are that activity is mediated by cultural artefacts, activity must be analysed at various levels, and changes in thinking occur in the social plane over a period of time. An activity is seen as any motivated and object-oriented human enterprise, having its roots in cultural history, and depending for its actual occurrence on specific goal-oriented actions (Rizzo, 2003). For these reasons outlined, I have selected concepts from CHAT to employ as an analytical tool for the activity mediated by cultural artefacts that are present in the three case study settings.

Rather than drawing fully on CHAT, I have selected key concepts which enable an analysis of the tools, artefacts, environments and structures within the case study settings, and the analytical tools to investigate the impacts of cultural and historical events. Nussbauer (2011) outlines three generations of CHAT frameworks. In this study I draw on concepts from third generation CHAT framework. The third generation, developed by Englestrom (2001), further developed activity systems to include networks of interacting systems to deal with tensions and contradictions that encourage collective learning through change. This latter model may apply to large systems, evolving into institutions and organizations (Nussbauer, 2011). My research follows the CHAT generation three guidelines established by Englestrom (2001) which incorporate subject, artefacts, object, rules, community division of labour and outcome, and how processes evolve and change over time. This may also include levels for analysis (Leont'ev, 1978). Units of analysis analysed at individual, interpersonal, and collective community levels (Fleer, 2004). Nussbauer (2011) informs us that CHAT lends itself to the collection of rich data that contribute to the depth and quality of description of the context, and is applicable to classroom research. Applying CHAT to relationships between various constructs and components can reveal embedded organisational and contextual influences. The theory's importance lies in organising, sifting, sorting, and clarifying complex phenomena

found in activity in and beyond the classroom. It has the capacity to expose points of intervention and indirect relationships that might not otherwise be considered. Furthermore, it is versatile, being applicable to a variety of situations. The third generation of CHAT is relevant to my study as it aligns with the nature of the topic I wish to explore, incorporating a wide range of tools, artefacts and structures to be investigated in the selected research communities.

Indigenous Theory

The two theoretical frameworks presented above – Rogoff's planes of analysis and the Wenger's communities of practice model – provide useful concepts for analysing the data gathered in the study. There are gaps, however, that need to be considered from a Polynesian framework. A compelling case for the use of Polynesian analysis is the composition, the modus operandi, and the espoused philosophical aims within the Polynesian language nests in the study. Utilising a Polynesian lens of analysis sits within the movement which Smith (1999, p.144) refers to as the process of "reviving, reframing, envisioning, re-creating and re-sharing" with the wider community.

Indigenous theory is underpinned by holism and integrates traditional approaches in education (Manuatu, 2006). Indigenous knowledge refers to the norms and social values, the mental constructs that guide, organise, and regulate the peoples' way of living; it is the sum of experience and knowledge of a given social group, and forms the basis of decision making in the face of challenges, both familiar and unfamiliar (Sefa, Dei, Hall, & Rosenberg, 2000).

Indigenous and Pacific models of development are often presented in terms of metaphor and imagery (MacFarlane, 2004). Prominent examples include Te Wheke/the octopus (Pere, 1988), Te Whare Tapa Whā/four-sided house (Durie, 2003), and Poutama/Steps to Heaven (Royal-Tangaere, 1996). All of these describe an interconnectedness to all things Māori, or Te Ao Māori, the Māori world (Pere, 1988). These connections are emphasised within collective groups and between individuals, and contain a spiritual dimension, an aspect frequently overlooked in Western models. Several researchers (Gonzalez-Mena, cited in Siraj-Blatchford & Clarke, 2000; MacFarlane, cited in Bird & Drewery, 2000; Pere, 1988) describe the powerful place of language to protect and nurture. Pacific models of development traverse Pacific cultures where identity and language are inextricably woven together. Oral tradition of reciting genealogy or whakapapa is fundamental to Polynesian identity (MacFarlane, 1994, cited in Bird & Drewery, 2000). Therefore Indigenous theory allows a significant tool for analysis in the Pacific language nest setting.

In short, whilst it can provide a broad analysis of cultural practice, sociocultural theory is not able to fully address characteristics of a particular culture, in this case that of the Polynesian Pacific Nations cultures involved in the research. An indigenous lens pays close attention to cultural nuances revealed in the cultural contexts. In order to fully explore specific cultural factors, I consider an Indigenous theoretical lens an important component for this study.

Polynesian human development learning theory: Poutama Model.

Concepts of spirituality, genealogy and mythology, and specific practices, values and beliefs upheld within the language nest context, are areas that are well suited to analysis of Polynesian concepts. For these reasons I have selected the Poutama Maori Human Development Learning Theory outlined by Royal-Tangaere (1996) to complement the use of the socio-cultural theories above. The Poutama symbolises the stairway to the spiritual realm, and embraces holism incorporating intellectual, physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and cultural dimensions, to ascend from one step to the next developmental step. Each dimension is as important as the other and is viewed holistically. The layered steps, as in a tukutuku panel, represent the many dimensions that make up one's personality.

Within this model are two core learning practices – Tuakana Teina and Ako – which I use as analytical tools to investigate the practices within the case study settings.

Tuakana Teina.

Tuakana Teina is a core concept for Polynesian theory of development (Ritchie, 1962; Tangatapoto, 1984). The principles espoused in the Tuakana Teina learning relationship may be linked with the notions of guided participation and apprentice learning in Rogoff's planes of analysis theoretical model. Tuakana Teina also resonates with the notion of legitimate peripheral participation expounded by Lave and Wenger (1991) from which the notion of Community of Practice (Wenger, 1998) was developed. However, while there are strong links with the two Western theoretical frameworks, the Polynesian theory of learning encompasses a far broader view of learning which incorporates consideration of the spiritual and genealogical realms and interweaving of such concepts into learning and development. As such, Tuakana Teina provides a strong lens for analysis of the case study data.

Reilly (2010) provides a historical account of Tuakana Teina, noting that this was a significant relationship in Eastern Polynesia, such as in ancient Mangaia (an island in the southern Cook Islands) and in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Tuakana Teina pairing traces back to the founding ancestral population of Eastern Polynesia and is considered to be "the structural germ" that

repeatedly generated each island's chiefly hierarchy. The Tuakana Teina relationship serves as the tumu (foundation) generating society's system of rank and leadership. The relationship began within the spiritual realm with Tuakana and Teina ascribed atua (God) status. Tuakana was Tangaroa (God of the sea) and Teina was Rongo (God of the land). The legend tells of the rivalry of the brothers and that the first born may be usurped by the younger sibling. The relationship is hallmarked by mutual respect, cooperation, and loyalty to the familial lineage and genealogy. The reciprocal nature of the relationship is evident when the roles are exchanged according to the skill of each partner in the relationship (Reilly, 2010). Reilly explains that a leader who stands as a Tuakana to the rest of his family and wider community has to manifest the appropriate moral qualities or risk being displaced by someone who does. This reveals a moral dimension to the relationship.

The roles of Tuakana and Teina are governed by cultural protocols that need to be recognised and practiced in order to enable the relationship to proceed according to cultural expectations. Furthermore, social obligations on the part of both parties were requisite and were also interchangeable according to circumstances (Reilly, 2010).

Royal-Tangaere (1996) points out that Tuakana and Teina are derived from two principles, whanaungatanga (the practices that bond and strengthen the kinship ties of a whanau and promote the values of loyalty, obligation, commitment and aroha [love] in maintaining a strong stable community unit), and ako (to learn, and teach), and is a model of interaction that occurs at all levels of engagement within the extended community. The Tuakana and Teina process allows for development to occur along and up the steps of the Poutama.

Ako.

The concepts of Tuakana and Teina also operate through the duality of ako. Ako means to learn as well as to teach and therefore it is an acceptable practice within the Polynesian world for the learner to shift roles and become the teacher, and for the teacher to become the learner. The notion of the learner taking on responsibility of being the teacher or tuakana to his or her teina is encouraged from an early age. The relationship reinforces love and care for each other and strengthens the principles of whanaungatanga (Royal-Tangaere, 1996). Ako provides an analytical lens that I can employ with even the youngest of children in the case study community settings. Royal-Tangaere observed tuakana teina practises within the kohanga reo (Maori language nest) where older children were asked to care for a young child who had just begun attending. The example she used is that of a four-year old child caring for a two-year

old. The bond between the two was one of protection, care, and education on the part of the tuakana (older child) and of adoration on the part of the teina. These bonds were encouraged within the cultural community after the children have left the kohanga reo.

Winitana (2009) describes a pedagogical teaching approach using Tuakana Teina principles. Adopting a traditional Maori model of learning Winitana recalls the role of Maui, the spiritual ancestor, and “teina brother of the Maui brothers” of Polynesian legends (p. 1). By considering Maui’s exploits one can gain a broader view of learning located in Te Ao Maori. Winitana maintains that by recalling and rearticulating the tuakana teina learning relationship one is also reciting the genealogy of Maui. The tuakana teina pedagogy has its underlying philosophy in traditional Maori (Winitana, 2009) and Polynesian practice (Tangatapoto, 1984) based on genealogy and mana (social prestige).

Tuakana Teina relational learning (Glasgow, 2010) and the wider cultural principles provide a key tool for analysing field study observations, conversations, and Talanoa sessions from a Polynesian cultural and spiritual frame. A key goal of this study is to document, enhance and promote Pacific practice and Pacific communities from my standpoint as a Pacific researcher. My research, however, uses a set of theoretical lenses: as Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2001) explain, employing a juxtaposition of indigenous and Western theoretical paradigms strengthens research.

Chapter Summary

This study is underpinned by the theoretical frameworks, which influence data collection and in order to analyse the data. From this base the methodologies have arisen, but also have provided a strengthening to reinforce the questions being asked and the ways in which the data has been gathered.

A further reason for reinforcing with a strong theoretical base is that this is an area of research which is relatively new and untested. By constructing a theoretical frame that supports the wide ranging methodology and data gathering methods and analysis, it assists in establishing the study in the research arena.

Chapter Five

Methodology: Tools of Navigation

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological framework and research methods through which the data from this study are generated, analysed and evaluated. The first section provides an overview of the methodology used to answer the research questions. The second section describes the research design and the case study settings, the participants and the data gathering instruments and process. In keeping with Pacific research guidelines the study involves the establishment of a Pacific advisory group, referred to as the Vananga Advisory Group (VAG). The three case study settings were: a Cook Islands Punanga Reo (TPR); Niuean Akoga Amata (NUK) and Tokelau Akoga Kamata (TAK). Talanoa were conducted with the VAG and with each of the respective case study communities.

Qualitative Methodologies

This is a qualitative study that sits within a constructivist–interpretive paradigm. The qualitative approach asserts the social construction of understandings and learning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). There are strong alignments with the theoretical frameworks of sociocultural and indigenous theory used in this study which strengthen this methodological approach. A hermeneutic theoretical and philosophical approach is used to interpret and understand the social, cultural, and linguistic practices of the communities in this study (Walliman, 2005). Interpretivism recognises the “embedded” nature of the researcher, and the personal theoretical stances upon which each person bases his or her actions. It rejects that society can be studied from a detached, objective, and impartial viewpoint by the researcher; research is understood to be mediated by our own historical and cultural background (Walliman, 2005). This approach is of particular relevance for this study where my cultural background, and my professional background as an early childhood teacher, impact on the research process and the actions (methods) selected and implemented.

The methodological approach within this study draws on a range of different traditions and strands. The diverse approaches strengthen the study by offering a broad and diverse set of criteria upon which to gather and analyse data. Throughout the chapter, examples of the central role of the researcher are provided in the methodology and the methodological approaches selected.

Insider status of researcher.

The positioning of the researcher is a key consideration when seeking understandings of the lived experiences of participants, particularly when conducting research with cultural groups, and an awareness of subjective understandings, indigenous methodologies, appropriate methods, and attitudes (Bright, 2014).

In this study, relationship building and researcher identity have been combined to forge an insider status. I am a Cook Island Maori citizen with limitations of being New Zealand born and without fluency in my home dialect. Equally importantly to my Cook Islands Maori status are the relationships that I have created in the research settings. Achieving “insider” status in a Pacific language nest requires an on-going commitment to serve and provide guidance and support within the community. In my capacity as a former early childhood teacher, I provided assistance and support for teachers during their teaching practice, and act as mentor for provisionally registered teachers seeking advice and guidance. Such actions enable respectful and reciprocal relationships to emerge. The researcher as insider allows a level of safety for the research community, particularly when the researcher maintains a strong knowledge of the culture, values and practices, and ethos of the setting. My relationship strengthens my position as an insider within the research setting and reinforces the interpretivist paradigm within which my research is positioned. The validation of knowledge arises from the relationship between members of the stakeholder community (Crotty, 1998; Walliman, 2005), and helps to achieve objectivity with the researcher paying due consideration to the ways that personal experiences may impact on the research process and outcomes.

Constructivism.

Constructivism emphasises the socially constructed nature of knowledge and reality, a view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality, is contingent upon human practices being constructed during interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within a social context (Crotty, 1998; Walliman, 2005). This approach aligns with ethnographic methodologies that facilitate the study of communities and cultural groups, analysing words, practices, tools and images.

The constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (that is, that there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures. Findings are usually presented in terms of the criteria of grounded theory or pattern theories (Denzin & Lincoln,

2003; Walliman, 2005). Walliman (2005) asserts that we experience life through our perceptions which are influenced by our preconceptions, beliefs and values; we are not neutral, disembodied observers but part of a society. Accordingly, the interaction link between the researcher and participants' values should be made explicit.

The underlying idea within constructivism is that all knowledge is created. The researcher must draw on whatever resources are available, and use these both to identify and to make sense of evidence. An implication of constructivism is that research accounts are taken to reflect the social and personal characteristics of the investigator; what is produced reflects who the researcher is and reflects specific socio-cultural identities and interests of the researcher (Hammersley, 2011). This implication is pertinent to values I bring to the study as a Cook Islander researching my own community. I have a strong sense of connection and belonging to the Cook Islands community. Although I have developed a strong sense of connection and commitment to the Tokelauan and Niuean case study setting our research relationships will never be as culturally and linguistically well founded. These notions of connection are supported by Hammersley (2011) who states that the constructivist process is not a matter of conveying what is discovered intact to an audience, but it should create a particular vicarious experience of the world for audiences. The personal and social characteristics of the researcher will shape what is investigated as well as what is discovered.

Ethnography.

The study employs an ethnographic methodology with an emphasis on first-hand field work. Ethnography is the study of people in collective groups, communities, or societies (Angrosino, 2007) and the distinctive way of life that characterises groups and its culture. The study of culture involves an examination of the groups' learned and shared behaviours, material productions, and customs and beliefs. Ethnography provides a thick description of peoples' perspectives in the context of the naturalistic setting (Mutch, 2005). It attempts to provide meaningful knowledge of the culture through shared interpretations. Since it offers opportunities to observe culture during extended periods of time, it provides understandings of the meanings of socially situated actions from the actors' points of view (Merriam, 2001).

Walliman (2006) suggests that an ethnographic approach studies the social life and cultural practices of communities by researchers immersing themselves in the day-to-day life of their subjects. No method of data collection is ruled out, although participant observation in the field is usually considered essential (Angrosino, 2007). The focus of the research and detailed

research questions will emerge and evolve in the course of the involvement. Theoretical orientations and preliminary research questions are subject to revision. Finally, the data collection is usually conducted in phases over a given time. Frequent behaviours, and events tend to be focused on to permit the development of an understanding of their significance. The ethnographic design requires knowledge of socio-cultural concepts (Walliman, 2006).

Ethnography is multifactorial, conducted through the use of two or more data collection techniques in order to triangulate conclusions. It is inductive, which means it is conducted in such a way that it develops general patterns or explanatory theories rather than being structured to test hypotheses. It is dialogic and conducted by researchers whose conclusions and interpretations can be commented upon by those under study even as they are being formed. It is holistic and conducted so as to yield the fullest possible portrait of the group under study (Angrosino, 2007).

True ethnography relies on the ability of the researcher to interact with and observe people as they go about their daily lives. Merriam (2001) explains that ethnography can be employed to be used in small-scale culturally isolated communities or, in a more contemporary vein, “communities of interest” or groups of people who share a common factor. Furthermore, ethnography allows a range of voices to be heard (Dalhberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). The central aim of the ethnographer is to provide a holistic account that includes the views, perspectives, beliefs, intentions, and values of the subjects of the study. In combination, these factors provide a strong case of selection for my study.

Interpretivism.

This study sits within an interpretivist epistemology which espouses that all perceptions and facts arise within the context of a prior set of beliefs and or theoretical frameworks (Hall, 2014). All facts are established within contexts by agents that have inherited traditions of thought, or ways of interpreting the world, that in turn will shape their interpretations of the empirical material with which they deal. According to Hall (2014), knowledge is generated in the process of interpreting new experiences or new theories in the context of what we believe and what we have learned (p. 308). Hall claims that those that work within an interpretivist epistemology are committed to analysing the social world by reference to how it is interpreted by agents and by reference to the meanings it holds for the social group. In all social life, people behave as they do because of their beliefs and theories about how the world works, about their place in that world. Interpretivists are concerned with meaning and with analysis of social and

cultural concepts, practices, and behaviours. Hall (2014) explains that the narrative is crucial to thorough, ongoing research, and further asserts that interpretivists view the narrative as a valid form of explanation. Such narratives present an interpretation of events based upon rigorously tested evidence. Recognition is given to the values and beliefs of those within the research context whom Hall (2014) refers to as “situated agents” (p. 310).

Interpretivism allows for a range of different methods when conducting research. This may involve ethnographic methods, such as observation, interviews, and field notes that work towards developing a rich account of life within a community (Hall, 2014). What matters ultimately, according to Hay (2011), is the plausibility of the explanation, more than the origins of the evidence.

Hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation (Leonardo, 2003). Leonardo maintains that the process of schooling is an interpretive hermeneutic endeavour. He continues that at the heart of educational research is a hermeneutical structure where interpretations collide or complement each other. Leonardo investigates Ricoeur’s notion of hermeneutics as “conflict of interpretation” (2003, p. 331). In Ricoeur’s view, hermeneutic interpretation follows dialogue, where meaning and further clarification may be sought. The notion of the speaker as an original source is of paramount importance. The need for an empathetic response in interpretation combats the imposition on the part of the researcher of categories onto another’s experience. Leonardo (2003) argues that hermeneutic interpretation involves:

“Neither neutrality in the matter of the object, nor the extinction of one’s self, but the conscious assimilation of one’s own fore-meanings and prejudices. The important thing is to be aware of one’s own bias, so that the text may present itself in all its newness and thus be able to assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meanings” (Leonardo, 2003, p.331).

Leonardo, (2003) explains that a hermeneutics approach employs interpretation in order to seek understanding. Standards for evidence are seen as validation rather than verification, as validity is viewed as more productive for understanding human interactions because it is open to the examination of unobservable dimensions of human subjectivity.

The critique of bias assumes a true interpretation, or at least a less distorted one. Said (1979) notes that there is no method for detaching the scholar from the circumstances of life, from class, a set of beliefs, a social position, or member of a society. Scholars are participants of social and cultural life and therefore are inscribed by the hermeneutic circle (p. 10). Leonardo

(2003) claims that hermeneutics forces the researcher to choose an interpretation in the face of uncertainty representing a valid process of decision making. Thus the bias and social background and status of the researcher should be clarified in the research process.

Indigenous Research Methodology: Convergent Approach

As well as using methods that pertain to ethnography and interpretivism, I implemented methods that aligned with a Polynesian traditional method of research. Fairburn-Dunlop (2010) asserts that Pasifika researchers have a responsibility to challenge mainstream models, whilst Gegeo (2010) considers that the processes of interpretivism and ethnography fit within an indigenous epistemology. Gegeo proposes an indigenous research methodology being juxtaposed with “metro-centred” research: there will be points of convergence with both systems aligning rather than assimilating. Gegeo argues that juxtapositioning two methodologies allows for epistemic rigour and depth. Furthermore Tuafuti (2016) asserted that her Pacific research was strengthened by adopting a “negotiated space” (Mila-Schaaf & Hudson, 2009), which is a place of mediation between Western and Pacific ways of knowing. In this research, I was guided by Gegeo’s and Tuafuti’s thinking and endeavoured to blend ethnographic approaches with Pacific research guidelines, principles, and methods of data gathering explained in Anae et al. (2001). The guidelines suggest that there should be a first point of contact when designing a research proposal around the research topic. In this case, the organisations that I consulted were Te Punanga o te Reo Kuki Airani o Aotearoa (Association for the Cook Islands language in Aotearoa – early childhood sector), Te Umiuminga a Tokelau (Association for the preservation of Tokelauan culture and language), and Matakau Vagahau Niue (Association for the preservation of Niuean language). Importantly, these organisations have provided guidance, advice, and advocacy throughout the research process. At all times, it has been important to ensure that the research processes that I used have not contributed to the erosion of cultural values and protocols.

Ray (2012) and Tuafuti (2016) also refer to convergent indigenous methodologies which do not work exclusively within traditional knowledge systems but rather blend Western and traditional approaches. Ray explains that the term convergence refers to a junction or a place in which two things meet briefly, and then carry on their own separate paths. This approach to research allows for a fluidity that can encompass any social and cultural context as well as an indigenous way of being, and looking at the world (Ray, 2012). Ray argues that the overall approaches to convergence research are guided by Traditional knowledge systems, with aspects of the methodology (predominantly the methods) borrowed and/or adapted from Western

approaches. This type of methodology employs Indigenous principles to guide the ethos of the approach (Tuafuti, 2016). Although convergence Indigenous methodologies use some Western methods, what makes them Indigenous is the inclusion and guidance of principles held within Traditional knowledge systems.

Kurtz's (2010) study found that the fluid non-linearity and unpredictability common in Indigenous methodologies challenged the researcher to stay true to the methodology while simultaneously respecting cultural protocols and traditions. Kurtz outlines the successes and challenges of embracing Indigenous methodologies in the midst of academia without losing sight of respect, commitment, and accountability to Indigenous peoples. Indigenous and Eurocentric world views in combination can contribute to allow the research process to shape its own methods. Within this approach the research needs to continually consider who owns the research, who will design it, carry it out, write about it, and how the results will be distributed.

Within this burgeoning area of research, Suaalii-Sauni and Fulu-Aiolupotea (2014) conclude that developing Pacific research and research capacity in Pacific Islands countries must include opening spaces within Pacific communities to critically engage in what are Pacific or indigenous research tools, methods, and methodologies. There is a need to share and explore Pacific and Western epistemologies inherent in contemporary Pacific research. As with other Indigenous models, such as Kaupapa Maaori research, there is a deliberate two-way conversation between researchers and between researchers and participants; a conversation that privileges a research process that keeps at the forefront a respect for cultural context and meaning.

Talanoa Methodology.

The increasing use of Indigenous Pacific research within the Aotearoa New Zealand context, particularly by the Pacific research community, means that many are familiar with "Talanoa" methodology (Suaalii- Sauni, 2008). The term Talanoa is derived from the Austronesian language with "Tala" meaning talking or telling stories, and "noa" meaning free and open expression (Halapua, 2004). It can involve engaging in dialogue with or telling stories, and sharing feelings and experiences. Tongan academics such as Halapua (2008) and Vaioleti (2006) are considered the early developers of Talanoa as a formal Pacific methodology. Adding a technical research-related meaning, Vaioleti (2006) has transformed Talanoa to be not only

about the “talk” of participants, but also the way that this dialogue is set and analysed for academic research purposes, such as interview data (Sualii-Sauni, 2008).

Halapua (2003) considers Talanoa as an open dialogue where people can speak from their hearts and where there are no preconceptions, thus providing opportunities for intimate sharing to take place. Furthermore, the product of Talanoa research is a holistic and reflexive process in which the research process will enhance understandings of participants’ needs, hopes, and desires. It is argued that such processes will contribute to the decolonisation of research (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014).

Talanoa as a research methodology is not simply an ethnographic method of formal or informal interviews or discussions. Farrelly and Nabobo-Baba (2014) found that Talanoa is often treated as synonymous with informal open ended interviews, glossing over the deep empathetic understanding required in such exchanges. The authors raise the issue of silence, also referred to as “va’a”, explaining that silence is far from empty: it is a way of knowing “there is an eloquence in silence ... a pedagogy of deep engagement between participants” (Nabobo-Baba, 2006, p. 94). Further, each context within which Talanoa is conducted has well established cultural protocols, expectations, and requirements.

Pacific indigenous terms such as Talanoa must have presence and legitimacy in both the academic and Pacific worlds (Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo, 2001). In the process of description, ownership, understanding, and dissemination, and through rigorous debate, Pacific methodologies such as Talanoa can make a very real contribution towards decolonisation of research theories and practices (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014; Sualii-Sauni & Fulu-Aiolupotea, 2014).

Furthermore, there is the necessity to draw closer attention to the world views that such methodologies espouse. Talanoa encapsulates and signals a world view, a way of knowing and doing that defines and guides encounters and relationships within the research process. Farrelly and Nabobo-Baba (2014) maintain that there is a strong connection between Talanoa and empathy, and further assert that the implications of political dimensions, cultural relevance, and socio-ecological impacts of a chosen research method within research communities are very important considerations. Moreover, maintaining the connection between Talanoa and empathy is critical in enlightening how Talanoa as a method may decolonise research in the Pacific, inform the decolonisation of research in other cultural contexts, and contribute to ethical and empowering policy and practice development. The authors (Ibid) elaborate,

suggesting that in Talanoa research, researchers and participants share not only each other's interest and information, but also emotions. Latu (2009) expands this further, linking Talanoa to political, historical, geographic, educational, cultural, personal, spiritual, social, and structural, constructional perspectives.

Talanoa embraces Pacific worldviews on how we ought to live and work together collectively and relate to one another as members of society (Halapua, 2004; Ruru, 2010). Latu (2009) points out that Pacific Island society has, throughout history, relied on the Talanoa process. It helps build better understanding and cooperation within and across human relationships; it advances knowledge about social identities, extended families, villages, ethnicities, and tribal affiliations. Talanoa is seen as trustworthy and reliable as a research method and is becoming increasingly supported within Pacific Islands nations because of meaningful and authentic engagement with the research process (Halapua, 2004; Latu, 2009). Talanoa is a powerful way of constructing, deconstructing, and reconstructing knowledge. Through Talanoa, Pacific people learn, relate, recall, and reconnect (Manuatu, 2006). Talanoa is concerned with strengthening respectful relationships, thus developing a collective sense of unity. According to Vaioleti (2006), Talanoa as a research methodology is “ecological, oral, and interactive”; it is a “personal encounter where people story their issues, their realities and aspirations” (p. 21).

Whilst the term Talanoa is considered a principal source of learning and knowledge for Tongan people (Latu, 2009; ‘Otunuku, 2011), it is also commonly practised by those who live in the Pacific Islands (Latu, 2009, Vaioleti, 2003). Talanoa encompasses broad cultural foci drawing on the nuances of the culture expressed in words but also senses and body language (Kepa & Manuatu, 2006). Otsuko (2006) confirms that culturally appropriate methodology makes fieldwork more reliable and valued, developing a climate of rapport in the research setting (Latu, 2009). Whilst maintaining an open agenda, it becomes the mediator between our world view and the world view of others (Latu, 2009).

Talanoa is seen as a culturally appropriate method of researching within Pacific communities (Anae, Coxon, et.al. 2001). Collaborative discussion enables a degree of power sharing between researcher and participants which balances the power between them. It may also enable an element of co-researching with participants to occur. Talanoa aligns with the essence of my main research question, which asks: what are the practices and processes in the Pacific language nest that enable, promote and preserve language, culture and traditional practices for the communities of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau Islands.

Talanoa as methodology and method promotes a process of storying that whenever possible is open, and face-to-face ('Otunuku, 2011). Such storying, whether deep, serious, or casual, is carried out using a process that is focussed on building culturally appropriate and respectful relationships between the researcher and the collective participant group. On the basis of this understanding of Talanoa, its use, this stance engaged and motivated.

While Sualii-Sauni and Fulu-Aiolupotea's (2014) study found that Pacific researchers would describe their use of Talanoa in ways that are synonymous with European-termed social research methods such as focus group or interview, according to (Prescott, 2008), the distinction between the interview/focus group and the Talanoa session is becoming clearer as more researchers use them, and talk and write explicitly about their experiences. Vaioleti (2006) describes Talanoa as belonging to qualitative research, grounded theory, naturalistic inquiry, and ethnography.

Fletcher et al. (2006) found that employing Talanoa methodology in their research both supported and challenged traditional and alternative Papaa (European) approaches to qualitative research. Three key issues that arose during the research using the Talanoa methodological approach were: 1) group ownership and control of the process and outcomes, 2) the importance of collaboratively sharing research outcomes with the researched and the wider Pasifika community, and 3) the value of opportunities for Pasifika and Papaa to undertake Pasifika research together. Fletcher et al. (2006) found that the research methodology should view Pasifika research participants as authorities on their experiences and knowledge, and that this should feature prominently when reporting findings. Nakhid (2003, p. 210) supports this stance, stating that "the voices of Pasifika students... should be dominant within the research methodology". Denzin and Lincoln (2000) remind us that qualitative research, in many of its forms (observation, participation, interviewing, and ethnography), serves as a metaphor for colonial knowledge, for power, and for truth. Such research provides the foundation for reports about and representations of "the other". In the colonial context, research becomes an objective way of representing the dark-skinned "Other" to the white world, Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p.1). By engaging Traditional, Pacific, indigenous research approaches in the study I sought to promote convergence and eliminate white bias. Talanoa has been a forerunner as a Pacific methodology and is enabling Pacific researchers to build on this subsequently with other methods such as "Te 'akapaka'anga - Cook Islands genealogy" (Powell, 2019).

Vananga Advisory Group (VAG)

Before I expand on the case study settings in the study, I will outline a significant aspect of this research design, which is using the guidance of Pacific experts in the ECE field. This was the establishment of a Pacific advisory panel, which I refer to as VAG.

The VAG comprised elders from the three Pacific Nations involved in the research. The initial selection criteria included: fluent speakers of their home language and dialect, who are also trained early childhood teachers. Panel members included a church Minister's wife who had been involved in Niuean ECE in Aotearoa, a trained early childhood teacher who worked with the Tokelauan community, and a New Zealand trained ECE teacher from the Cook Islands community. The panel chose to name their advisory panel the Vananga Advisory group (VAG), as the most suitable title for the purpose and scope of their work, and henceforth they were referred to as VAG. At the first meeting, it was discussed that the panel may wish to co-opt others onto the panel as they felt necessary for further support, advice, expertise, and guidance. This subsequently occurred with the co-opting of another Niuean advisor who provided crucial cultural status when working with the Niuean research community and participants.

The members of VAG were approached as early as possible in the research process and the first meeting was set up on receiving confirmation from the VUW ethics committee. The main reason for this was that I was seeking to achieve authenticity in the research process. I was aware that I was adopting a neo-colonialist lens by grouping three Pacific Nations from within the New Zealand Realm. By accessing expertise from Tokelau, Niue, and the Cook Islands, I acknowledged the individual differences in language, culture, and traditions. The VAG had ongoing involvement throughout the data gathering and analysis stages and provided a critical role as cultural and linguistic advisers for their respective cultural groups.

Notably the VAG members acted as community liaison, informing me of the correct protocols at all stages of my study and providing input with regard to the dissemination of the research findings (Anae et al., 2001). Through this process I deferred to their judgment and sought advice as part of the reflexive process. Although the discussion was an open forum, I developed an agenda which was given out prior to the Talanoa session. I provided feedback on my progress, and sought cultural guidance. I continued meeting with the VAG after the data gathering process was completed. We met to discuss preliminary findings and towards the end of thesis writing when I sought guidance and clarification on the selection of language phrases to use in the study. My final Talanoa with the VAG was held on March 2018, during the phase

when I was making final edits to my draft. At this final meeting we celebrated with a meal at the home of one of the VAG members. At this final meeting we reflected on the process and the key role that they had played as professional and cultural experts. Words of advice about protocols and the need to be aware, for example, of how to greet people, were offered by the VAG, translations were made and points about names, pseudonyms and other ethical considerations were checked. During my study I met with the VAG 11 times. This cultural mentoring and advice was invaluable when conducting Talanoa with cultural groups and Pacific elders, and church groups. In several cases the VAG members provided support in both assisting and facilitating Talanoa in individual and group meetings. I discuss the process of Talanoa carried out with the VAG later in the chapter. I will now discuss the case study settings selected and used.

Multiple Case Study Design

Case study is defined by Flyvbjerg (2011) as an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to the environment. Case study is the most broadly used form of qualitative research design (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Merriam, 2001; Stake, 2008; Yin, 2003) and the selection of cases needs to be systematic, purposeful, and criterion based. Case studies will be selected for what may occur intrinsically within a setting. Also, case study research is used to explore phenomena occurring across settings from which data are collected and analysed (Merriam, 2001), allowing more general understandings of the field to be constructed from the ground up (Merriam, 2001). Furthermore, case study allows for the development of “thick description” of a number of single, bounded systems (Mutch, 2005). Thick description includes everything needed for the reader to understand what is happening. Case study, with its emphasis on thick description, sits well within an ethnographic approach. Stake (2008) describes a case study as both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of the inquiry. Flyvbjerg (2011) advises that the individual unit, or case study, can be studied in a number of ways; the study involves intensive and detailed data gathering and a case typically evolves over time. Case study researchers, according to Stake (2008), seek out both what is common and what is particular about the case, and portray the nature, activity, and function of the case; its historical background; its physical setting; other contexts, such as economic, political, legal and aesthetic; other cases through which this case is recognised and then informants through whom the case can be known. To study the case, to probe its peculiarity, qualitative case researchers gather data on all of these factors (Stake, 2008).

Flyvberg (2011) argues that the case study unit can be studied in a range of ways but should comprise depth, including such facts of detail, richness, completeness, and variance. Further, a case study typically evolves over time, often as a sequence of concrete and interrelated events that constitute the case study when seen as a whole.

I selected a multiple case study design for several reasons. Stake (2008) advises that the cases selected within the multiple case study may be studied jointly in order to investigate a phenomenon, population, or general condition. Individual cases may be similar or dissimilar. They are chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, and stronger theorizing about a still larger collection of cases (Stake, 2008). With analytic conclusions from a number of independent cases being more powerful than those coming from a single case (Yin, 2003), I reasoned that the benefits from having three case studies would be more substantial than those from a single case.

Case study selection.

The cases were selected from each of the respective Pacific communities of The Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau. Whilst the settings vary in circumstances, the common conclusions or principles that are revealed enhance the generalizability of the data findings, compared to those from a single case (Yin, 2003). Of further interest is the contrast between the settings and the contrasting situations that are revealed within each respective case study. Yin (2003) advises that there is room for modification in the process of data collection; however my primary research question has clearly established parameters for the study which fit within the methodological and theoretical paradigms that underpin the research process. During the initial discussion with the VAG I outlined my thesis question and sub questions, and my proposed methodology and methods of data collection. During these first talanoa with the VAG the decision to approach the three case studies in the study was confirmed.

Data Gathering Schedule

The process of gathering the wide ranging and eclectic range of qualitative data was conducted and spread over a 27 month period from April 2013 to July 2015. The first data gathering began with an initial talanoa with the VAG. At this session I discussed the research and the role that these three experts would take in guiding the research process and providing cultural and linguistic guidance. They were to act as Tuakana (experts), to my novice or Teina role (refer to chapter four). Throughout the data gathering process I have met on a regular basis with the

VAG. Talanoa meetings were arranged at the end of each case study data gathering period, and prior to my beginning gathering data in the next setting.

Case study one.

Case study one is a Cook Islands language nest, Te Punanga Reo, (TPR) located in one of the inner suburbs of Wellington city. TPR was established in the early 1980's by the Cook Islands community, with a key intent to retain and strengthen the Cook Islands language and culture. The teaching staff comprise four Cook Island born and raised teachers who are fluent in Te Reo Maori Kuki Airani (Cook Islands Maori) and two New Zealand born Cook Island teachers who are developing fluency in Te Reo Maori. The administrator is a New Zealand born Cook Islander. There is a management committee comprising the supervisor, a staff representative, and three community members. The centre is licenced for 28 children, 20 aged over two and eight under two. In recent years the centre roll and community have become increasingly multicultural, catering for the culturally diverse community in the local area. Consequently the number of families and children of Cook Islands heritage is now in the minority. The centre has historical links to the local Pacific Islands Presbyterian church (PIPC) and has played a prominent role within the Cook Islands community in the Wellington area.

Data gathering rounds conducted in Case study one.

Seven full day sessions in close succession were conducted in Case study one. I then conducted further data gathering during Cook Islands language week, during a trip to Rarotonga with the teaching team, and a final talanoa with the founder of TPR at the end of the year. At each data gathering session talanoa were conducted, including group talanoa with teachers and community members, and talanoa with individuals such as teachers and parents. In addition, other data gathered included observational data of episodes of children's play, interactions and conversations between and amongst the participants in the case study, written narratives, audio and video recording, field notes, and reflective diary recordings. Documents such as a philosophy statement, policy documents, daily routines, and rosters, management planning and self-review documentation were accessed and analysed. The table detailing the data gathering schedule is outlined as follows:

Table 1

Data gathering at TPR

Visit one	Talanoa with the teaching team and management group.
Visit two	Morning visit -Teachers are beginning to speak to me in Te Reo Kuki Airani (Cook Islands Maori) and providing an interpretation. This demonstrates that their role as tuakana spans a wide group, not only the children in their setting but with members of their community who have little cultural and linguistic knowledge.
Visit three	Visit conducted later in the morning. Documentation including philosophy and policy statements, daily routines and rosters, programme and management plans were obtained. Photographic documentation gathered of children participating in routines, and in free play episodes with a particular focus on cultural and linguistic learning opportunities. A reflective diary entry recorded the progress made and the need to conduct talanoa with the parents and anau (families) using the services.
Visit four	Talanoa arranged with parents in the morning. In the afternoon conducted Talanoa with community elder.
Visit five	Attended PIPC church service for White Sunday.
Visit six	I conducted an afternoon visit with the teachers and children
Visit seven	Based on my reflections I noted gaps in my observational data and the focus of this visit was to observe the flow of the day and the routines and how they were used to foster cultural and linguistic learning. I observed teaching styles, any intergenerational differences in teaching between older and younger teachers. I then conducted on the floor talanoa when teachers were available to find out how they were able to plan for the specific cultural practices they imparted.
Visit eight	I took photos of the wide range of cultural artefacts on display. I observed cultural activity of making coconut oil, and held a talanoa with Mama P. about this process and the range of uses for coconut oil. We also spoke of

	the impending Wedding in Rarotonga and how all of the teachers, and I, were all invited.
Visit nine	Cook Islands language week 2014: During the Cook Islands language week, there was a strong emphasis given to showcasing the cultural and linguistic learning of the children. This was demonstrated in the items they performed for parents at the end of the language week. Individual children performed cultural items such as the haka (Cook Islands Maori war chant) and the ura (dance). Children performed action songs and recited passages from the bible. Traditional umu kai (earth oven) food was prepared and served to the visiting dignitaries and guests.
Visit ten	I conducted a Talanoa with the founder of TPR at the Cook Islands language nest. Fortunately she was present during a visit I made to TPR during Cook Islands Independence week, and she consented for me to sit with her whilst she weaved a flax (ei) head dress. She is now elderly and I was aware that I needed to arrange a time that would work for her. The opportunity arose when she was present at the centre to celebrate the Cook Islands Independence Day festivities.
Visit eleven	<p><i>Trip to Rarotonga with the teaching team</i></p> <p>I was fortunate to travel to Rarotonga with the team to celebrate MJ's wedding, to attend a religious cultural festival and to visit three ECE settings in the wider Rarotonga area. The religious celebration was to commemorate the introduction of Christianity over 130 years ago. I observed young children and their families, involved in the activities and performances. The ECE preschool visits provided an opportunity to meet the teachers. In two of the three preschools the teachers were New Zealand trained, Pakeha (European) teachers. The programmes were play based ECE programmes. I also met with the personnel from the Cook Islands Ministry of Education during my visit. My visit to Rarotonga provided me with insight into the educational provision there and to identify and reflect on the similarities and the differences in the ECE settings and the wider cultural community.</p>

Case study two.

Case study two is a Tokelauan language nest, Akoga Kāmata (TAK) based in one of the outer suburbs of Wellington. It was established in the early 1990's by the Tokelauan community with financial assistance from the Catholic Church which continues to provide support to the centre. The eight staff are comprised of both Tokelauan and Samoan teachers, who are fluent in both Tokelauan and Samoan language. The centre is licenced for 30 children. 23 over two and seven under two. They are governed by a management committee comprising staff and community members. TAK cater for the Tokelauan community in the wider area. The roll at TAK whilst becoming culturally diverse, maintains more than 50% of its roll with children and families from Tokelau, Samoa and other Pacific Nations. The service has strong support from the elders in the community as well as links to Nukunono, one of the three atolls of Tokelau.

Prior to beginning my research with TAK, I was required to meet with the centre management committee and to provide a detailed outline of my proposed study. I met the group at the beginning of a planned management meeting, and was allocated 20 minutes to outline my research proposal, hand out information sheets, and to allow for questions. A decision was not made immediately but the committee further discussed my proposal, and fortunately, three weeks later affirmed that I could conduct my research with their setting.

Data gathering in case study two.

Data gathering in case study two began when I had completed data gathering in case study one. I then held a talanoa with the VAG advisors to inform them of my progress, interim findings, and to receive guidance from them on the next stage of my research gathering data in case study two.

There were eight full day visits in close succession over two months data gathering based in the setting.

Table 2

Data gathering at TAK

Visit one	My first visit to the centre was an afternoon talanoa gathering with the teaching team.
Visit two	Was spent observing the children and the teachers on the floor. I conducted one to one talanoa with teachers in the afternoon.

Visit three	Involved meeting and conducting talana with parents and with the supervisor. I gathered documentation, including the philosophy statement, language policy and annual and strategic management plans.
Visit four	Conducted firstly in the under two area and meeting with the under two teachers, then and holding a talanoa with a grandparent and observing In the afternoon I observed children visiting from the neighbouring school.
Visit five	A Tokelauan church service on Sunday morning at the church next door.
Visit six	I took photos of the environment and artefacts that reflected the Tokelauan culture and community. I observed instances of cultural language use and the ways they were woven into the everyday conversations I conducted a talanoa with a young father.
Visit seven	I held talanoa with the Supervisor, a young teacher and later a group talanoa with the teaching team.
Visit eight	A church visit. This time the wider community Te Umiuminga elders were going to meet after the session and I was invited as a guest to participate in the group event. The church service was taken by their local Tokelauan priest and it was conducted in Tokelauan language. After the service the group then moved to the church hall next door. Before food was served several of the elders spoke about the importance of retaining the Tokelauan language and culture. I was able to conduct individual Talanoa with three elders. Fortunately, when the priest was in close proximity he would translate and clarify some of the conversations that were conducted. Several had been involved in the establishment of Matiti and retained a keen interest in the centre. After Kai kai (food) was served and eaten the elders stood and sang a Tokelauan chant. I reflected that the young children who were present were very fortunate to be exposed to a traditional performance from this elderly group.

Case study three.

Case study three is a Niuean language nest Aoga (henceforth referred to as NUK) in Mangere, South Auckland. It was originally established in 1987, by the Niuean community in South Auckland, and in 2008 located to its current premises. It has 10 teachers, a cook, and an administrator. It is licenced for 30 over two children and 15 under two. In the last few years, the centre has been administered by a private owner who is also a member of the Niuean community. Prior to this, a management committee shared responsibility for managing the centre.

I consulted with J my Niuean VAG adviser about the choice of setting. On J's advice I approached NUK and they consented to me visiting them to discuss the study. My first visit was in early August 2014. I met with the Supervisor and Administrator and provided them with information sheets and consent forms. I followed this visit with a phone call and email to see if they had any further questions and I could set up the second visit. I also contacted J who felt that a personal call from her to the centre might enable them to ask questions that they may have about the research process. She was able to reassure them that the research process would not be harmful or critical of their centre. With this reassurance, they agreed to join to engage in the research and we set up a time for the second visit.

The data gathering was conducted over a year due to the distance required to travel between Wellington and South Auckland.

Table 3

Data Gathering conducted in NUK

Visit one	To introduce myself and drop off information letter and forms
Visit two	During this visit I met with the Supervisor, Manager and the Administrator. I took photos of the environment
Visit three	On the third visit J joined me. I felt that the Niuean community was still wary of my role as researcher and uncertain of my study. I reflected on this after my first two visits that I had been fortunate to have a strong relationship with both my first two case study settings. This was not the case with the Mangere based setting. I was unknown to them and understandably they were wary. J was able to reassure the group of my role and that this was an opportunity to showcase the very important work

	that they were doing in maintaining the Niuean language, culture and community in Mangere. I observed the children at mat time, took photos of the indoor and outdoor environment. J was my intermediary, introducing me to the teachers and members of the Niuean community. M the supervisor organised a staff meeting for later in the afternoon. This was an opportunity for me to build my relationship with the group and for J to attest to the value of the research.
Visit four and five	Conducted two days in a row. I gathered documentation including the philosophy statement, selected policies such as the language policy, and management and programme planning documents. I conducted talanoa with two community elders, and then with a parent.
Visit six	Spent in the under two area for much of the day. The older, culturally and linguistically strong teachers formed the under two team. I observed a traditional approach using Niuean language with the babies and sitting of the floor, using traditional toys, such as wooden pate (drums).
Visit seven	Conducted in close succession I noted gaps in my data gathering around observing children in play episodes. I observed teacher and child interactions and the ways that children used the cultural artefacts in the environment.
Visit eight	I held a brief talanoa with the teachers and I met and conducted a talanoa with NUK director/ owner.

Observation Gathering Techniques

I have employed a range of observation gathering techniques in the data gathering process with each technique used for a particular purpose. The techniques are outlined as follows. Narrative observations were recorded using words, often supplemented with visual material such as photographs, video clips, and DVD's. The narratives I gathered focussed on a wide range of activities, and daily events in each of the case study settings. Furthermore I conducted narrative observations of children and adults as part of the data gathering process. Narrative observations tend to emphasise the importance of infants' and young children's understanding, and their

relationships with people, places, and activities. Narrative or storied approaches in observations, such as those used in education settings, usually include reflections on the context of the sociocultural setting and the cultural aspects of learning (Podmore, 2006. p. 64).

Sociocultural observations focus on children in a community of learners. Podmore (2006) discusses the mosaic of observations of small groups of children. Observers use the group observations to discover the learning of individuals. This process aligns with my observations of children in the case study settings. In particular, video and audio observations of children were generally conducted in group activities such as mat session where they were frequently mastering language and becoming enculturated into the early childhood setting.

Rogoff (2003) reinforces the sociocultural concepts that inform narrative observation discussing planes of analysis or “lenses”, or ways of viewing, when observing and analysing. These lenses are: the personal or individual, the interpersonal or interactions between people, and the cultural, including the cultural values and context (Rogoff, 2003)[see theory chapter.] An advantage to using a sociocultural approach to observation is connection and sensitivity to the cultural context of the research community. This closely aligns to the narrative gathering process in which I was capturing examples of social, cultural, and linguistic learning.

Photographic, video and tape observations.

In each of the case study settings, and in other contexts where I gathered data, I took photographs, and recorded videos and audio. This use of technological data gathering was an efficient way of gathering data. Using these techniques freed me to focus during talanoa discussions, although I did take written notes at the same time as the video and audio taping wherever practicable. I found that having two sets of data gathering techniques were useful for cross referencing my notes.

The acceptability of using multiple methods for data gathering allows flexibility in selecting a suitable technique for the purpose; for example, capturing the visual display of dance with a video recording, or a photographic recording or audio taping to capture children engaged in a cultural activity such as a story or song. Visual and audio recordings allow for revisiting the scenario or episode retrospectively. Clough and Nutbrown (2012) posit that audio or video recording is the best way to record interview data because relying solely on handwritten notes inevitably means that some comments are lost. In this research, I found that a combination of writing notes whilst video and/ tape recording enabled me to cross-reference, and this has strengthened the data gathering process. A challenge associated with recording, however, is

that the transcription of lengthy tapes, as well as the management of large amounts of data, is time consuming (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012).

Futhermore I used photographs as an observation method to record group or individual children and projects and provide a pictorial image of daily regular and spontaneous occurrences (Hamer, 1999). Photographs are a valuable way of recording information about children's individual and group skills and can make it easier to understand the observations in context (Podmore, 2004). Photographs can be used to show stages of learning, such as the involvement in a dance or cultural music or mat time session for a group or an individual within the group.

I used video recording as a means of gathering data of children in play contexts and of music sessions. These video recording episodes were a valuable way of providing detailed information on a child or groups of children whose activities and language I was capturing. I was able to go back and review, and re-play repeatedly to classify and analyse the observational data (Podmore, 2004) As Hamer (1999) suggests, I found video recording enabled me to capture observational data that is detailed, captures the moment, and captures information much more easily than is recorded by hand. A video recording can provide information on the tempo of the day, the ways that children participate in the programme and interact with others around them. Important considerations, pointed out by Podmore (2004) are to ensure that faces of key participants are clearly visible, and that it is essential to exclude or erase non-consenting persons from the recording or picture.

I used tape recording observations to record language of all participants, children and adults, in the early childhood setting, and to chart that practice over time. I found that audio recordings were an unobtrusive way of gathering data (Hamer, 1999), and this was particularly the case when conducting talanoa sessions, and capturing conversations with children in the language nest environment.

Participant observation

In my role as participant observer I was aware that my presence within the early childhood settings would have affected the data collection process. Conducting an ethnographic study includes the capacity of the observer to be aware of and to reflect on his or her surroundings, the actions of the participants and how the observer may be influencing the outcomes from the observation. This process requires analytical skill in order to strengthen the researcher's understanding of the culture and events from the participants' point of view (Madden, 2010).

I was guided by Podmore (2006) whose guidance on observing children and communities in the ECE sector, from the child-study movement suggested that I enter and leave the area quietly and to keep in the background as much as possible. Thus to position myself so that I was at children's level but to be unobtrusive, and as inconspicuous as possible. Furthermore Podmore suggests that a researcher should respond to children's responses in a friendly, but brief manner. Thus this approach promotes a respectful manner that is least disruptive to the programme, or children and staff activity.

I was also aware as I entered the language nest settings that my language skills were lacking and I didn't wish to disrupt the language processes by using English in my interactions. Madden (2010) cautions that ethnographers who work in diverse settings have a range of language and communication issues. In research contexts, Madden maintains that the use and misuse of language can severely affect the ethnographer's attempts to find a workable level of acceptance and tolerance from their participants, such that the fieldwork can be reduced to a period of stand on the outside looking in (p.61). Madden notes that the politics of language difference and overlap can be a challenge and simple trial and error is often what ethnographers have to engage in as they wrestle with the issue of language in their early field work.

Participation is central to conducting an ethnography (Madden, 2010). Ethnographers talk, participate and observe simultaneously and the sum total of all of these actions creates participant observation in its broadest sense.

In the process of observing I came to understand that my presence, even as I conducted myself along the lines of Podmore's 2006 guidelines, was affecting data collection. Teachers were attuned to engage in conversations that might support my data gathering and were keen to share their cultural and linguistic skills. I could see that this fuelled their enthusiasm to focus on culturally embedded practice. I surmise that this may not have been the case if I had not been collecting data. As time went by I became more relaxed and settled, and also the research settings became more familiar and comfortable with my presence I reflected on the process of participant observation. I recalled that Pacific values and traditional practices were fundamental to the process of this ethnographic study and thus I was reminded of the Pacific research guidelines as espoused by Bennett, Brunton, et. al, (2013). Whilst I understood that my presence would affect data collection I strengthened a Pacific approach to this process. Thus I built on the notion of establishing authentic, meaningful relationships, reciprocity, and using culturally competent practice. I sought to practice the cultural competencies required as

outlined by Bennett, Brunton et. al, (2013) such as spending time with children during mat time, helping out with activities, and routine tasks. In this way I sought to encourage the research community to view my role to be not only to observer but also as someone to provide assistance, and give back to the community, whilst also participating and observing in the case study setting.

Documentation gathered.

I found it very valuable to gather documentation, in each of the case study settings as another form of data collection. Documentation such as learning stories of children, philosophy statements, policy documentation, programme and management planning, newsletters and staff meeting minutes were key data which provided further information but also revealed processes that often take place or are developed in response to particular requirements. The need to have a clear philosophy statement outline the core values and beliefs that underpin the centre's operation, and management, for example, is such a requirement. Gathering such information through documentation, such as policy and programme documents, provided me with another lens on activities, programmes, policies and procedures. The information gathered at times provided a focus for further observation or to monitor and check the validity of the data already gathered (a form of triangulation). For instance I noted the philosophy statement for TPR emphasised the bilingual approach to language learning in the centre programme, and I was able to witness this occurring in the narrative observations I recorded, and this was further confirmed in the Talanoa sessions around language learning, that I conducted with the teaching staff.

Another form of data gathering that I used was reflective diary recordings. Walliman (2006) asserts that personal accounts and diaries provide information on people's actions and feelings by asking them to give their own interpretation, or account of what they experience. These collected accounts need to be processed into working documents that can be coded and analysed (Walliman, 2006). Further to this, Saldana (2013) notes that one's level of personal involvement as a participant observer, as a peripheral, active member during fieldwork, filters how you perceive, document, and thus code the data. This has also a bearing on the detail and structuring of field notes (Saldana, 2013). I endeavoured to record after each session in each case study, by entering my thoughts, ideas and reflections in a reflective diary. I found there were a couple of useful outcomes from this process. Although my notes were often roughly written, and scraps of ideas jotted down, they were a useful reminder, and would jog my thinking before I began my next lot of data gathering. They were also useful at the end of the

data gathering processes for each case study as they would provide a roughly chronological order to the data gathering processes. Furthermore, situations that may be difficult, or needed a bit more teasing out, lent themselves well to the reflective process could be further reflected on and ways that may be workable solutions considered. An example of this was the reflective entry that I made after my first visit to NUK and the reflection that a meeting accompanied by the Niuean VAG member would reassure the research community. This proved to be the case when I embarked on my second visit and J accompanied me.

Data management and analysis.

Well conducted data management contributes to transparency of analysis and facilitates the possibility for others to see what has transpired through the investigation and analysis (Boeije, 2010). I followed steps for data preparation which involved well organised storage of data files for each case study setting. A second aspect was the transcription of the audio and video sources. This proved to be time consuming as a large proportion of my data was gathered via talanoa which were recorded through audio or video taping. At this point Boeije (2010) suggests that data needs to be checked to ensure confidentiality which I completed by using pseudonyms for participants, centre names and other markers which could be used for identification.

The definition of data analysis provided by Boeije (2010) was applied when analysing case study data for each site. Qualitative analysis is the segmenting of data into relevant categories and the naming of these codes while simultaneously generating the categories from the data. In the reassembling phase the categories are related to one another to generate theoretical understanding of the social phenomenon under study in terms of the research questions. Miles and Huberman (1994) outline that qualitative data analysis consists of three concurrent flow of activities, and this was employed in the data analysis process in this study. Firstly, data reduction is where the data were reduced through such means of selection and paraphrasing and decision-making about which data provided initial focus. Secondly data was displayed whereby the reduced data was organised by assembling the information so that conclusions could be drawn, and thirdly drawing conclusions and verification, and coming to a decision as to what things mean by noting regularities, patterns (similarities and differences), explanations, possible configurations, causal flows and propositions, and then drawing and verifying conclusions.

I used an inductive approach for data analysis. In the data reduction process, content analysis was used to identify and code all case study data, transcribed talanoa observations, field notes, reflective diary entries and documentation. I carried out the coding of data manually, following procedures suggested by Braun and Clark (2006). I began by reading and re-reading the data, and systematically working through the entire data set to code passages. Any data of interest to the study were written beside with pencilled comments, and words or phrases were highlighted with different colours, and coloured post it notes. I developed a colour coding system for areas of interest as they were identified. My repeated reading of the data at this stage served to allow me to become very familiar with the data. Schreier (2013) asserts that working with the data involves reading the material until a relevant code is encountered, checking whether a subcategory that covers this code has been already created, if so subsuming this under the respective sub-category, and if not, then creating a new sub category that covers this code. Then continuing to read until the next relevant code is encountered. This process is continued until a point of saturation is reached. That is until no additional new codes can be found. I found that after an initial immersion in the data I was able to establish the main categories of: Language maintenance, cultural implementation (full definition on p28), parent and community involvement, and challenges encountered. These broad categories formed the frame into which the emerging themes, that I continued to identify, were then placed. Once the broad categories were established, I worked through all of the data and continued to identify themes and to highlight relevant quotes to support each theme. Engaging in this process helped to identify a good account of ways that language and culture were implemented, involvement of parents and community, and challenges noted, within each respective case study setting.

Literature reviewed in chapter two as well as the questions posed in the study informed and guided the development of categories and also influenced my thinking about potential categories that may be found in the data. Data gathered revealed a range of ways that language and culture were implemented, such as using a bilingual approach. Data around parent and community participation, and ways that these were shown formed further categorization and finally, the wide ranging challenges were arranged into categories such as financial, policy and language decline.

Within each case study, analysis was conducted which produced an individual case description for each site (see Chapters 7, 8 & 9), prior to cross –case analysis (Merriam, 1998). The reporting for each site was summarised by stating the categories that emerged from each site, subsequently enabling the identification of patterns in the data across the three case study

settings. These could then be compared and contrasted in the discussion chapter (see Chapter 10).

The broad categories in the findings are: Firstly language maintenance, and cultural implementation. These categories respond to the first question in this study which asks - what are the practices and processes in the Pacific language nest that enable, promote and preserve language, culture and traditional practices for the Pacific communities of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau? The themes that emerge from the data, and which have been discussed in the findings chapters are: practices and processes enabling, promoting and preserving language and culture; planned and intentional practices in the daily programme, greetings and farewells; daily routines that support cultural and language practice; and policies, philosophy and management documentation that promote language and cultural learning. The final theme in this category is the environment and the ways that language and cultural learning and practices are enhanced. The second broad category is involvement of the language nest community. This category responds to the second question in the study, which seeks to find out in what ways families, and community members are involved in the Pacific language nest, within the centre and other community settings such as the church. The themes that emerged focussed on those who constituted the language community and firstly the theme of teacher involvement is discussed. Teachers as *tuakana* and *teina* was the next theme that emerged from the data on teacher involvement and the role that they play as part of the wider community. Parent and community involvement follows on from the role of the teacher. Firstly the involvement of the parents and families in the language nest setting is the first theme. Following on is the wider community relationships that have been identified from the data analysis. Within this theme, the sub-themes identified are the place of the church, community events including Pacific Islands language week, ceremonies that are significant for communities, such as the hair cutting ceremony for Cook Islands and Niue, and social occasions identified including *Housie*.

The third category that emerged from the data analysis is the challenges that the language nests encountered. This category addressed the third and final question in the study, which asks what are the key challenges that exist in the operational development for Pacific language nests? From the data, the key challenges identified across the case study settings were language preservation, diminishing community support and involvement. There were some themes in this category on challenges which were not applicable across all three case studies.

These findings are all discussed in the respective case study findings chapters, 6, 7 and 8 which follow the methodology chapter. Within each findings chapter, examples and relevant quotes from the data gathered are used as evidence to expand and elaborate on the categories and themes.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations and practices were guided by the Victoria University of Wellington Faculty of Education Ethics Committee Human Ethics policy and, the Pacific Education Research Guidelines (Anae et al., 2001). Ethics approval was granted by the Victoria University of Wellington Faculty of Education Ethics Committee. In keeping with the principles outlined by Israel and Hay, (2006) ethical behaviour was motivated by a desire to protect individuals and communities and by the desire to do good and avoid harm.

Merriam, (2001 p. 244) observes: “Qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict.” During this research, I was aware at all times that, as the researcher, I was in a position of power in the research process (Mutch, 2005); therefore, it was my foremost responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all involved in the research process and to treat participants with consideration, fairness, and respect.

Furthermore, I was also aware of important issues which relate to the cross-cultural nature of my study. Tuhiwai Smith (2005) suggests that codes of conduct can be prescribed for Māori researchers in cultural terms. Robinson-Pant (2005) suggests that there may be cross-cultural conflict when it comes to ethical codes and value systems. As a Pacific person, I was committed to conducting myself in a respectful manner at all times and in keeping with the protocols required, particularly around Talanoa meetings and Pacific cultural and ethical values and practices. This involved formality in processes, spiritual blessings, and sharing of food (Glasgow, 2009). Furthermore, I regularly consulted with the VAG for advice and guidance, particularly on cultural matters. They were able to provide mentoring and guidance in keeping with Polynesian principles and practices of Tuakana/Teina, ensuring I maintained alignment with culturally relevant practices within the research process.

Freeman and Mathison (2009) outline potential ethical challenges in social constructivist research with children. Although permission to carry out research with children as participants may be negotiated with adult gatekeepers, the rights of children should always be of foremost concern. I am cognisant of these challenges and understand that children should have the

opportunity to opt out of research, even if the researcher has been granted parental permission to observe them. Freeman and Mathison (2009) assert that it is not only a question of seeing the world from children's perspectives, but acknowledging their rights to express their point of view or to remain silent. Ethical research with children requires that researchers adopt open communication with child participants and critical reflexivity towards all aspects of research as it occurs. Central to this discussion is the notion of voluntary participation, the ability to act or make a judgement based on one's own free choice (Freeman & Mathison, 2009). I was alert to any signs that a child may not wish to be observed during the data gathering process, such as if they turned away, were not responsive and appeared disinterested in my approach. I also ensured that children were consulted before I began observing. I spoke to the teachers and they introduced me at mat time and I used the mat time opportunity to explain why I was visiting the centre. Additionally I informed children that I may be writing stories and taking photos and videos of them in the setting. Fortunately by consulting with, and informing children prior to observing them I was able to ascertain their willingness to be observed and I did not have to curtail my observations for any reason. Parental consent was also obtained for children's involvement in the research.

Cullen, Hedges, and Bone (2009) provide a set of principles to guide the research process in early childhood settings, drawing to our attention the ethical tensions that permeate the research process, and the researcher's responsibility to engage in on-going ethical decision making. The ethical framework proposed by Cullen et al. (2009) is particularly relevant to this study. Whilst it acknowledges universal ethical research principles, the framework introduces the notion of *nga hononga* (relationships) into the ethics process. This is particularly important when researchers and participants in a research setting may perform multiple roles. These principles provide a useful guide in the planning, undertaking, and disseminating stages. Questions and considerations at each stage are designed to guide the researcher. At the planning stage, the researcher is asked to consider whether the research topic and questions are appropriate for the age and/or cultural group; who will be involved from the teaching team; and what parents/whānau and community involvement will entail. During the data gathering process I was alert to any issues of on-going negotiation, voluntary participation, involvement of the teaching team and whānau and community groups if they were to arise, and any subsequent effects of the research on the teaching and learning environment.

When disseminating data and findings I needed to consider how the data would be used to ensure the on-going safety and confidentiality of everyone involved in the study. This is

important for children's safety, particularly as was granted permission to use visual images. I had an obligation to be transparent in the ways that I interpreted, validated, and disseminate my research. Alongside this, it is particularly important that I considered ways that parents, families, whanau, and communities could be involved in the decision making around the research dissemination (Cullen et al., 2009).

A key principle informing ethical research is to cause no harm, and, if possible, to produce some gain for the participants of the project and wider field (Israel & Hay, 2006; Walliman, 2005). De Munck (2009) informs us that researchers must take every precaution to avoid misrepresenting their findings whilst upholding the notion that participants' rights and interests must be protected at all times.

Prior to beginning the research, informed consent was sought from the research participants and communities, and participants retained the right to terminate their participation at any time (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006; Merriam, 2001; Mutch, 2005). Information sheets and consent forms were provided in English and the three languages used at the centres (see appendices 1, 2&3). Participants were informed about the purposes or methods of the research. Confidentiality was maintained through the use of pseudonyms. Data provided by participants was stored in a secure manner in a locked filing cabinet. Privacy and safety of participants were maintained at all times. Ensuring a sense of trust within the research community is imperative particularly within communities where incautious behaviour and cultural insensitivity can create problems for the research community and may lead to community withdrawal (Israel & Hay, 2006).

Reflexivity

In ethnographic research, the outcome is based not only on interpretation, editing, and skilful writing techniques, but also on reflection of the reality of the situation of the study; therefore researcher reflexivity is a prime consideration (Denzin, 1997). Additionally, biographical details about the researcher warrant inclusion as part of the analysis. The analysis of qualitative data calls for a reflexive account by the researcher concerning the researcher's self and its impact on the research. Chilisa (2012) discusses three selves that researchers bring into the research process: the research based selves; brought selves, which historically, socially, and personally create our standpoints; and situationally created selves. Chilisa argues that each of these selves come into play in the research inquiry and has a distinct voice. The indigenous research paradigm requires the researcher to critically reflect on self as knower, redeemer,

coloniser, and transformative healer (Chilisa, 2012). My reflective journal served as a diary that records all events that affect the way the study was conducted, and analysed reflexively, from which conclusions were made.

Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research is equivalent to the notion of internal validity in quantitative research (Chilisa, 2012). Qualitative research is characterised by multiple realities, and therefore multiple truths. Research evidence is, therefore, credible if it represents the multiple realities revealed by the participants; thus, the participants are able to verify that the descriptions and interpretations of their human experiences are accurate and true. Credibility is strengthened when researcher and the research community build rapport and share values or practices that make connections. Prolonged time in the field and engagement with participants are important in enhancing the credibility of a study. Alongside this is the need to conduct peer debriefing with the sages and elders of the community who are knowledgeable about the subject under discussion, and, thus, able to guide the research process. (Chilisa, 2012). I built a process of consultation into the data gathering phase, meeting with the VAG. At the end of each research gathering process in the case study settings, I was also able to use the meeting times to ensure progressive subjectivity (Chilisa, 2012), whereby the researcher is able to monitor their own developing constructions, and document the process of change from the beginning of the study until it ends. Sharing the context of these last meetings with the VAG mentors enabled me to gain valuable feedback on which to reflect, and to plan ahead. Accordingly consultation with, and receiving feedback from the VAG strengthened credibility in the research process (Chilisa, 2012).

Triangulation

Triangulation is a strategy for enhancing the credibility of a study. It is based on the assumption that the use of multiple methods and data sources can eliminate biases in a study. Chilisa (2012) refers to several ways of triangulating data: methodological triangulation, investigator triangulation, triangulation of data sources, and theoretical triangulation. A number of processes in this study aligned to these. First, by using a methodological triangulation process I was able to compare data collected by various means, such as talanoa discussions, observations, diary recordings, storytelling, songs, language, proverbs, metaphors, and artefacts. Secondly, theoretical triangulation occurred when I was able to compare theoretical ideas from different theoretical perspectives, including indigenous knowledge theories that inform conceptual frameworks, data analysis, and interpretation (Chilisa, 2008).

Validity

Clegg and Slife (2009) claim that validity for the indigenous researcher recognises the conceptual and theoretical frameworks, as well as the data collection and analysis methods, derived from the research communities' frames of reference and indigenous knowledge. It is the researcher's responsibility to accommodate the research communities' ways of knowing, and to incorporate concepts of fairness and ontological authenticity, as well as positionality, voice, critical subjectivity, or self-reflexivity (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Additionally, Berryman, Soohoo, and Nevin (2013) assert that, within a culturally responsive methodological approach, validity and reliability are dependent on the quality of the relationships developed in the research process, and promoting cultural knowledge and language. I have approached the study with these understandings and to ensure issues of validity are recognised and met at all stages of the research process such as maintaining self- reflection and developing respectful relationships with the research communities, including engagement with the VAG.

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the methodological framework and research methods through which the data were generated. The qualitative methodological approach was outlined followed by insider status, constructivism, ethnography, interpretivism, and hermeneutics. The chapter then discussed an Indigenous methodological approach, outlining the Talanoa methodology, and the engagement of a Vananga Advisory Group. The research design- a multiple case study, was described followed by a description of the three case study settings for this research. Following on was a section on observation and documentation gathering methods, data management, and ethical considerations. The chapter finished by looking at the processes of reflexivity, credibility, triangulation and validity.

Chapter Six

Case Study One: Reaching Nukutere the First Destination Cook Islands Community Language Nest/TPR

Kia riro te mekameka o to tatou reo e te au peu Tupuna ei ramepa tūrama no
te uki ou e tu mai nei.

Let our beautiful language and culture be beacons guiding our children

(Te Api'i Meitaki philosophy guiding statement, 2016).

Introduction

The Cook Islands language nest, or Te Punanga Reo (TPR), in an inner-city suburb in Wellington, was established by the Cook Islands community in 1983. The original location was a garage space owned by the TPR founder. In 1989, TPR moved to its current dwelling, a house renovated for purpose. The centre management claims that this was the first Pacific language nest established in the Wellington area. The centre provides a full day education and care service, Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 5:00pm. This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the TPR case study and Chapter 9 considers the collective findings across the three cases in this study.

The findings for TPR are presented in three sections reflecting the research questions: 1) What are the practices and processes in this setting that enable, promote, and preserve language, culture, traditional practices, and knowledge for the Cook Islands community in Aotearoa/New Zealand; 2) In what ways are families and community members involved in the Pacific language nest, and in other community settings such as church; and 3) What are the key challenges that exist in the operational development of the Pacific language nest?

Practices and Processes Promoting, and Preserving Language and Culture

In relation to practices and processes that enable, promote, and preserve language, culture, traditional practices, and knowledge for the Cook Islands community in Aotearoa/New Zealand are four main areas of findings: 1) planned and intentional practices in the daily programme; 2) spontaneous and unplanned learning opportunities fostering linguistic and cultural knowledge; 3) documentation philosophy and language policy, and 4) the ways in which the physical environment reflects the culture, and provides opportunities for enhancing Cook Islands cultural and language learning.

Planned and intentional practices in the daily programme.

I found that many daily routines support cultural and language practice, with a number of planned practices deliberately integrated into the daily programme that are intended to promote, and preserve language, culture, and traditional practices. These include mat time sessions, greetings and farewells, and mealtimes.

Mat time.

Daily mat time sessions are scheduled and are formal teacher-directed sessions with cultural rituals around the delivery. Mat time is led by Tuakana teachers. All children are required to attend and remain for the duration of the session. The mat time session begins with a pure/prayer, as part of the cultural process of bringing a group together and blessing the proceedings. This is frequently expressed in a mixture of Cook Islands Maori and English: “Ka pure tatou. Himene e tatou pure/ we are going to do our pure now. E tatou himene pure/ what songs shall we sing?”

Mama P explained that a bilingual approach (Cook Islands Maori and English) has developed for a range of reasons, mostly pragmatic, as most children are not Cook Island Maori and their first language is English. Consequently, their developing skills in Cook Islands Maori language are neither practiced nor reinforced at home.

At mat time children sit in a circle and each one is addressed: “Kia orana, Pohatu, pehea koe?” (Hello Pohatu, how are you?), to which the child responds “Meitaki matou” (I am well thank you). This is followed by children reciting their genealogy “Ko Tane toku papa, Ko Keu toku mama, Ko Pohatu toku ingoa” (Tane is my father, Keu is my mother, I am Pohatu); singing hymns or Cook Island cultural and religious songs and reciting excerpts from the bible, and boys performing haka and drum-beating, and girls tamurei and ura (dancing). These sessions enable the tuakana/children to perform and hone their performance and language skills. On the other hand, I observed several songs were favourites, such as “Jesus is a winner man” and “God is watching over me” which were sung in English. Mama P explained that whilst the children are “very good at understanding the reo”, there is an expectation that not all are able to understand and the discussion is pitched so that all of the children can be included. In this way, language delivery is framed by cultural values of respect and inclusion, and all are able to participate in the session at their own levels of ability. Daily mat time, then, is an example of intentional teaching where the tuakana can take the lead with confidence and ability. Children, in the individual plane, learn protocols such as sitting quietly and observing, around

formal collective sessions. As Teina they are being enculturated, at the interpersonal level, by the Tuakana teacher using directive and modelling teaching to instil language, culture and traditional learning, within the cultural community plane.

Mama P explains:

In the island way, this is the way we learn at home by sitting and listening to the older people and we would learn how to recite our genealogy, read the Bible, and our cultural stories, the stories of our elders.

Language and cultural learning are interwoven (Rogoff, 2003). It is from this premise that I suggest that experiential learning, such as the activities associated with mat time, assists children to learn the rules of engagement. Through a process of guided participation, children's cultural learning is fostered via participation in culturally valued activities (p. 66). For example, they are learning about participating alongside their peers and teachers in a formal cultural experience. They learn the importance of listening and sitting together for sustained amounts of time, imperative when attending formal functions where waiting in the collective group is expected by the cultural community. This intentional teaching was also evident when the teachers, who are proud of their ability to speak te reo, were keen to teach me phrases. The evidence, then, indicates that it is understood that they are required to mentor others, to build stronger language ability and cultural knowledge and understandings. One important way that this is achieved is through planned activities at mat time, intentionally designed to promote and preserve language and culture

Greetings and farewells.

Another intentionally planned practice is the daily ritual of greetings and farewells in Cook Islands Maori. Greetings in Cook Islands language reinforce the special character of the service. From an interpersonal plane, this is an opportunity for relationship building and conveying information between parents and teachers. Children respond in either English or Te Reo, as befits the bilingual approach. For example, when I arrive, teachers address me, "Kia orana Ali, pea koe i teia ra?" I have been guided to answer "Meitaki au", (I am well), "Roi roi au" (I am tired), "Mataora au" (I am feeling great). This is accompanied by a kiss on the cheek, which is considered by the Cook Islands community to be polite, respectful protocol when greeting others. Likewise, those leaving are farewelled with "Aere Ra", or "Ka Kite" to which the response is "E noho ra" or "Ka kite". Thus, from participation and observation children learn both the language and the protocols and practices to accompany the verbal greeting.

Meal times.

Sharing food and eating together is generally an important part of Cook Islands culture and children learn the protocols and cultural expectations. “Ka pure te kai” (a prayer to bless the food) begins each meal time. Blessing food draws attention to the spiritual realm and the bounty that is provided, showing appreciation and respect for the food. Mama T, who prepares all the meals, including a cooked lunch, says, “We looked at lunchboxes to cut down costs, but a big part of our culture is to provide ‘kai kai’ (food, meals), to make sure our children are well fed, and to be good hosts”. Mama T provides meals such as Cook Islands style Chop Suey, Fish dishes and rice, alongside Western dishes. Thus, children are introduced both to traditional Cook Islands food, and to the protocols around eating and sharing food together. Royal Tangaere (1996) points out that, from an Indigenous theoretical framing, processes of care and wellbeing promote the notion of whanaungatanga, (family connections) and strengthen bonds in the cultural community by the promotion of cultural practices

It can be seen, then, from these examples – mat time, greetings and farewells, and meal times – which Te Punanga deliberately integrates into its daily programme, a number of practices that are intended to promote and preserve language and culture.

Spontaneous and unplanned learning opportunities.

The second major area of focus relating to practices and processes enabling, promoting, and preserving language and culture are spontaneous and unplanned learning episodes. The findings were: teachers using te reo in conversations, in play episodes, in spontaneous music and dancing sessions.

Conversations.

Te reo (language) occurs in conversations with children when teachers are focussed on language learning. However, when the tuakana teachers (Mamas) are conversing with each other te reo occurs in a natural way, and their conversations demonstrate a strong model of language. Such conversations occur during play episodes. J. has finished reading stories, and as she leaves to go into the office, the children ask for another story. Mama M asks J “Apaimai i tetai puka” (Pass me the book) “Ae, teia (Yes, here it is) ‘J replies. Language conversations also occur during routines such as meal times. Mama K states “E pongi tikai au i teia ra” (I am really hungry today). Mama M laughs and says “aue Mama K ka ’inangaro koe i tetai kai? (Oh Mama K do you want some food?). “Ae, apaimai tetai taro e te meika, ine” (please pass the taro and the bananas please). As in any natural language learning context, children gain an

understanding of the language by exposure and listening to these conversations, absorbing the environmental triggers and influences that reflect the language and cultural context of the Cook Islands. Further, in these early years of relationship-building, they are learning from others who instil a range of values and cultural practices such as collaboration and a sense of community. Learning, then, occurs in both spontaneous and planned episodes of learning.

Play based episodes.

Fluent and accurate models of language delivery are evident during the day within the play-based, child-centred programme.

Language learning occurs in a number of ways. For example, children in a dispute over sharing the blocks are told, “ko rua” (the two of you) indicating they must share. When children respond positively, the teacher praises them, “meitaki”. Thus, children learn instructional commands, appropriate behaviours, and praise in Cook Islands Maori. By teachers breaking the language down to simple words and sentence structures, children are being supported in Cook Islands language learning. In this way they are scaffolding children’s developing understanding of words and the ways that these words are used in meaningful, relevant and authentic ways within the TPR programme.

Teachers also often offer the correct responses, for example:

A teacher greets a parent, “Kia orana, pe’ea koe?” (Hello, how are you?). She then models the correct response “Meitaki au” (I am well, thanks).

Teachers also facilitate Cook Islands language learning in play contexts. The following are examples of spontaneous language reinforcement engendering language learning, using a bilingual English and Te Reo Kuki Airani teaching approach:

Teacher to child: I noted you showing confidence in speaking Te Reo Kuki Airani through identifying colours. You were pointing to the colours on the wall and singing the colour song “Teatea – white, muramura- red, auika – blue, matie – green, kerekere – black, AEIOU, rengarenga – yellow, makara – orange, tarona – pink, vare’au – purple, re’ure’u - grey, paraoni – brown.

This morning you were building a “mountain” with the coloured blocks and were able to identify the colours of the blocks in English and te reo Kuki Airani. You declared “Renga, renga, Yellow” holding up the yellow block to show the teacher.

The following example describes a spontaneous episode promoting both cultural practice (umu making) and Cook Islands language learning.

Three children approached the teacher who was cutting excess leaves from the bottom of a banana plant. She explained: “In the islands, we use these to shelter from the rain”. The children picked up leaves and held them over their heads pretending to keep the rain off. “It’s raining” they exclaimed, laughing and running around. The teacher explained how banana leaves are used to wrap food in the umu (traditional earth oven). The children collected more leaves and took them to the wooden “picnic” table, to start preparing for their “umu”.

The teacher observed the game unfolding and joined the group, along with three other children, showing them how to prepare the leaves for wrapping the food to be put in the umu. Using a basket of objects – mainly plastic fruit – as “kaikai” or food, she explained what is put in the umu: “meika-pi” (unripe, green bananas), “kumara” (sweet potato), “taro” (starchy vegetable) and “ika” (fish). The children wrapped the “food” in the banana leaves.

The teacher explained that they are then placed in the umu which is dug in the ground, with rocks, heated by a fire to make them very hot. They need to be careful in putting their food in the umu. The children then placed the containers of food in the umu. The teacher explained the food usually takes several hours to cook. After a few minutes, she took the large banana leaf off the wrapped parcels of food. “It’s cooked. Ka pure te kai/let’s bless our food”. The children took the parcels of food out of the umu and proceeded to eat it.

In this vignette:

- The teacher is recognising the opportunity for spontaneously introducing cultural learning
- The children are weaving these concepts into their socio-dramatic and social learning.
- The children are interpreting meaning from the teacher’s explanation and revealing their developing knowledge in their play
- The teacher is using her “lived experience” and cultural knowledge to extend children’s learning. Acting as tuakana she demonstrated cultural practice

The learning episode is used to weave language learning in an authentic way. Children’s learning is extended across planes of development, as individuals, engaging in interpersonal learning and acquiring cultural skills that strengthen their understandings and expectations of the wider community. This includes the spiritual blessing of the food. Hence, the spiritual dimension encompassed within an Indigenous lens is woven into learning episodes.

Spontaneous music and dancing sessions.

Language and cultural learning is woven into music and dancing episodes that occur “in the moment”. Teachers maximise these cultural and linguistic learning opportunities. In this episode Cook Islands music playing in the background inspires children to dance. Mama M turned up the music when a favourite song was heard and K. (3 years old) began swaying to the music, saying, “Ura, ura” (dance). He picked up a poi and started twirling it around; this encouraged his friend D (2 years, 5 months), who had been watching him, to join in. They both twirled around the room in time to the Cook Islands drumbeat. In this way children gain knowledge and experience of the cultural practice. The older child who has been encouraged to participate, provides a model for the younger, onlooker child to emulate and join in. Employing Rogoff’s (2003) notion of participatory appropriation, on the personal plane the younger child is developing his understandings and skills, as he participates in and contributes to the cultural activity and prepares himself to engage in similar activities in the future. The participatory perspective views development as a dynamic, active, and mutual process involved in people’s participation in cultural activities. The children are both learning through observation and participation in on-going daily activities. Using an Indigenous gaze, this is an example of the tuakana modelling the cultural activity and encouraging the teina to join in and develop his dancing skills.

Alongside the spontaneous “teachable moments”, the programme is planned to extend children’s cultural knowledge through their play experiences. This next episode describes the involvement of children engaging in a process of guided participation. The “umu-cooking” (as described earlier) triggered an interest in traditional foods; teachers utilised this spontaneous episode to plan the learning experiences described below.

Mama T, the cook at the centre, ventured out of the kitchen carrying a fish (a yellow-eyed mullet) saying, “E ika teia/Here is a fish.” She explained that she had been fishing off the wharf on the weekend and had caught a fish that she was going to cook for lunch. The fish was whole and had not been scaled or gutted. She held it out for the children to touch. Some children were not keen to touch it, responding with “eww” and “it’s slimy”. Mama T asked if anyone had been fishing and spoke about how at home in Mangaia, she would go out in the canoe for big fish. There is a large poster on the wall of Ika o te Kuki Airani/ fish of the Cook Islands) and she directed the children to see if the fish she had caught was like any of these. “It looks like that one”, replied C (4) who appeared intrigued by the fish and how it was caught. “We use a line and a hook, no fishing rod over there” she said “but we still catch the big ones. The sea is

warmer up there so we have different ones, some are the same”. Then “First we give thanks to Tangaroa for the first fish (caught)”. Mama T carried the fish away to bake whole in the oven.

G, a younger teacher, asked the children “who has been fishing?” “My papa takes me fishing sometimes”, said C “Maybe we could do some fishing?” G suggested, setting up the magnetic fish game in the main indoor area with children standing on the mezzanine floor and hanging their rods over the side. “Maybe we can go fishing off the wharf one day” G suggested.

In this example, Mama T was able to use her cultural background and interests and experiences outside of the centre – including in the Cook Islands context – to expand on the interests and cultural learning of the children. Children in Aotearoa/New Zealand may not have the same experiences of children in the Cook Islands and this episode exposed them to an important part of the Cook Islands culture. Employing a CHAT lens this episode reflects the change that occurs within communities over time, when opportunities for experiential learning are less readily available to the contemporary community.

Mama T’s explanation of the cultural practice of acknowledging the sea’s bounty and thanking Tangaroa, the Polynesian God of the sea, indicates that traditional spiritual concepts co-exist with Christian doctrine. Further to this, Royal–Tangaere (1996) explains that Tuakana Teina began in the spiritual realm, with Tuakana the God of the Sea and Teina the God of the land.

The play-based programme provided opportunities for children to enact catching the fish and to make links to the wider social and cultural world of Pacific practice and how it can be implemented in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context. This enabled the younger teacher to demonstrate his skill in implementing the interest in a play context, using the opportunity to make links to family and community by inquiring about children’s experiences and proposing further learning experiences.

In this episode, through a mutual structuring of participation, children have access to observe and engage in this episode, as well as engage in shared endeavours, including conversations, and engagement in play (Rogoff, 2003). Children are learning that practices may be similar and different to those they experience at home, and that there are cultural protocols around fishing, such as gifting the first fish back to Tangaroa. The cook makes links between practices in the Cook Islands and Aotearoa /New Zealand, by exploring the mullet, which was caught in the local harbour, examining the chart of Cook Islands fish. G, the younger teacher, then directs the children’s learning to a play activity. The weaving in of planned cultural activities and acting on the children’s interest “in the moment” reveals a range of pedagogical approaches,

of facilitating, scaffolding and modelling, to support children's learning (MacNaughton & Williams, 2004). Rogoff (2003) notes that children's play builds on what they observe; in the episode described, children were enabled to develop skill, as apprentices, in culturally-organised activities. These examples of teachers' conversations, play episodes and spontaneous music and dance sessions, demonstrates that language and cultural learning are occurring through spontaneous and unplanned learning opportunities.

Documentation philosophy and language policy.

The third main area of findings are the documentation that support language and cultural practice. These documentation are the philosophy statement and the language policy. Practice within the learning community is underpinned by documents, regulations, and contracts that makes practices explicit for a variety of purposes (Wenger, 1998). Using Rogoff's cultural-institutional focus, this section explores the systems, documentation, and other practices in place at the centre to promote language and cultural learning. Rogoff (2003) states that this level of analysis pays due consideration to how the school culture connects with national and educational policy. Furthermore Rogoff claims that practices and processes may include ways of teaching and learning, home languages, religion, and government and legal systems. These practices and processes are central to the individual and community functioning as people build and contribute to community cultural and language traditions. In this way the TPR philosophy and language policy statements advance language and cultural principles.

Philosophy statement.

This chapter begins with the guiding statement taken from TPR's philosophy statement, a requisite document (Education Review Office, 2013; 2015). TPR's philosophy provides a focus on their service aspirations, underpinning their values and beliefs which guide practices (Clark & Grey, 2010). It can be seen that TPR has a broad coverage linking to facets of the early childhood programme, governance, administration, and management, and clearly emanating from the philosophical framework are policy, planning, and teaching approaches (Arthur, Beecher, Dockett, & Death, 2004). Given the centrality of philosophy across all facets of TPR's operation, it makes sense to investigate the philosophy in relation to the language, culture, and traditional learning.

The TPR philosophy statement is accessible to parents and visitors to the centre. It is displayed on the entrance noticeboard and included on the first page of the parents' information booklet. The philosophy describes the programme, while the language and cultural values guide

practice. TPR's opening paragraph in the philosophy document states that TPR will promote Cook Islands language and culture to encourage and promote the positive identity of the children. The foregrounding of these values and practices at the beginning of the statement demonstrates the prominence of this stance in the programme and allows parents to "know how this centre works" and to make a decision on whether this early childhood service aligns with their own values and educational aspirations for their children. While many points made in the philosophy statement are generic such as would be evidenced in a mainstream ECE setting, others reflect the congruence that can be achieved when two worldviews connect (see Chapter five, p.83). In keeping with the questions asked in this study, this section now elaborates on points covered in the TPR philosophy document which focus on cultural and linguistic areas.

"We believe that the language and dialects of Te Reo Kuki Airani are a foreground for our practices and policies". This statement is a clear indication of what one might expect to see and experience within the Cook Islands language nest setting; furthermore, practices and processes in the programme and environment align closely with and reinforce the statement. The linguistic benefits of using the indigenous language are outlined in Chapter Three (Tuafuti, 2016; McCaffery, 2015). Moreover, the strong philosophical stance supports the strong practice that is demonstrated in the setting. Clearly, this enhances children's identity formation and Cook Islands language development.

"The children's voice and their individual strengths and interests lie at the heart of this philosophy". This principle indicates a pedagogical approach adopted by many early childhood settings (Ministry of Education, 1996; 1998; 2006). A key shift, however, is that in the approach promulgated by these documents, are processes that highlight the interests of the child, and not the adult. When overlaid with a Pacific cultural view, it is what the adults, teachers, parents, communities and families within a community of practice espouse as best for the child that is paramount (Clark & Grey, 2010). Thus, the interest of the child is central within the collective community.

"We believe in the notion of Tuakana Teina. Our environment supports mixed aged interactions between infants, toddlers and young children at certain times with teacher guidance". This principle aligns with the notion of the learning within a collective grouping. The setting promotes learning through tuakana and teina relationships, in which learning occurs within the reciprocal interplay of experts and novices, in an apprenticeship style of learning (Rogoff, 2003). The philosophy statement incorporates the three stages of development taken from Te

Whaariki, the Aotearoa/NZ early childhood education curriculum, working together within a mixed age learning environment. Finally, it alludes to the role of the adult to convey information, knowledge, and concepts implementing an adult-directed approach such as in guided participation during “structured, adult directed” mat time sessions where teacher guidance is demonstrated. Children are enculturated into Cook Islands cultural practices, learning traditional pure (prayers), himene (hymns and songs), and ura (dance). Children also learn expectations of behaving within group situations such as waiting, listening, observing, and responding at appropriate moments. Ways of being within the community reinforce cultural mores, values, and skills which can be transferred across settings such as church and community events (Tagoilelagi-Leota, 2010).

“We believe in learning through play and incorporate a holistic approach to the programme planning which caters for individual needs and is developmentally appropriate in its practices”. I sought to identify cultural and linguistic learning that took place during play episodes in my data gathering. Learning through play has been debated, critiquing the value and suitability of offering a play-based model within the Pacific educational context (Glasgow, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2005) and how Pacific teachers grapple with a programme foregrounding play-based learning (Leauepepe, 2010). The range of play activities made available during my visits to the Cook Islands language nest were varied. Activities that were culturally connected included making coconut oil, which involved scraping the flesh out of a large number of coconuts, using an electric coconut scraper, and then boiling the mixture on the stove to render the oil from the nut. The children were involved in picking herbs growing in the garden to put in the oil to add fragrance and health-giving qualities; “Like a kind of basil” as it was described. Another activity was tie-dying pieces of fabric to make pareu/cloths to be used for a range of purposes. The centre was strengthening children’s identity to the Cook Islands culture by making their own individual pareu, as well as cloth wraps for socio-dramatic play.

Bilingual language policy.

Whilst language immersion is evident in the daily programme, it is a bilingual process which is mainly evident in the programme, and this aligns with the principles in the philosophy statement and the language policy. Bilingual language use is not new to the people of the Cook Islands. The term “Maroro Maori” (Goodwin, 2003) refers to the increasing practice of interweaving English and Te Reo in the same sentence. The Maroro is the flying fish and represents the practice of flying between languages. When I raised the notion of the Maroro

Maori in the Cook Islands group talanoa, it was viewed as a pragmatic way to proceed in the face of language change and language use. This was observed during the sessions:

“Aere mai, did your mummy plait your hair?” and “The pepes in the bus go aue, aue, aue”.

When questioned about the use of Maroro Maori in the Cook Islands, the Te Punanga teachers indicated that Cook Islands Maori in its pure form – that is, using only Cook Islands language – was used, but this was mainly in the outer islands where less English is used. Mama P explained:

If you go to Manihiki, it is Cook Island Maori, and if you go to the Southern group and even in the Northern group (it is) Cook Islands Maori. In Rarotonga, yes, you will see them, especially the younger ones using both of the languages.

Mama P conceded that in the main island, Rarotonga, bilingual Maori and English language use is increasingly evident. She noted that this was likely due to the tourist population in Rarotonga and the requirement by local community to use English language for conversation, particularly in retail and tourism sectors.

The policy documentation developed in collaboration between the teachers and the parent community of TPR clearly affirms the role that the teachers play in preserving and extending the use of te reo Kuki Airani, including the different dialects of the Cook Islands. The document acknowledges the diminishing pool of fluent language speakers which has necessitated a bilingual approach to language learning. This is conditional until “greater numbers of language speakers are available” (TPR Language Policy, 2016). Once the numbers have grown, an increased language immersion programme is envisaged. An acknowledgement of the dialect learning provides a compelling reason for the selection of the teaching team. As noted earlier, members of the team are drawn from several islands and their dialect fluency is requisite for effective implementation of the language policy and procedures. The policy guidelines promote the prominent role of fluent te reo Kuki Airani speakers in developing the language programme. These knowledgeable speakers, drawn from the Cook Islands community, act as tuakana/mentors assisting the teina/novices to build their language skills.

The language policy encourages adults, parents, and family members who do not have te reo to join in the programme and learn it alongside the children. Summing up this section the

philosophy statement and language policy document and demonstrate the values and beliefs of the centre around language and culture and ways they are implemented in practice

Environment promotes language and cultural learning.

The fourth area of finding is the physical environment and how the physical environment effectively promotes and reflects the language and culture and demonstrates philosophy and policy in action. Wenger (1998) informs us that learning is a social phenomenon occurring when people actively engage in the practices of the social community, and the process where individuals actively try to make sense of or meaning from their experiences. Wenger's concept of reification proposes that processes and artefacts make practices and shared ideas concrete. This is reinforced with the concept of practice which Wenger describes as including the language, tools, documents, images and symbols, made explicit for a range of purposes. The Punanga environment uses a wide selection of cultural images and symbols and artefacts in an endeavour to concretely show the cultural focus within the setting.

The colourful sign on the front gate welcomes those entering with "Kia orana, Aere mai welcome to TPR o te Kuki Airani, the Cook Islands language nest", providing the visitor with information about the early childhood service provision in this setting. Plantings of banana and taro and hibiscus plants growing in a sunny, sheltered corner in the front of the playground area provide a strong visual sense of the cultural origins of TPR. These grow alongside herbal plants that Mama P. uses to mix into the coconut oil that she regularly makes at the centre. The oils are used for massage and each herb, such as basil, is selected and used as a remedy for different ailments. As I arrive in the morning a teacher, Mama M is using a kikau (traditional) broom to sweep the paths, with Cook Islands music playing in the background much as it would in a village community in the Cook Islands. She is wearing a flower in her hair and a traditional "Mumu" dress made of pareu material (cotton fabric, printed with flower and leaf motif patterns) and fashioned in a certain style, introduced by missionaries' wives in the years of European colonisation. She greets me warmly and indicates that the others are "inside".

Inside, a rich array of artefacts are constant reminders of the cultural character of this early childhood setting. Wall displays such as the alphabet, numbers, and greetings in Cook Islands Maori are prominently placed, often with English equivalent wording, reflecting a bilingual language approach; one such is the poster of fruit of the Cook Islands displaying Meika/banana and Aparā/apple. Large Cabin Bread biscuit tins are used for storage. These are familiar to those from the Cook Islands, where Cabin Bread is a staple food supplementing fish, coconuts,

and vegetables grown on plantations. A sea theme display features the sea life of the Cook Islands – sharks, dolphins, turtles, shells, and fish. Large lengths of pareu material are displayed on the walls, and woven mats are placed on the floor for infants, children, and adults to sit upon. Cook Islands music plays in the background with drum beats, occasionally stirring the Mamas into practicing traditional hula dancing. Children are encouraged to join the dancing. Himene tuki (traditional singing) and other ballads are also played, as part of a “Raro mix” of music, providing a stirring, and at times calming, multisensory experience and reinforcing the philosophy of the setting and letting the language, culture, and traditional practices shine through. Cultural tools – such as the kikau/broom for sweeping the floor and the coconut scraper – are authentic resources to implement cultural practices from home. Using a CHAT analysis, Nussbauer (2011) explains that cultural activities are mediated by cultural artefacts, enhancing and enriching the learning environment.

The mamas mostly wear mumus. Often, they wear ei, garlands of flowers, on their heads. Mostly these are made of artificial flowers and leaves, but for special occasions such as White Sunday or Cook Islands Independence Day, the mamas will spend time making ei from real flowers. This is an example of Wenger’s (1998) notion of identity, described earlier in Chapter Four. In this case the mamas are promoting their identity as members of the cultural community and their cultural attire demonstrates their membership of the Cook Islands culture.

The younger members of the staff wear Western dress and I did not observe any wearing ei during my time at the centre. The younger teachers stated that for formal occasions they will wear ei if not traditional dress, finding mumu restrictive for moving about when working with children in the play-based programme. Employing a CHAT gaze the change from wearing traditional to Western dress demonstrates how practices evolve and adapt and evolve over time (Nussbauer, 2011).

In the dress-up trolley is a range of cultural dress – island fabric shirts, children’s mumus, and hula skirts made of raffia. Ei and head ei, are available as are beads and other Cook Islands dress accessories. Children are engaged in making their own ei out of artificial flowers. They use lengths of pareu for wrapping the dolls, as capes and covers for covering constructions, and as tablecloths. Teachers use pareu for wrapping the babies and rocking them off to sleep in the traditional Cook Islands way. There is a display of natural materials, with baskets of shells and beads on the table for children to explore, and woven products such as fans, hats, and mats displayed on the walls.

There is an intentionality in providing a culturally rich environment. Wenger's concept of community (1998) asserts that knowledge acquisition entails exposure to lived experiences, and providing an environment rich with cultural artefacts and activities creates a prime space for building cultural knowledge.

Summary of Section 1

This section has presented evidence that, in TPR, there is a wide range of practices in place to support and enhance language and cultural learning. The documented values and beliefs contained in the philosophy statement and the steps outlined in the language policy strengthen and underpin teaching approaches. The cultural and linguistic knowledge of the teaching team supports the range of ways that language and cultural practices are promoted through planning and documentation, and how they are practiced.

Involvement by Members of the Language Nest Community

The second research question is: In what ways are families and community members involved in the Pacific language nest, and in other community settings such as church?

This section presents findings about the ways in which the families and community are involved in the language nest (TPR) and in other community settings such as the church. The first section focusses on teachers' involvement in the TPR community, followed by teachers as tuakana and teina. This is followed by the involvement of parents and community members. The second section presents activities that are linked to TPR but take place in other community settings: TPR community relationships, which include White Sunday church celebrations, Cook Islands language week. Hair cutting ceremony, Access Radio and Housie, supporting TPR.

Teachers' involvement in TPR community.

For the purposes of this study teachers are considered by the TPR community as integral not only to the centre operations but within wider community activities. In this section, I describe their involvement within the TPR setting and the wider Cook Islands community. There are a number of ways that teachers are involved with the TPR community. The cultural and traditional knowledge that teachers share, at an interpersonal level, is a considerable cultural resource, and they use this knowledge to guide others, throughout all aspects of the programme. Cultural knowledge conveyed through narrative storytelling is promoted in Polynesian culture, and this is a style for which TPR teachers show a preference. Fostering the role of tuakana includes a responsibility to impart cultural knowledge and values. From an individual plane,

teachers enhance learning by drawing on their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. For example, when I inquired about the music playing softly in the background, I was given an in-depth response about a range of music types, such as ‘hīmene tuki’, ‘hīmene reo metua’ or ‘apii sabati’. Mama K says:

There are differences in the southern and northern variations of the hīmene tuki. The ones from Manahiki and Saku (Tongareva) are the best. Oh, when you listen to those like T Robati, (who is from Manahiki) it is just lovely.

Mama T told me a story about how Mangaia became a British colony:

I am Mangaian born and bred. The story of Mangaia is ‘Au aua hau’u enua’ – Be fruitful. Te Taki Rua was a land owner who was a serious gambler who would gamble – everything – wife, children, home, land... and eventually he sold (lost) the land to Britain and we received the flag and stamp from the Queen.

Whilst sitting at the meal table, Mama P discussed the practice of naming. She provides a metaphor of the origin of her name and that of her daughter H:

H is from my Tahitian name (It is a shortened version). I think it was the lady Piu, who was named after a flower that only grows on a particular mountain, it doesn’t grow anywhere else in the world. There was a waterfall there and the waterfall is actually the hair of that lady. When my family saw a picture of Hani they said she looks like her Tahitian name. (H has long waist length hair, falling like a waterfall).

I heard a story about arranged marriage and whangai, or adopting children to family members. At a group talanoa session, Mama P described a family example of whangai:

The sad thing is Mama K (her marriage) was arranged. Mama K was only five years old. So, her parents got together (to arrange it). My mother-in-law was whangai out, well actually the two sisters, my mother-in-law, you know (laughs) they were all whangai out. Papa said he couldn’t do anything, that’s how strong the culture was. So, their youngest child K was the only child that he brought up.

Secondly, the team at TPR is entirely comprised of Cook Island staff; this is a key strength, enabling them to establish a strong sense of belonging and identity with the children and families. Furthermore, it allows teachers to develop a sense of being capable and knowledgeable, and to move between a mainstream Western educational model and context to

a traditional Cook Islands model of learning such as the Tuakana/Teina episodes described above. This is an example of convergence between Western and Indigenous theoretical principles outlined by Tuafuti (2016) and Gegeo (2010) in Chapter Four.

Thirdly, another strong component of the teachers' involvement is Christianity which is evident across the centre programme, in the spiritual practices implemented and the spiritual beliefs of teachers. Mama P expresses this:

God will always bless us...for example the children on the roll, going up and down. I have a strict Catholic upbringing, and I believe a sacrifice for 9 days – I had a strong belief that by doing this, something good will happen to us.

Mama P is a church deacon and sees her role as important in “bring (ing) all the sheep back to the flock”. Furthermore, several of the teachers are Sunday school teachers at the local PIC church and spend several days prior to the White Sunday celebrations assisting children to learn the songs and recital they will perform for the church congregation. In some cases, parents of children who don't generally attend that church will make the effort to take their children to church for the White Sunday service. Rogoff (2003) explains that, at the interpersonal plane, adults' structure participation and notes that church plays a central role in the socialisation of children, strengthening community involvement and membership.

A key concept encompassed within this particular community of practice is the passion for, and commitment to building knowledge of the culture, language, and traditional practices of the Cook Islands community. As previously noted, this is expressed in the values that underpin the philosophy as well as the cultural knowledge and practices of the teaching team.

Teachers as Tuakana and Teina.

Within the centre community, the teachers work together as a team. However, there is a difference around the skills and knowledge that they offer. The older, Cook Island-born and raised teachers – fluent native speakers of Te Reo Kuki Airani, as well as the dialect that is spoken on Rarotonga – I refer to as Tuakana, and the younger, Aotearoa/New Zealand-born and raised teachers whose first language is English as Teina.

In order to meet the philosophical aspirations espoused in the setting the teachers within the Cook Islands language nest require specialist skills that enable them to deliver a culturally embedded and located educational programme. TPR has five full-time teachers, one administrator, and a cook, who all identify as Cook Island Maori. However, clear divisions are

drawn within the team in relation to cultural and linguistic understandings, abilities, and practices.

Tuakana

The tuakana have brought with them cultural values and what Tongia (2003, p. 289) refers to as “Toka Maori”. Toka means rock which implies stability, continuity, and strength and Maori means indigenous or belonging to this place. “Ei toka Maori te taomi i te rua ma’i” (p. 291), a proverb from Tama’iva Mata’iapo in Rarotonga, stresses the importance of covering breadfruit pits with Maori volcanic stones rather than coral stones. Thus, toka Maori refers to strength in retaining our Maori ways of doing things. It refers to the way we dress, our food, costumes, transport, housing, body decorations, songs, dance and so on in our Maori way of life (Tongia, 2003). This study found an ongoing commitment by the tuakana teachers to implement toka Maori in their daily and ongoing practice. Examples are presented and discussed, below.

A further distinction of tuakana teachers is their status and title of “Mama”. In accordance with Cook Island Maori cultural practice, once a woman has achieved certain milestones such as being a mother, and having reached a certain age, she is thought to have earned this title. The tuakana in the Te Punanga team are the Cook Islands born teachers and staff. Mama P, Mama K, and Mama M, all trained and registered teachers. Mama P and Mama M, completed teacher training in the 1990s and Mama K. trained in 2010. Mama T is the centre cook and whilst untrained is accorded the status of tuakana as a Cook Islands born staff member.

Each Mama comes from a different island in the Cook Islands group: Mama P from Mauke; Mama T, Mangaia; Mama M, Atiu; and Mama K, Rarotonga and Aitutaki. Whilst there is no teacher representation from the northern islands, members of the management committee represent Manihiki and Tongareva. These distinctions are very important. Whilst Cook Island Maori identify to their enua/homeland and nation, they identify even more closely to their motu/island which is their turangavaevae/place to stand (Crocombe & Crocombe, 2003). Another significant factor is that each motu has its own distinctive dialect; thus, dialect is a key identity marker for the Cook Islander. Each tuakana teacher at TPR is cognisant of and competent in the dialect of their home island. It was evident that this ability is a constant source of pride for these teachers. Discussions would ensue around the dialectical differences for particular words and phrases. When I used the Tongareva word “ekore/no”, Mama P. burst out laughing, saying:

You can't use ekore in Rarotonga – no one would know what you were saying. The word you use is 'kare' for no.

This is important, as knowledge of each distinct dialect is diminishing both in Aotearoa and in the Cook Islands where the Rarotongan dialect, alongside English language, have become the lingua franca (Glasgow, 2010). An equally pressing concern is the inevitable population decline in the outer islands, and the ensuing decline of dialect speakers (Goodwin, 2003), and cultural identity, which Wenger (1998) explains is defined by one's membership of a cultural and linguistic community.

Whilst I noted that Rarotongan dialect was mainly used in the daily conversations amongst the tuakana teachers, there were instances when dialect distinctions were sought. On one occasion, I talked to Mama K about the use of words such as Makariri, which in New Zealand Maori means cold, but in the Cook Islands dialect, means "cooling down". She elaborated with an example:

Akauke ia kia makariri ka inu ei koe – Leave it until it has cooled down before you drink it.

The Cook Islands term for cold is anuia.

Eke mai, ki vao ka anuia koe – get out before you get cold/or you will get cold.

Tuakana teacher: Aronga Mana

Within Cook Island communities a traditional leadership hierarchy exists. Formally aronga mana/traditional leaders were born and not elected, but according to Tongia (2003) new "traditional" leaders, outside of the Cook Islands, are made rather than born. However, the tuakana teina relationship continues to serve as the tumu/foundation to generate Polynesian society's system of rank and leadership (Reilly, 2010). The manager of TPR, Mama P, is the key leader or Aronga Mana in the setting. She has been involved with the language nest since its foundation in the mid-1980s. She holds a high position within the wider community in her role as deacon in the local Pacific Islands Presbyterian church (PIPC). Mama P maintains a strong conviction for Cook Islands language and cultural preservation. She upholds a solid commitment to the cause for many reasons. Her mother-in-law, Mama Tapaeru Tereora, was one of the key leaders in establishing the Cook Island language nest in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and Mama P has since taken on the leadership mantle, both within the centre and the church, as well as in her role as expert of cultural matters and practices.

Tongia (2003) notes that in Cook Islands Maori society traditional and church leaders play an important role in the process of Ara tipoto, or funeral duties. Whilst I was in the midst of data gathering at TPR my father passed away. Mama P immediately took over, and, in her leadership role, was able to guide me and my family through the process of contacting the Minister, organising such duties as preparing the apare (the wake until the time of burial) and the 'eva (rituals of lamentation and mourning after the burial until after they are lifted, signifying the completion of the mourning period; in my father's case, about one month after). She directed us about how much to pay certain people, such as the Minister, and who to acknowledge. In this way, she was very much my tuakana in terms of my learning about the provision of food, the process of kopekope/calling of people, and recording of food and monetary contributions, which enabled our family to ensure that the cultural conventions and protocols were met. Furthermore, her contributions to the VAG talanoa has enabled a sharing of ideas, commonalities, historical connections, and voicing of opinions on the challenges faced.

Mama P firmly believes that the language nest upholds a key role in language preservation. In her leadership role, she remains firm about the place of the language nest in retaining te reo Kuki Airani:

The language nests are the place where we can actually teach the language and our culture.

Mama P explains that language and identity are inextricably interwoven:

If you are a true Cook Island (er), you actually have to know your language...because your language is your identity, without your language you are not a Cook Islander.

Her view has held strong throughout her career in the language nest, with a clear conviction that a knowledge of Cook Islands culture and language is central to identity.

Teina teachers.

The two younger members of the staff are J, who graduated in 2013, and G, currently in-training. Recently, they have been joined by A who is a student teacher in training, and M, the centre administrator.

In accordance with ako, the reciprocal nature of learning within the Tuakana and Teina relationship (Royal Tangaere, 1996), these New Zealand-born younger teachers fluctuate between mentor and mentee roles according to the circumstances at the time. For example, I

noted that they frequently initiated and engaged in play-based activities that were mainly child-driven, using a range of teaching techniques such as facilitation and collaboration (MacNaughton & Williams, 2004). During these episodes, they would take on the role of expert, implementing a pedagogical approach founded on Western theoretical framings, and facilitating activities where children engaged freely in painting, sand play, and other open-ended activities. They appeared to be most at ease when they could implement the learning gained through their years of training. Conversely, they adopted a novice/teina role during group episodes such as mat times, and in other group situations where Cook Islands language skills were required. This is not a situation which New Zealand-born Cook Island youth are facing alone; Numa (2003) found that a growing number of young Rarotongans, living in the Cook Islands, know very little Cook Islands Maori and, as noted earlier (McCaffery, 2015), Cook Islands Maori is now considered inter-generationally extinct. Although there is a complex set of factors that needs to be considered in this language crisis, the young Cook Island teachers in this setting are in an ideal situation to build their Cook Islands language skills. Mama M says of her son G, who is one of the young teachers:

He knows the reo – we use it at home, and he understands it”.

J and MJ both state that although they are not fluent speakers of te reo, they understand a lot of the protocols of Cook Islands practice, and that they have a level of understanding of the language:

Even though I don’t speak it, I understand a lot of what is spoken, as I have been around it all of my life. I don’t see it as a disadvantage, but will make an effort to learn more in the future. (MJ)

The guidance of their mentor/tuakana teachers supports the language learning of the younger mentees/teina teachers. In this way teina are able to gain, through formally participating in the language programme, an increasing repertoire of Cook Islands language words and phrases. In the cultural learning environment, they can align the language learning to authentic day-to-day experiences. All three younger teachers maintain that their language skills have been strengthened by their prolonged exposure to the language and cultural programme.

I noted that the younger teachers used the Cook Islands language at their level of ability using single words, short commands and phrases. This demonstrates a developing level of ability and skill that they are gaining by working and participating in language interludes with the tuakana teachers. The engagement at this interpersonal plane reveals that language imparted through

participating alongside knowledgeable mentors in authentic ways is a promising outcome for adult language learning. Moreover, by participating as members in the practices of the community, these teachers are gaining the required learning to become members of the community of practice (Wenger, 2006).

An example of how practices are evolving is evident in the rest time routines. Rest time is when all of the children are required to either sleep or rest and remain quiet for a sustained period. Staff quietly encourage children to rest. Towards the end of the rest period the older children, under the guidance of the teina teachers are able to engage in quiet table top activities such as puzzles, story books and literacy activities. The teina teachers had questioned the length of rest time and noticed that the rest time for the older children was reduced and the older children were accessing the activities for most of the rest time. In the Cook Islands a nap or rest for the community is often practiced at the hottest time of the day. Children learn to remain quietly on their mats until rest time is over. Practices are evolving in accordance with new practices and beliefs. The younger members of the teaching team are promoting the rights of the individual child to a responsive programme incorporating child centred learning. This is a convergent approach employing both a Pacific cultural practice and Western pedagogical framing in the rest/sleep routine. Engaging a CHAT theoretical frame the change in the rest routine demonstrates how practices and rules that govern them evolve and change over time.

Parents' and community involvement in TPR.

The multicultural composition of the families using the service is quite apparent in terms of diversity. Cultural groups represented include Maori, Tongan, Samoan, Fijian, Papaa/New Zealand Pakeha, Vanuatu, Aboriginal, and European families. Significantly, there were only four children from Cook Islands backgrounds at the time of data gathering. The phenomenon of decreasing numbers of Cook Islands participants is discussed in the final section of this chapter, which identifies challenges for the centre.

The parent community provided a range of viewpoints on how they perceived TPR and the service provision.

One family had newly arrived at TPR. During my talanoa session with them, they identified several reasons for joining. They professed to “liking the vibe” of the centre, and the fact that it was community-based. These parents were both Pakeha (European), and the father was a secondary school teacher who appreciated the culturally diverse makeup of the centre. He had seen a pamphlet about TPR in the local supermarket, and, walking past the centre, had seen the

children at play. He felt the children seemed happy. The mother, from an Italian background, felt strongly about her child becoming culturally aware by exposure to other cultural values and practices. The parents both described that “nice feeling” that they felt upon entering the centre and this made them feel comfortable to bring their child. I met up with the mother a few weeks later at the Cook Islands language week celebrations and she commented:

My child is happy and settled. We are enjoying learning Cook Islands words, from the songs, that she is singing at home.

A couple who had recently settled their child stated that they didn’t want their son to transition to school and become racist: “I want him to be open and accepting of other races”. The couple felt comfortable that their child would benefit from engaging in another cultural group as they would reinforce his own culture and language at home. Their view reflects those of Gregory (2005) who argues that children acquire membership of several communities through their engagement in different cultural and linguistic groups and can acquire membership of these communities simultaneously.

The warm and welcoming atmosphere was appreciated by another new mother:

As soon as I walked through the door, I felt comfortable to bring my child.

This young mother, of Cook Islands descent, whose child had been attending for over a year, felt very fortunate that her son could attend the centre:

I was raised without learning my mother tongue, and I really feel that I have missed out; that is why I have made the effort to bring him here as I want him to learn his language and his culture. It’s about his identity, and I know that he will learn from the Mamas here.

Writing about Communities of Practice, Wenger (2006) argues that there is a profound connection between identity and practice. By enrolling her child in this service, the child will be better served to develop a strong sense of Cook Islands identity.

Another mother of Cook Islands heritage had three children attend TPR during their preschool years. She had made several trips “back home” as a child, with her Cook Islands mother, who now lived in Australia. Attending and supporting TPR was a way of keeping in touch with her Cook Islands roots and community, maintaining cultural knowledge and keeping connected to her culture now that her mother was no longer living close by.

I want my children to learn the Cook Island ways as well as the language. I would love to go back home to live.

For this mother, enabling her children to learn the Cook Islands language and culture was also a way of honouring her grandmother, who came to Aotearoa/ New Zealand as a young woman as part of the New Zealand Cook Islands house girl scheme. This was a New Zealand government funded scheme which recruited young Cook Islands single women, to travel to New Zealand and work as house girls, in households of well to do New Zealand families. In affirmation of the family involvement, Mama P states that “her (the mother’s) children are very good at te reo”.

These two Cook Island mothers, then, wish their children learn as apprentices in this setting, to be guided by the teachers to enable them to participate in the cultural community, both here and possibly living “back home” in the Cook Islands. Clearly, a competent grasp of the language and cultural practice will strengthen their ability to fully participate in community cultural endeavours in both contexts.

The welfare of the families is important to the centre and the management view the environment as their families second home. Mama P explains that support is given on financial and health matters:

We also have links to CYFS, and we provide family advice. If they have trouble with their child sleeping, I have a nursing background and (can) recognise such ailments as ringworm and eczema and can advise if they need to take their child to the doctor.

During my talanoa with MJ, the manager, I learned that management are very supportive of families, noting that there are many sole parents and low socio-economic families at TPR. MJ, encourages parents to increase their skills, such as studying, while their children are attending the centre, to better their prospects of getting employment. Clearly, the role of the Punanga extends beyond the early childhood service exclusively. In addition, MJ asserted that providing financial support, is considered a key role in assisting parents to develop skills and improve their life prospects.

TPR community relationships.

Connections to wider community initiatives feature in the Punanga programme; for example, involvement in the church and social groups such as housie (a form of social gambling) and other cultural events including white Sunday, Cook Islands language week. The Cook Islands

Presbyterian Church has had an association with the language nest since it was first established in the 1980s. Church members at that time were strongly involved in all aspects of the centre operations. All of the tuakana teachers are involved with the church and some feel that, increasingly, it is the role of the language nest staff to maintain and encourage community involvement with the local church.

Mama P expresses frustration:

You know already I feel now I am taking myself outside the ECE sector, like I am already bringing our people back to church, you know, and I said I am a Catholic but my husband is a Presbyterian... I am not even a member of the church, and I am trying to get the Cook Islands people back to their church, that your (their) parents, your grandparents, and your great grandparents (belonged to).

A personal triumph was expressed by Mama P

I'm just glad with the people who came back (to the church) in the last five weeks...I managed to get seven people back to church.

White Sunday.

The ceremony of White Sunday is prepared for many weeks beforehand. This is a significant annual church event and requires many "practice runs" as skills of performance are highly valued in the Cook Islands community. In one episode, I observed C (2 years, 7 months) becoming increasingly involved in Pure (prayer) time and preparing for White Sunday, becoming enculturated into the centre learning, learning the rules of engagement, the cultural values and beliefs of the programme, and the practices that are used to support these beliefs. He had moved from observing from the side-lines to becoming actively involved in participating, standing alongside the older children and joining in the dancing, watching the teachers doing the actions to the music and following their lead.

A few weeks later I attended the White Sunday service at the PIPC church. C. stood proudly and confidently alongside his small group and at the instructions of Mama T, in her role as Sunday school teacher, and sang the hymn that they had been practicing in the previous weeks, thus making valued contributions to the cultural group and demonstrating skills of presenting alongside his peer group.

C's parents, alongside other parents who generally are not church-goers, attended the White Sunday service. Following the church service, I spoke to Mama P. about the number of children

attending. She responded that the parents were “very good”, making the effort to bring their children to the church celebration even though most of them “no longer attended church themselves”.

In this example, then, the teacher provided guidance at the interpersonal level to enable C to learn how to contribute to the church community performance; teina C took the lead from the tuakana – the older children and the teachers – taking on an apprenticeship as a performer, singer, and dancer, acquiring skills to contribute to and participate in the collective group performance in the community of practice; and the parents’ attendance demonstrated a commitment to supporting the community in different contexts .

Cook Islands language week.

The language week initiative, established by the Ministry of Education as a means of strengthening the Cook Islands language, is scheduled for the first week in August and is a highlight of TPR’s annual programme. Planning begins several weeks before the event. The planning includes preparing for cultural activities, children’s cultural items, and “family and community day”. In 2016, the theme was *Kia ariki au i toku tupuranga, ka ora uatu rai toku reo/to embrace my heritage, my language lives on*. The language week has become an opportunity to showcase the work of TPR. During the week, cultural activities are implemented: making of head ei/floral head dress, scraping coconuts, and making traditional dishes such as poke/a savoury dish of arrowroot and banana, or pumpkin and coconut cream, and rukau/taro leaves and coconut cream.

Haircutting ceremony.

The ceremonial practice of haircutting is practiced in the Cook Island community. TPR provides support and guidance for families on the haircutting ceremony. I observed a small boy with long hair asking if he will have a haircutting ceremony, which Mama M affirmed. When I enquired what age this may happen, she replied:

Sometimes five, or 15/16 years – depends on the grandparents and parents. It is not usual but sometimes 21. The haircutting ceremony the child’s hair is platted into 100/150 plaits depending on how many guests. It can sometimes raise up to \$10,000 depending on how much guests give.

Cultural ceremonies, such as haircutting, are celebrated by the wider Cook Islands community. These occasions are opportunities for the Cook Islands community to gather together, to network, renew connections, fundraise, prepare, and share Cook Island kai kai/food. The local

dance group, generally representing a particular island group, will have practiced a dance routine. From a wider community level, these ceremonial gatherings are used to strengthen the Cook Island community and involve the Cook Island families, including younger parents and youth in cultural ceremonies. These cultural functions serve to strengthen relationships and networking to take place. Moreover, these gatherings provide opportunities for the Punanga teachers to connect with the community and vice versa.

Access radio.

Te Punanga has a close connection with the Cook Islands community Access Radio. Access Radio is a very effective means of transmitting information from TPR to the wider Cook Islands community as well as providing TPR with feedback from community members. Despite the broadcasting hours, 5am three mornings a week, there is a dedicated following amongst the Cook Islands community in Wellington. Radio talkback is an effective way of renewing connections, “having a say” on topical matters, and passing on information. Wellington-based Access Radio conveys news, such as the passing of Cook Islanders in Wellington and community events both here in New Zealand and in the Cook Islands, to the Cook Islands. It also broadcasts news of events in Rarotonga and the outer islands of the Cook group. Listeners are frequently canvassed for their views and knowledge on Cook Island matters.

During the time of this research, a member of Te Punanga Reo management committee had responsibility for running the Cook Islands Access Radio station. D described his commitment to his community by carrying out this cultural service:

This is a way of strengthening my own language and culture. I learn from my people, all of the time, when they ring in for talkback and feedback, I am learning the old ways. I was young when I came to New Zealand and it was easy to forget the reo. I have learned so much since I have been taking the Access Radio.

The required learning to become a member of a community of practice, takes place through the participation by members in the practice of the community (Wenger, 2006). By listening and learning from his elders, D was guided as a teina, or learner, to strengthen his culture and language and take on new knowledge and skills. In this way, he also developed his tuakana role, and his status as a leader within the Wellington Cook Islands community. Access Radio reaches into the Cook Islands and D became well-known in his homeland as well. D passed away at the end of December 2016, and such was the esteem in which he was held by the Cook Islands community, that the Cook Islands community hall in Cannons Creek in Porirua, the

area in which the largest group of Cook Island people in the wider Wellington reside, was overflowing with people. Dignitaries travelled from the Cook Islands, as a sign of respect for his service to his community.

The role of Access Radio is key in enabling the community to voice their say. TPR activities such as management meetings and other events of interest, are broadcast on the radio. D informed me that via Access Radio community members are invited to participate and to offer their opinions on operating TPR. Mama P views this as “a mixed blessing” where people will have their say but won’t come and help out”.

Housie supporting TPR.

TPR have benefited from the support provided by the Cook Islands community which runs a regular housie evening and a percentage of the proceeds are given to TPR. Mama P recalls:

Well there is the Cook Island housie...it was actually the housie that bought this building. We ran the housie in 1989 to get the money to buy this house, otherwise we wouldn’t have been able to.

Like Access Radio, Housie provides positive benefits for TPR. The donations from Housie have bolstered the finances of the centre and are seen as a way that the community can “do their part” in serving TPR. Utilising Wenger’s (1998) concepts of community and joint enterprise, the use of Housie, and Access Radio to support the centre is an example of an activity that the community negotiates and engages in together, in order to maintain and fund their cultural community.

Summary of Section 2

This section shows that, as well as several specialist roles, a broad range of participants contribute in a variety of ways to the centre community. Teachers take on tuakana/ teina roles, and are guided by the Aronga Mana, or head teacher. Parents and the community are involved in various capacities. Parents express aspirations for their child and reasons for selecting TPR as an ECE service. Significant cultural events and activities, including Cook Islands language week, the haircutting ceremony, White Sunday, Access Radio and community Housie all demonstrate wider community involvement.

Challenges that Exist in the Operational Management of the Cook Island Language Nest

This section addresses the third research question: What are the key challenges that exist in the operational development of the Pacific language nest – in this case, TPR. Challenges identified

are presented in four sections: language preservation; the number of older generation of language speakers is declining; diminishing community support; and financial constraints to providing a quality ECE service.

Language preservation.

The status of Cook Islands language/s has reached crisis level, following decades of decline of the language and dialects both in Aotearoa/New Zealand (McCaffery, 2015) and in the Cook Islands (Crocombe & Crocombe, 2003). Of major concern is that the Cook Islands language has now been defined as inter-generationally extinct with less than 3% of Cook Islanders under 15 years of age able to speak it (McCaffery, 2015).

Contributing to this trend at TPR are demographic changes that have occurred over the last two decades. Originally the service was established to provide language and cultural learning to Cook Islands children; however, over the last decade the composition of families has become increasingly multicultural, reflecting population movement. This shift has impacted on the programme and philosophical stance of the service. The majority of the families using the service are no longer Cook Island Maori, and this trend has necessitated a move from the original full language immersion approach to a bilingual medium of Cook Islands Maori and English. Consequently, the use of Cook Island Maori in the centre is decreasing, mostly being used at specific formal times during the day.

Language preservation was the prime motivation for the inception of the language nest and continues to underpin all aspects of the centre operation. Mama P explained:

You know if I go back to when the centre was established the mind of the founder... was actually to help the Cook Island parents to retain the (language), because...we come to New Zealand and we have our children here because (when) the parents or the grandparents (came) in the early 50s and the late 50s, there were a lot of Cook Islanders who could speak their own language and they speak to their children in English.

Mama P. said that she is one of the parents who promoted the use of English with her own children, despite her pivotal role in the language nest and being a fluent native speaker. Mama P. alludes to the cultural tension around her decision to use English. Employing a CHAT lens, Englestrom (2011) asserts that there are tensions and contradictions in processes which evolve over time. Mama P. describes her conflicts:

As parents, the first language we speak to our children is English thinking that ...if your child is speaking in English they were actually looking after our children's future so that they would have a good education, good jobs, you know, for the future.

She goes on to say that she did not realise the repercussions of language loss from taking this stance to language learning.

None of us realising that you know, we are actually...we deprive them.

A further concern is that the younger members of the staff, all New Zealand-born Cook Islanders, are among those who were deprived of the language and now have limited, or very little, Cook Islands language knowledge. They are the teachers of the future, who will take over from the Mamas as they retire. Whilst there are no formal measures in place to impart cultural and linguistic knowledge, clearly the ongoing involvement in the programme and exposure to culture and language is increasing the skills of the teina teachers. However, these teachers need support if the service is to continue in its current guise.

The number of older generation of language speakers are declining.

The early pioneers of the Cook Islands language nests have been decreasing with the older generation passing away. Language leaders such as Te Upoko Morgan in Tokoroa, and Mama Tu Taramai in the Wellington area were key in driving the initial establishment of the nests. These members were influential role models with strong language and cultural knowledge. They promoted the drive to establish Pacific ECE settings as key in language and cultural preservation. Mama P remembers:

We used to have that support before but now it is all gone. It's just our generation. We had Mama T. here. It is all those people who started it off and they have handed it to us but our job is much harder because we have lost so much.

We need to...put our trust into each other because we are our own strength, we need our strength from each other so we can move forward.

Mama M notes:

Our generation are not strong enough, because our older generation are already gone.

As each member of the older generation passes away, the number of skilled teaching personnel decreases. This places increasing demands on the tuakana teachers in this setting, with many tasks shared among a decreasing pool of expertise. Outside of their centre lives, the Mamas

play pivotal roles in many different community groups such as Cook Island performance groups, Cook Islands language learning classes for adults, women's' sewing groups, taking leadership roles in church activities, and making their homes available for family travelling from the islands. They have been raised with the cultural understanding of service to the community and, as the quotes above indicate, the decreasing numbers means they are often overwhelmed with community expectations and tasks.

Diminishing Cook Islands community support and involvement.

Lack of community support by the wider Cook Islands community, and the decline of Cook Islands families using the service is a significant concern for TPR. When the centre was first established there was a high percentage of community support. However demographic changes in the local community have severely impacted on the ability of the Cook Islands community to continue providing the support needed. Mama P described the decline in participation with members moving out of the area, over the last three decades:

It was very strong, very strong. But you know why in 1982 it was strong? We had a lot of Cook Island people and so many people living around here. Across the road we had a Cook Island family, and all down here they were all Cook Island families, you know Wilson Street, here by the church in this area, belonged to the Cook Islanders all just living next door to each other. What happened though, we are isolated when Gould (Meat Company) moved from here out to...Lower Hutt. Yeah that's when we went right down. The families moved to the Hutt and they moved to Australia. It was very strong in those days before they moved away.

Mama P describes the challenge that arises from the decline in community support:

What I really wanted was...to encourage our people, our parents of today, to bring their children...I am not trying to say we can't have other ethnic groups, but...if the (Cook Islands) parents really wanted to bring their children to the punanga to learn the language and culture and then through them, the children to the parents, they will know something about the language and the culture.

Mama P alludes to the fact that these parents often do not know the language themselves.

You feel that it's actually important to learn the language and culture through adult teaching.

She notes that one of the compelling reasons for teaching the next generation English, to ensure a good education, has had unforeseen repercussions:

Some of our people got a good education in New Zealand...and they fit...the business market and that is why they don't think that the language nest is important, or the language is important.

Mama K opines that the current generation of young parents, in the wider Cook Islands community in Aotearoa/New Zealand does not appear to have confidence in the Pacific language as a learning environment that will serve their children well in preparation for the compulsory primary education sector. It appears the mainstream ECE settings are seen as more favourable to ensure that children succeed in education, and to have greater job prospects. Such perceptions have come at a cost for the Cook Island community.

Mama K is concerned that the Aotearoa/New Zealand Cook Islands community is losing its connection and identity with the Cook Islands.

Our younger generation are losing their ties with the Cooks... what are we going to do to revive it?

Mama P's response indicates despondency and helplessness about the decline of community involvement:

I don't know what to do now. I feel helpless... it has been like this for a while now, there's no community involvement. I don't know where to start, it seems like we look down on our own people, that 'you can't do it, it won't survive'...that sort of attitude, you know. I suppose we have to just carry on what we believe in without the community involvement.

Mama P notes the increasingly diverse ethnic composition of the children on the TPR roll and suggests that for the service to survive, and continue, embracing the cultural diversity of the local community, and providing a service that caters for families from a range of cultural backgrounds, is becoming the normative practice. The following statement shows a real mixture of feelings, gratitude tinged with sadness.

That's why I am really grateful that half the children from all walks of life are actually carrying on the Cook Islands language, which is actually sad, very sad, that all of these

children from different backgrounds is actually carrying the Cook Islands' (language and culture). But you know this place will always be open for our tamariki, our people.

Financial constraints.

A major challenge in the operational management for TPR is financial constraints. TPR is evolving and adapting to meet the needs of the cultural community to ensure its financial viability. These changes are necessary for the service to survive. The funding regime, based on occupancy rates and trained teacher grants, means that the roll must be opened to the wider community to acquire the funding necessary to continue offering the service. MJ mentioned tension between Cook Islands cultural values and the Ministry of Education funding regime. For example, TPR holds two places open for hardship cases, or parents and families who may not be able to pay full fees. This practice impacts financially on their centre operations, and they are faced with no longer providing these places. MJ explained that they are trying to help their young families “get ahead” but are continually having to find ways of accessing the extra funding needed. MJ commented that it can be “stressful at times” not being able to provide low socio-economic families living in the area with further support: “We continually struggle financially from one (Ministry of Education) funding drop to the next. We are just really lucky with the staff who are understanding and flexible about when they are paid”. As centre administrator, MJ acts as the interface between TPR and several government departments and finds this role a “juggling act where money comes in and it goes straight out again, and I wonder whether we can sustain this (financially) much longer”. This is not a new phenomenon and the Ministry of Education (2018) has expressed concern that since 2015 seven Pacific ECE services have closed voluntarily and four licences were cancelled by the Ministry. There are now 17 Pacific ECE services remaining in the Wellington region. Clearly this issue is pressing and needs careful consideration and wide consultation with the Pacific community in the wider Wellington area.

Summary of Section 3

Challenges to the operational management were identified and discussed. A key challenge is the continuing decline in Cook Islands language. This has arisen from many factors including lack of resourcing and decreasing involvement by the younger generations of Cook Island Maori in Aotearoa/New Zealand, in combination with diminishing community support and involvement by the wider Cook Islands community. Finally, financial constraints have a significant impact on the centre's ability to operate.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented findings from case study one, TPR, showing the language and cultural practices that are promoted within this ECE setting. The philosophy and language policy, along with the abilities of the fluent language speakers, accompanied by their deep cultural knowledge, are considerable strengths in delivering an authentic culturally located service. Whilst change is inevitable, it is already clear from the challenges identified that it will be increasingly difficult to strike a balance between offering the culturally embedded programme that TPR philosophy and policies promote, while meeting the requirements of the increased diversity in the cultural and social composition of the community it serves.

Chapter Seven

Case Study Two: Sailing Onwards to Tokelau

Tokelauan language nest Te Akoga Kamata

Feliuliakiga o te au mo he tumanaki taonga o fanau

Recognising the moving currents for the sustainable future for our children

Introduction

The Tokelauan Pacific language nest, or Akoga Kamata (TAK), was established in 1987, and licenced in 2000, in a suburb in the Hutt Valley, in the wider Wellington district. The service caters for 30 children, comprising 23 aged over two and seven aged under two. There are seven teachers and an administrator who work closely with the management team. The teaching team consists of five fluent Tokelauan teachers, who were all born and spent their formative years in Tokelau, and two Samoan teachers. The Tokelauan teachers are tri-lingual as they all speak Tokelauan, Samoan, and English.

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the TAK case study and, as noted in Chapter Six, these findings will contribute to the discussion in Chapter 9. The findings for TAK are presented in three sections reflecting the research questions: 1) What are the practices and processes in this setting that enable, promote, and preserve language, culture, and traditional practices and knowledge for the Tokelauan community in Aotearoa/New Zealand; 2) In what ways are families and community members involved in the Pacific language nest, and in other community settings such as church; and 3) What are the key challenges that exist in the operational development of the Pacific language nest?

Practices and Processes Promoting and Preserving Language and Culture

In regard to the practices and processes that enable, promote, and preserve language, culture, traditional practices, and knowledge for the Tokelauan community in Aotearoa/New Zealand there are four main areas of findings: 1) planned and intentional practices in the daily programme; 2) spontaneous and unplanned learning opportunities fostering linguistic and cultural knowledge; 3) documentation of philosophy and language policy; and 4) the ways in which the physical environment reflects the culture and provides opportunities for enhancing Tokelauan cultural and language learning.

Planned and intentional practices in the daily programme.

Several daily routines support cultural and language practice, with a number of planned practices deliberately integrated into the daily programme that are intended to promote and preserve language, culture, and traditional practices. These include mat time sessions, greetings and farewells, and mealtimes. These findings align with those from chapter six, confirming common practices between the two settings.

Mat time.

Mat time forms the focal point of the daily morning schedule. This is where the large group, including all of the children and many of the teachers join together on the carpeted area at mid-morning. The session begins with the children and teachers participating in a blessing or lotu. It is delivered in the Tokelauan language and is based on Roman Catholic doctrine. Parents have explained that a strong factor in their decision to use this ECE service is the Catholic religious learning alongside the Tokelauan cultural and linguistic skills and knowledge. R, the supervisor, supported this noting that the Christian teachings are a strong part of the programme. She noted the difference in the mainstream settings:

Here we promote our language, especially our spiritual beliefs and prayers (during mat time). We start our morning with our prayer and when we have our morning tea and afternoon tea and after, when the children are going home, we say our prayer before the children are going home.

You know, making the sign of the cross and doing prayer in Tokelau it is a different way we learn from the mainstream. It is a different language of course; here we are speaking our own tongue. Some of the kids are quick to pick it up, you know, through songs and dancing, but it's a lot different from there to here.

All of the children are encouraged to join the teachers on the mat for the session. This is a pivotal part of the day when teachers conduct songs, stories, chants, haka, and traditional performances with the children. Also, children recite short excerpts from the bible with much encouragement from their teachers. During my observations of mat time I noted that children are very familiar with the routine and the requirement to join in and participate. Children are praised for their participation in the group activities, particularly those who are able to recite the Bible, and those who join in the cultural activities with gusto and enthusiasm. I noted teachers stand and join in the dance, to model the moves, and to show their delight in the dance

and music. It is often a noisy, and fun activity full of laughter, and children join in with eagerness.

The spiritual ritual sets the scene for the day as children are greeted and welcomed in this formal setting. The teachers taking the mat time session speak exclusively in Tokelauan. I observed a counting song “Tahi, lua, tolu, wha, lima”, a finger rhyming song. The teachers then sang a traditional chant, with all joining in the chant, demonstrating their understanding of the lyrics and the tune. Children join in singing these traditional songs with gusto, sometimes shouting out key words in their enthusiasm. The passion, skill, and ability of the teachers clearly convey to children the importance and significance of these songs and the messages that are being passed on through the music and stories.

Children are building familiarity with these songs; by listening and participating in such cultural activities they are gaining cultural and linguistic understanding, and thus are equipped with cultural tools which enable them to participate in the cultural community. Regular, daily reinforcement of these sessions are tangible examples of culturally located practice where learning takes place at the interpersonal level via the Tuakana (knowledgeable expert)/Teina (novice) learning relationship (See Chapter Six). A further set of cultural skills are being strengthened in the process of gathering together and sharing at mat time. Children are learning to identify with the cultural group and develop a sense of belonging to the collective group. This aligns closely to TAK’s philosophy statement which foregrounds the importance of children gaining a sense of identity and belonging to the centre and Tokelauan community. Furthermore, children are learning about the notion of “va’a” or time and space and how this is used in different ways in different cultural contexts. Learning to sit, wait, observe, and listen are key skills that children need to learn in order to participate in wider community activities, such as church and community events.

Mat time is the main vehicle for language transmission in this setting, and the teachers are clearly attuned to the tempo of children. The songs are delivered in terms of the “busyness” of the day, or the composition of the group. For example, during one observation there were several boisterous four-year olds and, wisely, the teachers embarked on the “haka” sessions fairly early in the mat time session and for a prolonged period. This helped the children to let off steam using a culturally relevant process.

There were several cultural principles being taught and learned during this activity: the gendered nature – only boys were able to perform, while girls were given the role of beating

the drums which both genders are allowed to perform. Following the haka and drums, other songs were sung and girls were encouraged to stand and dance. Within many traditional Polynesian cultures there are roles which are performed either by males or females. TAK is instilling these understandings at an early age. These gender roles are evident in the traditional practices of “Inati”, a traditional practice, of collective sharing, for Tokelauan people described by Kupa (2014). Using Rogoff’s planes of analysis at the interpersonal level, children are developing their understandings of Tokelauan culture and language as they participate in, and contribute to, a process which Rogoff (2003) terms participatory appropriation.

Throughout all of the mat time routines, then, a traditional approach is adopted, using instructional, directive teaching strategies which reinforce learning occurring through observing, listening, and following directions. The teachers take on a Tuakana role using their cultural and linguistic knowledge to enhance children’s (Teina) learning and understanding.

Greetings and farewells.

Teachers greet children, parents, and community members in Tokelauan. A child is greeted with “Talowha Ni, T”, as he enters the room, and his mother with “Talowhi Ni, M” – “How are you this morning?” This practice denotes the bilingual approach used in the centre in response to the limited Tokelauan language skills of the parents in the community. A different approach is used when a grandfather arrives with his grandchild: “Malo ni” he greets the group. “P Talowha Ni” K a teacher, replies. “Ea mai koe?” (“Hello P, how are you?”). “Malohi whaka whetai, kae a koe?” (“Good thanks, how are you?”). “Manuia lava, whaka whetai” (“Very well, thanks”) K responds. K. knows that P has Tokelauan language skill and addresses him accordingly. In another instance a child arrives with his mother who is Maori and is greeted with “Kia ora, Malo ni, manuia te taeao” (“Good morning, how are you?”) using a bilingual (Maori and Tokelauan) approach.

Likewise, teachers take the opportunity to use Tokelauan language to farewell children. At the end of the day teachers assist children to prepare for their departure. As they leave children and family are farewelled in Tokelauan. R calls out to four-year old M as he leaves with his mother “Towha ni M, Toe whetaui (“Good bye M, See you later”). M’s mother urges him to respond “What do you say M?” “Towha” he replies. R praises M for his response using an appropriate linguistic response, “Ah good boy, M, Malo (Good), Manuia te awho” (“Have a good day”).

In this way cultural and language conventions are practiced and reinforced in this daily, ongoing routine of greeting using a traditional approach. Teachers use their language and

cultural skills with adults and children, and during these interludes promote and enhance culturally framed language learning.

Meal times.

Meal times are seen as opportunities to gather and talk, engaging in interactions and cultural activities. The meal begins with a prayer. A bilingual language approach is evident in keeping with the idea that some children may not have full cognisance of Tokelauan language. The following vignette demonstrates the bilingual process used at meal times. The teacher N is holding the water jug and asks children if they would like an “inu vai” (drink of water), saying, “It is healthy for our bodies to drink vai”. “Yeah, vai”, responds a child who is holding out his cup. “Hiki mai – who likes healthy foods?” asks N to which the children at her table respond with an emphatic “Me!” “We look after our Tino (body) when we eat our healthy food.” N places some pictures of food on the table – “whuawhai” (banana) she states. “I love banana” a child adds. N continues, “apu” (apple), “moli” (orange) and then proceeds to point to other pictures, saying, “Here’s some food from Tokelau, popo (coconut), talo (taro), and ika (fish). I have these (food) back in Nukunonu”. “I got a sandwich in my lunchbox”, a child states. “Oh, you have”, replies N “whalaoa (bread) is good for you.” N encourages the child to eat, “and the hihi (cheese) too”. This vignette demonstrates that learning may occur, as Rogoff (2003) asserts, through guided participation in cultural endeavours that take place in everyday conversations that can provide children with information and involvement in the skills of their community.

Kupa (2014) explains that the practice of Inati is historically related to sharing the fishing catch, and the metaphor of caring and sharing has been adapted by TAK to demonstrate Inati as (sharing and caring for each other) as cultural practice used in the TAK early childhood environment (Rameka, Glasgow et. al, 2017) This practice was evident during my observation of the infant and toddlers’ area. In this space the centre has replaced the high chairs and tables and uses hand woven Tokelauan mats for the infants and toddlers to eat together, and also for play and akoakoga (mat time). R, the Supervisor, explains that eating together on the mat is an example of the traditional practice of “Inati”, sharing food together and developing relationships through this process. Thus meal times are prime times for sharing language and imparting cultural practices and traditional values of sharing within the collective group. Adapting the cultural practice of Inati to a modern context demonstrates the Cultural Historical Activity tenet that activities and practices adapt and change according to context and timeframes. In this way practices evolve in the contemporary environment.

Spontaneous and unplanned learning episodes.

The second area of focus relating to practices and processes enabling, promoting, and preserving language and culture are spontaneous and unplanned learning episodes. I found that teachers were using Tokelauan language in spontaneous ways including in conversations, in play episodes, and in spontaneous music and dancing sessions.

Conversations.

Teachers at TAK engage in conversations using gagana Tokelauan (Tokelauan language) in natural ways, demonstrating strong models of language. During mid-morning, I observe community elders slowly making their way past TAK to the church next door. N talks to R in Tokelauan. “Ko tamaiti e olo ki te lotu he tama kua galo” (They are going to church for a young college girl who died. She was only young, still at college). N responds “Haloa ni” (it is very sad, the old people are going to church, and some of the young ones from her school are going to. I will go over to help out after (the TAK session has finished).”Haloa tona kaia” (Yes, I feel sorry for her family), R replies. R explains to me, “We sometimes take the little ones over to the church for the funerals, but we’re short staffed today so can’t take them”.

On a brisk morning the teachers talk about the weather. M talks to K as she arrives in the morning, “Te malulu a te taeao nei” (‘It is cold this morning’). K responds, “Ae, te makalili. ko P na nowho i te whale ona ko ia nae makalili” “Io P e nowho i te whale aua e malulu” (Yes, P is staying at home today as it is too cold). P is one of the grandfathers who helps the teachers with the language programme.

Conversations such as these expose children to language, enabling them to learn cultural triggers and influences that reflect the Tokelauan culture and language context. The children are learning from the adults, in this setting, the values and cultural nuances and practices for the Tokelauan community

Play-based episodes.

The play-based, child-centred programme at TAK provides opportunities for fluent and accurate models of Tokelauan language delivery. Language learning occurs in a range of ways. For example, in the following vignette, N is working with a small child in the pepe (infant and toddler) area. She is supporting the child to complete a puzzle. “Ata whou” (come) she calls to the child. “Whuli /whuwhuli” (turn it around). “Malo (Good) Ata ata” she says, then “Ua” (stop), which indicates that he has finished his puzzle. Within this interpersonal plane of engagement, the teacher, as tuakana, is facilitating the play context, suggesting actions for the

child to choose to complete the puzzle. She uses Tokelauan language exclusively in the episode, and the child demonstrates his level of understanding of the language of instruction. The interlude uses both instructional language and positive reinforcement.

Play episodes such as this are utilised by the teachers for language learning. This is particularly so in the indoor environment, around activities such as counting and reading. In another episode, N works with an older group of children reading a counting book.

N points to the butterfly “Lelewhua” (butterfly) she informs the group. “Tahi, lua, tolu” (one, two, and three), “tahi, lua, tolu”: In such instances, children are rote learning both numbers and names of familiar creatures such as butterfly and ika (fish).

The teacher uses this opportunity to weave in Tokelauan language and names, with children encouraged to repeat the Tokelauan words. This episode is an example of guided participation (Rogoff, 1990) where guidance and participation in culturally valued activities are essential to children’s apprenticeship in thinking. This mutual structuring of participation enables children and the teacher to engage in the shared endeavour of reading stories and reciting language.

The following vignette documents a spontaneous story session and provides another example of how teachers optimise opportunities to strengthen language learning in the play contexts.

Le Mai a Sam – Sam’s body (Te tino a Sam)

R is reading a story to a group of children in the area for children aged over two. As she reads, she points to the illustrations on the page: “toku niwho” (teeth), toku vae (legs), toku whatawhata (chest), toku taliga” (ears).

R then moves on to another story about K’s house asking, “Ko loto o te whale o K? What did you see in K’s house?” “Nowho ki lalo, sit down”, R instructs the children who are standing up and moving about. She repeats, “toku taliga, listening ears, toku fale, my house; umu kuka, kitchen; potu takele, bathroom”. “Whaka longo” (listen), R commands the children, “whamalama, window; hitepu, stairs; tukutua, toilet”.

R then asks the children once again, “Nia a te ke kitea i te whale o K?” (What did you see at K’s house?) using the Tokelauan phrase but without the English translation this time, to which the children reply in English, “a kitchen, a toilet, a table”. The teacher uses the story sessions for bilingual language learning. Resources such as Tokelauan readers contribute to the teachers’ ability to deliver literacy learning. Fluency in Tokelauan language is required. Using the Tokelauan words and phrases first, emphasises their significance. Providing the English

equivalent enables children whose first language is English to participate, whilst also gaining fluency in Tokelauan language. While the children responded in English, they understood the Tokelauan question that was posed to them. Through participating in such learning episodes, they are acquiring the language to communicate in this cultural context.

Rogoff (2003) notes that mutual structuring of participation, which is a process of guided participation, can take place when elaborating on, and listening to stories; in this case the Tokelauan words for the features of the house. Further, Rogoff states that children learn by reciting oral language models, and these skills are highly valued. This may involve reciting songs, and genealogies that are central to community and family life (MacNaughton, 1995).

The episodes described above demonstrate a bilingual language delivery. However, when using this approach, the Tokelau language is foregrounded. Teachers choosing to use the Tokelauan words first, followed by English translations, place emphasis on the Tokelauan terms.

Spontaneous music and movement.

The following spontaneous movement session episode leads on from the topic covered at mat time earlier in the day - body parts. The teacher N. addresses the group, along the lines of the song “Head, shoulders, knees and toes”. “We are talking about our tino, (body); we point to our body’, where is your ulu? (Head), talinga? (Ear) your gutu? (Mouth), your mata? (Eyes), ihu? (Nose), lima? (Arms /hands), vae? (Leg) tulivae? (Knee). With each instruction the children point to the respective body part. “Now we do it faster” - and the children speed up their actions in response to the teacher’s actions. The action song ends with children falling down to the ground and laughing. N applauds the group with “Malo tamaiti” (Good children). In this way children, as teina, are learning alongside their knowledgeable tuakana encouraging the group to learn by modelling the words and body parts so that they will become familiar with the names of parts of the body in Tokelauan and English language.

Evidently language and cultural learning at TAK occurs in both spontaneous and unplanned as well as planned episodes of learning. Teachers take advantage of learning opportunities that happen in the moment to weave in language learning using a mainly bilingual approach. These episodes complement the more planned approach in which daily embedded routines are built and maintained in the TAK programme.

Documentation philosophy, language policy, and strategic planning.

The third main area of findings is related to TAK's documentation that supports language and cultural practice; in particular the Philosophy Statement the draft Language Policy and the Strategic Plan. As noted in the previous chapter, analysis at the institutional level considers policy, teaching practice, and processes within the community that build on cultural and language traditions, as well as the documentation for a range of purposes (Rogoff, 2003; Wenger, 1998).

Philosophy statement.

The philosophy statement forms the central focus from which all aspects of the centre operation emanate and link back to (Clark & Grey, 2010; Education Review Office, 2014). The philosophy statement espouses the centre's vision, aspirations, core values, beliefs, and approaches. Furthermore, the objectives contained within the philosophical approach should be evident in the practices and policies and inform the community of the quintessential principles of the service.

TAK's philosophy of practice seeks 'to develop a sense of identity and belonging with children and community members in the setting'. An important consideration for the service is to build a strong sense of community identity and belonging, strengthening the Tokelau culture in the younger generation. Wenger (1998) suggests that this process of building identity and belonging is developed as a negotiated experience through participation in communities.

Another principle specified in the TAK philosophy is 'developing relationships with people, places, and things is an important cultural practice'. Social learning takes place through tuakana/teina relationships and within and across the collective group, thus aligning with the Indigenous, Polynesian frame of culturally relevant learning using the developmental learning theory of Tuakana Teina (Royal-Tangaere, 1996).

The philosophy statement aims for 'children to speak the Tokelauan language with confidence', and 'teachers to implement the Tokelau culture'. The statement proclaims that 'the service offers a programme that differs from mainstream education'. Notably it states that 'language and culture are closely interwoven and each share an equally important status'. These sentiments encompass many of the key areas which TAK seeks to promote.

The final principle in the philosophy statement promotes 'developing strong links with the wider Tokelauan community both here in Aotearoa New Zealand and "back home" in Tokelau'. The TAK community strives to maintain a strong and wide community support

network. Of the three case study settings in this research, TAK is the only one that has ongoing contact with its home nation through the maintenance of links to the only preschool on Nukunonu. Having taught at TAK in earlier years before returning to Nukunonu with her family, the preschool teacher in Nukunonu is well-known to the TAK team. In 2006 the TAK teachers made a trip back to Nukunonu renewing their connections to the village community and school on the atoll. Maintaining a strong identity to the Tokelauan culture and homeland is considered to be imperative as the group strives to maintain links between Aotearoa New Zealand and Tokelau. Using Wenger's 1998 concept of identity, the group is negotiating ways of not only belonging to the local community, but also across the Pacific to their homeland.

Each of these statements in the philosophy indicates the aspirations of the Tokelauan community in this case study setting are to ensure culturally embedded practices are demonstrated and promoted across all areas of centre operations. The following conversation expands on aspects of the philosophical tenets as outlined in practice at TAK.

An, a father with a young child at TAK, describes his experience both as a parent at TAK, and a contributing member of the Tokelauan community. He felt that TAK played a key role in cultural maintenance. An admitted that mostly he spoke English at home to his child, despite his and his wife's knowledge of Tokelauan:

I was brought up strongly in the Tok (Tokelauan) culture. I lived with my grandparents (back in Tokelau); my grandma she has been around for a long time. She spoke to me in Tokelauan. I can understand it and I can speak it as well.

Al. Do you speak it to your daughter?

An. I do, but mostly English, but her grandma (his mother) speaks to her in Tokelauan.

Al. What about your wife? Does she speak Tokelauan language?

An. Oh she's like me, you know, she is Tokelauan but my daughter is getting mostly English at home. I think it is because she is New Zealand-born. Sometimes I think I'm being lazy. You know, I can understand it and I can speak it. I guess that I want her (his daughter) to be the same because with every generation we are sort of creeping away more. Thing is, there is my mother who is fluent, and then there's me and I am half and half, and so that's what I want, I want more (Tokelau language) for her.

An. identified that the key principles of language and culture were interwoven and that it was important that his daughter benefit from the experiences she was exposed to at TAK in order to gain language, culture, and a strong sense of Tokelauan identity. Therefore An's point of view supported the philosophical approach underpinning TAK's programme which is to advance Tokelauan language and cultural learning for the children at TAK.

Draft language policy.

R, the supervisor, explained that the TAK policy for language (in draft at the time of my data gathering) is bilingual: "We use the bilingual because we have so many of our children and families who are from mixed backgrounds. Sometimes the parents don't know the language and the children don't understand so we use both Tokelauan and English with our children." R explains that they also consider it is important to use Te Reo Maori: "We use Te Reo (Maori) at our mat time and when we read stories, so that our children are learning this language as well". During a mat session, I observed R leading the children in the song, "Twinkle. Twinkle little star". The next verse was then sung in the Maori language of Aotearoa/New Zealand beginning "Tirama, tīrama, nga whetu", to which many children joined in. R then exclaimed, "Paki, paki", which is the Aotearoa/New Zealand Maori word for clap. During another visit the children sang me their Welcome Song, "Tahi, lua, Talowha, talowha, talowha, kia ora koutou katoa, Ni sam bula vinaka, Talowha ni, Hello everybody are you all right?" Thus, a trilingual approach is embraced in an inclusive way to represent all three languages that they are promoting in the setting.

The language policy is implemented in the mat time practices. Whilst a bilingual approach is embraced, at times trilingual practice is evident when songs in Te Reo Maori are sung as well as multicultural practices, thus demonstrating an inclusive approach to language learning in keeping with the increasingly multicultural roll at TAK.

Strategic plan.

TAK's strategic plan for 2015-2017 states that 'TAK believes in cultural expectations, respect for and the role of our elderly, and also values our cultural and spiritual beliefs'. This is translated as: e talitonu ia TAK ki a mokomokaga whakaaganuku, whakaaloalo ma te amanakia o tagata matutua, ma whakataua o tagata matutua, ma whakataua te aganuku ma na talitonuga whakaekalehia. Selected goals within the strategic plan aim to support positive learning outcomes for children and to promote

- Tokelauan language and culture

- Positive identities for Tokelauan children
- To provide a learning environment that is based on a Tokelauan method of educating to allow Tokelauan children to develop and grow to experience and value the Tokelauan culture.

Thus, in summing up this section on documentation, it can be seen that a strong cultural and language focus is built into the philosophy, policy, and planning for TAK. The philosophy statement, the language policy, and the strategic plan document the framework of values and beliefs of the centre around preservation, maintenance, and transmission of language and culture and underpin the ways they are implemented in practice as presented in the previous sections on planned and spontaneous teaching and learning episodes.

Environment promotes language and cultural learning.

The fourth area of findings in relation to research question one which seeks to find out how the physical environment effectively promotes and reflects the language and culture and demonstrates philosophy in action. The first section looks at the physical design of the building followed by aspects of the internal environment and the centre layout, artefacts and displays that display Tokelauan culture. Leading on from this are examples of how children access and use the environment to enhance their cultural learning.

Building design.

The building at TAK was constructed in 1990 using a government architectural plan developed specifically for Pacific language nests. Outwardly it resembles a conventional early childhood plan and bears little resemblance to a traditional Pacific construction. Inside the main part of the building is open plan leading out to a wide porch area. To one side is the infants and toddlers space catering for the smaller group of under two-year olds. Features such as the wide entrance way and the open plan design work to cater for the collective community group. An instant visual impact is made with the welcome sign in Tokelauan language, and the use of the notice board to display Tokelauan language. On my visits I noted there was usually a vase of flowers, such as Gardenias and other tropical flowers, in the foyer. Shoes are taken off at the door and visitors are warmly greeted with “Talowha Ni” from the teachers.

Inside environment

In one corner a shrine represents the place of the church in the lives of the children and community. Supporting children’s developing spirituality aligns with the Poutama, which

symbolises the stairway to the spiritual realm, and connects to the spiritual dimension embraced in Polynesian human development (Royal-Tangaere, 1996).

The walls are print rich with Tokelauan greetings, numbers, alphabet, and short phrases displayed around the indoor environment. As part of the enculturation process many of the bright, plastic toys were stored away and replaced with natural wooden, woven, and shell resources. The Tokelauan teachers were very knowledgeable about the cultural artefacts and resources. Furthermore they demonstrated skill in weaving woven products such as mats and fans that were displayed in the setting. Centre family and community members, encouraged by the increase in use of Tokelau resources, began to provide shells and wooden products from their homes. The centre priest, who has brought a large shell collection to Aotearoa New Zealand from Tokelau, gladly donated some of his collection for the children to explore and learn about Tokelau sea life. A large mural of the sea around Nukunonu, painted by a parent, provides a backdrop to this replication of “life on the atoll” within the centre. These details were gathered during the research in accordance with Nussbauer’s (2011) claims that the collection of rich data, incorporating the physical space in the educational setting, can contribute to the depth and quality of description of the setting. Using a cultural-historical activity lens, Rizzo (2003) claims that activity is mediated by cultural artefacts, in this case artefacts that enable cultural learning to proceed.

Children exploring the natural materials

The following vignette shows children using the environment to expand their cultural experience with natural materials and artefacts. E and P are both under two years of age and are, thus, based in the under 2’s area. During this episode they enjoy exploring the natural materials in the environment. The toddlers move to the table which has woven products displayed. P picks up a woven head dress (pale or whau) and places it on E’s head. She then picks another and places it on her own head. They look at each other and laugh. In a subsequent brief episode, another child places a woven basket on his head and finds this highly amusing.

In this episode, a well-resourced environment supports children’s cultural learning. An environment that surrounds children with traditional products allows children to access these artefacts and to use them in their play contexts, in their own way. The children in this episode demonstrate their understandings of using traditional woven products in authentic ways. The use of such products has been modelled by teachers and parents in the past. They demonstrate relationship building and the notion of Inati (sharing) is emerging in the children’s sharing of

the pale (hat). Cultural learning is carried out by use of the traditional materials and by sharing these together. This is an example of children learning at the interpersonal level in which the peers are interacting in guided participation in culturally valued activities. E & P engage in a tuakana/teina relationship in which P places the pale (hat) on E. In turn E carries out the move, revealing her understanding of where to place the pale.

During an observation in the over-tuos area, I observe teachers facilitating a group session using natural resources from Tokelau, such as shells and woven artefacts, in a numeracy activity with children using these resources for counting, grouping, making sets, and seriation. Teachers and children sit around in a circle on the woven pandanus mat and teachers talk about the shells, where they have come from, and demonstrate weaving using flax and other materials. Via this sensory, cultural experience, children use the resources in a range of ways, and their learning of cultural resources and practices are strengthened.

Summary of section 1

This section has presented evidence that, in TAK, there is a wide range of practices in place to support and enhance language and cultural learning. The documented values and beliefs described in the philosophy statement, and practices demonstrated in the language policy, bolster and frame teaching approaches. The cultural and linguistic knowledge of the teaching team upholds the range of ways that language and cultural practices are promoted through strategic planning. Furthermore the environment is rich with cultural artefacts and resources which children and teachers access to enhance language and cultural learning.

Involvement by Members of the Language Nest Community

The second research question is: In what ways are families and community members involved in the Pacific language nest, and in other community settings such as church. Thus, this section presents the study's findings on the ways in which the families and community are involved in TAK and other community activities. The first section focusses on teachers' involvement in the TAK community, including the supervisory leadership role, and teachers' perspectives, followed by the involvement of parents and community members in the TAK programme, including the Tokelauan language week. The second section presents activities that are linked to TAK but take place in other community settings: church services, school networking, Te Umiumiga (Tokelau cultural group) community gatherings, and Community support of the cultural programme.

Teachers' involvement.

Supervisor leads the team.

R is the supervisor at the centre and has been involved there, in that role, since TAK was established in 1990. She is also a member of the VAG and provides a wealth of information as a prominent member of the centre and the church, as well as a senior educator in the teaching team. It is R's vision for the centre and her leadership which promote strong, cohesive, and motivated teamwork. Additionally, R is the interface between the Ministry of Education and other government bodies. As a tuakana (leader) she demonstrates skill to engage the teaching team to actively participate in collective endeavours, which, in turn, enables and preserves the community's coherence (Wenger, 1988). In a process of guided participation, R competently guides her team to acquire skill and expertise in taking on leadership roles. For example, Ka, a newly-graduated teacher, was given the responsibility for creating the programme planning board exploring the life cycle of the Lelewhua (butterfly). R explained "I could see she had some good ideas, so I asked her to put the display on the wall. She did a really good job." Thus, in this instance, R is enabling Ka to develop skill by providing interpersonal support and guidance (Rogoff, 2003). Likewise, R's strong cultural knowledge and her standing within the church and community inspires confidence in, from what I observe is a friendly, motivated team. Her leadership style is hallmarked by humility, respect, and a calm, approachable demeanour. Engaging a cultural-institutional plane (Rogoff, 2003) these characteristics have enabled R to work in a consultative, collective way with the wider Tokelauan community.

Teachers' perspectives.

Teachers' perspectives provided further information and examples of community involvement, in particular within the teaching team. Ka informed me that in her role as a younger teacher, or teina, she has learned a lot from R, including cultural knowledge, and also stating

"I am learning to speak Tokelauan words, and I am using these with the children". Furthermore, Ka, a fluent Samoan speaker, reported, "I feel encouraged in this setting to be more culturally strong in my teaching practice in Samoan as well as learning the Tokelauan".

Ke is a trained teacher who had recently moved to TAK from a career in mainstream ECE. She is Tokelauan-born and fluent in Tokelauan language and cultural practice. She commented:

The main thing that was keeping me there, in the mainstream, was the money, but I know that teaching the Tokelauan language is important for me. That is why I come back here to TAK.

M is another young Tokelauan teacher who echo's Ke's sentiments. She has recently joined the TAK teaching team. She explained:

I didn't realise the strong Tokelauan culture and language focus at TAK. I really appreciate the chance to work with my community. It's very different to the mainstream. I am very happy to be here and to use my Tokelauan language and culture, here with the children and support the families.

Clearly the perspectives of the teachers reveal their strong commitment to supporting and promoting Tokelauan language in their teaching practice. They demonstrate a range of skills from novice or teina teacher to those with a depth of language and cultural practice.

Parents' and community involvement.

Parent involvement is a strength of the TAK programme. Parents provided a range of reasons for enrolling their children in this setting. A key motivation was the relationship that the parent or family may have to the centre, as well as the desire to contribute, and support the language and cultural learning that are promoted and practiced in the centre. A, a young father, gave the Tokelauan language as the main reason for using the service. Connection to his mother's cultural background was a further compelling reason to bring his child to the centre:

I was brought up as a Tokelauan on my mother's side. My father never spoke Samoan, so I am closer to my Tok side, so that is why I bring her to a Tokelauan centre. I am not really able to use the Tokelauan language so that's a biggy for me.

This sentiment was supported by T, another parent:

Well, I think for me, first and foremost I bring my kids here for the language. I (originally) went to kindergarten (with my children) but it wasn't the place for me.

Clearly it was more than the language provision on its own in this setting, which appealed to this parent. She went on to state that the underpinning cultural values and practices espoused in the philosophical approach and the links to her homeland were compelling factors in her decision to remain with the centre:

So, it was amazing that I found out that there are so many philosophies out there as well. We come mainly for the culture of Tokelau...I help here because I was born and grown up in the islands and I could see how we struggle...with our English. We are very minor in comparison to our English and that's what keeps me coming. I think also that most of your young parents are New Zealand-born and so they do not always have the same, you know, values of the islands, and there are those differences.

The tight-knit Tokelauan community was clearly also important to young parents. A continued:

Ah, yes, that is what the Tokelauan community is all about...doing things together – like the teachers, they all know each other, they are all related and this is bringing in the Tokelau village, you know, all doing things together.

Community endeavours are considered a way of ensuring the continuity of this small community. A central tenet is the cultural knowledge and understandings that children would gain during their early years of education at the TAK. A parent suggested that by attending TAK his daughter would learn her cultural identity and connection to the Tokelauan community:

Well I think just being around our Tokelauan community, just being around everyone, will help her. So, it's the closest they will get to being back home... Being here is like being at a village school. She's interacting with her cousins on a daily basis and developing her social interactions.

Within a traditional Polynesian village, grandparents are valued for their knowledge, skills and wisdom (Claessen, 2009). Historically, and to a lesser extent in contemporary times, grandparents play key roles in cultural transmission of rules around social life, how to behave towards family members, and assisting children to become versed in the intricacies of the village kinship system. They assist children to learn the tasks that they will need to perform as adult men or women. Several of these are gendered roles with clear demarcations between roles played by males and females introduced in the early years (Claessen, 2009; Kupa, 2014). The boys learn the skills of tasks such as fishing and planting from their fathers and other older male relatives. The girls learn tasks such as cooking and caring for their younger siblings from their female relatives.

In the TAK context the gender divisions are not reinforced as closely. For example, in one episode, A., a young father, was lying on the book corner floor reading to his infant daughter,

selecting a Tokelauan reader and pointing to the words and pictures as he read the story. This scene would be less likely in the traditional pre-colonisation Tokelau context where reading to children may be considered women's work, and part of the gendered caregiving role in the early years (Claessen, 2009). Employing a CHAT theoretical lens, Englestrom (2001) states that activity systems include interacting systems to deal with tensions and contradictions that occur within the collective group over time and context. The majority of Tokelauan children are born in Aotearoa New Zealand and M, a teacher, noted changes that have occurred in cultural practices from those who were born and raised in Tokelau. Accordingly the practice of A reading stories to his baby, is an example of such change in cultural practice.

Grandparents and elders in the community take a keen interest in the running of the centre and their input is encouraged by the teaching team who recognise the importance of their cultural wisdom. This aligns with a previous research project conducted with Pacific language nests in which the role of the grandparent in the early childhood setting was seen as a gift or taonga (treasure) (Glasgow & Rameka, 2016). As R explained:

In our TAK environment we still want our old, you know, to given their wiser (wisdom) and 'cause they are (older) we want our language to be alive... So we want our kaumatua (elders) to be around even though they may not (always) be actively involved with the children like (in play) activities, but they need to interact with them using their mother tongue to make sure the little ones here are not losing the language.

P, a retired grandfather, is fully supportive of TAK and demonstrates this in a number of ways. He drives his grandson to the centre daily, sometimes picking up other children who need transportation. Several mornings a week he comes in and helps out, reading stories, assisting at mat time, and providing support for the teaching team. He combines this with any duties that he may have at the church next door.

The role of teachers and their involvement in the wider Tokelauan community reveals the manifold ways of participation. The senior teachers, such as R, bring language and cultural knowledge, leadership and mentoring support, whilst the younger teachers are keen to develop language and cultural skills and use these in their teaching roles. Parents and the wider community are involved in the TAK programme in a range of ways, including valuable input from Tokelauan community elders.

Tokelauan language week.

The annual language week celebration, during the first week of November, is one that is keenly anticipated and planned. Each year, the teachers plan a range of activities for the week which showcase their language and cultural programme and practices. In my first year of data-gathering the contact with Tokelau, and Nukunonu in particular, had extended to the primary school in Nukunonu, with which they held a Skype session. Each day a range of cultural activities are held and community members are invited to participate. In 2017, the theme was ‘Tokelau ke mau ki te Gagana a nā tupuna auā he towhi mai te Atua/Tokelau hold fast to the language of your ancestors because it is an inheritance from God’ bringing together strong elements of language, culture, and spirituality. On the final day of language week a large meal was prepared and provided to the community including local dignitaries, the local Member of Parliament, and members from the Ministry of Education attended the celebration.

During mat time sessions, the children at the centre had been practicing a range of songs and items to present to the guests. In this way they were learning to become competent as hosts and as knowledgeable presenters of traditional songs and items. TAK regards the language week highly as a means of transmitting the message of the valuable work conducted in the setting, including the values and beliefs that underpin the philosophical approach. The media are invited and write a piece for the local community newspaper and items are broadcast on television channel *Tangata o te Motu* (People of the Pacific Islands). Also, the Access Radio Tokelauan channel plays a key role in broadcasting the upcoming event, as well as recording aspects of the language week programme and playing these via the radio, back to the community. Thus the language week is a prime event for bringing the community together in a range of ways, to showcase the range of ways that TAK is promoting and enhancing Tokelauan language and culture in the setting and wider community.

Community involvement outside TAK.

TAK’s connections to the wider community are evident. The Tokelauan community is tight-knit and the people share a common migrant history. Many came to the Hutt Valley for employment in the growing motor industry and allied businesses and have retained close links to their cultural community and the church.

Church and community gatherings.

Spirituality in the form of Christian practice underpins TAK's operations; in particular is the central place and influence of the Catholic Church. This strongly aligns to the Poutama which symbolises the path to the spiritual realm, enabling one to ascend through levels of development (Royal-Tangaere, 1996). I recall that one afternoon in my early data-gathering at TAK, the church bells were ringing and a steady stream of mainly elderly, but also younger community members, were slowly passing by to attend the church next door. A community member had passed away and the funeral was being held. It brought to mind the village community on my island atoll, very similar to Nukunonu, where the church along with the school, forms the village hub. Many of the community events occurred in this context. The supervisor, R, reinforced the place of the church in the learning and development of the children at the centre. She informed me that often the "older ones", aged three to five, would accompany some of the teachers to these church sessions held on weekdays. This enabled children to learn the desired behaviours when attending church and to be involved in community and church activities. Christianity, in the form of Catholicism, is ingrained and practiced within the centre programme. Furthermore, the church provides financial support. The church funded the initial stages to assist in the building of the centre, and also provided the land, carved from the local Catholic School beside which the centre is located. Without this assistance R acknowledges it would have been almost impossible to establish the Pacific language nest. The socio-dramatic corner at TAK has an altar, candles, and other religious icons, representing the central position of the Catholic Church at TAK. Also, the teachers take a role in assisting in church activities. During a Tokelauan church service, I observed the teachers taking a prominent role in the service proceedings, leading the congregation in singing and bible reading.

Community events play an important role in retaining connections for community members. Rogoff (2003) notes that at the cultural institutional level of analysis, the cultural contributions are important considerations. Furthermore, she proposes that the involvement of human activity reveals the dynamic and mutually constituting nature of the individual, interpersonal, and cultural-institutional processes (p. 62). Grandparents I spoke to at a church gathering expressed their gratitude that TAK was still in operation as many felt keenly that the language and culture of their homeland needed to be encouraged with their grand and great grandchildren. One grandfather, P, described the depth of feeling he experienced when he heard his grandson singing the songs that he had learned back home as a child:

It warmed my heart to hear the little ones sing the songs that I remember learning at home. It makes it worth it to bring him here just so he learns the Tokelauan ways. It is a great thing so he won't forget who he is ... a Tokelauan. The teachers here they do a great job.

A grandmother provided her view:

As a grandmother I have to make sure that my grandchildren are learning the language. I take them along to TAK and I teach them simple words like 'through' and 'come' in Tokelauan, and I said to the language group, 'let's do something before it's too late, and I'm really proud of them and I want them to continue and even (though) some of the older ladies (who were once involved) some go to Australia and (some) back to Tokelau.

An elderly gentleman spoke up at the Talanoa, saying, "I started it, I started TAK, because we knew the importance of it, of the language". This was a well-attended Talanoa and I reflected at the time, that this demonstrated the importance that the collective group places on language and cultural maintenance. The group had made it very clear that they want the Tokelauan language culture and identity to remain strong. M, a grandmother who had a lot of input into the programme in earlier times, described her thoughts on the importance of language preservation:

I think the language is a precious gift. People born in Tokelau, they learn it (the language) from birth, but over here they have to learn it in a different way, they acquire it, so I encourage them, I speak with them (in) Tokelau (language) and like reading stories to them, and I remember the old days. It is important that the message is given about the language and how important it is for the Tokelau people.

Another grandmother added her experience:

My children identify as Tokelauan but it is the little ones (who need encouragement). I have a whiteboard at home and when I write the word I say to the little one, 'you come and tell me the word' (she laughs). It is not for us to say 'our language is lost' if we do nothing about it. I encourage them at home and they come and we pray every day together; and some of my grandchildren,

they look like they aren't saying their prayers but some of these days they will be able to.

Rogoff (2003) posits that mutual structuring of participation occurs when recounting and listening to narratives, with a range of cultural and language traditions being conveyed. Moreover, stories are central to instruction and learning in many cultures.

B, a community elder, on finding that I am from Tongareva, compared notes about living on an atoll:

On your island you have a lot of water eh? (I explain that it is only rainwater that is caught and stored in tanks). In Tokelau we only have the rainwater. So, if you go to Tokelau you will see what I mean. In Tokelau...the foundations of our house, it is a concrete pad. So, we get the water from there, into the tank. If the tank's fitted properly it is a brilliant idea. It keeps the water cool and fresh. But if there is any rubbish it can get contaminated. But it can work brilliantly.

He then noted a further relational connection between us:

I was raised by my extended family, but my natural father married a pukapuka (lady from Pukapuka, a northern Cook Islands atoll that is closest to Tokelau).

Wenger's (1998) concept of identity applies here within the notion of negotiated experience, where our experiences and knowledge of community practices help to define who we are. Furthermore it is Rogoff's (1990) belief that we enhance our greater understandings by sharing in the process of guided participation where mutual understandings are built between people in interactions.

At the Talanoa held with the elders of the Tokelauan community, the elders stood and conducted a traditional song to give thanks for the opportunity to express their support for their community. I observed young children milling about observing and listening to the discussion, the songs sung, and the protocols around community gatherings. This constitutes very valuable exposure to the rituals and expectations that cannot be as easily replicated in another situation. Thus, such opportunities provide rich learning for these children to become enculturated into the Tokelauan community in Aotearoa New Zealand. Lave and Wenger (1991) maintain that through this process of observation, children are engaged in legitimate peripheral participation. The children are involved in their community's mature activities, watching what is going on and becoming involved. Children's learning through intent participation (Rogoff, 2003) and

observation of activities in everyday life, assists mastery in apprenticeship. Further Lave and Wenger (1991) refer to this as learning by osmosis, picking up values, skills, and mannerisms with close involvement with the socialising agent.

Te Umiumiga.

The tightknit community support is manifested in many ways. Te Umiumiga a Tokelau is a community service that was established in 1989. The main goal was to bring the local Tokelauan community together. In 1998, a hall in Naenae was purchased from funds raised by the Tokelauan community. In turn, this group went on to fundraise to assist with the establishment of TAK, the first licensed Tokelauan preschool in 2001 (Dunlop & Makisi, 2003). All of the Tokelauan teachers in the team have been involved with Te Umiumiga a Tokelau. It is located in fairly close proximity to the centre which enables members to be on hand to support with centre and community events.

A talanoa with a grandmother elaborated on the importance of this community initiative. The discussion that preceded the reference to Te Umiumiga was about the preservation of the Tokelauan language and culture:

I make sure that my daughter can speak Tokelauan language. We always do (language) workshops at Te Umiuminga and we talk about how beautiful the Tokelauan culture is, and the women who are involved in this.

Te Umiuminga, then, provides another community place for language learning. The community has identified that there is a need for adult language classes, and practices have been implemented in this meeting venue as encouragement. Alongside this are the cultural connections that are reinforced through the social gatherings held at Te Umiuminga. From a community perspective, this assists in the Tokelauan community remaining tight knit. Importantly, Te Umiumiga sits outside the church community, so providing a meeting place for those who do not belong to the church community. I was informed that the Te Umiuminga hall was used during the week for the elderly to meet together for morning tea and to play cards. The hall's in close proximity to the church, school, and TAK allows the elderly to contribute to the early childhood programme.

School networking.

The centre has a strong relationship with the school next door. Many of the children attending the TAK transition to the Catholic school; to ensure this occurs effectively, the teaching teams within each service have developed a transition to and from school process. Children who are

approaching five spend time in the new entrants' classroom (a common practice for children transitioning to school). A practice that is not so common is that once a week the new entrants' class visits TAK. During my observation of this session in the early afternoon, R facilitated mat time and invited children from the school to join in the activities that were set up for their benefit.

During my data-gathering time at the centre, I observed older children during their play and lunch breaks hanging over the fence, calling to their younger siblings and friends. The closeness of the school and the relaxed, supportive, and respectful partnership between the two education providers strengthened the relationship and assisted in the transition of children to school. There is a Tokelauan teacher based at the primary school and this further strengthens the links between the two educational settings.

Community support cultural programme.

As noted earlier in the chapter the cultural programme in place during my visits emphasised the practice of Inati- a Tokelauan practice of community care and service (Kupa, 2014). Inati is demonstrated in a range of ways and for several different purposes. In some ways it is representational of the care and consideration the Tokelauan community show for each other. R the supervisor recalled:

When my first child was born, instead of giving him to his grandparents to raise (as is the usual custom) we had another way. When the men go fishing, everyone gets a share of the catch. My son's share is given to his grandmother – that's his Inati. When my second one was born the Inati went to the other side (of the family).

This practice was seen as a way of not only sharing the catch, or the harvest; it was a way of ensuring that the elderly in the village were cared for by the younger generation. At TAK, the programme encourages the sharing of resources such as shells and woven artefacts with the children. Sharing of time and expertise is also encouraged with elders such as P attending the centre programme and assisting with mat time songs and stories.

P a grandfather, described how he used Inati in the community. He was concerned about the "street kids" in the city. He spoke of how he bought packets of thick woollen socks and carried them in his car to give out to street kids. He also described how he would collect an old man for church every Sunday, saying "That is my Inati to them – to help them out". Another parent donated her time and expertise to paint a sea scape mural on the centre wall with paint donated by centre families.

Summary of Section 2

Summing up parent and community involvement is evident in a number of ways within TAK and within the wider Tokelauan community. Elders take a keen interest and offer assistance, and traditional knowledge and support as noted in TAK and in community events and groups.

Challenges to the operational management of TAK

This section, addressing the third research question, explores the challenges faced by TAK. These challenges include community resources due to decreasing number of elders and language speakers, as well as the decreasing level of family and community support. Further, it was found that frequent changes at management level have placed an increasing workload on the supervisor and insufficient funding has impacted adversely on the centre's ability to provide ongoing training and professional development opportunities.

Diminishing community resources in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

While it was noted that the community provides valuable support, a key challenge for TAK is that the number in this group is beginning to decline. This is occurring in two ways. Firstly, the number of elders in the group continues to decline, and secondly, the amount of community involvement is also lessening.

The following statement relates to the diminishing group of the older Tokelauan people; those who were some of the initial waves who travelled to Aotearoa New Zealand. In this case an elder who was moving back home to Nukunonu explained:

I'm going back to live. My brothers and sisters are forcing me to go back, because no one else is the Matai (chief). But I really don't want to go back because of my grandchildren, (who are living in Aoteroa New Zealand) but I will go back because for the villagers, (although) I haven't been back for 40 years.

This is an example of the tensions that exist in cultural expectations and the challenges encountered by groups who have links in both countries. R, the supervisor, commented that there is an increasing trend for the elderly to move to Australia to live with children and family there. This issue is directly related to the diminishing resource of fluent, native language speakers, which is also becoming problematic.

The decreasing community support has also increasingly affected TAK. R noted that the community is generally only involved in special events that TAK holds such as the annual

language week celebrations. She commented, “They (the community) attend for the language week but not the whole week”. She continued, “The community is changing and parents only come in when they want to and teachers are expected to care for their children” (without the earlier strong level of community support). Thus the extent and the ways in which the community support TAK are changing in accordance with the societal and demographic changes that are occurring, all of which are impacting on the TAK programme and management. Consequently TAK has modified and made adjustments to accommodate change.

Frequent changes in the management committee.

Challenges also occur at the management committee level. R informed me that “The rollover of the governance group is a constant challenge”. R opined that this impacts on both the stability of the management committee and her role of supervisor. She noted that they are frequently having to “start from scratch” when a committee member leaves and this places a burden on her workload as supervisor. R is required to pick up tasks that are left by departing committee members which are often not part of her established job description and which leaves her questioning “what my role is” and feeling overloaded.

Insufficient funding.

The centre has been impacted adversely by a funding shortfall. R finds this increasingly challenging in terms of supporting her untrained staff to access training. Furthermore, lack of funding has meant that members of the teaching team are unable to enrol in professional development courses to upskill and keep abreast of current trends in ECE. R is concerned that the centre will be at risk of losing good teachers if they are not able to provide them with good working conditions which include professional development and ongoing training opportunities.

Summary of Section 3

In summary the challenges that have impacted on TAK’s operations are the lessening community presence and support; constant changes at the operational level with a high and frequent turnover of management committee members; and the lack of funding to support ongoing training and professional development opportunities for staff and the teaching team.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented data from the Akonga Kamata (TAK) and the ways that this setting seeks to practise and promote Tokelauan language and culture within the language nest programme. Strong community support impacts significantly on the centre’s language

programme, but also reinforces the affirming attitude that the community, particularly the older generation of Tokelauan citizens, has.

The chapter has presented the findings of the case study, and is divided into three sections in alignment with the three research questions. Firstly the findings are presented on the practices and processes promoting and preserving language and culture, including the learning that occurs in planned and intentional practices, and the spontaneous and unplanned learning occurrences. Also in this section are the centre documentation which support language and cultural learning, and the first section ends with a focus on the centre environment and the cultural resource and artefacts contained within to extend and enhance children's language and cultural learning.

The second section responds to the second research question and the ways that families and community members are involved in the Pacific language nest. Firstly the involvement of the teachers as members of the TAK community are discussed including the role of the supervisor and then teachers' views. Following are examples of parent and community involvement within the centre, and finally the annual Tokelauan language nest event. The next section focusses on community involvement that occurs outside TAK such as church gatherings, Te umiumiga, school networking and community support programmes.

The third and final section, responding to the third research question, discusses the key challenges that exist for TAK. This section outlines the diminishing community resources in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Another challenge identified is the frequent changes in the management committee and finally insufficient funding to enable to support teachers' professional development.

As with the previous chapter on the Cook Islands, this chapter has presented findings from the second of the three case studies, Tokelau, while chapter 8 will present the final case study, the Niuean language nest.

Chapter Eight

Case Study Three: Niue the Third Leg of the Journey

Niuean Community Language Nest

Vagahau mata ki lunga, vagahau mata ki mata: the language continues to live and sail forward

Introduction

The third case study setting is a Niuean language nest Aoga Niue (NUK) in South Auckland. NUK was established in 1987. It opened initially as a Pacific playgroup in an old school hall, before becoming a fully licensed centre in 1990. In 2008 it located to its current purpose-built building, next door to the hall. This setting comprises separate wings for under two-year olds and over two-year olds with a central kitchen facility and dining room space. It is licensed for 15 under two children in one wing, and 30 over twos in the other. It has a supervisor, 10 teachers, a cook, and an administrator. They all speak the Niuean language at different levels. In 2015, NUK was placed under the management and administration of the current owner and licensee, R.

The findings for NUK are presented in three sections reflecting the research questions: 1) the practices and processes in this setting that enable, promote, and preserve language, culture, and traditional practices and knowledge for the Niuean community in Aotearoa New Zealand; 2) the ways that families and community members are involved in the Pacific language nest, in the centre and in other community settings such as church; and 3) key challenges that exist in the operational development of the Pacific language nest.

Practices and Processes Promoting and Preserving Language and Culture.

In relation to practices and processes that promote and preserve language, culture, and traditional practices and knowledge for the Niuean community in Aotearoa/New Zealand there are four main areas of findings: 1) planned and intentional practices in the daily programme; 2) spontaneous and unplanned learning opportunities fostering linguistic and cultural knowledge; 3) documentation philosophy and language policy, and 4) the ways in which the physical environment reflects the culture and provides opportunities for enhancing Niuean cultural and language learning.

Planned and intentional practices in the daily programme.

This section outlines the planned and intentional practices in the daily programme. These practices include greetings and farewells, mat time sessions, meal times, and daily care of infants. These practices predominantly align with the planned and intentional practices observed in chapters 6 and 7.

Mat time.

Mat time is utilised as a key vehicle for participating in collective learning of language through songs, chants, and other cultural practices, and of Niuean cultural values and beliefs. M., the supervisor, explained:

The mat time is an opportunity to reinforce the centre philosophy. It's all about respect. It's more than just language and culture. It is impossible to teach the children the language without the values, through songs, music, and movement. We teach them that way, but also we talk about how to respect their friends and elders. They learn to take their shoes off before coming to the mat, to stand in line, to sit down quietly, all (these practices) are Niuean ways of respecting. We have spiritual teaching and using Niuean language (allows) children to hearing the language. The rote learning is a big part of who we are; in the Island we learned this way.

A typical mat time involves beginning with a prayer and a Niuean song. From here the children and teachers launch into a set of Christian songs such as "This is the day that the Lord has made", "I'm gonna snap, clap, zoom and praise the Lord", "Jesus is the winner man", and "My God loves me". Songs are sung in English first and then in Niuean, with the same actions used in each version. Children join in the actions and appear familiar with the words for both the English and Niuean versions. They then respond to the instructions given in Niuean language by the teacher supervising the mat time session.

Children move about, wriggling and jumping, some remain sitting still. There is a lot of leeway for their interaction. The teachers on the other hand are very enthusiastically involved with the singing and the actions of the songs. The mat time is a prolonged process and children have become accustomed, some resigned, to sitting on the mat. There is little intervention by teachers and an unspoken expectation, or perhaps learned behaviour, appears to be established whereby children remain on the mat during this group session. Teachers are encouraging of children's efforts but equally relaxed about their levels of participation. M explained that

“The children who participate (are present) on the mat may not be (actively) participating but they can hear us. That is okay as they are still learning by being with us on the mat. They learn what we expect of them and our cultural ways”.

Lave (1988) suggests that within intent participation, apprentices and other learners attend to informative and ongoing events (such as the daily mat time) for their instruction. Furthermore Rogoff (2003) proposes that learning may occur by children “listening in” (p. 324), and by being “onlookers”, rather than interacting partners. In this way, children are provided opportunities to watch the important activities of their communities.

The mat time then moves on to a flag-raising ceremony, whilst singing the Niuean national anthem. The children are instructed to “Tu ki luga” (Stand up) and the children mostly stand and listen, teachers all singing, and holding up the Niuean flag. They then end the mat time with a prayer, and children stand with their eyes closed while the teachers say the prayer and fold the flag away. The following vignette describes a haka performance that took place. The children remained at the mat after the flag ceremony and a spontaneous haka chant was initiated by a teacher. “Tufakahoko” she shouted, to which the children responded, “tu faka hoko”. The chant then proceeded, “pono, pono, monu Tagaloa Niue, keke poi, keke poi, a tuea, tuea, keke poi, a tuea, tuea, tuea” with children acting out fishing using a spear, followed by “Kitu, kitu, e! A tuki, tuki puti tua shoo! Koi foi lumilala, koi, foi, lumilala” (rowing the boat). In this way children are learning from the teacher acting as tuakana, guiding them in a traditional Niuean chant, simulating traditional methods of catching fish, and demonstrating accurate and clear Niuean language, vocabulary, and diction. Also, this episode enabled children to experience a traditional Niuean practice.

This traditional chant that the children are learning mentions Tagaloa, the God of the sea. Thus, at mat times, traditional forms of spirituality and worship are interwoven with Christian forms, revealing that the place of traditional gods is not forgotten.

Opportunities such as this to participate in cultural practices build an understanding of Niuean identity and work to reify these practices (Wenger, 1988) as key cultural learnings. I noted that younger teachers, in their early twenties and thirties, and who are proficient in the language and cultural practices, who have lived in Niue and experienced traditional practices “back home” were contributing fully in the centre programme. Wenger (1998) suggests that the process of mutual engagement requires the full inclusion of members at the individual and the community level, in which attention is paid to community maintenance and to preserve cultural

maintenance. Wenger further proposes that mutual engagement does not call for homogeneity between members; therefore, contributions and participation will vary for individuals and groups.

In this group episode, it is evident that the younger Niuean teachers, who have worked as teina alongside knowledgeable tuakana in the cultural context, have gained proficiency in cultural and linguistic practice and are now becoming confident to become tuakana in their teaching roles. Furthermore, they act as role models for younger New Zealand-born teachers, who are thus mentored by their peers to gain stronger cultural and linguistic knowledge. I reflect that during the group mat time sessions, children are learning cultural skills of sitting, participating, observing, listening, collaborating, and relationship-building, as well as absorbing cultural cues, language skills, and knowledge (Thaman, 2008). Thus mat times are clearly intentionally planned to promote and preserve language and culture.

Greetings and farewells.

The daily practice of greeting and fare-welling parents and family in Niuean language is evident in the centre. During my visits to NUK I observed teachers greeting children and their parents and family using a bilingual approach. Parents and visitors are greeted in Niuean language, followed by English, as they enter: “Monuina e pogipogi-Good Morning” “Fakaalofa lahi atu-Hello”, “Malolo nakai a koe - How are you?” I was introduced to the teachers and parents who arrived during my visits, “ko Ali ae- this is Ali”. Teachers further responded, “Mitaki kua feleveia a taua- nice to meet you”. Parents would generally use English as greeting responses.

Likewise, at the end of the day teachers would farewell individual children as they departed with, “Koe kia S - Good bye S” or “Mua kia” (goodbye to more than one person) to parents and children departing. Clearly the planned approach to greetings and farewells promote language and culture using Niuean language followed by the English translation. The provision of the two language codes provides an effective means of language learning, whilst also allowing the language learner the opportunity to use the language they feel most comfortable with.

Meal times.

Mat time leads into hand washing prior to morning tea, another formal part of the daily programme. Children respond readily to commands that are delivered first in English followed by Niuean, demonstrating a bilingual approach to language delivery: “Wash your hands –

holoholo tau lima”, “come down – nofo ki lalo”. They then move into the dining area, which is a separate room off the main play area, and outside the kitchen. A Niuean prayer giving thanks for the food is recited before children begin to eat. Royal-Tangaere (1996) notes the prime importance of spiritual learning, which is clearly woven into the daily rituals, giving thanks to God for the food provided. Furthermore, participating in sharing food together enables a process, which Wenger (1998) refers to as negotiation of meaning and by participating in this experience children are developing their identities as Niuean.

The next formal gathering of the day is the lunch session at midday. Children are called to wash their hands and find their lunchboxes. The session begins with a prayer to bless the food

Daily care practices of infants.

Due to the separation of the children aged under two in this setting, I provide a description of this area. At NUK the under two teaching team focuses on a cultural caregiving programme for the infants and toddlers, which is conducted in a separate under two section of the centre. The Supervisor, M informed me that they use a “five senses” approach to care. As the name implies, this approach attends to all aspects of the child’s physical wellbeing, incorporating the child’s five senses. The staff explained that the matua (grandparents) have guided them in the decision to promote a culturally embedded programme for their pepe (babies). I was informed that there are no set routines, and children’s needs are met as they arise. For example, there is no set time for eating; rather, a “demand” feeding system is employed whereby children are fed, as the name suggests, when they demand or request food. M explained that this is how pepe are breastfed “at home” (in Niue): “When they are hungry they are put on the breast”. This demand feeding approach is also taken when babies begin to eat the “mama” (traditional way of chewing solid food so that it can be swallowed by the baby).

An important component of caregiving is the close bond that the caregiver and infant develop. This is particularly evident when an unsettled child is consoled. M informed me that a “crying baby gets a cuddle until it is no longer crying. We don’t put the babies down unless we are close beside them, and then we usually nurse them on our lap”. M told me that this was a directive from grandparents, who have requested that the staff “just nurse (comfort) and hold the babies”. Parents are frequently consulted so that a partnership is developed around caring for the infant. M noted that the “New Zealand policy didn’t always fit with the Niuean curriculum”, and that practices such as mama, (described above) were not allowed. As a

consequence of discontinuing the practice of mama, M opined, “Now there is more eczema and they don’t have the same immunities”.

A decision made by the centre management was to place all of the Matua (older, culturally knowledgeable) teachers in the baby room. They are the ones who can implement traditional cultural caregiving practices in the Niue language. Whilst the decision to have the older, including some untrained, teachers with the babies was questioned by the Ministry of Education during a routine visit, according to M, the teachers and management were able to articulate the rationale for this decision:

They (the MOE) questioned why all of our old ones (were) in with the babies. We were able to say that we were trying to maintain the vagahau (language and culture). We need the articulate ones in with the babies. We talk about the practice of ‘drinking the coconut milk’, which means providing the warmth for the under two children. We need to get our pepes (babies) off to a good start. This is the best part of the child’s life; when they are cared for and nurtured and surrounded by Vagahau. This is the island way. Although these old ones are not all qualified, they are the best qualified to work with the pepes and to help (give advice to) the young parents.

Wenger (1988) suggests that participation is a combination of social, affective, and cognitive aspects which enables a negotiation of meaning with particular experiences and contexts. This participation develops identity and that of the communities to which we belong. Furthermore, Wenger argues that learning occurs through engaging with practice which includes both explicit and tacit learning. It includes the language, tools, images, and symbols, well-defined roles that practices make explicit for a range of purposes. Rogoff (2003) suggests that learning also includes the embodied understandings of how to raise infants. This is an example of such learning happening, in the Niuean culture, and the shared world views of the Niuean teaching team and fanau (family). In this way the matua, in their role as tuakana teachers, take a prominent role in enculturating teina, both parents and their children, into the Niuean traditional ways of living.

In summary there are several ways in the NUK programme in which the daily planned and intentional practices promote language and cultural learning. These occur during greetings and farewells; mat time sessions; meal times and during the daily care giving of infants. Teacher draw on their linguistic and cultural knowledge to strengthen these learning episodes.

Spontaneous and unplanned learning opportunities.

The second area of focus relating to practices and processes promoting, and preserving language and culture are spontaneous and unplanned learning episodes. These episodes occurred in the moment and demonstrated the cultural and linguistic skill and expertise of the teachers conducting the episodes. Included in this section are conversations, play based episodes, and spontaneous music and dancing sessions observed. The episodes outlined link to similar findings with the Cook Islands and Tokelau centres.

Conversations.

Teachers and community elders converse in natural and unplanned instances, using Niuean language throughout all of my centre visits to NUK. I observed and recorded the following conversation which occurred in the moment, alongside the children playing outdoors. Two community elders Ma and J had just greet each other and they were catching up after not seeing each other for a while. The conversation turned to the demise of the Niuean community language nest that was established in Grey Lynn. “Tokologa lahi e tau Niue ne nonofo i Grey Lynn, koe mogonei kua kāmata e agoa Niue koe NUK, moe takitaki foou nakai manako a lautolu ke matatutaki” (There were so many Niue people down there in Grey Lynn. R. the new owner of NUK took the school *Te Whaariki* (the Aotearoa New Zealand ECE curriculum).” Koe mena haia, kua tamai a lautolu ki nuku”. (But they never bother, they never bother to carry on). Ma pointed to a child who has come from the playgroup in Grey Lynn that has closed, saying “That’s why they bring them here”. J opined “Mitaki lahi, mitaki kua tamai a lautolu ke fakaako e Vagahau Niue ha tautolo. Koe Aliko haia he Vagahau Niue” (that it is good, better to bring them over here, to learn the language).

Ma replies that several grandparents are now feeling more reassured that this service is carrying on the language learning programme. “They (the grandparents) are proud of their grandkids now” (for learning and speaking the language) and noting that grandparents have provided positive feedback on their children’s learning progress. This positive change was noted by Ma with her grandchildren stating “They are different now, they are different at home, they like being involved with the other kids, but before they never did, they (the grandchildren) just come along and hold onto their (her) leg” implying that her grandchildren had gained confidence that they had not felt initially. It is evident that grandparents and elders play a role in centre communities and have a keen interest in the development of the programme. Ma is also the centre cook and she and her husband T, are involved on a daily basis, as are the elders who assist in the under two area. Grandparents also play a key role in the annual Niuean

language week and other community events hosted by NUK. Thus daily ongoing spontaneous conversations between fluent Niuean teachers and elders expose children to models of language conducted in natural, conversational ways. Further providing another means of how language and cultural learning is imparted. The episode also denotes the pivotal role that fluent language speakers play in the programme

Play-based episodes.

Within the play-based programme opportunities are made for cultural learning. Once morning tea is finished children in the over two area are free to play in the wider environment, inside and outdoors. M the supervisor, encourages children to find their sunhats, “You must be wearing your hat outside, no, no here you go, where is your hat? No hat, no play”. The tendency to move into English for instruction of play is evident. Commands appear to ensure safety is maintained and using language which children understand appears critical to convey messages around safety practices.

In the following vignette J was demonstrating to children and others the use of the coconut, using the resources at hand. Two boys were looking at the brown, husked coconut that had been recently placed on the table in the cultural corner. One picked it up and pretended to crack it open with the sharp edge of his hand and laughed. J approached the pair and began to explain to me and the boys about the use of the coconut. J picked up the coconut and stated, “If you take the top off, it’s very easy – it’s got the milk inside”. She continued, ‘You know, when you scrape it and you squeeze it you got the milk’.

“Is it the hard one, not the soft one?” I asked.

“Not the soft”, she replied, and tapped it with her hand. “So we use a lot of that”, she explained. She then showed us the sinnet from the coconut husk, saying, “This one, you take it out and you use it for the squeezing”. “Ah, you use this to squeeze out the coconut milk” I ask. “Yes”, replied J “It is called the ‘ulu’, we use it to squeeze out the milk...everything is used from the coconut”. She held the ulu out to show the children who were watching. “See, this is the ulu”. In this way J acted as a guide at the interpersonal level, recognising the learning opportunities associated with children’s interest in the artefacts (coconut and sinnet) to extend their cultural knowledge and experience, explaining that every part of the coconut is used, and the range of uses indicates its important status in Niuean life.

In another episode, the community elder was informing the children about the traditional Niuean cooking house. A model of this was set up in the indoor environment in one of the indoor play fale.

J “This is the cooking house – in Niue we call it the ‘Peito’. That’s the umu there” J pointed to a structure of on the floor. The umu, they put the stones in it, but they had to remove the stone (in this setting) cause it is not safe so, cause it not safe for the children, but that’s the peito”.

I reply “Wow that’s like a cave, so they have it in a covered house”.

J responds “Yes, then you know the umu in Niue, they put the food in, they wrap the food in banana leaves”.

“So they put them on the top of the stones?” I ask.

J responds “yes on the stones and then more stones go on top, so it is covered, they cover it with more leaves. Not like the Maori they cover it with the soil”.

This episode demonstrates mutual structuring of participation by recounting and elaborating on cultural, communal rituals, and practices. In this way such play episodes provide prime opportunities for language and cultural learning at the personal, interpersonal and the wider cultural community planes.

Spontaneous music and dancing sessions.

Language and cultural learning occur spontaneously. The following vignette describes a language and cultural learning event which occurred “in the moment” in the under two area. It was late in the afternoon and some of the infants were in bed and some had already left for the day. There were two children present in the spacious infant play area.

A teacher was beating the pate (wooden drum) and a child approached indicating by pointing and holding out his hand that he would like to play the pate. “Oh, you want to play. Okay, Atu’s turn, Atu’s turn”. The teacher allowed the child to take hold of the sticks and start beating the drum, with the teacher moving to the beat. A young toddler runs past me and started to wiggle to the music. He clapped his hands “E pasi” (clap), the teacher responded and smiled. The teacher then started to chant in Niuean, “Tuku tau lima fakatali, tuku tau lima fakatali”. The child beating the drum stopped and the teacher said, “You march” and began to beat the drum in a regular pattern as the child swayed to the music and danced around. He picked up a plastic toy fish. “Ika” (fish), the teacher informed him, and he swung the ika around whilst

dancing. The teacher continued to beat the drum and called to the child to remain with the music, but his attention was drawn to the dress up box and he picked up a yellow construction hard hat. Another infant was also listening to the music episode and sat quietly alongside the teacher on the mat, mouthing a plastic toy, appearing content to listen to the drum beating. The episode came to a close when the older child became distracted by activity outside and stared out of the window at the parents arriving to collect their children. “All finished now, amanaki”. Wisely, the teacher had acted in the moment, with an awareness that the children’s attention may only span a short time. This episode, then, is an example of the teacher spontaneously encouraging the children’s participation in an unplanned music and dancing activity, weaving in language and cultural practice (drum beating), and pitching it at a level which acknowledges the developmental stages of the children involved.

In summary this section has provided examples of how language and cultural learning are imparted during spontaneous and unplanned ways in the programme. These occur during conversations, play based episodes and spontaneous music and dancing episodes. Thus demonstrating that language and cultural learning are woven into the daily programme in a natural way and which teachers optimize for teaching and learning with children.

Documentation: Philosophy and policy statements.

The third main area of findings are in the documentation that supports language and cultural practice. The relevant documents are the philosophy statement and the special needs and human rights policies. The philosophy documentation align to the documentation findings in chapter 6 and 7. The policy documentation differ as NUK do not have a separate language policy but statements are contained within the two policy documents mentioned above.

Philosophy statement.

The philosophy and vision for NUK set out the aspirations for the setting and the way that it intends to complete these in practice, policy, and centre governance and operation. The NUK vision “provides children with the best start in life, through the provision of quality early childhood education, starting at the most formative stages of their young lives” (NUK vision statement, 2016). The vision indicates the specific character of the educational setting and aims to provide such learning in the “Pacific way”, with loving, tender, and nurturing care, and weaving in a cultural frame to the settings aims.

The philosophy statement states that Niuean language is woven into the programme, providing learning opportunities and experiences to ‘ke fakatumau ke fakaaoga moe fakagahua e vagahau

Niue- maintain the Niuean language’. Alongside this is the intention’ to promote and retain the Niuean culture – fakamanatu mo e fakaako e tau mahani motu mo e aga motu’; ‘extend linguistic and cultural knowledge through arts and crafts – fakaako kehe tau gahua lima/tufuga lima’; and ‘retaining cultural narratives through recalling Niuean legends – fakaako kehe tau tala tuai’. The centre expresses the desire ‘to promote and retain the Niuean traditions and knowledge of their ancestors – ke fakamanatu e tau taoga mo e tau taleni he tau mamatua’. Cultural values such as’ respectful and righteous behaviours – ke fakaako e tau fanau ke mahani fakatokolalo mo e mahani totonu’ – are promoted. Lastly, ‘Christian-based learning and values are promoted in the programme – ke fakatumau e tau fakaakoaga kehe tau vala tapuaki mo e agaaga Tapu ke moua mai e tau loto fakamokoi, fakaalofa moe e fakalilifu’.

The philosophy statement expresses the desire ’to maintain the Niue language – ke fakatumau ke fakaaoga moe fakagahua e vagahau Niue’. This principle is implemented in practice and plays an important role in developing language ability in children before starting school and in supporting children’s identity (McCaffery, 2010).

The philosophical approach promotes a bilingual approach to language learning and the examples provided in this chapter demonstrate this approach in daily practice. At daily mat time sessions, a balance of Niuean and English is implemented thus promoting a bilingual approach to language learning. I reflect that the process of bilingual language transmission is determined by the confidence and skill of the teacher in using the home language. Episodes which occur “in the moment” are often a reflection of the language expertise of the teacher using the home language and this practice is evident in the range and frequency of the language learning episodes.

As previously noted in the mat time scenarios, bilingual practices in the daily routine generally using English language first followed by Niuean language; for example, “Wash your hands – Holoholo tau lima”, “Sit down – Nofo ki lalo”. This is not always the case such as “Fakaalofa lahi atu - Hello”, thus there is no clear approach of which language comes first. I observed however that children respond to the commands, and in this way they are developing an understanding of Niuean terms alongside the English.

When the centre was first established a Niuean language full immersion model was promoted. This approach has now been replaced and R, the owner, informed me of the process that the centre underwent to transition from a full language immersion model to the bilingual, English

and Niuean, model of language learning. The process involved parent consultation with parents being surveyed about full immersion and bilingual practices:

The response came back that they wanted the bilingual centre, ‘cos they wanted their children to learn both English, which is the language, economic language, but they also wanted to retain the Niue language. So, we had to take the lead from the parents and the community so we changed our licence from full immersion to a bilingual Niue centre.

R also noted that that had been difficult to eliminate the use of English from the full immersion programme:

I think the approach has clarified a lot more in terms of what they were doing, ‘cos the approach certainly was struggling at the beginning... although there was full immersion, we had to work really hard with staff to make it full immersion because of the (English) language that was used; so, what we actually found was [the bilingual model] aligned to what the teachers and the team were already doing.

Full immersion in a language other than English is challenging due to newly acquired teachers with little Niuean language fluency and the pervasive nature of English language usage, making it almost impossible to keep an “English free” environment in the Niuean setting.

We brought in English speaking (teachers) with some Niuean background. We had to find the right people for the job. This is where a lot of immersion programmes are coming unstuck, because a lot of their speakers are traditional and from a different age group as well.

Here R alludes to the idea that traditional Niuean teachers may not have current skills. This issue is discussed further in the Challenges section later in this chapter.

In summary, the philosophy statement documents and shows the centre’s values and beliefs on promoting and preserving language and culture and the ways they are demonstrated in practice.

Policy statements.

Two of NUK policy documents include statements that reinforce language and cultural principles. Whilst NUK does not have a Language policy it makes reference to language and cultural learning in two policy documents. Firstly, their Special Needs Policy (2015) states that bilingual and multilingual children are assets to the life of the pre-school and that they will be

valued in the NUK programme. This policy also states that cultural dietary needs of children will be met. The second policy is NUK's Human Rights Policy which states that NUK respects the basic human rights of children and families, and celebrates the differences between ethnicities, cultures, and races. Each of these policies acknowledge language and culture. Interestingly the notion of bilingual and multilingualism is positioned as a component of special needs and the human rights policy emphasises the human right to access one's culture and ethnicity. Whilst they are not contained within an easily identified policy format, evidently the policy documentation contain principles acknowledging the value and the fundamental human right of children and families to access an education in their home language and cultural learning.

To sum up this section identified and outlined the documentation at NUK that promotes and preserves language and culture. These documents were the philosophy statement and statements identified in the Special Needs and the Human Rights policies.

Environment promotes language and cultural learning.

The fourth area of finding in relation to the ways in which the physical environment reflects the culture and provides opportunities for enhancing Niuean cultural and language learning, is how the physical environment promotes and reflects the language and culture and demonstrates the philosophy and policies in action. The NUK building is purpose-built structure for a full day early childhood setting. Built in an L-shape, there are two distinct wings, where children are divided by age, into over twos and under twos. These two wings are joined by a communal kitchen, dining room and an over two multipurpose classroom space. This separating of the children by age is a clear departure from traditional Polynesian practices of child rearing. In a previous study (Glasgow & Rameka, 2016), I learned that in traditional Polynesian culture, children were raised in a communal way, with older children taking responsibility for their younger siblings and children of the village community, and encouraging *tuakana /teina* relationships to develop (Royal -Tangaere, 1996). *Te Whaariki* (Ministry of Education, 1996) the Aotearoa New Zealand early childhood education curriculum uses a developmental frame grouping children into infants, toddlers, and young children. A further requirement of the Ministry of Education is that early childhood settings are required to provide a separate space for children aged under two. This legislation, based solely on the Western developmental lens of grouping children in age-defined cohorts, has had a direct disrupting impact on Polynesian child rearing practice.

The indoor physical space, in the over two area, has been planned and set up to create a simulated Niuean village in the building. Clearly, the emphasis is to promote the cultural context, and to foreground the cultural artefacts and activities that exist in the traditional Niuean village. Replicating a traditional village exposes children to a culturally authentic learning activity, which resembles the Niuean experience. With the wide range of Niuean artefacts and resources one has a sense of stepping into a village in Niue, created in the wider, spacious indoor area. A Fale (traditional house) has been constructed draped in fern fronds over a wooden frame. It is a cook house where a container of logs is placed in preparation for the umu (earth oven). There are Kava sticks stored in this space. On the other side of the room is another fale enclosure. Traditional costumes of woven flax skirts are aesthetically displayed. The woven flax flowers, traditional materials covering the couch, traditional “lei” (flower garlands) and coconuts displayed on a table top, and bananas still attached to the stalk of the banana palm reinforce the cultural dimension. A wall display showing Niue and the main villages, which are all named, is framed by a woven mat and traditional fans. These artefacts are tangible ways of keeping the culture and links to the homeland in the physical environment. Children can connect to their villages and homeland. Furthermore, it provides a visual medium to display and promote language learning.

Traditional artefacts include woven baskets, fans, hats, and wooden pate (drums) for children to use. Compact Disks of Niuean music and songs are available and Niuean music is playing in the background. There is written Niuean text. Stalks of green bananas hang in the kitchen area to ripen. Coconuts were opened and flesh cut into small pieces for children to have at morning and afternoon tea. The cook informed me that traditional meals are provided for special occasions such as the Niue language week and religious days. There is an umu pit on the grounds outside available for the community to use when cooking using traditional methods.

The entranceway foyer space has been utilised effectively to showcase the special character of NUK. The noticeboards reflect Niue culture and language very effectively. The entrance foyer is very informative with the philosophy statement, policy documents, planning and other information on display. These are all written in Niuean language with the English equivalent provided. This display sets up a clear message about the service provision and certain expectations of the programme that is delivered, and cultural practices and language implemented. An example of this is a poster in Niuean and English which describes a range of cultural values and qualities that the service seeks to promote with children: fakamakamaka,

(determination), fakalilifu (respect), fakauka (perseverance), fakafeofanaki (consideration), fakamagalo (forgiveness), fakaalofa (love), talitonu (beliefs), and fakamokoi (sharing).

Teachers' profiles are displayed within the entrance way. Several are written in Niuean language exclusively, demonstrating their Niuean language skills and their strong identity to Niue, its culture and language. The profiles help to foster connections to families and to the Niuean community. Each staff member provides a family profile, their links to Niue, and their teaching role in the centre.

Children's photos are also displayed in the foyer. The introduction is written in Niuean language "Fakalofa lahi atu Ko e higoa haako o..." followed by the English equivalent "Hello my name is..."

Several informative wall posters outlining the cultural nature of the service are displayed; for example, Kato he polotu (basket of knowledge) with photos of children framing a woven basket. A large collage wall mural featuring fish and sea life in Niue is displayed in the main play area. The ika (fish) have been coloured in and cut out by children and pasted on to a large sheet of light cardboard. In the nature corner a chart of fish caught and found in Niue is displayed – 'Tau ia a moana mo e tau ika' (Oceanic and deep bottom feeding fish of Niue) providing information for the collage. Alongside this is a poster of fishing in Niue (Hi ika), reinforcing the prominent place of fishing as a key aspect of Niuean life.

Woven Niuean hats, fans, and skirts are displayed in the play area. Alongside the hats is an explanation, written in Niuean language, of what the hats are made of (pandanus) and the process of producing them. A polotu (woven fan) decorated in a traditional way with bird feathers is displayed on the wall, and a display of traditional woven skirts made from pandanus has been hung in front of a window. This has a great aesthetic effect with the sun shining through.

The amount of skill and time taken in making these crafts and the respectful way that they have been displayed sends a message to children and the community that such skills and products are taonga and should be treated with respect. Furthermore, it reinforces the underlying philosophy and purpose of the setting.

The infant area reflects the Niuean culture, with cultural artefacts displayed on the walls. Lengths of plastic leaves are draped around the walls, representing the green vines growing in Niue. In the music corner are pate (wooden drums). In this area the teachers are three older

women, all Niuean born and raised who sit cross-legged on the floor. During one of my observations I see a teacher singing to the children in Niuean using the words and actions providing a compelling vision of traditional village life.

This section, then, outlines the many and varied ways that the environment is used to demonstrate and reflect Niuean culture and cultural practices. Artefacts are available and made use of by adults to reinforce cultural and traditional learning and language.

Summary of Section 1

This section has presented evidence that, in NUK, there are many practices and processes that promote and preserve language and cultural learning. The planned and spontaneous learning opportunities, the rich physical environment which triggers language and cultural learning opportunities in combination with the documented values and beliefs contained in the philosophy as demonstrated in practice, all combine to enhance language and cultural learning.

Involvement by Members of the Language Nest Community

The second research question is: In what ways are families and community members involved in the Pacific language nest, and in other community settings such as church?

This section presents the study's findings about the ways in which families and community are involved in language nest (NUK) and in other settings such as church. As in chapter 6 and 7 the first section discusses teachers' involvement in the NUK community. The involvement of parents and community follows with a section on the centre owner, parent and teacher participation in the programme and the annual Niuean language week. The second section presents activities that are linked to NUK that take place in other community settings, namely a discussion of the Niuean hair cutting ceremony.

Teachers' involvement in NUK community.

As in Chapters Six and Seven, for the purposes of this study teachers are considered integral to the NUK community. In this section I discuss the ways that teachers are involved with the NUK community. The teaching team are all Niuean-born, and most are fluent speakers of the Niuean language. Within this section are the sub sections of: the supervisor as leader, the senior teaching team and the younger teachers.

Supervisor as leader.

M, the supervisor, plays a key leadership role. She was born in Niue and has lived in Aotearoa/New Zealand with her family for two decades. She describes her role as playing a

key part in leading the teaching team and maintaining open communication with parents and whanau. She is adamant that the Niuean language survives: “It is very important to keep our Niuean language alive, for our children and for our community”. She continues that she and her husband have raised their daughter who is now in Primary School to speak fluently, and notes with pride, “At school she is doing very well, I think it is because she has the Niuean language as well and this has helped her self-confidence, her identity (is strong)”. M notes that this has helped her daughter to succeed academically as well: “She is very good – she gets school prizes for her work”. M continues that she would like that for all of the children at NUK, for them to develop their early learning skills so that they can have successful learning outcomes at school.

M discussed the expectations of the families at NUK. In regard to language, M stated that when parents first enrol she informs them that, “We speak Niuean and English...it’s a bilingual school”. She has found that rather than this being a deterrent, parents, “still brought their children, which means they want their children to learn another language”. I asked if this encouraged the Niuean parents to learn their language. M. replied, “Definitely, some of them are actually enrolled in Niuean language classes”. Therefore as a leader M is encouraging, approachable and informative. This has acted as a trigger in supporting parents to enrol their children and has acted as an impetus for some to learn Niuean language.

Senior teaching team.

Me and B are the team leaders who, alongside M, form the senior leadership team. They discussed the strong team support system they instil and their intention to strengthen this further. They affirmed that parent involvement was important and had actively arranged “Sports day” to encourage parents to attend with their children. They noted that parents were involved, helping out when NUK was short-staffed, as well as providing books and resources. Increasingly, they have found that, although the “majority (of parents) don’t work” and that they are encouraged to come and join in at mat time, parents have an increasing tendency to drop their children off and not stay. Thus parents are having less exposure to the NUK programme and policies which M stated has resulted in children learning rules at home that may not align with the rules implemented at NUK. M asserted that “things I implemented with my children will not be taught to children here... times have changed and the new generation of parents don’t go to church, and parents don’t have the level of understanding, and their values of respect may be different now”. She noted a difference between the Aotearoa/New Zealand-born and the Niuean-born parents. M felt that the New Zealand born were less

confident in their skills and knowledge of the culture and language. The teachers felt that it was requisite that all parents are immersed in the wider Niuean community so that they were familiar with trends that were occurring.

M explained that they have purposely staffed the under two area with the older teachers (Mohi mea) so that the babies can be nurtured and cared for surrounded by Vagahau language and culture) and be cared for “in the island way”. She said that parents were provided with this information when they enrolled their children and they were generally accepting as most had “brought their pepes to learn the Vagahau”. Consequently there has been a societal move away from traditional cultural practices, such as behaviour management, and language practice by parents in the over two area with younger parents more likely to be familiar with Western practice. However this trend has been noted and a purposeful approach has been enacted in the under two area, to ensure infants are cared for in a traditional manner, and to embed culturally and linguistically learning with the children under two.

Younger teacher.

Be is a young teacher who works in the over two area at NUK. Prior to this she assisted the playgroup that was established in Grey Lynn, another suburb in Auckland, moving to NUK when the playgroup closed down: “That is why I came here as I am very keen to support our Niuean community in Auckland and to use my language and culture with the children”. She reported that her formal training has been very useful to support her teaching, and in particular when talking to parents about their children’s learning but this was also with cultural principles in mind: “I still make sure that I am using my Vagahau so that our children learn our Niuean ways”. Clearly Be shows commitment to Niuean language and culture, and imparting this knowledge and learning to children at NUK. As a young teacher, with fluency in Vagahau, she represents the new generation of Niuean teachers. In her practice she is able to combine her formal Western based training along with her strong cultural background, enabling her to incorporate a broad, culturally strong view of educational provision and practice.

Parent and community involvement in NUK.

In the parent and community involvement section are the subsections which discuss parent and community involvement, the role of the centre owner, and the Niuean language week.

There are a range of cultural groups who attend NUK. While the majority of families are Niuean there are also Samoan, Cook Islands, Maori, and Tongan families who use the service. J a grandmother of an infant at NUK, affirmed the importance of language: “It is up to the

matua (grandparents) to support the community”. J made the historical connections that the Niuean language nests had to the church: “When you come to the Niuean language nest it had to be under the umbrella of the church. Now it has new management. R has taken over as the new manager of the centre and has made changes”, thus intimating that NUK is not as connected to the PIPC church as when it was first established.

Ma who is a grandmother of children who attended NUK in previous years assists at NUK on a daily basis. She works in the kitchen and helps out with daily tasks around the centre. She and her husband arrived in Aotearoa/New Zealand, from Niue in 1964 and all of her six children are Aotearoa/New Zealand-born. She explained that she and her husband speak the Vagahau at home, and her children can understand and speak it. Interestingly, Ma commented that when she and her husband first arrived, “we speak a little English, then we went to night school to learn English. We were encouraged to use English, even by the Niuean community. We thought using our language was showing off and (that) we should use the English”. She could see that this was disadvantaging as “one day it (the language) will disappear”. She made the point, “We are Niueans, and we should be using our own language”. She said that her grandchildren had attended NUK, and could converse in Niuean competently, but had moved to Australia a few years earlier and now spoke only English. She opined that, “Samoan are very good at speaking their language to their children at home, their parents and grandparents. But with the Niue people (the language learning) only happens here, and when they go to school it is only English”. She continued that she could only, “blame ourselves for not using our language with children”.

E, a young mother, is very supportive of promoting Niuean language and one of her main goals for her young daughter is to speak the Niuean language: “Language is who you are; it is your identity, and it can be done, if parents and grandparents do their job children will learn”. She believes that children having both English and Niuean is an advantage. To this end she enforces Niue language spoken exclusively at home: “I told my daughter, ‘I am not responding to you unless you speak to me in Niuean’. Back in the day Niue people would ask why I should teach my child (Niuean language)”. E now appreciates the value of speaking Vagahau Niue: “Niuean is a beautiful language – it warms your heart. When it is well spoken it is a gift – why would I give it up?”

Evidently it is apparent from the responses of these teachers, parents and community members that the opportunity for children to learn Niuean is a strongly motivating factor for their involvement in NUK.

Centre owner.

R has recently taken over the management of NUK. He is the owner and licensee of the centre. When it was first established it was a community-based service, with a community management team comprised of community members, parents, and representatives from the teaching team. M, explained that in the last few years, the centre had experienced financial difficulties and R, who is a member of the wider Niuean community and whose children attended NUK, had stepped forward to assist. Feedback from the teachers and community members was that it has been a positive measure and the change has been greeted with relief that the centre is operating with clear leadership and direction, and importantly that the financial crises had abated.

Centre self-review – Parent and teacher collaboration.

A requirement of all ECE settings is to conduct reviews of their programme. This process is referred to as “Centre Self-Review”. As part of the self-review parents are consulted and provided with feedback. In the centre entrance foyer, a poster displays the purpose of self-review. It links centre processes to Ministry of Education regulations, policies, and guidelines. M elaborated on the centre self-review which they had in place which was “healthy eating”. At NUK children bring a lunch box for their midday meal. The decision to focus on this was due to the “junk food” that parents had been providing for their children and M stated, “All we want (children to bring) is a sandwich and fruit”. The centre has adopted a slogan of “healthy body, healthy mind”. “We have taken a path where we ask parents to implement at home what they see happening in the programme, at the centre”. M noted that this system is working well with an improvement in the healthy sandwiches provided and stronger lines of communication with parents. In this way the systems that take place in the cultural-institutional level include parents positive involvement in their children’s learning and wellbeing.

Niuean language week.

The Niuean language week, held at NUK on the third week of October each year, is considered a highlight in the NUK annual calendar. M reported, “This is awesome – the parents and the community, they all get involved, for the whole week, and we have lots of parent support, especially on the last day where we have a big meal and the children perform an item”.

According to E, the language week is the main event in which parents are involved. On display in the centre is a poster that was prepared for the language nest in 2015. It contains the days of the week in Niuean language, greetings and farewells, months of the year, names for members of the family, numbers from one to ten in Niuean, and a list of the villages in Niue. This resource effectively displays written language that can be easily spoken. It is a useful resource with terms that are easily learnt by those beginning to learn Vagahau Niue (Niuean language). The recently-published newsletter informs the parents of the upcoming Niuean language week. Parents are warmly invited and provided with a schedule of the programme and cultural activities that have been planned.

As with the other two case study settings, M informs me that the language week is eagerly looked forward to, with a lot of preparation and planning taking place beforehand. The language nest spends a lot of time and effort in ensuring the week is full of cultural practices, language opportunities, and traditional practices, such as umu (earth oven) preparation, music and dance items, and weaving and displaying of cultural artefacts – hats, fans, placemats, and baskets. The event provides an opportunity for the cultural community to join in together, network and share their understandings, knowledge, and language, and to reinforce their identity and commitment to their culture. It is a time for community to rally around and to showcase the service provision and the support that the service provides to the Niuean community in South Auckland. M notes that increasingly Niuean language week is the main annual event which parents will become involved and support.

In summary, NUK involves the parent and wider Niuean community in the events that take place within the NUK programme in a range of ways, Grandparents and family members contribute to the on-going programme providing support and guidance within the daily programme, the centre owner is also a member of the Niuean community and consults with the centre staff and community in decision making, the centre self- review process is used as a measure to consult with parents and collaborate on programme and centre review, and finally the Niuean annual language week is prominent in the NUK calendar, attracting continuing and increasing wider community support.

Community Involvement outside NUK

This following section discusses activities that occur outside of the NUK environment. The subsection includes the cultural ceremony of hair cutting, and the role of the church.

Hair cutting ceremony.

The hair cutting ceremony is one that is practiced by the Niuean culture. As in the Cook Islands culture, the Niuean hair cutting ceremony is a rite of passage for a Niuean boy, and an opportunity for the community to gather, as well as to provide gifts for the child's future. In the centre several young boys have long hair. I asked, "What age do you usually perform the hair cutting ceremony in Niue?" J, an elder, informed me the ceremony can occur at any age, going on to explain that in Aotearoa New Zealand it is more challenging because of the need to "save the money; but home they work in the plantations, so taro is used (as payment)". According to J, it can cost anything over "\$10 to \$20 grand (thousand dollars)". I surmised that it may take until the child is 18 before the parents could afford to pay for the ceremony. The response was, "It depends on the parents and what time they are ready for it". J informed us that her grandson's hair cutting ceremony was held before he went to school and that it was just a simple one because her sons' wife didn't have knowledge of the process. Traditional practices are being modified according to the Aotearoa New Zealand context and the differing expectations. Also mixed cultural situations result in variations to traditional practices. The programme is a fusion of differing practices that they implement and the presence of the elders in the setting provide a balance and a guide for culturally authentic practice.

Role of the church.

As in the first two findings chapters, the role of the church and Christianity plays a role in the NUK programme. This is evident in the centre routines where blessings are given for food prepared, and devotions, bible readings and hymns are sung during mat time. M felt that with encouragement "some of the younger parents, do come to church with their children". M further noted that as a result of engaging in the centre programme and understanding the NUK philosophy "they are not only learning the language and culture but they are (also) coming back to the church". This is reversing a trend that has been established away from church attendance by young Niuean parents. For instance Ma opined that in the old days the Niuean community were more tightknit and lived in close proximity to the inner city churches such as the Pacific Presbyterian church in Newton and the church had been a community gathering place. With the move to South Auckland by many of the Niuean community they were now spread wide and distanced from the earlier church groups.

Thus NUK plays a role in supporting wider community endeavours. Teachers and elders are knowledgeable about traditional Niuean practices of hair cutting, and can advise younger community members on this practice. Furthermore the NUK programme is aligned to

Christianity in philosophy and practice, and has generated an increased trend in church attendance with young Niuean parents and families.

Summary of Section 2

This section reveals a range of participants who contribute to the centre community in various roles. Teachers are guided by the Supervisor M, and the senior teaching team provides guidance for the larger team. Parents and community are involved in a range of capacities, such as the centre owner, and parents and grandparents assert the importance of NUK as a means of promoting Vagahau Niue. Key events and activities including Centre Self- Reviews in the centre programme, Niuean language week within the centre, and hair-cutting ceremonies and the role of the church in the wider community, all reveal wide community involvement.

Challenges that Exist in the Operational Development of the Niuean Language Nest

This section addresses the third research question: What are the challenges that exist in the operational development of NUK? Challenges identified are presented in three sections: Differing views on quality provision, financial issues impact on management and governance and programme experiences; and decreasing community involvement and support.

Differing views on quality provision

Since R has taken over as centre manager he has taken on an important role. He has noted differing approaches which exist within the teaching team and the challenges that exist within the diverse group of teachers. He has found that the older teachers may be less receptive to change and embracing new theory and practices. During my own observations, however, I noted the teaching team work together collegially and harmoniously, and due recognition was given to the strengths and skills of colleagues within the group. A hierarchy was noted with the owner, supervisor and administrator providing guidance to the team on operational, management, and curriculum matters. R, however, points out that from his standpoint as owner and licensee, he needs to ensure that there are sufficient fully-trained and registered staff in the centre. The right people for the job, in his view, may not necessarily be the fluent language speakers, who, whilst being very skilled at maintaining traditional values and practices, were often the older members of the teaching team. The aspirations of this older group were more likely to be culturally-driven and seeking to impart traditional learning. In R.'s opinion:

They seem to be set in their ways of doing things, whereas the regulations have changed and unfortunately some of them haven't changed. I've walked into centres where we've got a lot of fluent language speakers but they pretty much are in the traditional learning

and teaching and practice. It doesn't fit. It may fit ten years ago but ...it doesn't fit any more.

R noted:

There is a struggle in trying to make that connection so that we can unpack Te Whaariki. There is a restriction of the skills sets you are trying to bring on board, so that... you have to find a balance between those who are elderly and those you are young and youthful who may be able to understand the language but are not fluent.

R summed up his stance on the debate about quality – getting the “right mix” of teachers with a range of knowledge and “skill sets”:

You hear quite often, you know, how we do things, this is the Pacifica or Niuean way of doing them, which when someone else has a look and says... ‘you can’t use language and culture to get away with poor quality’.

In R’s view, then, the right mix may have less emphasis on language and culture and more recognition of formal training and qualifications. Using Rogoff’s (2003) institutional plane of analysis, it would appear that the legislative implications around qualifications have impacted on the perceptions of “valued” and “requisite” knowledge. Furthermore, a cultural historical activity analysis acknowledges that changes in thinking occur in the social (and cultural) plane over time (Nussbauer, 2011). In this case contemporary understandings held by younger New Zealand teachers are being upheld over traditional, cultural knowledge and language fluency of older staff members. R sees that the older staff are “struggling” in interpreting the curriculum and believes that it is very hard to articulate because when you are speaking your home language it can be hard to transfer those ideas into your own language. This is particularly the case when there is a range of ages and abilities within the team.

Financial issues impact on management, governance and programme.

Prior to R taking ownership of NUK it had been experiencing financial problems and was at risk of closure. In 2015 R took responsibility for management, governance, and overall operational management. This was a departure from the original management structure of NUK which up until then had operated as a community cooperative venture.

The Ministry of Education regulations provide a set of structural processes required for ECE providers to access funding. These processes include ratios of trained staff to children within the group, evidence of adherence to the curriculum framework *Te Whaariki* in programmes to

extend and enhance children's learning and development, and evidence and documentation of these processes. Ongoing professional development of the teaching staff is another sign of quality provision. The importance placed on well-informed practitioners has been recently strengthened with the Education Council requiring registered teachers to maintain documentation of ways they have implemented the Registered Teachers Criteria over the three-year registration period. Whilst the criteria call for teachers to consider cultural practices, in the main they assess a set of generic teaching practices. It is understandable that challenges exist for the language nest with measurements that do not take into consideration the philosophical and cultural characteristics of the setting.

R sums up the situation thus:

This is what we get measured on... I don't know what the perception around full immersion services around quality is, 'cos if you did the research and found out how many were in category two (demonstrating poor quality practice) you're on the ERO schedule. I wouldn't be surprised if you found most of our Pasifika services in the category two or one...where we sit, I think, it is always that tension between their eyes versus our eyes.

Different lenses, or "eyes" can make a significant impact on the provision of a quality programme for the Pacific language nest. The vision of this setting is to give children the best start in life in providing quality learning in "the Pacific way" with loving, tender, and nurturing care. First and foremost is the use of Pacific protocols and practices from which policy and practice for this centre emanate. A challenge for the centre is to provide justification to the Ministry of Education for the selection of personnel who may not have formal qualifications, but have strong cultural understandings.

R commented that when the Pacific language nests were being set up in the 1980s they were being set up to fail. Having made a start, they now need to find a way to move on from there. The importance of maintaining the language is acknowledged and continues as a motivating factor. Further acknowledgement is paid to the pioneers and those who continue to lobby for the language nest. Alongside this, R suggested there is a proactive desire to fight and say, "where to from here? 'Cos if we don't fit into this box we need to find a box that fits us".

R drew a comparison to Kohanga Reo movement saying that the lack of a central Pacific language body is a distinct disadvantage. Consequently, R forecasts dire straits for Pacific Islands language nests if changes are not made:

I don't think we fully understood what was going on. Now you can see how that was leading into, how they were reading the regulations...what will happen now is that we will see a lot of these immersion centres closing down...for (lack of) compliances or...the Ministry are doing its bit but...for them they have different considerations and sometimes it misses what we are trying to say...I had a conversation (with someone) who had spent ten, twenty years in the Ministry and as soon as she (left the Ministry) she started to see what we were saying and I said to her 'look you have been in the Ministry for so long; why didn't you say anything? And now that you can see what we are up against. This is what we have been trying to tell you all along'. But I can now see that when you are in the Ministry like any bureaucracy you are lumbered with a whole lot of other things and you kind of miss the bigger picture.

At the moment R has to go with what actually counts (staffing to ensure quality funding is maintained) and as he states, "the more that you go down that track the more you start to see a dumbed down version of full immersion might look like". Sadly, R feels that the "horse has bolted" in terms of reclaiming and rebuilding the language nest. The cultural mismatch and lack of understanding are clear. In some ways the warning signs have been evident and noted by the community. At a conference five years previously, R had noted comments such as "Well it looks as if we are moving away from where we were set up in the first place".

A further challenge identified by R is that the business model that is beginning to emerge in the ECE sector has not worked in the language nests' favour.

First, you've got the AKA (Auckland Kindergarten Association) who have this sort of mentality; you know, 'we were here first so we've got in the main office (influence within the Ministry of Education')'. Then you've got the mainstream, profit-driven; you know, they know how to run these things (ECE settings) but they're for profit and then you've got some community-based set up and they are in between. I am finding that some community-based are doing very well. Others are going (in decline) 'cos what you got is some centres were set up into trouble.

M admits that there are constraints for the low-income families that NUK caters for: "We see the daily struggle" she admits, "and there is only so much influence we can have as we don't know what is happening at home. These parents are struggling to feed their children, and we know that parents can feel embarrassed. Some cannot afford the fees which are \$50 a week for

an under three and \$20 a week for three and over. The parent's voice (a parent feedback system) doesn't come back to us. We tell them that they are the 'first teachers' of the children, but they don't always see it like that".

Thus the financial constraints experienced by NUK run across all levels of the management, governance and programme. Financial impacts are also felt by parents from low income families in the NUK community.

Decreasing community involvement and support.

Due to a range of factors the involvement and support from the Niuean community is decreasing. Partly it is due to the Niuean community demographic moving to more areas in the wider Auckland region. Ma commented that the community used to be based around Glen Innes but now they have moved to south Auckland suburbs like Mangere and Otara and had less connection with the Niuean community. As in the other two findings chapters parent and community involvement, as M suggested is more likely during the annual language week celebration and particularly the last day when the children put on an item and a meal is shared. M also explained that although several of the parents did not work they were accustomed to bringing their children into NUK but not remain with them, rather they preferred to use the centre as a full time care and education facility. M felt that because they paid fees and the funding required the children to be in attendance for 6 hours daily the parents routinely dropped their children in the morning and collected them at the end of the day. Consequently parent involvement had declined and Ma noted that many had 'moved away' from the church and he Niuean community. J an elder considered a contributing factor to the perceived decline in involvement by the younger parents was a preference and privileging for Western mainstream education models. In summary parent involvement and support is decreasing and more likely to be limited to community events such as the annual language week. There is less community cohesion with the Niuean community more wide spread across the Auckland region and younger parents were less likely to choose NUK as an educational facility.

Summary of Section 3

Challenges to the operational management were identified and discussed. These included differing views on what constitutes quality ECE provision. This issue has arisen with the increasing focus on formal qualifications which are required to achieve maximum funding from the MOE, and little consideration of language and cultural expertise. The financial struggle of

parents was acknowledged and the impact this has had on the centre programme. Finally the decreasing involvement of parents and families is noted.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the findings from the third case study setting, NUK, demonstrating how language and cultural practices are promoted in this ECE setting. Philosophy and policy documents, and the skills of fluent language speakers, along with their broad cultural understanding, show the significant strengths in providing an authentic culturally-based service. The physical environment has been thoughtfully arranged and resourced to provide a cultural learning space with a wide range of cultural artefacts and resources available for teachers and children to enhance cultural and linguistic learning. Families and communities contribute in supporting NUK within the centre and in wider community initiatives. NUK grapples with challenges and issues around quality provision, financial issues encountered across all levels, and decreasing community involvement and support.

Chapter Nine

Discussion and Conclusion: Final Destination

E to papa kae he to fale afolau: an entire coral rock can be uprooted by the strong tides, but
not a traditional house. (Traditional Niuean Proverb)

In changing seas our language and culture will always remain relevant. Hold fast! Anchor
your language and culture.

Introduction

The intention of this study was to examine ways in which the Pacific language nests in Aotearoa New Zealand contribute to language and cultural maintenance for the Aotearoa New Zealand Realm Nations of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau. This question was posed in light of the continuing language decline for each of these Pacific nations. The principal question asked: How are language, culture, and traditions supported and promoted for the children, families, and communities in the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau language nests in Aotearoa New Zealand? Following on from the principal question were the following three sub-questions:

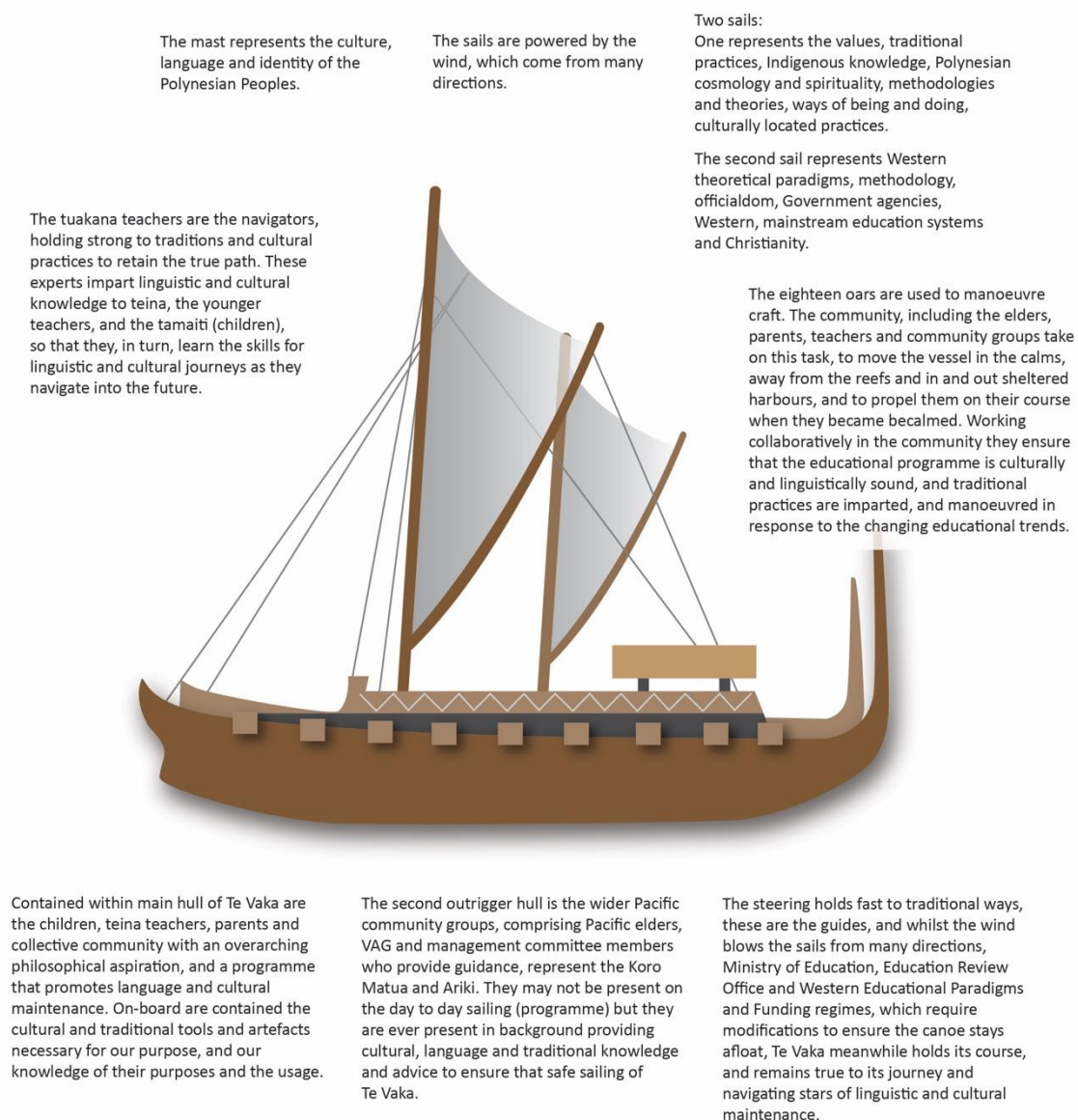
- What are the practices and processes in the Pacific language nest that enable, promote, and preserve language, culture, and traditional knowledge for the Pacific communities of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau?
- In what ways are families and community members involved in the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau language nests?
- What are the key challenges that exist in the operational development for Pacific language nests?

In the material that follows, key findings from across all three case studies are discussed and considered in the context of other relevant research and recommendations are proposed. Limitations of this study are discussed, and the implications that arise from the study are presented, weaving in the metaphor of Te Vaka (see Figure 1) to illustrate the Pacific language community and the preservation of language and culture. Finally implications for ECE policy and practice, are examined.

Figure 1. Te Vaka Metaphor: Developed by A. Glasgow, 2018

Te Vaka Metaphor

Hoea te vaka e pīrangī ana koe, kia kore ai e pakaru mai to ngaru
(Row the canoe that your heart tells you to and let no great wave destroy it).



At times the journey is perilous and waves can seem insurmountable, and calls on the strength, wisdom, skills and indomitable will of the navigators and the community to ensure the vessel does not falter or capsize. Some will leave, and join other, faster moving vessels, with different ethos, whilst others will choose to jump aboard, those from different worlds but who also aspire to the values and knowledge espoused in Te Vaka. Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community to sail Te Vaka in the true and the right direction.

Practices and Processes Promoting and Preserving Language, and Culture

This study set out to determine the ways practices and processes imparted in the Pacific language nest promote and preserve language and cultural practices. Data gathered across the three sites Te Punanga Reo (TPR), Te Akoga Kamata (TAK), and Akoga Niue (NUK), including observations, Talanoa discussions, and documents examined, revealed that language and cultural practices were imparted and supported in a range of ways. The support for such practices occurred during routine, planned, and spontaneous episodes within the play-based programmes. The physical environments provided rich cultural learning opportunities. The philosophy statements within each setting aimed to maintain and build language and cultural learning and further documentation, such as language policy, set out how documented practices should be implemented.

Planned language and cultural learning experiences.

All three settings implemented a planned approach to language and cultural learning. This occurred in daily greetings and farewells, through scheduled daily mat time sessions, and the implementation of learning programmes for children. The main vehicle for language transmission was via group sessions and in spontaneous conversations and play based episodes. Similarly, MacDonald and Moore (2016) found that group sessions were established as a forum for imparting language and culturally rich learning experiences for children as a means of keeping the language and culture alive. Although the findings from the Niuean case study suggest children's participation was variable, Lopez, Correa-Chavez, Rogoff, and Gutierrez (2010) report that children learn within the cultural community when they are involved in regular activities and events, even when they are only peripherally involved in the activity. Furthermore Virmani, Wiese, and Mangione (2017) believe that cultural and linguistic practices should be woven through all aspects of the daily programme. Rogoff (1990) maintains that on the personal plane individuals develop their understandings as they participate in and contribute to the cultural activities and prepare themselves to engage in similar activities in the future. Lave and Wenger (1991) explain that through the process of observation, children are engaged in legitimate peripheral participation: in this study I observed that children gained cultural and linguistic experience by engaging in daily group events such as mat times, greetings and farewells, and meal times, and spontaneous and unplanned learning sessions such as conversations, play based episodes and spontaneous music and dancing sessions, and these experiences prepared them to engage in similar activities in the future.

Mat time.

In each setting, mat time sessions were held mid-morning either prior to or after morning tea. Mama P explained that “in the island way, this is how we learn at home, by sitting and listening to the older people, and we would learn to recite our genealogy, read the Bible and our cultural stories”. In this way children were engaging on a personal plane, within an interpersonal relational plane, and acquiring the skills to participate in the wider cultural institutional plane (Rogoff, 2003). In all three settings mat time sessions were purposefully planned and supervised by teachers who were fluent in their home language and conversant with the cultural traditions and customs. With encouragement children learned the ways of introducing themselves in each setting. Their connection to their homelands was reinforced by reciting of their national anthems as noted in TPR and NUK. The cultural gendered roles of performance were learned with boys performing the haka in each setting and girls performing dance and sharing the beating of the drums in TAK. Spiritual practice was evident at mat time. In each setting the session was begun by a prayer and songs selected by children included children’s Christian songs. In all settings songs that were chosen by children and sung together in the group session. Thus, the spiritual dimension of children’s development was fostered (Pere, 1988). A similar point is made by Tuafuti (2016) who found that children’s spiritual “literacy” learning was enhanced during collective group sessions. In summary, planned daily mat times were practiced in all case study settings. This forum was used to foster language and cultural learning and weave in spiritual learning, linking to children’s genealogy and Christian practice. These sessions were mostly supervised by culturally and linguistically competent teachers with teachers who had less expertise in culture and language working alongside.

Meal times.

In all centres meal times were held at set times as a group activity and were seen as important for building and nurturing children’s physical, cultural, and spiritual wellbeing. Jordan’s (1988) study of early childhood programmes, emphasises that daily routines are important to guide children to understand the cultural values, beliefs, and roles that underpin such practices as sharing a meal together. Tuafuti (2016) also considers the ability of children to respond competently to cultural cues as comprising both cultural and spiritual literacy. As explained in the findings chapters, meal times were also used as an opportunity to teach about being good hosts, recognising the spiritual and physical dimensions of development and healthy eating and strong bodies. Royal-Tangaere (1996) argues that such daily routine fosters the spiritual

dimension, and encompasses the physical, social, and cultural facets of children's lives, which Pere (1992) refers to as a holistic framing of learning and development.

Spontaneous language and cultural learning.

In all three contexts, valuable language and cultural learning opportunities also occurred in response to spontaneous activities. Conversations between tuakana teachers in TPR (CH6) and TAK (CH7), and between an elder and teacher in NUK (CH8) provide strong models of language in conversational style. Children are introduced to authentic language learning in the home language, and developing an ear for language, in a process which Rogoff (2003) refers to as 'listening in'. They are also introduced to the nuances of language such as the tone of voice, inflection and body language that accompanies the spoken word. Teachers were alert to ways that children's learning could be extended upon, in the course of engaging in play and exploring their environments. Lave and Wenger (1991) assert that learning can occur through intent participation and observation of ongoing activities of everyday life. Further, they argue that learning by osmosis involves picking up values, skills, and mannerisms through close involvement with others, such as the relationships between the novice and master. Employing an indigenous lens, learning occurs between the Tuakana and Teina (Royal-Tangaere, 1996), and also within the Community of Practice (Wenger, 1998). The previous chapters show that teachers utilised children's interests for spontaneous learning opportunities for weaving in language and cultural learning: for example, at TPR, banana leaves are used to protect from rain, and the children engaged in the umu making process (CH 6); at TAK, discussions of parts of the body after a story session (CH7); and at NUK, traditional uses of the coconut were explained (CH8). Spontaneous language learning was observed during the meal time session at TAK, and during music and dancing sessions at TPR and NUK, with teachers encouraging children's dancing to the beat of the pate (drum). Thus, it can be seen that within the case study settings, opportunities to extend children's learning were recognised and responded to, within the cultural, play-based environment, with teachers skilfully using both planned and spontaneous opportunities to weave a language and cultural learning.

Language nest documentation.

Philosophy statements espouse the values that underpin, and are key to, all areas of centre operations; they underpin practices as well as centre policy and programmes (McNaughton & Williams, 2004). Exploring the philosophical principles of each setting gave insight into the values and beliefs of each setting. In all cases, language and cultural preservation were of prime importance, and this was evident in the philosophy documentation. Similar findings were noted

by the Education Review Office (ERO) (2007) who note that the philosophies of the Pacific early childhood services all place a strong emphasis on promoting Pacific language, culture, and traditions. Huffer and Qalo (2004) assert that Pacific educational philosophies are prime considerations in studies of Pacific educational communities, further maintaining that these philosophies affirm the existence of Pacific ways of learning, practices, and their distinctive understandings of the nature of knowledge, wisdom, and intelligences. These philosophical understandings, in turn, inform centre practice. An example of philosophy in action was noted by ERO's (2007) study when adults used a Pacific language in conversation, prayer, and song.

Language policy was less consistent across the centres with TPR having a well-developed language policy, TAK's being in draft format, and NUK not having a language policy. Clear policy guidelines for language and cultural implementation would be advantageous. Firstly, such a policy would enable implementation of the philosophical tenets contained with the centre statement, and secondly, would provide clear guidelines on how to proceed with the implementation of language and cultural education. If such policies are not in place practices may be less well linked to theoretical and pedagogical principles, and teachers will not have a broad range of objectives, principles, and practices to draw from, and to justify the approach they take to language learning. Sound policy development founded on research, cultural beliefs, and theory is crucial (Churchill, 2016). In summary, the philosophy statements for each setting espouse the language and cultural values to which the cultural communities aspire, and which underpin the programme and practices. Further work on policy development and documentation and implementation in TAK and NUK would enable stronger links between and across philosophy, policy, and practice.

Pacific language week.

Strong interest and involvement was evident in the annual language week events held by each of the three Pacific language communities. These events were very successful in ensuring community engagement and enlivening, enriching, and promoting the language nests in the wider national context, and, in the Tokelau context, within ECE settings in Nukunonu. Parents and community were invited to share their expertise in the cultural activities that were scheduled during the week. It was a time to celebrate community elders and media were invited to attend. The language weeks were planned with care and consideration to ensure that the culture and language of each setting was showcased. At their recent Education Review Office (ERO) visit in May 2017, the ERO reviewer suggested that TPR have a "language week, every week" (of the year), due to the successful and focussed way that language and culture were

delivered in the programme during language week. Rogoff (1990) suggested that activities such as these serve to strengthen the community at the cultural-institutional plane, with the involvement of community elders and dignitaries building relationships and understanding of the language nests. Clearly, the annual language week is highlighted by all three case study settings, and provides an opportunity to showcase the centre programmes and to involve and inform parents and the wider community of the language and cultural programme.

Church and Christianity.

From the beginning of the language nest movement, Christianity and spiritual faith has been a hallmark of the Pacific language movement (Ete, 1993; Tuafuti, 2016). In the settings Christian practice is woven through the daily, ongoing programme, reinforcing that spirituality is a key value for Pacific Island people (Anae, et al., 2001) most commonly associated with Christianity (Bennett, Brunton, Bryant-Tokalau, Sopoaga, Weaver & Witte, 2013). In each of the findings chapters (6, 7, and 8), there are specific examples of children learning Christian songs and bible passages, and church festivals such as White Sunday were highlighted in the centre's annual planning.

In a recent study (Rameka & Glasgow, 2014) the central place of Christianity in the programme was revealed, with the respondents emphasising the cultural and spiritual realm were an integral part of children's development. ERO (2007) found that forty-one of the forty-nine Pacific Island centres in its study expressed Christian beliefs through their programme and/or had close links to a Christian church. Twenty-three services included Christian devotions, worship through lotu or pure (prayer), pese, lotu hiva (hymns), or stories in the daily programme. The practice of daily devotions helped develop children's understandings and expression of their Christian faith. Burgess (2004) noted similar practices in the Samoan language nest where many of the practices were founded on Christian principles. ERO (2007) found that Christianity and spiritual practices were both interwoven into mat times and were also evident at other times during the day. For example, in each setting prayers and Christian songs were practiced during the daily programme, to bless the food at meal times during the mat time routines. Also certain church festivals, such as the White Sunday services, were well attended by families at TPR and NUK. Furthermore, children at TAK attended church services and church events during the week, as well as Mass on Sundays with their families. Rogoff (2003) drew attention to the notion that stories are central to instruction and learning in many cultures. She argued that church narratives play a central role in the socialisation of children,

assisting them to understand the meaning of the scriptures and to relate points of the Bible in their everyday lives.

Christianity has had a significant impact on Polynesian spirituality and its intrusion dismantled many of the traditional spiritual practices that formed the basis of Polynesian world views and ways of being. Crocombe (1983) using an example of Tahiti, explains that at the time of the missionaries arrival, society had undergone social and political upheaval, complicated by wars, introduced diseases and consequent population decline, resulting in psychological sapping of energy and loss of faith in traditional beliefs. The Tahitians, particularly members of the aristocracy, turned to the teachers of Christianity for salvation; physical and spiritual as much as spiritual. As in Tahiti, the status of missionaries became the highest in the Cook Island society. They wielded a lot of power. Steiner (2015) notes that most Pacific people emphasis on faith, is not surprising given Christianity's significant role in the Pacific which dates back to the arrival of the first missionaries in the region in 1797. Pacific peoples converted and embraced Christian teachings. As a result of the wholehearted commitment to Christianity, the people discontinued to practice and follow their traditional spiritual beliefs. This was often at the behest of the missionaries who discouraged the worshipping of idolatry and other gods. Consequently, much of the traditional ways were discontinued or were not overtly demonstrated.

Missionaries also introduced Western models of education delivered in English to Pacific communities. The connection between education and the church may have provided a strong encouragement to attend school. The use and privileging of English by the church missionary schools was the inception of English language use that has continued into contemporary times. Thus the church played a significant role in contributing to the loss of traditional Polynesian spiritual beliefs and practices, as well as the decline in Polynesian language.

In contemporary times the churches, particularly those connected with the establishment of the Pacific language nests, have contributed to reversing language decline for Pacific communities in Aotearoa/New Zealand. As described earlier the role of the church has been pivotal in establishing educational provision particularly in the ECE sector. Christian practice disrupted the traditional spiritual beliefs of Pacific Peoples and introduced a Western education that was delivered in English. Nowadays the church is actively seeking to reverse language loss, and revitalise Pacific languages through the establishment of the Pacific language nests. Further the

language nest, through the delivery of a traditional programme, is recalling the traditional spiritual ways, such as honouring Tangaroa with the first fish caught.

In some ways Pacific spirituality and Christianity dovetail. This point was noted at TPR where children had been singing Christian songs at mat time, giving thanks to a Western concept of God at meal time, whilst later in the morning they were engaged in acknowledging Pacific cosmology. The Poutama theoretical model outlined by Royal-Tangaere, (1996), symbolises the stairway to the spiritual realm. Engagement in significant cultural learning, such as these daily spiritual practices, enables children to ascend to the next level of understanding and knowledge. In the process of gaining this deeper understanding, children can also move from the role of teina (novice), to tuakana (expert).

In summary, the spiritual dimension manifesting in Christian practice was evident across the three settings. However, whilst a strong Christian dogma underpins the programmes, episodes within the TPR programme also made reference to traditional Polynesian Gods.

Environment enables valuable language and cultural learning.

The physical environments in the case study settings all provided rich opportunities for language and cultural learning. Each setting displayed cultural artefacts and resources that were utilised for learning. A compelling reason behind my study was to explore educational models that were reflective of traditional Pacific models. Tangatapoto (1984) described how cultural learning occurs within a naturalistic environment such as the 'are orau (house of manual training) where woodcraft, weaving, and bark cloth are made. In each of the language nests I observed how the environment was used in this way. Children were introduced in formal and play-based episodes to making pareu, preparing the umu, and learning some of the traditional protocols and practices for successful fishing in TPR. Thus, each language nest setting provided a rich cultural experience. Teachers and parents contributed cultural artefacts which were creatively displayed. Teachers took care and pride that their learning environment was a representation of their villages back home. Artefacts – wooden pate (drums), woven products, costumes, lei (flower garlands), along with natural resources, and tropical plants such as banana and taro – combined to provide a cultural backdrop for children's learning. ERO (2007) suggested that Pacific ECE settings were high-quality environments: well appointed, attractively set up, effectively resourced, and celebrated the cultural heritage of their community through enriching displays of artefacts and images. Certainly, using ERO's definition, the three learning environments of this study delivered high-quality environments.

They were all rich with posters and displays of words in the Pacific languages and the English equivalent, and a significant range and supply of natural materials, shells, woven and wooden crafts, often displayed at children's level so that children could experience the texture, shape, and weight of each object.

Throughout the day, both indoors and outdoors, children at all case study centres had access to a range of culturally located practices, such as music, singing, and dance which ERO (2007) considered to be hallmarks of a strong language and cultural programme.

A noteworthy challenge was the layout of TAK and NUK centres, and how these had the potential to impede a culturally strong Tuakana/teina ECE programme (Crocombe & Crocombe, 2003). In recent research in which I was involved (Rameka & Glasgow, 2015), the Maori and Pacific ECE teacher participants considered it a very real impediment to their cultural programme when children of different ages were placed in different rooms, as they are in the TAK and the NUK settings. This earlier study maintained that the best way for children to learn is under "one whare" with "all of the tamariki and the pepe learning together". Furthermore, the separation of children by developmental age, as required by Ministry of Education regulations, did not allow for the full participation of the younger children within the Community of Practice (Wenger, 1998). It also restricted children's engagement at both the interpersonal plane, with older and younger community members, and at the wider cultural institutional plane (Rogoff, 1990).

Family and community involvement.

This section addresses the second research question: in what ways are family and community members involved in the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau language nests. Data gathered across the three sites showed that family and community are involved in a number of ways.

Tuakana Teachers as skilled language speakers and holders of cultural knowledge.

Key determinants in delivering the cultural and language programme are the cultural and linguistic skills and knowledge of the teachers, and the wider contextual, traditional skills and connections to the Pacific Island communities in Aotearoa New Zealand and the home countries. Language and cultural competencies are requisite for teachers, however the declining number of teachers with these skills is a challenge, and is discussed later in the chapter. The sub headings in this section are tuakana and teina teachers, convergent approaches, younger teachers choosing mainstream, language provision, language and cultural knowledge underpin identity, and homeland versus a pan Pacific approach.

Tuakana teachers.

In each of the case studies, I identified the tuakana teachers, the majority of whom were born and raised in the Pacific Islands. They are fluent native speakers, and retained strong links to the cultural communities back "home" as well as here in Aotearoa New Zealand. They are mostly trained as New Zealand early childhood teachers, although some – such as the infant teachers at NUK – have been employed for their cultural and linguistic expertise first and foremost. The community, comprising both elders and younger members, express appreciation for the centres' efforts in retaining the language and culture practices for their communities. Elders express approval of the traditional cultural knowledge of Tuakana teachers and the ways they impart these cultural practices and knowledge to the children. Elders felt that the Tuakana were skilled in instilling language learning and identity. In each setting elders felt that children in the ECE settings were provided with opportunities to learn of the homelands.

Each of the teaching teams was headed by a tuakana teacher who maintains high status within their respective cultural community. This status comes with responsibilities for a range of wider community endeavours, such as church, sporting, family, and other social commitments. Thus the leadership and mentoring provided in combination with their considerable language and cultural knowledge and community status reveal their important contribution to language nests in this study.

Teina teachers.

Teina, or novice teachers, the younger generation of teachers, are encouraged and mentored by the tuakana, in order to teach language and cultural skills. In my observations I have noted that the young teachers, working closely alongside the tuakana teachers are increasing their cultural and language knowledge. Just as the children are learning through intent participation, so too are the younger Teina teachers who are learning through observation and participation in on-going cultural and linguistic activities in the daily programme. Rogoff's (2003) study of Polynesian groups, notes that cultural learning was happening by "osmosis" of the values, skills and mannerisms by close involvement with socialising, and enculturating agents. Lave and Wenger (1991) identify this as occurring within an apprenticeship between the novice and the master. From a Polynesian lens the Teina were learning, sometimes directly and at other times by observation, the knowledge and skills of the Tuakana (Royal-Tangaere, 1996).

The younger teachers encountered two cultural world views in their teaching. They were less likely to have fluent language skills and cultural knowledge of their home countries, and more

likely to have recognised teaching qualifications. My findings show that in each setting the younger teachers took a leading role in developing the programme based on children's learning interests, strengths, and skills. All of the younger teachers revealed that their language skills were increasingly strengthened by working alongside the more experienced native language speakers. Through a process of listening in, the Teina teachers were apprenticed into language learning.

This is a significant finding because it reveals that it was not only children who benefit from working in these culturally rich settings. As apprentices working alongside more culturally competent mature peers, young teachers are also learning the protocols and other requisite knowledge. Through daily reinforcement of language and practices, it would seem these younger teachers were serving another apprenticeship for specialist teaching in the language nest setting. The comments of these younger teachers revealed how they were learning. It was this younger group that need specific, targeted support to build their abilities as cultural and linguistic specialists. They are the next generation of language nest teachers and will need wide ranging support to build language nest teaching capacity in the future.

Convergent approaches.

I noted that a convergent approach, as discussed earlier by Gegeo and Gegeo (2001) was evident in the programme in which both Indigenous Polynesian and Western paradigms were sourced to enhance and extend children's learning. In part this is due to the tuakana/teina relationship. For example the fishing activity described in Ch 6 where the Teina teacher engaged the children in an activity that built on the Tuakana teacher's traditional knowledge. Thus a mutual sharing of ideas between the traditional teachers and the younger teachers acted to support professional teaching practice and ultimately enabled a culturally rich programme to develop. Correspondingly Tuafuti (2016) noted a convergence between Western and Samoan principles and practices implemented by teachers in her study of Samoan Aoga Amata (language nests).

Of prime importance is the reciprocity in which traditional practices are imparted by the Tuakana and practiced by the Teina. In our recent 2017 study, Glasgow and Rameka found that Maori and Pacific newly-graduated teachers entering teaching roles in language nests required adjustment to a "new" way of teaching.

Accordingly, it is important that both the tuakana and teina teachers need to be able to engage and learn alongside each other. There are constraints around this in situations where the

children are segregated by age with the babies being cared for by the older teachers. In a more culturally authentic arrangement both groups of teachers could share knowledge and ideas, and learn from each other, in a process of 'ako' (Royal-Tangaere, 1996). Furthermore Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of community of practice would be authentic, culturally located, and inclusive. Thus, with sustained engagement with language and cultural practice, teina teachers become enculturated and can traverse competently between two worlds. Children and families will benefit from a culturally enriched educational programme that encompass and espouse Indigenous and Western practices and paradigms.

Younger teachers choosing the mainstream.

Of concern is the trend that newly-trained Pacific teachers elected to work within mainstream ECE settings rather than within Pacific language nests. Thus there are fewer Pacific teachers working in the Pacific language nests. One reason given for this is that mainstream salaries are higher; teachers cannot afford to work within community language nests, and that language nests "just can't compete" with kindergarten salaries. Linked to this is that the younger teachers appear to be less inclined to embrace a cultural perspective where community priorities come before individual need; for example, at times when the centre is unable to pay their staff. Older teachers are more likely to be "really good [about this] and they understand the situation".

Another belief held by some younger parents, as noted in CH7 (TAK) and CH8 (NUK), was the notion that mainstream was better with the implication that Western education and provision, are privileged by the younger generation of parents. This perspective was contrary to the young parents' views in support of the language nest earlier in the discussion, and it denotes the tension that exists with younger generation Pacific parents which is impacting on Pacific language nest service delivery as there are fewer Pacific families using the Pacific language nests. Thus Pacific children are not accessing the language and cultural skills and knowledge provided and the number of Pacific children on the roll, as seen in CPR 6 (TPR) is steadily decreasing.

Accordingly, while it is noted that considerable reciprocal learning occurs between the younger and traditional teachers during their interactions and involvement, barriers such as separation in different teaching rooms, financial incentives to work in mainstream teaching positions and a privileging of Western educational models impact on the role of Pacific language nest teina teacher.

Language provision

As explained in the findings chapters, the language approach delivered by all case studies was a bilingual language programme. The role of the teachers is delivering a bilingual programme, and the interconnectedness of culture and language learning. I note from the literature that notes the role of the teacher is vital in imparting the bilingual programme (Baker, 2007; McCaffery, 2010) as well as the connection to and/or membership of the cultural community (Smith, 1999). This study has found that cultural and language learning were interwoven and whilst I agree with suggestions that teachers need to be not only bilingual, but also bicultural and to value and model the way the two languages can contribute to bilingualism and biculturalism (Cummins, 2008; Valdivieto & Nieto, 2015), this should be carried out in a way that prioritises and promotes the Pacific language within this bipartisan approach. As May, Hill, and Tiakiwai (2004) contend, the programmes need to begin in the Heritage language, whether it is the children's first or second language, and have enough immersion for children to gain a reasonable working knowledge of the language. Baker (2006) and Garcia (2009) suggested that the language programme should be based on principles of language and cultural maintenance and revival and its purpose is to use this as a foundation for all academic participation and success at school. In their estimation it cannot simply be a translated English medium curriculum.

While the cultural and linguistic knowledge of the teachers is pivotal to delivering the language nest programme, teachers would benefit from stronger understandings of the skills needed to optimise teaching second language learning. The findings show that teachers use approaches that are based on how they were taught in a natural setting and fluency of language in the home. Findings show that this is not the case for children at the language nest. Essentially, English is the first language of most of the children in the contemporary Pacific language nest. This may not have been the case when the centres were first established but the statistics (McCaffery, 2015) show that most of these community members, particularly young adults and children, are not fluent language speakers. If the desire is to deliver a language programme that enables children and teina teachers to move beyond comprehending and responding with non-verbal gestures, specialist language learning skills need to be applied by teachers. Language fluency is requisite but insufficient on its own for language teaching. Lave and Wenger (1991) propose that the goals of programmes are achieved more easily where the programme actively plans and seeks to enrol learners into a community of speakers within a community of practice. Clearly based on the findings, and supported by the literature (Baker, 2006; McCaffery, 2015)

measures are needed urgently to stem the diminishing pool of community of speakers, and reverse the alarming statistics of fluent language speakers in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Language and cultural knowledge underpin identity.

Numbers of native speakers in each of the case study languages are declining rapidly. Key participants in CH6 and CH8 asserted that their language was their identity, denoting that language and identity are intertwined confirming Tongia's (2003) definition that language fluency is an identity marker. Some fluent speakers could see that they were advantaged by the ability to speak two languages. Wenger (1998) asserted that identity is constructed out of our negotiated experiences of membership within social communities and are bound to our practices within a community. Further, Wenger (1998) defined identity as negotiated experience where our experiences and others' views of our participation in communities help to define who we are. By participating in the language nest, children and their families develop identities as members of these cultural communities. Mara's (2006) study propounded that learning and using Pacific language both re-invigorated Pacific identities and worked towards countering language decline.

Homeland versus a Pan Pacific approach.

Connections to homelands were seen as key identity markers with participants variously declaring pride in being Niuean, describing the importance of language and culture as identity markers of being a "True Cook Islander", and tracing their cultural belonging back to the atoll of Nukunono in the Tokelau group. Centres clearly did not employ a Pan Pacific approach in establishing their cultural links to home. Membership of the Aotearoa/New Zealand Realm was acknowledged but didn't appear to be of paramount consideration for participants in the study. Each centre focused on the homeland: whether it be the volcanic rims that comprise the coral atolls of Tokelau or the northern Cook Islands, or the high atoll of Niue, it is the language and cultural traditions of the villages on these islands that are of utmost concern. I reflect that voices from these small marginalised Pacific communities can often be lost in a Pan Pasifika discourse located in larger Pacific groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the specific requirements or challenges faced by these groups may be unheard.

Parent and Community involvement.

The centrality of parents, families and the community, and the ways that they are involved in the Pacific Islands language nests in this study is a key theme.

Parents' and grandparents' views.

Within each setting there was a growing group of the younger generation who have a strong motivation to use the language nest to ensure that their children learn their language and culture. These parents also express the desire to establish stronger connections to their island backgrounds as in CH6 and CH8 with parents desiring their children to develop strong cultural identity to their homelands, build language skill and strengthen their sense of belonging

Grandparents at each setting also expressed a desire to ensure that their language and culture would be preserved in their grandchildren. In all case study settings, grandparents confirmed the importance of their grandchildren learning their language within the language nest, stating that this service provision needs to be available for the next generation. Thus, grandparents have a strong desire that the Pacific language nest continues to deliver language and cultural learning to their grandchildren in order to preserve language in the younger generations.

Community involvement.

Within each setting community members are involved in the centre programme and wider community endeavours such as White Sunday events for TPR and NUK and the annual language week events for all three case study settings. As shown in the findings chapters, community involvement, guidance, and backing are strong incentives across all settings.

Rogoff (2003) posits that the study of cultural processes should acknowledge the contributions of the people involved, within the community, in all of the cultural-institutional community processes. A CHAT lens (Englestrom, 2001) draws attention to the evolving nature of collective groups and how processes evolve and change over time. For instance, the Language Nests communities are changing, and families are increasingly drawn from a range of cultural backgrounds, with parents offering a range of reasons for enrolling their children at the centres. These included exposing their children to a wide range of cultural experiences, to learn another language and to experience other cultural practices. Several families and children have links to more than one Pacific group.

The Pasifika Education Plan (PEP) 2013-2017 (Ministry of Education, 2013) places Pacific learners, their parents, families, and communities at the centre, so that all activities are responding to the identities, languages, and cultures of each Pacific Island group. Furthermore, the PEP proposes that Pacific success is characterised by vibrant, dynamic, and successful Pacific learners who are secure and confident in their identities, languages, and cultures, navigating through all areas of the curriculum. The PEP statement goes on to state that the

knowledge and voice of Pacific learners, parents, families and communities must be gathered and this data used to inform and achieve better outcomes, and to influence the education system from within. Calzada et al's (2015) study further confirms that involvement of parents from immigrant families, is a positive predictor of good learning outcomes for children. The diagrams below (see Figure 2) show the increased focus that the Ministry of Education is placing on the role of the family and community from the comparison of the two PEP plans. The PEP for 2009-2012 places the child in the centre of the education system, whereas the PEP for 2013-2017 builds on the earlier model, with the image of the learner surrounded by parents, family, and the community as a more inclusive and culturally located model of Pacific education – of how successful learning of students is determined by family and community support.

Figure 1. Pacific Education Plan

The PEP plan (2013-2017) aims to achieve closer alignment and compatibility between the learners' educational environment and their home and/or cultural environment so that educational services are using their individual, collective, and cultural connections to work together for better outcomes for Pacific students. This is an educational model which aims for students' academic success. A central factor in each of these models is the engagement of the collective community which incorporates all levels of individual, interpersonal, and cultural-

institutional planes, indicating the pivotal and influential positioning of family and community in all areas of children's learning (Rogoff, 2003). The findings in this study show that parent, family and community engagement at all levels are evident across all planes.

Centres becoming increasingly multicultural.

The centres in this study have taken the trend to have multicultural composition in their stride. The nature of funding provision is based on per capita, therefore the number of children on the roll will reflect the amount of funding the centre receives. With decreasing numbers of children attending from their home nations, centres are relying on families from other cultures to enrol their children to boost the numbers of children in each setting. Teachers were frustrated that children were not accessing their cultural heritage. On the other hand, children from European cultures in the language nests were considered fortunate to have the opportunity to learn. Parents from other cultures expressed their appreciation that their children were learning about other cultures and languages to their own, and gaining a broader cultural view.

It must be noted, however, that increased requirements to cater for children and families from other cultures has meant changes in language provision, thus an increased bilingual language delivery. McCaffery (2010) argues that in a centre where the medium of instruction is declared to be other than English, the arrival of one English language speaker often causes Pacific teachers to start speaking to that child in that language. McCaffery also expresses concern that adoption of such a bilingual approach in ECE will deprive Pacific children of the right to learn and maintain their own languages at their own dedicated ECE centres, and argues that parents of non-Pacific speaking children who choose to send them to Pacific language nests need to know that the programme runs in the Pacific language. Furthermore, the teachers need to understand that while they are applying the cultural values of respect to this practice, they are also contributing to the decline in their home languages. The tension that exists is that, in order to gain the funding required to operate, centres have opened the available spaces on the roll to the wider community thus increasing the multicultural and diverse roll composition and, consequently, the potential for the decline in use of language.

Ministry of Education funding provision.

Another trend has occurred, in part due to the Ministry of Education funding formula, which requires a child to attend the service for six hours a day in order to accrue maximum funding for the centre. Therefore parents now tend to use the setting as a full day care and education facility; teachers note that even when parents are not working they are in the habit of dropping

children off and not staying. Thus, the traditional community-based collective model has been dismantled and a Western concept of ECE provision has meant that young parents are not accessing the language and cultural experience. This means they will be less likely to have the ability to promote language and cultural learning with their children. The study has found that the teina teachers are gaining from their exposure to language and culture on a daily basis. A recommendation would be to incentivise involvement of parents' of young children. In this study they have expressed desire for their children to learn their home language and culture; however this learning needs to be reinforced at home so a stronger emphasis on parent language and cultural learning would be beneficial.

Challenges to operational development.

The third question in the study set out to understand the key challenges that Pacific language nests encounter. There were some that were common to all three case studies which I will first address and others that were experienced by single settings. Some of the points discussed have been introduced in earlier chapter sections and are outlined more fully in the challenges section

Decreasing community involvement and support.

The numbers of community members who are involved in the language nests continues to decline. Across all case study settings the sadness felt by the loss of language, culture and identity as a result of the falling numbers was expressed. Wenger (1991) described a characteristic of identity as negotiated experience where identities are defined by the communities that we belong to and those we do not. Decreasing membership in the Pacific language nests, therefore, comes with an increasing loss of identity and community involvement. Statistically this has had a detrimental effect on the spoken language for the Aotearoa/New Zealand Realm nations (McCaffery, 2015).

I noted in the last section that young parents are less likely to be involved in the centre operations, choosing to use the service as a full day care and education facility. There is little incentive for involvement. Furthermore, the elderly are not actively involved in the centre programme apart from the annual planned events such as language week. Consequently decreasing community support impedes the Pacific language service provision.

Mentoring people into the roles of Tuakana and Teina.

As detailed in the previous three chapters, this study found that a Tuakana Teina learning occurs between the older teachers and the younger teachers. Within the language nest the younger, less fluent speakers, readers, and writers in the Pacific languages are learning and being

mentored to gain not only the language skills but the equally important cultural protocols and skills that frame the language. Smith (1999) claims that, where possible, teachers need to be members of their own cultures and communities, able to walk the talk and create learning environments where being a member of the culture is valued and modelled in all aspects of learning and life. I adopt a different view based on my observations during this study: teina teachers may not necessarily be drawn from the same cultural group, but if they are fully participating members of the community, and have the desire to learn the culture and language, they can be mentored into this role. Such an approach, which reflects Rogoff's (2003) apprenticeship model of learning, where the novice teacher is learning via hands-on training, needs to be built into an intentional teaching programme in which the less able teachers are guided with a range of ways to learn both language and cultural practice. Given the falling number of community members involved in language nests, it may be a pragmatic strategy to appoint teachers, from all cultures, who show an interest in learning and using a Pacific language in the ECE setting and use this style of language and cultural mentoring to build teaching capacity. The situations where this was happening effectively demonstrates that this may be a possible solution to increase teachers' skills and expertise.

Barriers to providing a culturally located service.

Regulations and requirements can be a barrier to offering the service – the privileging of Western education and training has created a two-tier system in which the older, unqualified, but most culturally and linguistically able, are viewed as less valuable and this plays out in the funding which is only provided for trained teachers. The untrained teachers are paid from the income received from parents' fees and donations. The management of two centres perceive that the intervention of the MOE has not worked in their favour, with one administrator saying she felt the centre had been targeted, "I learned that once you have a red flag, they just won't leave you alone". This participant also stated that the centre has to "beg" for assistance, and it was not always forthcoming. Another manager expressed concern that decisions in the MOE were sometimes made without community consultation, adding that it was not until a key person from the MOE retired and came to visit the centre that she realised some of the issues with which they had to contend. Clearly, the funding system needs modifying for these specialist education providers. Consideration needs to be paid to the cultural values that underpin the Pacific services, such as generosity and sharing, which sometimes prohibits centres from charging parents fees that they may be unable to afford. Whilst some funding is available via a means testing process and parents who are on low or no income will receive

support, it is often insufficient to cover the costs of delivering a quality Pacific language service. Thus the funding formula should employ a cultural criteria where teachers, who may not be fully qualified with a teaching qualification, will be assessed on linguistic and cultural skill and will be funded according to their skill and knowledge.

Ministry regulations, which must be strictly adhered to, have meant less autonomy for these centres in decision making around programmes and curriculum. For example, one centre was informed at their last ERO review that their mat time sessions were too long and that they needed a more child-centred programme. At their most recent ERO review in May 2017, one centre insisted that ERO provide at least one Pacific Island reviewer. Because they are constrained by the lack of Pacific Island reviewers, the centre review was delayed until one was available.

Earlier in the study it was noted that these New Zealand Realm nations have become accustomed to a Western education system, which has been a causal factor in the declining numbers of young parents from these three nations enrolling their children in the language nests' services. This is combined with other factors. In the case of the TPR, the exodus of most of the Cook Islands families from the area has had a huge impact on their service. Some families travel to the language nest but often this is unmanageable and they look for alternative options closer to home. In South Auckland, NUK has a multicultural roll but many Niuean families make the effort to travel across town to bring their children to the centre. TAK on the other hand does not have the problems of declining rolls of Tokelauan children, rather it is the declining numbers in the older age group, the ones who were the first pioneers to come to Aotearoa New Zealand and who began the Tokelau language groups. In summary, there are a combination of causal factors which are presented as barriers to providing a culturally located and embedded ECE service provision.

Declining numbers of cultural elders.

The problem of declining numbers of elderly was recognised by all three groups. In some cases elders were going back home to serve their communities in their later years, such as the elder in CH7 (TAK). Many of the pioneers have now passed away, and their loss, and the support and guidance that they had provided were acknowledged by the language nests with all three groups noting the gap that was left. Furthermore the lack of community members to replace these first wave who established the language nests was keenly felt with Tuakana teachers and elders questioning their resources to continue

A further challenge that is emerging is the current generation of Tuakana teachers, the current leaders, are now reaching retirement age. To compound this, the pool of culturally and linguistically skilled and knowledgeable teachers in the next generation is also decreasing. I note that a PEP (Ministry of Education, 2013) key target is to increase the number of Pacific Islands ECE language services teaching in a Pacific island language or culture over 50 percent of the time. Given the declining number of speakers with the ability to deliver a programme of this nature, particularly for these three New Zealand Realm nations, this is an unrealistic target particularly for the language nests in their current form. This goal may be achievable for some Pacific Island groups who have the personnel to run a bilingual programme, or adopt a pan Pacific perspective, but this fails to acknowledge the differences between the Pacific Island groups. If the Ministry is committed to this goal, there will need to be a targeted approach to building capacity in human resourcing and to consider the particular requirements of the Aotearoa/New Zealand Realm nations.

The generational differences between those with cultural knowledge and linguistic competence are evident in the settings. A number of participants expressed regret that they had not encouraged their children to learn their home language. Sknutt-Kangas and Dunbar's (2010) study found that those from the minority culture had not taught their children their home language due to the mistaken belief that it would help their children. This was due mainly to parents being ashamed of their language and culture and not wishing their children to experience marginalisation in education. The researchers found that the result of foreign, or dominant language medium education had mostly been that the younger generation had not learned to read or write their own language, and their competence in the dominant language had not reached the level of their dominant-language peers. The vicious cycle has resulted in the present need for language revitalisation with Sknutt-Kangas and Dunbar (2010) and Moinolmoiki, Gaviria-Loaiza, and Han (2017) proposing that the acculturation process is a key consideration, particularly for the first-generation immigrants, who have shown that they are less likely to maintain their cultural identities, values, and characteristics, and teach their children their home language.

Noted earlier in the chapter, teachers in language nests would benefit from further professional development in bilingual teaching. There is little if any provision of professional development available to support the language teaching skills of the language nests. Teaching a second language to young children requires the teachers to be well trained with specific pedagogical

practices around language learning. It is key that the teachers in these teams can access training to enhance their skill.

Flaws in a Pan Pacific approach.

The Pan Pacific approach has been adopted by the Ministry of Education Pacific Education Plan (MOE PEP) which focusses on Pacific student achievement and Pacific competencies, but pays no regard to the uniqueness of and important differences between Pacific countries. Whilst it advocates new approaches to engage parents, families, and communities with ECE (such as supported playgroups, and the “Engaging Priority Families” initiatives), these may not be the best approaches to meet the requirements of the Aotearoa New Zealand Realm communities. As noted in CH2, these nations have experienced a unique history of assimilation not encountered by other Pacific Nations and the results of assimilation continue as evidenced in the low number of language speakers from the Aotearoa New Zealand Realm nations outlined earlier in the study (McCaffery, 2015). Likewise the MOE may not be the best positioned to make these decisions. Participants noted that MOE personnel are not always attuned to language nests’ cultural requirements, and may not have sufficient lived experience within the community. Participants also commented that decision making may be biased due to the constraints of Ministry bureaucracy which may cloud Ministry personnel’s judgments.

A significant consideration that is overlooked in a Pan Pacific approach is identity and the strong links that Pacific people have to their own homelands. There is commonality and convergence in certain values, traditions, and legends; for example, the values of respect, service, and humility are key values for Pacific peoples (Tuafuti, 2016). However, there is also divergence in the legends, and the links back to one’s “Turangavaevae” (Resting Place): in those from TAK it is the narrow rims of submerged volcanoes, or in NUK’s case a high atoll. At TPR, Mama T spoke of her ancestry and the stories of her genealogy were linked closely to her home island and that of her mother. Thus, it is factors such as turangavaevae, genealogy, legends, language, and cultural practices that combine to construct identity. When decision making involves a Pan Pacific voice, it is often exclusive of the smaller less representative Pacific voices. In effect, this diminishes identity and the uniqueness of each Pacific group.

I observed that culturally based decision making came from within the community groups themselves. I have noted strong community support in each setting, particularly from the elders in the community who have voiced strong opinions about the direction to proceed to retain language and culture within their respective communities. These settings continue to pride

themselves on the “grassroots” origins such as “beginning in my mother-in-law’s garage”, and community fundraising. These services have been described as a “labour of love”, and although there was a sense of being resigned to their fate – “our ship has sailed” – there was also a huge sense of optimism for the future expressed by older members of the community in terms of the work the teachers are doing and the cultural knowledge the children are gaining. These statements show that the community, particularly the older generation, desire that the language nests continue despite varying levels of involvement of the wider community.

Financial challenges.

Financial constraints were identified as a key challenge for each of the case study settings. Each was acutely aware of the socioeconomic groups that comprised their centre communities, and that many were unable to meet the costs of child care centre fees. Some parents were able to receive funding from other sources such as Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) which provide subsidies for parents who meet WINZ criteria. The three centre administrators in this study acknowledge that many from their cultural groups find it a struggle to pay. I found that centres adopted a cultural values based approach and sought to provide support for families who may not be financially equipped to pay fees. All of the centres implemented measures such as allocating spaces for both low income and non- fee paying families.

The financial problems encountered by the settings bring to the fore the cultural tensions that exist between centre operations and cultural world views. Others have noted that Pacific pedagogies for learning and teaching do exist and have played a significant part in the traditional and contemporary life of these communities (Thaman, 2010). In an earlier study (Rameka & Glasgow, 2016) a teacher in a Kohanga Reo (Maori language immersion centre) noted how she had to take off her mainstream potae (hat) and put on her cultural potae to enable her to work in culturally responsive ways. At times when funding was low, teachers would opt to take a lower wage for the week. “They are really good, and so loyal, they understand how it is” was expressed by one administrator, who found it a constant struggle to keep abreast of the payments, and this was “even though we are community based” (a not-for-profit setting). Employing an Indigenous lens, this stance, which may be perceived by some as overly generous, is not viewed as detrimental to the business but meeting the principles of moral obligation, commitment, and aroha espoused in the tuakana/teina relationship in order to maintain a strong stable community unit (Royal-Tangaere, 1996).

Inequities in ECE sector funding and employment conditions.

The Vananga Advisory Group (VAG) bemoaned the fact that many young Cook Islands, Tokelau, and Niue trained teachers chose to teach in the mainstream. Teachers discussed the primary reason was better wages and conditions which the language nests could not match. The inequities of funding and employment conditions within the ECE sector was felt acutely by the language nests. They not only receive less from lower parent fees, this also manifested in lower government funding rates than other services such as kindergarten. This raises the need to investigate the funding difference which enable some services to pay teachers at higher rates and to offer better conditions of service.

Bilingual or language immersion.

There continues the ongoing debate on the best way to proceed for optimum second language learning. The debate centres on bilingual language transmission versus language learning through language immersion. As explained in the previous chapters, bilingual language implementation is the chosen approach for language learning in all three settings. Tuafuti (2016) and Burgess (2004) studies in Samoan language nests, found a bilingual approach was chosen by Pacific language nests as a pragmatic response to families using mainly English at home, and thus children possessing limited Pacific language skills. Using English and Samoan was viewed as the most effective means of transmitting meanings that would be understood by children in both or either language.

Offering another view promoting language immersion, McCaffery (2010) argued that in ECE immersion programmes in the home language are important in developing maximum language ability in children prior to starting school and in establishing children's identities. McCaffery continued that immersion in the ECE context means that teachers speak only the heritage language and children are encouraged but not required to speak it. Certainly, the statistics that McCaffery (2015) presented for Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau are dire indicating that the bilingual approach to language learning for these language endangered groups are not effective in stemming language loss. Nicholas' (2016) study of Cook Islands language usage noted that immersion is the only model to ensure language will continue in its pure form. Nicholas believed that children should be introduced to total immersion. My findings contend that there should be more opportunities, such as during daily interactions and conversations that are built into the daily programme in an intentional way, at times beyond the mat and group time sessions, planning for and providing an increased emphasis for children to master speaking the language. This is based on the feedback from younger parents and members of each

community, who were exposed to the home, or heritage language as children but were not required to speak it. They are now competent language listeners and retain good levels of home language comprehension, able to understand it, but not speak it. Children need to have the opportunity to respond verbally in the language to become fully competent; to master the pronunciation, and the ways that these words are used within context and for a wide range of purposes. Mostly, as shown in the previous chapters, teachers in this study were observed to respectfully allow, and even expect, children to respond to the home language non-verbally or verbally in English.

Cummins (2008), Baker (2006), and McCaffery (2010) argued that when low status minority languages are under threat of loss by dominant majority languages, it is important to begin ECE education in the first language of the child. In these settings the first language development is still forming and likely to be undermined and replaced by English. Elders at TPR and NUK noted that cultural values of humility and respect meant that ‘te reo’ (language in their home islands) was not pushed and children would often respond in English. Many children who attend have English as their first language and this is a significant problem. The “home” languages, therefore, are no longer the first languages of the majority of the population for the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau communities in Aotearoa. Using Krauss’s (1992) definition of languages, and the statistical data provided by McCaffery (2015), the languages of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau are endangered and will, if the present conditions continue, cease to be learned by children during the coming century. Hence the issue of language maintenance, and revival of these three Pacific Nations remain very threatened. Consequently, more focussed strategic planning and policy implementation need to be implemented urgently to turn the tide on continuing language loss and the likelihood of language death.

Language delivery programmes.

English is the first language of most of the children and the parents. As each native speaking teacher reaches retirement, they will not likely be replaced with a fluent speaker, but rather by a younger Aotearoa New Zealand born teacher without strong native language skills. Another factor that needs consideration is that even teachers who can speak fluent native language may not have the skills required for effective second language teaching. Second language teaching is a specialist field and one that requires a range of skills. Unfortunately, these skills are not included in a course of teacher training; therefore, teachers will not be well prepared to teach in different culturally relevant ways. The teachers across all of the programmes are experts in their home language and cultural knowledge but not skilled in language teaching. Language

teaching specialisation is a required skill, particularly in an ECE group and institutional arrangements, as opposed to learning language at home as most of our native speakers have.

The field of language maintenance needs to be measured by a range of factors. Grace and Serna (2013) drew our attention to social, political, and ideological factors, while Black and Pavlenko (2001) argued that the notions of English as a “superior language” are seemingly insurmountable. Within this field the debate continues about whether full immersion in a language setting results in better language learning than a bilingual approach in children’s first five years. Recently Nicholas (2017), an Aotearoa New Zealand-based linguist studying the Cook Islands language use, has argued that full immersion for the Aotearoa New Zealand language nests is the most effective way of stemming further language loss, as in a bilingual learning environment the default language will always be English. McCaffery (2015) concurred and noted that pluralism will not work for “low status” Pacific languages such as the three in this study. Research such as Nicholas’ (2017) and McCaffery’s (2010) have provided compelling guidelines for language maintenance and revitalisation require closer attention in the language nest context.

Despite these services operating since the early 1980s language statistics reveal that languages are continuing to decline. Whilst this study investigated the ways that language is imparted, further study would be beneficial to provide guidance on successful ECE language maintenance models. Obviously there are further factors that need consideration such as the extent of exposure children have to language; also the home language of the child and family will have a significant bearing on the extent to which language of choice is used by the children and their families across a range of settings. A worrying trend is the majority of young parents interviewed in my study who were unable to speak their home language. This factor alone is a concern even withstanding the notion of language as social capital and English being considered more prestigious (De Mejia, 2002). It appears that a bilingual approach is now seen as a programme delivered mainly in English and home languages taught in an intentional way at the mat time sessions, and during in-the-moment episodes as noted in the study’s findings chapters.

This revealed that the delivery of a bilingual programme is not straightforward and requires forethought and planning. Baker (2006) claimed that teachers need to be native or fluent speakers, readers and writers of both languages. If this is not possible then it is best that the role is shared by two teachers each of whom is a fluent speaker of their own language.

Conclusion

This final section concludes the study. This section comprises an overview of key findings; the significance of the study, the perceived limitations of the study; and implications for policy, practice and research. This section concludes with Te Vaka metaphor, encapsulating the account of language and cultural learning that has emerged in this thesis, and also symbolising the end of this leg of the voyage.

Overview of key findings.

Several key findings emerge from this research on language and cultural learning in the Pacific language nest, community involvement and constraints to centre operations. These findings include both Tuakana/Teina relationships between teachers, and between mixed age groups of children are fundamental to Polynesian cultural learning; convergent approaches to teaching; culturally rich, well planned environments; language teaching strategies.

Firstly Tuakana Teina relationships, and the reciprocal nature of learning encompassed in Ako, are fundamental to Pacific learning. Through sharing of cultural, linguistic, traditional and theoretical knowledge, teachers strengthened their skills to work within Pacific and Western constructs and paradigms.

Tuakana Teina relationships between children are also pivotal to learning in the Pacific context. Therefore mixed age range groupings are most effective in allowing children to develop holistically across personal, interpersonal and cultural planes, and to become members of the communities of practice.

Secondly working together and sharing of knowledge strengthened the convergent approach in which the tuakana and teina teachers accessed practices that traversed Pacific cultural and traditional practice, whilst weaving in Western theoretical paradigms practice to enrich teaching practice and learning experiences.

Thirdly well resourced, and planned environments facilitate the unfolding of rich cultural experiences in settings which cater for mixed age range groupings. Thus the compartmentalisation of children according to developmental age is not culturally suitable and inhibits the development of cultural learning, a sense of belonging and identity to the wider cultural community.

A fourth finding is language fluency and deep cultural knowledge are requisite for the Pacific language nest teachers.

A fifth point is Pacific language teachers need to develop consistency in practice and policy on the optimum approach to effective language learning. Children are developing an ‘ear’ for the language but strategies for children to speak the language need to be further developed.

Significance of the study.

This study focuses on the Pacific realm nations (PRN) and is the first of its kind to investigate the Pacific language nests from the three nations of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau. Its focus of language, cultural practice retention and promotion is timely as statistically all three nations languages are endangered (McCaffery, 2015), and studies to stem language loss for the PRN are critical. The PRN all share a similar colonialist history and exposure to assimilationist policies within education systems which continue to impact on communities’ aspirations for children, such as privileging English and a Western educational model. The voices of the PRN communities have denoted aspirations to strengthen language, culture and identity, which are explored and elaborated on in the thesis findings.

Limitations.

This research is restricted to a small sample of Pacific Nations language nests. Therefore, it cannot make generalised statements on all Pacific nations language nests in New Zealand.

As a Cook Islander I was aware of potential bias which I sought to counter when researching the Tokelau and Niue centres. To eliminate bias towards the Cook Islands I established the VAG comprising expert teachers from the three PRN (Pacific Realm Nations). The VAG guidance assisted not only to counter bias but also lent support to my position as researcher in each of the centres.

Implications.

This research has revealed how language and cultural practices are imparted, the role of parents and community in supporting the Pacific language nest services and challenges that these services encounter. From the data gathered the following recommendations for ECE policy and practice are identified:

Policy.

Clearly the current funding model works against the sustainability of the language nests who all state that they are frequently financially constrained. What is needed is a different funding formula which acknowledges the specific requirements of the Pacific language nest community and funds the settings accordingly. As stated earlier, the MOE’s (2013- 2017) PEP plan calls for stronger family and community engagement in Pacific education. Such considerations

could be financial incentives to enable community members', parents', and grandparents' involvement such as payment for being a parent helper, or facilitating language sessions.

Another incentive could be for parents to be encouraged to gain a basic ECE qualification, such as a Play centre certificate where their active involvement and learning is monitored and regarded as a form of training which they can then continue to build on with a formal ECE teachers' qualification. Each centre would benefit from developing language policies which are informed by research, theory and models of language acquisition, second language learning, language immersion and bi-lingual language learning. This would strengthen practice which is underpinned by theory and research.

Pacific language weeks have been successful in promoting Pacific services, languages and cultures, and mobilising community support. Centres note that this is often the only times that parents are now involved in the centre programme therefore such ventures should be more than an annual event and funded accordingly.

Consideration needs to be given to culturally suitable environments that work best for the Pacific community. Because of the considerable potential and importance for Pacific language nests in delivering a culturally authentic programme, further support to create, open plan "whare" (Rameka & Glasgow, 2015) encompassing aspects of 'are orau and 'are vananga (Tangatapoto, 1984) would be beneficial to enhance language and cultural learning. Moreover, arbitrary separations mean that tuakana and teina teaching and the reciprocal learning, encompassed in 'Ako' (Royal Tangaere, 1996) is restricted. Evidently the engagement and learning that occurs between teachers is beneficial to the growth of the language nest. Thus centre building design for culturally responsive and located learning needs further consideration. Children also benefit from developing through Tuakana / Teina relational learning, and such learning is impeded when they are arbitrarily separated by developmental groupings, and cannot fully engage in the wider community of practice, nor foster a sense of Pacific identity.

At the Initial Teacher Education level, criteria for entering the ECE training programmes need to be broadened to encompass a wider set of pre-requisite skills. Given the dire state of the PRN languages, prospective students who have linguistic and cultural skills need to be a priority group to recruit. Financial incentives should be offered, with graduates working in the Pacific language nest for at least the two year teacher registration period.

Practice.

Whilst the centres demonstrate cultural practices these need to be structured in an intentional way. The philosophy statements strongly promote language and cultural practice and these need to be more closely followed. Stronger language policy documentation should be developed to guide culturally embedded practice, and work towards stemming the increasing encroachment of English language usage in centre programmes.

Specialised training on language acquisition and effective models of language learning with young children who mainly have English as a first language are required. Specialist learning support would strengthen teaching competence in second language acquisition, and in combination with teachers cultural understandings, will bolster confidence in the language programme, and ultimately increase children's spoken language skills.

The knowledge and skills of the Tuakana teachers need to be used in the wider ECE community. Give that most Pacific children attend mainstream, teachers should be provided with opportunities to gain skills to work in linguistically and culturally relevant ways.

Further research.

Areas of research emanating from this study include research into:

- A range of models of language learning. Exploring a range of effective language learning programmes offering effective bilingual and immersion language learning would provide the Pacific language nests with enhanced skill and knowledge on second language teaching. Further it would offer options to enhance their language programmes and increase children's spoken language skills. This is critical research given the language status of the PRN states as outlined by McCaffery, (2015), and Nicholas, (2016).
- Tuakana /Teina models of mentoring within teaching teams. This has been identified as a culturally relevant model and implementation of this model to mainstream ECE setting. A convergence of practice is created upon sharing of knowledge, theoretical paradigms and world views, in a process of Ako, reciprocal sharing and learning.
- Aspirations of young Pacific parents for their children ECE education. Whilst Pacific elders in this study overwhelmingly asserted that Pacific language and cultural learning should be fostered, younger parents had mixed responses to the Pacific language nest, and language and cultural learning. Much rests on this younger generation to instil language and cultural learning and research may uncover the complexities with which

young Pacific parents grapple around educational choices they make for their children. Parent language educational learning which is delivered in a range of media will encourage parents to learn language skills. It is more likely that children will retain and strengthen language skill if language is practiced, reinforced and encouraged at home. A question that runs alongside this is how do we teach parents to teach their children particularly when it is often a second language learning experience for the parents.

- The use of Pacific advisory groups to inform culturally relevant approaches to Pacific research (Anae, et.al, 2001). A key research process in this study is the use of the Vananga Advisory Group (VAG) and I would like to explore this methodological approach to add to the culturally located Pacific research methodologies and methods.

Steps to address language loss and contribute to language revitalisation

The final section of this chapter outlines practical steps to address language shift and consequent loss. The steps take into account the existing and potential factors that impact on language loss and contribute to language revitalisation.

Language shift

Language loss occurs through a process of language shift. Language shift is the replacement of one language by another as the primary means of communication and socialization within a community. Bayley and Ceil (2013) assert that the principal factors around language shift include individual, family, community and broader societal factors. These authors suggest that language maintenance must involve intergenerational transmission of the language. If intergenerational transmission of a language ceases, it can be said that the speakers have shifted to another language.

According to Bayley and Ceil (2013) language shift is an individual phenomenon because it involves the language behaviours of individual speakers. If the individual does not acquire a certain level of proficiency in a language, it will be difficult to use it in socially significant ways and it will be a challenge to pass that language on to children. Another individual factor is attitudes to the minority language. Bayley and Ceil (2013) found in their study with Spanish speaking teenagers in Sydney, Australia that there was a strong connection between positive beliefs in favour of bilingualism and greater Spanish language proficiency.

However positive attitudes are insufficient as almost all of the speakers hold positive attitudes towards Spanish, but almost all of them shifted to English by the third generation. In another study, Kuncha and Bathula (2004) found that half of the Telugu-speaking mothers and children in New Zealand felt it was a waste of time to learn Telugu; they were shifting to English after an average of just two years. Hence positive attitudes are not enough to guarantee language maintenance, the prestige of speaking English, coupled with negative attitudes to their own language lead to rapid shift.

Fishman (1991) emphasises the role of the family in reversing language shift. He has proposed a scale to measure the degree of shift in a community, called the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS). There are eight stages to this scale, where stage 8 represents situations where language is no longer spoken in a community, and stage 1 is robust use of the language. According to Fishman, only when stage 6 is stable - when the language is being passed on in the home, is there a chance of long-term survival of that language. Fishman argues that without intergenerational transmission, the efforts of schools, churches, and communities are largely symbolic and not likely to reverse shift, and that it is very difficult to move up the scale into stronger positions. Consequently, even if the education system and government provide support for the home language, this will be valuable only if family adults use the language with children and continually foster acquisition and use of that language. Furthermore, De Houwer (2009) found that a minority language is more likely to be acquired by children if both parents speak it with the children.

Within families the presence of grandparents, overseas visitors and visits to the home country have a very positive effect on home language use. Bayley and Ceil (2013) found that while multigenerational households with grandparents and other older relatives present contribute to language maintenance, when young people's contact with the language is limited to the family, without access to minority language classes or activities, this places a very heavy burden on families. Bringing in a gendered aspect to family language use, Kamada (1997) found that children with minority language speaking mothers ended up becoming more proficient bilinguals than those with minority language speaking fathers. Fathers found that the language commitment was difficult to maintain. When the minority language speaking mother chose not to speak the minority language, it was not acquired by the children.

Economic issues can be a contributing factor for not maintaining minority language. Zentella (1997) study with Puerto Rican families found that they could not afford to place Spanish

maintenance high on their list of priorities. Coupled with this was the belief that one could be Puerto Rican without speaking Spanish. This finding indicates that members of cultural groups maintain a strong ethnic identity independent of language usage.

Community can include neighbourhoods, schools and peers, social networks and participation in local religious institutions. One of the factors cited in language maintenance is the concentration of speakers who live in the immediate neighbourhood, with the assumption that the greater the concentration the better the chances for language maintenance. Conversely if the population is sparse, language loss may ensue (Bayley & Ceil, 2013).

Whilst the home and parents are seen as the primary site for language transmission, educational services, such as school and kindergartens can contribute to language maintenance. The direct involvement of educational institutions is essential according to Valdez (2011), if students are to have the opportunity to develop their competence in the minority language.

The local community, asserts Bayley and Ceil (2013) views and influences the minority community, in negative ways with pressures to assimilate to English exerted by school and the broader society. Society can exhibit different attitudes toward language minorities based on current events. In Australia Martin (2011) documents that although official language policy has evolved, the low status of languages other than English and assimilationist pressure on immigrant families have remained the same particularly in the context of the schools. He observes that while Australian teachers no longer advise parents to speak only English to their children, the overall negative linguistic social climate, referred to as 'linguistic culture' has affected immigrants' language choices. In spite of the pressure of the wider society, Fishman (2006) maintains that 'local circumstances and efforts are frequently the ultimate determiners of local successes or failure (2006, p.414).

Language Revitalisation

Fishman (1991) proposes that minority languages, would benefit from group based legal protection, as well as a more proactive stance by community members toward their preservation. Fishman emphasises the importance of intergenerational language transmission in language maintenance, along with understanding how such transmission is socio-culturally constructed and results from a combination of social, economic and political experiences Fishman, (2006).

Fishman's (1991) has proposed a model for reversing language shift (RLS). This model defines language revitalisation as a process that can take place over the course of several generations. Fishman outlined a series of steps that would assist in reversing language shift, or loss. These are outlined as follows;

- Step one – language assessment and planning. This step poses a number of questions: What is the language situation in the community? How many speakers are there? What are their ages? What are the resources available on the language? What are the attitudes of speakers and non-speakers towards language revitalisation, and what are the realistic goals for language revitalisation in the community?
- Step two – if language has no speakers use available materials to reconstruct the language and develop a language pedagogy.
- Step three – if the language only has elderly speakers, document the language of the elderly speakers.
- Step four – develop a second language learning programme for adults. These professional aged and parent aged adults will be important leaders in later steps.
- Step five – re-develop or enhance cultural practices that support and encourage use of endangered language at home and in the public by first and second language speakers.
- Step six- develop intense second language programmes for children, preferably with a component in the schools.
- Step seven – use the language at home as the primary language of the community so that it becomes the first language of young children. Development classes and support groups for parents should be held for parents to assist them in the transition.
- Step eight – expand the use of the Indigenous language into broader, local domains, including community groups, media, local commerce etc.
- Step nine – expand domains outside of the local community and into the broader population to promote language as one of the wider community and regional and national government (Fishman, 1991, p.202).

Whilst this model has many useful guidelines, and encompasses processes that act to stem language loss, according to Jones and Singh (2005) greater attention needs to be paid to the nature of remaining colonial ties, the nature of linguistic diversity, the developmental state of the Indigenous languages and the language attitude among the speakers. Albury (2016) claims that a cultural lens is needed in order to modify a RLS process in order to accommodate the specific cultural and linguistic characteristics within the cultural community. Therefore, while the components within Fishman's model are worthy of note, I believe an action plan should be contextually located. Carlson, Codopny, Gayleg and Gilbert (2016) recognise the critical role that ECE programmes play in strengthening their communities' languages and traditional practice claiming that a foundation of this preservation effort is teacher training and education. Teacher training is critical in preparing new educators to be sensitive to indigenous languages and cultures and make efforts to promote them.

Action Plan

An action plan that incorporates the findings of this study and is framed by Te Vaka metaphor suggests that action is required across several strata of society. I call on Fishman's (1991; 2006) work on linguistic revitalisation and the findings in this thesis in formulating a plan of action. Accordingly the plan is designed to support some of the features which Fishman considers are requisite in enhancing language growth. Such features include: intergenerational involvement of parent, family and community, group legal protection of language, and other features as noted in the nine steps to stem further language loss.

This action plan takes a multifaceted approach involving many stakeholders, hence drawing attention to all the parties involved in sailing Te Vaka in figure 1. I begin with our navigators-teachers who on a day to day basis sail Te Vaka: These are areas where actions could be taken:

The Navigators - Teachers

Teacher Training courses both in- service and pre-service training need to increase Pacific content including Pacific pedagogical approaches to teaching. At Pre-service level active recruitment of fluent Pacific ECE students. To genuinely support and sustain the recruitment involves providing financial incentives (scholarships) and ensuring ongoing mentoring, and suitable pastoral and academic support are in place, readily available and actively encouraged by the training institutions. This will grow the number of fluent language speakers across the ECE field.

Increasing the number of Pacific Teacher Trainers at Training Institutes will help to build community connections and will demonstrate the emphasis that the institution places on Pacific theory, pedagogy and practice in education practice in ECE.

Professional Development for In-service teachers - given that the majority of our Pacific children are now in mainstream ECE provision we need to ensure that our teachers are fully equipped to work in culturally responsive ways, and develop language and cultural skills that authentically support and promote these skills in children.

Engaging the tuakana teachers to work with and provide guidance to teachers in the mainstream, to strengthen Pacific pedagogical practices.

Professional Development for Teachers in language acquisition and second language learning with children. Whilst the cultural environment and practices reinforce authentic learning, stronger skill needs to be built on ensuring that children are acquiring the ability to listen, understand, and converse in the language.

Officialdom – the second sail

Ministry of Education (MOE) -Increasing the pool of Pacific MOE advisory staff who are culturally knowledgeable and supportive of the importance of Pacific ECE and in particular the language nest.

Revising the current funding models - the current MOE funding structures for Full day ECE education and care services do not work for the language nest. Centres are funded per capita by the MOE and are then required to top up their income with parents' fees. The language nests that I studied were very disadvantaged by the funding model. Whilst there are subsidies that they receive from other agencies – these are often insufficient and money is tight to pay teachers.

Pacific language nests need to be provided with further support and better employment conditions to attract and retain Pacific teachers into these services.

Annual Pacific language weeks need to be promoted, publicised and held more frequently. During language week the communities are mobilised – parents, grandparents and community members participate in activities, children practice for and perform cultural activities – these should occur more frequently than an annual event.

The Education Review Office (ERO) conducts auditing and monitoring of ECE services. ERO need to build their Pacific ECE reviewers. Currently reviews are most often conducted by ERO staff who have little understanding of Pacific values, practices and languages.

Community involvement – within Te Vaka

Now that the church has less involvement, given that young parents are less likely to attend traditional Pacific churches, there need to be other ways of involving parents.

Much stronger advocacy for these services is needed. ECE and the play based learning model is gaining recognition but there is still a disconnection between language, culture and how this links to educational learning. We need those within positions of influence to reinforce these services as crucial to the survival of our communities. Such measures may include providing a positive climate in which language learning is encouraged and looking at ways to engage such as interactive 'Facebook' pages, daily email blogs, access radio, sports events, reinforce how valuable language is to Pacific identity. Fishman (1991) states that children need to experience language at home, thus it is important to build parents' motivation to learn language and encourage language learning with their children.

Community elders should be part of our ongoing daily programme, as Fishman (1991, 2006) suggests that language learning for minority language is most effective if learnt and imparted

inter-generationally. Given that many Pacific parents may no longer be living close to extended family, the PLN community provides a gathering place for such relationships to be built

The Ministry of Education needs to provide ECE buildings that are designed so that cultural learning can take place such as Tuakana/ Teina and group learning processes. We need to change MOE legislation which requires children aged under two to be separated from their older peers. A village style fale which reflects as closely as possible a Pacific village context in a contemporary style needs to be considered.

Tamaiti within the Vaka

At the heart of our service are our mokopuna – our hope for the future.

Tamaiti need to build their sense of identity, culture and be strong language learners – as they will be our leaders and community members in the future. Tamaiti need access to strong cultural and language programmes, with culturally competent teachers who are knowledgeable and adept at delivering effective, additive bilingual models. Strong practice will reinforce children's language fluency skills. In order that these skills and knowledge are retained the transition to school will recognise the special requirements of Pacific children and will ensure that suitable language facilities are available within the school sector.

Teachers at the language nest, as experts in this area may be called upon to provide guidance to the Primary sector about the specialist characteristics of the Pacific language service to assist with the transition from the language nest service.

Links to Pacific Homelands

The fifth area of development is building and continuing links to our Pacific Homelands.

Continuing to sail te Vaka, using the wind, waves and stars to navigate back to our homelands establishing networks with teachers in the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau. Connections and relationship building can be forged by setting up teacher visits and exchanges, Skype sessions.

Summary

The Pacific Realm Nations (PRN) language nests continue to make a valuable contribution to ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand, and to the retention and promotion of their language and culture. This study found that these services have prevailed and adapted from 'garage play group' community origins to contemporary licensed and MOE funded ECE service provision.

However, change has also resulted in less community involvement, and a continuing decline in language fluency in the PRN communities. Measures implemented would enhance PRN ECE services which encounter considerable challenge. These measures include: increased and targeted funding support; the development of policy and practices to support ESOL language learning; and stronger emphasis and valuing of the special character of these services by their own communities and Aotearoa New Zealand society. The commitment and tenacity, demonstrated by the PRN language nests communities, despite considerable challenge, is to be admired and respected. I humbly acknowledge, respect and applaud their significant contribution to Pacific Education.

Meitaki Maata

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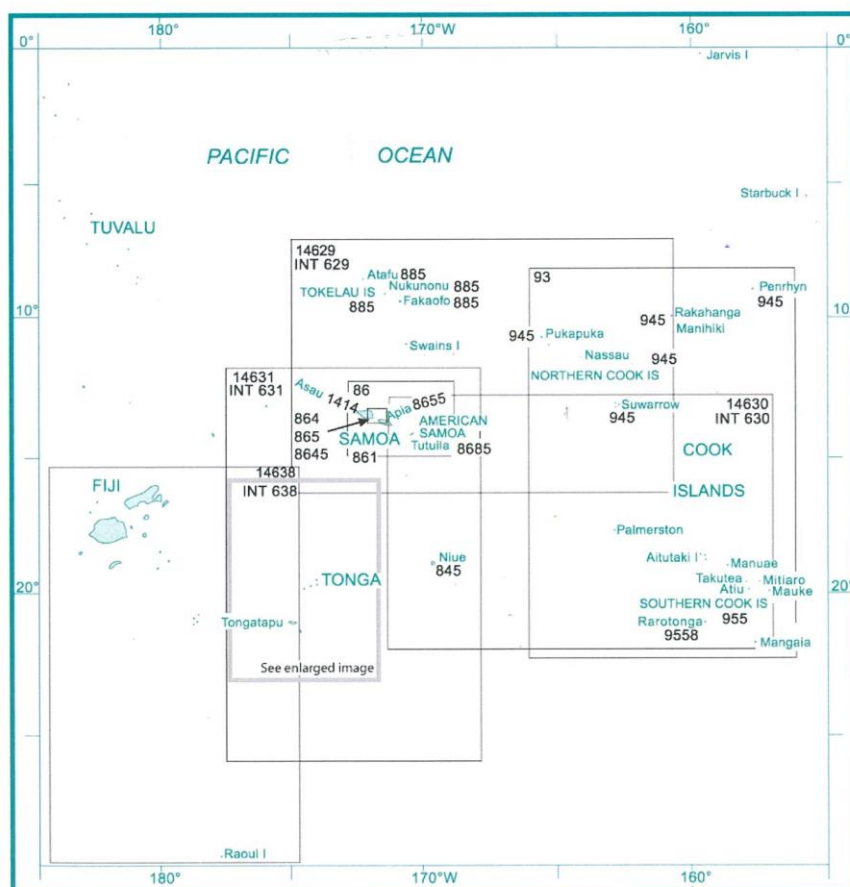
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Appendix A: Map of the Pacific PRN

Click on Chart No. to get details



Appendix B: Case Study Information and Consent forms



TE KURA MĀORI
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Research Project Title: The Pacific 'Language nest' how language, culture and traditions are supported and promoted for Pacific people in Aotearoa New Zealand

Vananga Advisory Group

INFORMATION SHEET

Kia orana, Malo ni, Fakaalofa atu

My name is Ali Glasgow, and I am a PhD student and lecturer at the Faculty of Education at Victoria University. I wish to establish a Pacific Advisory Committee (Vananga) to assist my research and to ensure that cultural protocols for the nations of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau are strictly adhered to throughout the research process. The purpose of this study is to explore the wide ranging practices, and in particular, the cultural and language practices that take place in the Pacific language nest.

The aim of establishing a Pacific Advisory Vananga committee is to ensure the research process is guided by elders from the three Pacific Nations being studied. Criteria for selection of panel members include fluency in their home language, NZ trained early childhood teaching qualification and wider community connections, and a strong level of understanding around cultural protocols for their respective Pacific Nations.

The Vananga will act as community liaison, informing me of correct protocols and will provide input in the dissemination of the research findings. I will seek advice and respect the judgment of each panel member throughout all stages of the research process. Vananga members will be required to maintain complete confidentiality of the identity of the centres involved in the research.

The research question for this study is:

How are the language, culture and traditions supported and promoted for the children, families and communities of the Cook Islands, Niuean and Tokelauan language nests in Aotearoa/ New Zealand?

Research data will be gathered in a range of ways. The Talanoa (Talatalanoa) method which is conducted by sessions (informal focus groups) with teaching and staff teams, community groups, will be a primary source of data gathering. Other data collection will be conducted by observation of participants in the language nest community- children, teachers, parents, and family and community members. I will undertake written narrative and diary observations, audio and video recordings. I will also conduct document and discourse analysis.

With your guidance I will hold Talanoa sessions in your early childhood settings, or at venues which you deem suitable for each respective community group. These will be held at times agreed upon by each centre. If the research setting selected is one in which you may also be a participant, as Supervisor or Manager, you will be required to sign a participant consent form as well.

Correct cultural protocols and procedures will be followed under your guidance, throughout all stages of this PhD research project. This may include beginning the session with a pure, or lotu, by

an appointed member, within the hierarchy of the community group, blessing and sharing of food, information, ideas, and cultural and linguistic knowledge.

Data gathered from Talanoa sessions will be kept for a period of seven years and then destroyed, except for those items where separate written agreement has been given by all parties involved. As sole researcher I will have sole access to the data; however these will be shared with my PhD Supervisors Drs. Cherie Chu and Judith Loveridge. Data will be kept in a securely locked cabinet. Electronic data will be protected and viewed by the researcher only via password access. Whilst your contributions will be much valued, you will be able to withdraw from your role as PAC Vananga advisory member at any time if you so wish.

The results of the research project will be written as a PhD thesis. Centres researched in this research project will be accorded confidentiality. I will use pseudonyms and will attribute what has been said to individuals in the research. I will provide the Vananga members with research findings, throughout the data gathering process and beyond, into the report writing stage. Your ongoing feedback and advice is vital to the project. The final report will be shared with you, prior to sharing with the staff, children community groups.

This research study has been approved by the Faculty of Education Human Ethics Sub-committee under delegated authority from the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee, and is designed to meet the cultural and ethical requirements of the Pacific Research Guidelines and those of each of the cultural research communities in this project. If you have any concerns in regards to this research, please contact Dr Allison Kirkman, Alison.Kirkman@vuw.ac.nz, Ph:463 5676 Chair of the Human Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Wellington.

I would like to request your consent to your involvement in the Vananga Pacific Advisory Committee. If you agree to this request I would appreciate it very much if you would sign and date the consent form attached. If you have any further questions or would like some more information, do not hesitate to contact me.

My contact details and those of my supervisors are:

Ali Glasgow Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori ali.glasgow@vuw.ac.nz Ph: 463:9738	Dr Cherie Chu Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori cherie.chu@vuw.ac.nz Ph:463:5316	Dr Judith Loveridge Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori Judith.loveridge@vuw.ac.nz Ph:463: 6028
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Yours sincerely,

Ali Glasgow



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Pacific Advisory Committee (Vananga) Consent Form
PHD Research project: Title: The Pacific 'Language nest' how language, culture and traditions are supported and promoted for Pacific people in Aotearoa/ New Zealand.
Researcher: Ali Glasgow.

I have received the information letter outlining the purpose of the study.

I have had the purpose of the data gathering explained to me.

I consent to participating in this research.

I consent to providing advice and guidance on this research.

I consent to participating in discussions around cultural, linguistic and traditional practices, alongside Vananga members and community groups.

I will receive a copy of the research findings for feedback before it is entered into the final report.

I will ensure that I will maintain complete confidentiality on all details about the research including the centres involved.

I consent to participate as a member of the Vananga Pacific Advisory Committee	Yes/No
--	--------

Vananga member name Position (optional)

Signature: _____

Date: _____



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**Research Project Title: The Pacific 'Language nest' how language, culture and traditions
are supported and promoted for Pacific people in Aotearoa New Zealand
INFORMATION SHEET: Management Committee**

Kia orana, Malo ni, Fakaalofa atu

My name is Ali Glasgow, and I am a PhD student and lecturer at the Faculty of Education at Victoria University. I wish to request your consent to approach the teachers, children and families at your language nest, and to invite them to participate in a study looking at how children and the community are supported in learning their home languages, cultures and traditions within the language nest environment, programme and community.

The purpose of this study is to explore the wide ranging practices, and in particular, the cultural and language practices that take place in the Pacific language nest.

The research question for this study is:

How are language, culture and traditions supported and promoted for the children, families and communities of the Cook Islands, Niuean and Tokelauan language nests in Aotearoa/ New Zealand?

I plan to undertake this research in three Pacific early childhood language nests and to gather information on the cultural and linguistic practices that take place during the programme. I will also discuss with teachers, parents, and community groups associated with the centre around cultural and language practices, their involvement in the programme and centre and other contributions that they wish to make to the research.

Research will be gathered in a range of ways. The Talanoa method which is conducted by sessions (informal focus groups) with teaching and staff teams, community groups, will be a primary source of data gathering.

Prior to beginning the research the establishment of a Pacific Advisory Committee (Vananga) will be established. This committee will provide cultural advice for their respective Pacific community.

Correct cultural protocols and procedures will be followed under the guidance of the Vananga, such as beginning the session with a pure, or lotu, by an appointed member, within the hierarchy of the community group, blessing and sharing of food, information, ideas, and cultural and linguistic knowledge.

Although Talanoa will be a significant observational data gathering method, I will also observe and contribute to the programme and with permission, when convenient; I will collect written observations, photographs, and examples of children's work, cultural artefacts, audio and video recordings. Any written observations, photos, examples of work, audio and video recordings will only be used for the purposes agreed to, with the consent of those involved.

I plan to complete my information gathering in each centre between October 2013 and March 2014. I will work in each of the three case study settings, sequentially, separately, one after the other. I aim to spend about 4-6 weeks gathering data within each setting I plan to spend 4 half days a week at the language nest during the 4 to 6 week period. During this process I will be meeting regularly with the Vananga to ensure cultural safety and protocols are maintained at all times. During this period I will organise Talanoa with community groups involved with the Pacific language nest community.

As sole researcher I will have sole access to the data; however these will be shared with my PhD Supervisors Drs. Cherie Chu and Judith Loveridge. Data will be kept in a securely locked cabinet. Electronic data will only be available to the researcher via password access. This study has been approved by the Faculty of Education Human Ethics Sub- committee under delegated authority from the Victoria University of Wellington. If you have any concerns in regards to ethics please contact the Chair of the VUW Human Ethics Committee, Dr Allison Kirkman Allison.Kirkman@vuw.ac.nz, Ph: 4635676.

Participation and keeping to cultural protocols

I am a qualified early childhood teacher from a Cook Island / Tahitian background, now working in teacher education. I have a research background in Pacific early childhood education in New Zealand and across the wider Pacific. I appreciate the challenges in teaching within busy early childhood settings and it is important that I am not a burden to the teachers, children or families during my research. Rather, I would like to contribute to the programme, under the advice of the Vananga. Further to this I wish to negotiate with the centre boundaries for the research process. I will consult and check frequently that the setting is happy with the way the research is progressing.

Teachers, children, family and community members who take part in this study have the right to:

- Decline to participate in any given research activity (Talanoa, observation, conversation etc) at any time.
- Ask any questions about the study at any time
- Withdraw from the study at any time before the end of data collection (expected to be the end of June, 2014).

Participant privacy

Participating centres will not be identified in the research. Visual data gathered will be treated in an ethically and culturally suitable manner. No person will be identified in written text and any visual images will not be used without prior consent. If these are of children additional prior parental consent will be sought. Visual data of children will not be used if parental consent is not granted.

Sharing of and access to research information and its storage

All information gathered during the research process will be held on confidence and participants will have access to the data collected about them at any time. Children, teachers, family and community members featuring in any photo, video or audio recording will have the opportunity to view, listen to, comment on and offer their interpretation of these recordings. These interpretations will be another data source and will be noted as a diary recording in my field notes. Written, audio and visual recordings from this research will be retained by the researcher and stored securely in electronic and paper form. Data will be destroyed after 7 years, except for those items where separate written agreement has been given by all parties involved.

I will hold a Talanoa to inform the management committee in each setting to explain the research to the language nest communities. This will provide the community participants to ask questions, and seek clarification of the process. I will also on the guidance of my Vananga members provide regular feedback in a culturally suitable form, such as a Talanoa session during a management committee meeting, teacher staff meeting and parent teacher meeting. This will provide on-going feedback on progress of the research process and allow participants to discuss, question, debate and reflect on the research. The Vananga members will know the identity of the centres but have signed an agreement to keep this information confidential. If participants choose to withdraw I will negotiate whether that data that has already been contributed can be retained for the research project.

Participating centres will receive a summary of findings of the study completed. I will deliver the key findings in a Talanoa session, verbally feeding back to the centre community, as well as supplying each setting with a written summary. I am very happy to meet with the management committee to discuss this process further and to answer any questions that you may have at any time.

My contact details for my primary and secondary supervisors and I are:

Ali Glasgow Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori ali.glasgow@vuw.ac.nz Ph: 463:9738	Dr Cherie Chu Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori cherie.chu@vuw.ac.nz Ph:463:5316	Dr Judith Loveridge Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori Judith.loveridge@vuw.ac.nz Ph:463: 6028
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Yours sincerely,

Ali Glasgow



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Consent Form for Management committee

PHD Research: The Pacific language nest: How language, culture and traditions are supported and promoted for the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau Islands: Ali Glasgow: Researcher.

I have read the information sheet and understand the nature of the study and what the study involves.

My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that all participants have the right to decline to participate in any research activities and withdraw from the study at any time before the end of data collection.

I understand that the research project is intended to be positive for the language nest, teachers, children and families and community

I understand that the researcher will consult with participants during the project to help keep the research processes culturally and ethically safe and appropriate.

I understand that children and teachers featuring in photo and video recordings will have the opportunity to view, comment on and offer their interpretation of and ideas about these recordings.

I understand that visual images identifying people will not be used in the research report, presentations or publications without the prior consent of the people concerned, and in the case of children, without the additional prior written consent of their parents.

I understand that copies of photos and videos I will be given from the research are for my personal use and that no material that identifies anyone other than me is to be made any more widely available.

I understand that I am able to get to see all the photos and videos involving me and they will not be shared with anyone unless I say they can.

I consent on behalf of the language nest to participate in the research project.

I consent for participants to be invited to participate

I give permission for the following items of information to be collected as part of this research and consent to these items being used for the purposes agreed to.

PLEASE CIRCLE Yes or No for each category	To be collected and analysed for this PhD project	To be used in presentations and publications
Observations of me	Yes/No	Yes/No
Interviews/conversations with me	Yes/No	Yes/No
Audio recordings I feature in	Yes/No	Yes/No
Photos I feature in	Yes/No	Yes/No
Video recordings I feature in	Yes/No	Yes/No

I understand that written, audio and visual information will be confidential to the research and publications and presentations arising from it, subject to the nature of the consents participants give.

I understand that participants will have access to the data collected about them at any time and that a regular newsletter will be provided to participating families to 'keep them in the loop' about the progress of data collection.

I would like a personal a summary of the research findings as will the families and community, and any other participant who requests it.

I understand that written, audio and visual recordings from this research will be retained by the researcher and stored securely in electronic and paper form and that data will be destroyed after 7 years, except for those items where separate written agreement has been given by all parties involved.

I consent to take part in the research	Yes / No
--	----------

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ LANGUAGE NEST _____



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**Research Project Title: The Pacific 'Language nest' how language, culture and traditions
are supported and promoted for Pacific people in Aotearoa New Zealand
INFORMATION SHEET: Parents / Fanau**

Kia orana, Malo ni, Fakaalofa atu

My name is Ali Glasgow, and I am a PhD student and lecturer at the Faculty of Education at Victoria University. I wish to request your consent to conduct my research project working alongside teachers, children and families at your language nest, and to invite you to participate in a study looking at how children and the community are supported in learning their home languages, cultures and traditions within the language nest environment, programme and community.

The purpose of this study is to explore the wide ranging practices, and in particular, the cultural and language practices that take place in the Pacific language nest.

The research question for this study is:

How are language, culture and traditions supported and promoted for the children, families and communities of the Cook Islands, Niuean and Tokelauan language nests in Aotearoa/ New Zealand?

I plan to undertake this research in three Pacific early childhood language nests and to gather information on the cultural and linguistic practices that take place during the programme. Your child's language nest is one of the three language nests involved. I will also discuss with teachers, parents, and community groups associated with the centre their cultural and language practices, their involvement in the programme and centre and other contributions that they wish to make to the research.

Prior to beginning the research the establishment of a Pacific Advisory Committee (Vananga) will be established. This committee will provide cultural advice for their respective Pacific community. Correct cultural protocols and procedures will be followed under the guidance of the Vananga, such as beginning the session with a pure, or lotu, by an appointed member, from the community, blessing and sharing of food, information, ideas, and cultural and linguistic knowledge.

Data will be gathered in a range of ways. The Talanoa method which is conducted by sessions (informal focus groups) with teaching and staff teams, community groups, will be a primary source of data gathering. Although Talanoa will be a significant observational data gathering method, I will also observe and contribute to the programme and with permission, when convenient; I will collect written observations, photographs, and examples of children's work, cultural artefacts, audio and video recordings. Any written observations, photos, examples of work, audio and video recordings will only be used for the purposes agreed to, with the consent of those involved. Electronic data will be protected and will be viewed by the researcher only via password access.

I plan to complete my information gathering in each centre between October 2013 and March 2014. I will work in each of the three case study settings, separately, one after the other. I aim to

spend about 4-6 weeks gathering data within each setting. I plan to spend 4 half days in the setting during the 4-6 week period. During this process I will be meeting regularly with the Vananga to ensure cultural safety and protocols are maintained at all times. During this period I will organise Talanoa with community groups involved with the Pacific language nest community.

As sole researcher I will have sole access to the data; however these will be shared with my PhD Supervisors Drs. Cherie Chu and Judith Loveridge. Data will be kept in a securely locked cabinet. This study has been approved by the Faculty of Education Human Ethics Sub- committee under delegated authority from the Victoria University of Wellington. If you have any concerns in regards to ethics please contact the Chair of the VUW Human Ethics Committee, Dr Allison Kirkman Allison.Kirkman@vuw.ac.nz, Ph: 4635676.

Participation and keeping to cultural protocols

I am a qualified early childhood teacher from a Cook Island / Tahitian background, now working in teacher education. I have a research background in Pacific early childhood education in New Zealand and across the wider Pacific. I appreciate the challenges in teaching within busy early childhood settings and it is important that I am not a burden to the teachers, children or families during my research. Rather, I would like to contribute to the programme, under the advice of the Vananga. Further to this I wish to negotiate with the centre boundaries for the research process. I will consult and check frequently that the setting is happy with the way the research is progressing.

Teachers, children, family and community members who take part in this study have the right to:

- Decline to participate in any given research activity (Talanoa, observation, or conversation) at any time.
- Ask any questions about the study at any time
- Withdraw from the study at any time before the end of data collection (expected to be the end of June, 2014). If this occurs I will discuss with you at that time, the use of data gathered involving you or your child.

Participant privacy

Participating centres will not be identified in the research. Visual data gathered will be treated in an ethically and culturally suitable manner. No person will be identified in written text and any visual images will not be used without prior consent. If these are of children additional prior parental consent will be sought. Visual data of children will not be used if parental consent is not granted.

Sharing of and access to research information and its storage

All information gathered during the research process will be held in confidence and participants will have access to the data collected about them at any time. Children, teachers, family and community members featuring in any photo, video or audio recording will have the opportunity to view, listen to, comment on and offer their interpretation of these recordings. These interpretations will be another data source and will be noted as a diary recording in my field notes.

Written, audio and visual recordings from this research will be retained by the researcher and stored securely in electronic and paper form. Data will be destroyed after 7 years, except for those items where separate written agreement has been given by all parties involved.

I will hold a Talanoa to inform the management committee in each setting to explain the research to the language nest communities. This will provide the community participants to ask questions, and seek clarification of the process. I will also on the guidance of my PAC members provide regular feedback in a culturally suitable form, such as a Talanoa session during a management committee meeting, teacher staff meeting and parent teacher meeting. This will provide on-going

feedback on progress of the research process and allow participants to discuss, question, debate and reflect on the research.

Participating centres will receive a summary of findings of the study completed. I will deliver the key findings in a Talanoa session, verbally feeding back to the centre community, as well as supplying each setting with a written summary.

I am very happy to meet with Parents and fanau to discuss this process further and to answer any questions that you may have at any time.

My contact details for my primary and secondary supervisors and I are:

Ali Glasgow Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori ali.glasgow@vuw.ac.nz Ph: 463:9738	Dr Cherie Chu Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori cherie.chu@vuw.ac.nz Ph:463: 5316	Dr Judith Loveridge Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori Judith.loveridge@vuw.ac.nz Ph:463: 6028
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Yours sincerely,

Ali Glasgow

Research Project Title: The Pacific 'Language nest' how language, culture and traditions are supported and promoted for Pacific people in Aotearoa New Zealand

Researcher: Ali Glasgow

Parent /fanau/ caregivers consent form

I have read the information sheet and understand the study and what it involves for my child..... and our family.

I know that the research project is useful, and will do no harm, for teachers, children, families, and communities, and that the researcher will speak with participants during the project so that the research processes are culturally and ethically appropriate.

I understand that Talanoa, written, audio and visual information will be confidential to the research and publications and presentations developed from the research, subject to the consents that participants give.

I understand that pictures in which people can be identified will not be used in the research report, presentations or publications without the prior consent of the people concerned and in the case of children without the additional prior written consent of their parents.

I understand that children, teachers & community members featuring in photo and video recordings will have the opportunity to view, comment on and offer their interpretation of and ideas about these recordings.

I give permission for the following items of information to be collected as part of this research and consent to these items being used for the purposes agreed to.

PLEASE CIRCLE Yes or No for each category	To be collected and analysed for this PhD project	To be used in presentations and publications
For any categories you want to give permission for and each and every individual item chosen (in addition to photos and videos) please mark the small boxes in the appropriate sections.	YES/NO	YES/NO
Observations of my child	YES/NO	YES/NO
Interviews/conversations with my child	YES/NO	YES/NO

Centre documentation involving my child	YES/NO	YES/NO
Audio recordings of my child	YES/NO	YES/NO
Photos of my child	YES/NO	YES/NO
Video recordings of my child	YES/NO	YES/NO

I understand that participants will have access to the data collected about them at any time and that verbal feedback will be provided to participating families about the progress of data collection.

I understand all participants in particular my child and our family have the right to decline to participate in the research and can withdraw from the study at any time before the end of data collection.

I understand that copies of photos and videos we are given from the research are for personal family use only and that no material that identifies anyone other than my child is to be made any more widely available.

I understand that our family will be provided with a summary of the research findings as will participating teachers, language nests, and any other participant who requests it.

I understand that written, audio and visual recordings from this research will be retained by the researcher and stored securely in electronic and paper form and that data will be destroyed after 7 years, except for those items where separate written agreement has been given by all parties involved.

I understand all participants in particular my child and our family have the right to decline to participate in any research activities and withdraw from the study at any time before the end of data collection.

My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree that my child _____ can participate in the research conducted by Ali Glasgow	Yes /No
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NAME: _____ (Parent/Legal Guardian).

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

CONTACT DETAILS _____



TE KURA MĀORI
MĀORI EDUCATION
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**Research Project Title: The Pacific 'Language nest' how language, culture and traditions
are supported and promoted for Pacific people in Aotearoa New Zealand
INFORMATION SHEET: Teachers/ Staff**

Kia orana, Malo ni, Fakaalofa atu

My name is Ali Glasgow, and I am a PhD student and lecturer at the Faculty of Education at Victoria University. I wish to request your consent to conduct my research project working alongside teachers, children and families at your language nest, and to invite you to participate in a study looking at how children and the community are supported in learning their home languages, cultures and traditions within the language nest environment, programme and community.

The purpose of this study is to explore the wide ranging practices, and in particular, the cultural and language practices that take place in the Pacific language nest.

The research question for this study is:

How are language, culture and traditions supported and promoted for the children, families and communities of the Cook Islands, Niuean and Tokelauan language nests in Aotearoa/ New Zealand?

I plan to undertake this research in three Pacific early childhood language nests and to gather information on the cultural and linguistic practices that take place during the programme. Your language nest is one of the three language nests involved in the research. I will also discuss with teachers, parents, and community groups associated with the centre their cultural and language practices, their involvement in the programme and centre and other contributions that they wish to make to the research.

Data will be gathered in a range of ways. The Talanoa method (informal focus group discussions) which will be conducted with teaching and staff teams, community groups, will be a primary source of data gathering. Prior to beginning the research the establishment of a Pacific Advisory Committee (Vananga) will be established. This committee will provide cultural advice for their respective Pacific community.

Correct cultural protocols and procedures will be followed under the guidance of the Vananga, such as beginning the session with a pure, or lotu, by an appointed member, within the hierarchy of the community group, blessing and sharing of food, information, ideas, and cultural and linguistic knowledge.

Although Talanoa will be a significant observational data gathering method, I will also observe and contribute to the programme and with permission, when convenient; I will collect written observations, photographs, and examples of children's work, cultural artefacts, audio and video recordings. Any written observations, photos, examples of work, audio and video recordings will only be used for the purposes agreed to, with the consent of those involved. Electronic data will be protected and will only be accessed via password access.

I plan to complete my information gathering in each centre between July and December 2013. I will work in each of the three case study settings, sequentially, separately, one after the other. I aim to spend about 4-6 weeks gathering data within each setting. I plan to spend four half days a week at the language nest during the four to six weeks during my data gathering process. During this process I will be meeting regularly with the Vananga to ensure cultural safety and protocols are maintained at all times. During this period I will organise Talanoa with community groups involved with the Pacific language nest community.

As sole researcher I will have sole access to the data; however these will be shared with my PhD Supervisors: Drs. Cherie Chu and Judith Loveridge. Data will be kept in a securely locked cabinet.

a) This study has been approved by the Faculty of Education Human Ethics Sub- committee under delegated authority from the Victoria University of Wellington. If you have any concerns in regards to ethics please contact the Chair of the VUW Human Ethics Committee, Dr Allison Kirkman Allison.Kirkman@vuw.ac.nz, Ph: 4635676.

Participation and keeping to cultural protocols

I am a qualified early childhood teacher from a Cook Island / Tahitian background, now working in teacher education. I have a research background in Pacific early childhood education in New Zealand and across the wider Pacific. I appreciate the challenges in teaching within busy early childhood settings and it is important that I am not a burden to the teachers, children or families during my research. Rather, I would like to contribute to the programme, under the advice of the Vananga. Further to this I wish to negotiate with the centre boundaries for the research process. I will consult and check frequently that the setting is happy with the way the research is progressing.

Teachers, children, family and community members who take part in this study have the right to:

- Decline to participate in any given research activity (Talanoa, observation, conversation etc) at any time.
- Ask any questions about the study at any time
- Withdraw from the study at any time before the end of data collection (expected to be the end of June, 2014).

Participant privacy

Participating centres will not be identified in the research. Visual data gathered will be treated in an ethically and culturally suitable manner. No person will be identified in written text and any visual images will not be used without prior consent. If these are of children additional prior parental consent will be sought. Visual data of children will not be used if parental consent is not granted.

Sharing of and access to research information and its storage

All information gathered during the research process will be held in confidence and participants will have access to the data collected about them at any time. Children, teachers, family and community members featuring in any photo, video or audio recording will have the opportunity to view, listen to, comment on and offer their interpretation of these recordings. These interpretations will be another data source and will be noted as a diary recording in my field notes.

Written, audio and visual recordings from this research will be retained by the researcher and stored securely in electronic and paper form. Data will be destroyed after 7 years, except for those items where separate written agreement has been given by all parties involved.

I will initially hold a Talanoa to inform the management committee in each setting to explain the research to the language nest communities. This will provide the community participants to ask questions, and seek clarification of the process. The Vananga members will provide guidance on how to provide feedback in a culturally suitable form, such as a Talanoa session during a

management committee meeting, teacher staff meeting and parent teacher meeting. This will provide on-going feedback on progress of the research process and allow participants to discuss, question, debate and reflect on the research. Once I have received feedback and approval from the management committee to proceed I will conduct a Talanoa with teachers and Language nest staff to answer questions and to outline my research process.

Participating centres will receive a summary of findings of the study completed. I will deliver the key findings in a Talanoa session, verbally feeding back to the centre community, as well as supplying each setting with a written summary.

I am very happy to meet with teachers and staff to discuss this process further and to answer any questions that you may have at any time.

Yours sincerely,

Ali Glasgow

My contact details for my primary and secondary supervisors and I are:

Ali Glasgow Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori ali.glasgow@vuw.ac.nz Ph: 463:9738 / 0272684537	Dr Cherie Chu Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori cherie.chu@vuw.ac.nz Ph:463:	Dr Judith Loveridge Faculty of Education Victoria University of Wellington Donald Street Karori Judith.loveridge@vuw.ac.nz Ph:463:
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PHD Research: The Pacific language nest: How language, culture and traditions are supported and promoted for the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau Islands communities in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Researcher: Ali Glasgow

Consent Form for Teachers and Staff

I have read the information sheet and understand the nature of the study and what the study involves.

My questions have been answered and I understand I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that participation in the research is voluntary and I can withdraw from the study during data gathering.

I understand that the research project is intended to be useful to the language nest, teachers, children and families.

I understand that the researcher will consult with participants during the course of the project.

I understand that children and teachers in photo and video recordings can view, comment on and discuss their ideas about these recordings.

I understand that visual images identifying people will not be used in the research report, presentations or publications without the prior consent of the people concerned, and in the case of children without the additional prior written consent of their parents.

I will be given copies of photos and videos from the research for my personal use.

I will not show these photos, videos and other research material to anyone else if they contain images other than mine.

I will get to see all the photos and videos involving me and they will not be shared with anyone unless I say they can.

I give permission for the following items of information to be collected as part of this research and consent to these items being used for the purposes agreed to.

PLEASE CIRCLE Yes or No for each category	To be collected and analysed for this PhD project	To be used in presentations and publications
Observations of me	Yes/No	Yes/No
Photos I feature in	Yes/No	Yes/No
Video recordings I feature in	Yes/No	Yes/No
Audio recordings I feature in	Yes/No	Yes/No

I know that written, audio and visual information will be confidential to the research and publications and presentations, depending on the consents participants give.

I know that participants will have access to data collected s at all time and that a regular newsletter will keep participants informed about data collection

I will be provided with a summary of the research findings as will the parents, children and fanau and any other participant who requests it.

Written, audio and visual recordings from this research will be retained by the researcher and stored securely in electronic and paper form and that data will be destroyed after 7 years, except for those items where separate written agreement has been given by all parties involved.

I agree to participate in the research conducted by Ali Glasgow	Yes/No
---	--------

NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

LANGUAGE NEST: _____

DATE: _____