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Living and Learning as Māori: Language Stories from Three Generations

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Through tracing in detail the story of schooling for three individuals, this article provides a rich description of the way that education impacted on the lives of many Māori between the early 1900s and the year 2000. Although there is extensive research on the historical colonising effects of schooling on Māori and te reo Māori (the Māori language), this article approaches these effects by bringing them alive and illustrating them in the everyday lived experience of women from three generations: my mother, myself, and my daughter. Through this method, the article maps in evocative detail the important historical period between the banning of Māori language in schools and the renaissance of Māori language teaching and speaking in schools.

■ **Keywords:** Māori, educational impact, storytelling

My Māori mother's Catholic boarding school education in the early 20th century was a legacy of the 1847 New Zealand Education Ordinance in which mission boarding schools received state subsidies to provide religious and industrial training for Māori. As a result of the New Zealand Land Wars, mission schools closed and the post-war 1867 Native Schools Act meant that the state provided secular schooling in Māori communities. A requirement of the Act was that English was to be the language of the school at all times. The 1867 Act was supported by many Māori who perceived the English language schooling system as a means of survival and a way to propel Māori towards social and economic equality with Pākehā/European (Simon, 1998).

My grandmother's family agreed with the 1867 Act. My grandmother's Māori language use was strong at home, and she was convinced that her Māori-speaking daughter (my mother) would be successful in life if she acquired Pākehā skills and exemplary English language knowledge through schooling. Hoping that these skills could be attained while her daughter's Māori language and traditional knowledge continued to flourish, my grandmother enrolled her daughter at a Catholic Boarding School in 1939. Her hopes were met. When my mother left the boarding school, she was an articulate, bilingual woman proficient in the Māori and English languages and cultures. She had gained English from school and maintained her Māori through using it at home and in her community where the language thrived.

When I was at school (1950s–1960s) my parents, like my grandparents, believed that English led the way to the future and we, their children, could learn Māori later in life. They barely spoke Māori to us as children and encouraged the use of high-quality English at home. At school, no Māori was spoken or taught. Consequently, with no instruction in the Māori language and culture during my formal education, and not much of it at home, I left secondary school with little understanding about my being Māori. The monolingual and monocultural education that dominated my childhood learning reflected education policies that sought to assimilate Māori into the Western world, and the agreement of my parents and others like them that Māori language and culture would take second place.

Then, inevitably, in the 1970s, it was discovered that the Māori language was in dire straits (Benton, 1997). Shocked that the language could die out, Māori communities and education leaders established initiatives to revitalise the language and culture. A significant action was the 1982 establishment of kōhanga reo, a pre-school learning environment in which Māori language, traditions and values were at the centre of all learning (Hohepa, 1993; Kai'ai, 1990; Royal-Tangaere, 1997). The need for kōhanga reo graduates to continue their Māori-medium learning led to the creation in 1985 of kura kaupapa Māori, a Māori language school (Tocker, 2015). My daughter flourished within these Māori language initiatives. Now, as an adult

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secure in her Māori identity, she has the confidence to utilise Māori language and culture as well as English literacy skills while participating in the wider world.

This paper takes a narrative approach to the fortunes of the Māori language in schooling over the last century. I have foregrounded the reported beliefs and experiences of three women, of three generations of my family, to tell a story about how an indigenous language was nearly lost and was regained—at least within their lives. The three generations I have focused on here are my mother's, my own, and that of my daughter. 'Naturally occurring conversations' with my mother and my daughter, described by Chase (2005, p. 652) as narratives, informed this account of how they, and I, have understood the ways schooling influenced our abilities to live as Māori. The stories related by my mother gave me an insight into a world significantly different from my own.

As is the case with other indigenous cultures, Māori perspectives are embedded primarily in oral histories and storytelling. Such communication practices are paramount in the connection of generations, and in the passing-on of knowledge, values and identities. So the use of narrative enquiry feels right in my research on Māori language and education in New Zealand. Bishop (1996), a leading Māori educationist, points out that narrative enquiry is a culturally appropriate research pathway for Māori because participants can 'select, recollect and reflect on stories within their own cultural context and language' (p. 24). They do not need to feel constrained or limited by the demands of the written word, or the formal interview. They can raise the points they wish to make with more ease.

I will briefly explore the relevance of narrative enquiry and storytelling for indigenous peoples before tracing the stories of my mother, my daughter and myself, to illustrate how the wider shifts in policy and Māori language use in schools were lived out in dramatically different ways over the last century.

Methods: Storytelling and Narrative Enquiry

Storytelling is a tradition practised by many indigenous peoples. Intertwined with knowing, storytelling holds both method and meaning and is crucial to indigenous research (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009). Storytelling can be understood in many ways as narrative enquiry when it is defined by Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) as the 'study of experience as it is lived' (p.69) or when others such as Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) refer to narratives and stories as accounts of human learning and sense making within a culture. Narrative enquiry can be also utilised by non-indigenous researchers to make sense of, and to reflect upon positions of privilege and power as exemplified by Mackinlay (2016) who used storytelling about her own experiences as a teacher of Australian indigenous students to 'interrupt and interrogate colonial ways of being, doing and knowing' (p. 379).

A number of writers have discussed the significance of storytelling in indigenous contexts. Cidro (2012) explains how storytelling passed on information and knowledge to people in the Anishinawbe societies. Cultural knowledge is also strengthened for the Saami people through story telling (Balto, 2006). The nurturing and educative aspects of storytelling are exemplified in writing by Thomas (2005) who tells of the wisdom passed on through stories related by her grandparents and other elders, First Nations people in Canada. Archibald (2008), another indigenous writer from Canada, writes about how the Coyote stories as told to her by Salish and Stó:lō Elders provide information, traditions and reminders of the knowledge, values and the connections between people, culture and land.

The legitimation of cultural values, knowledge and histories is transmitted through storytelling and, in the process, identity is strengthened. As Kovach (2009, p.94) aptly states, 'stories remind us of who we are and of our belonging'. For many Torres Strait Islanders in Australia, no longer living on their own land, a sense of belonging is heightened when they practise their own 'ways of doing' (Nakata, 2007, p.219) including storytelling and memory making. Yarning, a type of storytelling through conversation, is another indigenous method utilised by Aboriginal people, as well as those in Botswana as a means of sharing and exchanging information (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010).

My own people, the Māori of New Zealand, have a tradition of passing on values, traditions, history and genealogy through song and chants, proverbs and stories known as pūrākau. Pūrākau relates to myths and legends and to the stories that are communicated in modern times. The Māori educational scholar Jenny Lee has explained the place of pūrākau as a Māori research method by using that term to encompass what might be called narrative enquiry (Lee, 2005).

Outlining the distinctive qualities of narrative enquiry, Chase (2005) points out that a narrative not only tells a story from the narrator's point of view, but it also allows the expression of emotions, thoughts and interpretations of the narrator's everyday experiences. This is exemplified in the story my mother told about her arrival at her convent school in the town of Napier, New Zealand, and the feeling of being abandoned for the good of a Catholic education. The emotion she still keenly felt some 60 years later was very clear in the narrative she shared with me. I have included it in the beginning paragraph of her story below.

The stories my mother told me about her childhood experiences of gathering the fern plant for food and about learning from older, experienced women how to dive for seafood, were not only about food gathering, but also about the maintenance of kinship and reciprocity in her communal Māori world where crops and seafood were shared with everyone. When she explained that she was taught table etiquette at school, she was unknowingly

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relating an official educational practice that sought to introduce Māori to western values, knowledge and ways of behaving (Simon & Smith, 2001).

In communicating my family members' school experiences through their descriptive accounts, I am influenced by Goodson's (2013) arguments that narratives gain their strength in social research from an integration of social and political context into the narrative—what he calls the 'genealogy of context' (p. 5). Even though my mother and daughter did not always realise the context of their own stories, I have woven historical, social and cultural events into the life stories as related to me. When telling stories in this manner, policy effects in education and the impact of socio-political factors on people's lives can be made visible.

My own story is included as one of the generational tales in this article. By relating my own autobiographical education story in a research context, I have been able to gain more of an understanding about my own life (Kimpson, 2005), just as I know my daughter will gain more of an understanding of her own schooling by reading her narrative in the context of this article.

The details related in the three stories below enable the reader to gain a sense of actually 'being there' in our lives, though—as mentioned—I have also relayed some political and social shifts that, unknown to us, impacted on our lives as Māori. Although the stories are retold by me in the third person, I hope that I am following Thomas' (2005, p. 242) example of allowing storytellers to 'use their own voices to tell their own stories on their own terms' when I relate the lived experiences of my mother and my daughter. The stories are rich with examples of culture, history, traditions, and how living as Māori is shaped through the assimilation by ordinary people of educational ideas about what was 'best' for Māori.

My Mother's Story (1930–2007)

I had been so excited—the first time away from home, on a train, and such a long journey, from Shannon all the way to Napier—just me and my Mum.

Now I watched in horror, panic seizing and twisting my stomach, when Mum trudged away down the pathway becoming smaller and smaller, until she was gone.

I heard the swish of the brown tunic, the light clicks of the rosary beads. The nun moved towards me and said, 'This is your home now'.

My mother Rihitapuwae Rauhihi was nine when she began her Catholic education at St. Joseph's Boarding School. A cold bewildering world filled with unreasonable rules and strange beliefs, it seemed to be the antithesis of the warm communal life she now pined for.

From birth my mother had lived among her people of Ngāti Whakatere in the Manawatu. She basked in the love and attention from the many aunts, uncles, grandparents and cousins in her extended family. Māori was the main language spoken, especially by most of the older generation, whereas the English vernacular was more prevalent and fashionable among the younger people. In the communal environment, learning about Māori customs, protocols and ways of being just happened, it was not a conscious activity but was simply a part of everyday life. In a similar way to the participants in Metge's 1980s research on Māori methods of teaching and learning (Metge, 2015), my mother learnt through observation, imitation and experience. She told me that watching her aunts and kuia/elderly women performing activities was part of her learning. The practical 'doing' of the activity soon reinforced the lesson. Mum recalled treks with her mother or other women to pick fern shoots for food and the learning associated with the gathering of seafood and diving for koura/crayfish.

Family and tribal gatherings, tangi/funerals, weddings and other important whānau/extended family events often took place at the marae, a tribal gathering place. My mother learnt by observing and by taking part in the daily rituals, language and values that took place there. My mother lived as Māori—it was normal to be Māori, and to speak the Māori language.

Schooling had a profound effect on my mother's life and her being Māori. Until she was nine years of age she had attended the local primary school. English was the language of the school and my mother explained that her language, Māori, was only allowed outside the school gate. She related that being forbidden to speak Māori at school did not seem terribly significant at that time, because she still had the language thriving within her whānau and community.

My mother was quite a boisterous child, 'I was told I was a tomboy. They wanted to change me into something ladylike'. Consequently, the start of her Catholic education at St Joseph's Boarding School was marked by a focussed curtailment of her adventurous behaviour. A 'respectful defiance' was the stance my mother took in order to cope with the feelings of abandonment and loneliness.

In the 1940s when my mother attended St Joseph's boarding school, education for Māori girls was about teaching them to behave in a 'civilised' European manner, thus preparing them for entry into the working class and the wider Pākehā society. My mother related: 'We were taught how to behave and how to present ourselves in public. We learnt how to eat properly, how to hold a knife and fork, that you have a fork for desserts and sweets, a butter knife for the butter, and serviettes'. She learnt the three R's: Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic, some Biology as well as the following subjects: Hygiene; Home Economics; Embroidery; Knitting; Crotcheting; Dress making and Design; How to make Soap and Starch Clothes; and Laundry Washing. In acquiring these housekeeping skills, the young girls were being prepared for a working class adulthood through vocational and domestic training, an outcome of the 1930s Native Schools' curriculum (Simon & Smith, 2001). Although seeking 'to provide a good

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general education rooted in Christian principles' (Van der Linden, 1990, p. 25), the nuns of St Joseph's were well liked by my mother and others. The girls did not speak a lot of Māori among themselves at boarding school, choosing instead to speak English. Over time my mother came to enjoy living and studying at St Joseph's that she described as '*sound preparation*' for her future life in the world.

My mother had been brought up 'living as Māori'. The Māori language and knowledge she carried were put largely aside while at school where English literacy and knowledge were the main curriculum. Throughout her education, however, my mother managed to keep her Māori side intact through adaption and compromise. The English language education she received at the Catholic Boarding School was an addition to her Māori worldview: She became richer with her depth of both knowledge and languages. My mother left school with School Certificate, and an excellent proficiency in the reading and writing of both English and Māori. She was also an eloquent speaker, a skill she learnt from the school, where oratory in the Māori language was encouraged: 'we learnt how to run meetings and how to debate, also oratory skills in Māori and Pākehā. All these things have helped in my life since'.

My mother's Māori upbringing coupled with the Catholic English language schooling produced a proud and strong Māori woman, able to walk confidently between the two worlds, Māori and Pākehā. Like some of the respondents in Fitzgerald's (1977) study of Māori graduates in the 1940s, my mother strongly identified as Māori yet also aspired to acquire 'economic security and a European way of life' (p. 76). Showing great potential as a teacher, my mother was encouraged to apply to the Wellington Teachers College as part of the Māori Teachers Quota, a system introduced in 1939 to encourage Māori into the teaching profession (Simon & Smith, 2001, pp. 80–81).

It was at the Wellington Teachers' College that my mother met my Pākehā father, a fellow student. A friendship developed and grew into a marriage that lasted for 57 years until my mother's death in 2007. For the first five years of my life our family moved around the country as my father was posted to teaching positions in different Māori communities.

My Story (1951–)

In 1956, when I was five years old, my father's career, and our lives took a different turn as my father became the Māori Welfare Officer for the Taumarunui district. We moved to Ngāpuke, 20 minutes outside of the township of Taumarunui where we lived among our own hapū, Ngāti Hinemihi (a subtribe of Ngāti Tūwharetoa). Occasionally, we would visit our maternal grandmother and our Ngāti Raukawa relatives further south. It was here that we attended the tangi for my grandmother when she passed away.

A tangi, like most Māori ceremonies, involves tikanga Māori, described by Mead (2003, p. 5) 'as a means of social control'. Tikanga determines how Māori behave on a large scale, community level or on an individual basis. As children, my siblings and I learnt the more individual type of tikanga or traditional ways of behaving, by observation and a few lashings of the English word, 'Don't!' We learnt in a similar fashion to Webber (2008, p. 11) who describes being taught: 'Don't sit on tables, don't cut your hair or nails after dark, and don't step over people's legs'. Reasons were not often given for a particular activity. It was simply done that way. As the eldest in the family, I was expected to help my mother with the huge workload that came with having a large family. Washing clothes was one of those chores. Although I must have been shown at some time, it feels like I have always known that tea towels, tablecloths and linen associated with food must be washed separately from clothing that goes on the body. There was no lecture or long explanation just the understanding that it was paruparu/dirty to put the two types of clothing together. All this home instruction was in English, even though it was teaching—albeit without explanation—'Māori ways of being' in a domestic setting.

I observed my mother picking pūhā/sow thistle and watercress, learnt how to pick the vegetables and how to wash and scrub the sourness out of the prickly pūhā. Later, I was taught to add the greens to a boil-up and how to cook the delicious fry-bread that went with it. However, this kind of 'Māori kai/food' was not a regular meal for us as we were more likely to have a traditional 'kiwi' meal of meat and two veggies. Traditional Māori food and kaimoana/seafood was a special treat for my mother. She loved kina/sea urchins, pūpū/sea snails, tuna/eel and pikopiko/young fern shoots marinated with mussels. We were not allowed near these foods—they were for her consumption only. So we never developed a taste for Māori kai.

In my convent school days, there was no learning to support my Māori side. Although we studied Maths, Reading and Writing, Social Studies, Art, and Physical Education, the focus was on Catholicism and the avoidance of Hell. School differences caused conflict and kids from other primary schools delighted in teasing us. Coming from the only school in town that insisted on uniforms, I was very noticeable as a convent school pupil in my black, pleated tunic covering a white shirt and a sky blue tie. The distinctive clothing was instantly recognisable to the primary school travellers in the old school bus, and, as it lumbered past me walking home, they would yell and chant from the windows '*Convent dog sitting on a log, eating the guts out of a frog*!''Being Māori' was submerged under 'being Catholic' in my daily life as a girl.

The taunts from the primary pupils ceased once I entered Taumarunui High School where I was placed in the top academic class 3A1, as a result of streaming tests in

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my form two year at primary school. Academic students at secondary school studied the basic subjects of English, Mathematics, Geography, Physical Education and Science, to which I added French and Latin. Māori language and culture were not taught at secondary school.

My class rarely interacted with the 'lower' general stream students where it seemed most Māori students were placed. I remember, when hearing a racist remark about Māori students, reminding my classmate that I, too, am Māori. Genuinely surprised, my friend responded with the comment 'Yeah, but you're different!' I guess my classmates recognised me as one of them—this time, being of a 'better social class' trumped 'being Māori'. In a way, it is not surprising, given that I was the only Māori in the academic class until my 5th form year, all of my friends were Pākehā, and my middle class family lived in a Pākehā neighbourhood.

Many studies demonstrate the impact of socio-economic status and family resources on children's academic achievement (e.g., Biddulph, Biddulph, & Biddulph, 2003; Fergusson, Horwood, & Boden, 2008). Both of my parents were well educated, were avid readers and very proficient writers who expected their children to do well academically. My father had returned to teaching at the local high school. He was the English teacher and, in a way, continued his teaching at home as he corrected my grammar and that of my siblings to ensure proper English was spoken and written around the kitchen table. Such middle class family practices contributed to my learning and resulted in my placement in an academic class at high school.

In discussing Māori identity, Webber (2008) talks about appropriate behaviour that makes a person Māori. One expectation she mentions is the unwritten rule that real Māori stick with other Māori and steer away from befriending Pākehā. Although I didn't feel Pākehā, it seemed that my having Pākehā friends clinched my non-Māoriness. I enjoyed tennis, swimming and netball throughout my secondary school years, captaining the netball team during one of them. Even though I was a reasonably good sports player, and excelling in sport is a stereotype associated with being Māori, I still had the feeling that I wasn't quite Māori when it came to sports—not like the softball playing girls from the General Stream. Although I felt intimidated by their toughness, I envied their ability to send the ball hurtling with great speed to each other. And I envied the ease with which they communicated. I wished that I could be a part of the cheeky banter, the eruptions of raucous laughter. Their camaraderie, their group strength, seemed unattainable. I wanted to be identified with the Māori students but like 'Shirley', one of the participants in Lee's (2007) study of Chinese-Māori, placement in an academic class made me an outsider to other Māori at school. A Māori woman in my home town unwittingly re-ignited those feelings of disconnection recently when she mocked me with the words 'My Dad said you were a good girl at school. He said you were a nerd!'

The sense of separation from other Māori students and the feeling of somehow not 'being Māori', the feeling Webber (2008) describes of 'not belonging' or 'in-betweenness' (p. 9), was a constant companion during my secondary education. The sense of dislocation that remained with for me for some years long after I had left the high school was further compounded by my mother's occasional angry negativity. Once in a fit of anger, she stormed at me 'You kids –you're so Pākehā! You're just like your father!' In my mind she was saying we, her children, were not like her—not Māori!

My mother always voiced strong messages about upholding Māori tikanga or protocol, yet she was not keen to teach her children Māori language, even though I expressed interest while at high school, or to pass on the cultural skills she possessed. She was known as an expert in the art of performing action songs and the discipline of the 'mere' (a short, flat weapon of stone) that she deftly twirled and thrust in dance. She also became renowned for her song-writing talent and her waiata/songs are still sung on our marae today. But she did not pass this knowledge on to me.

Perhaps one of the reasons behind my not learning Māori language or 'Māori things' as I grew up was reflected in the education policies of the time that encouraged Māori parents to ensure good English language proficiency. Parents who went along with this view were not wrong or deluded. In fact, good English language proficiency *was* a route to a better job. Māori language, in the mainstream of New Zealand life at the time that ignored and looked down on the idea of 'being Māori', led 'nowhere'. So my parents (like others of that time) spoke English to me and my siblings as we grew up. My father related, 'There was a tendency to feel that you would be better off speaking English'. The regret my parents felt in later years about not teaching their children Māori was expressed clearly by my mother in 2001 when she said, 'That was a sad time for me, because I went along with the thinking of that time. I helped you to learn French and Latin. I fell down a bit because I never taught Māori to you children. I neglected the Māori side'.

At the time of this admission, my mother was in her 60s and had become very supportive of my desire to speak Māori. With the realisation that I was the only one of her eight children seeking Māori knowledge, she was keen to pass on whakapapa and other aspects of Māori learning to me. She delighted in conversing in Māori with me and my daughter Taupunakohe, who had grown up immersed in the Māori language and traditions through her kōhanga reo pre-school learning and Māori-medium primary school education.

Speaking in Māori opens the mind to many aspects of Māori knowledge and the mores of our ancestors. As Nepe (1991, p. 44) said, 'Māori language is the exclusive vehicle

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that gives expression to kaupapa Māori knowledge'. So upon my return to New Zealand from living in Australia in the early 80s, I was determined to develop my Māori language skills through regular attendance at the Ngāti Raukawa total immersion wānanga/place of learning. It was significant that the first wānanga I attended was held at Whakawehi Marae, the place where my mother had grown up. Here, I was introduced to the genealogy of my Ngāti Whakatere sub-tribe, demonstrating the connection between me, the marae and people there, thus sowing the seed: a nascent sense of belonging.

But as a novice, eager to learn Māori, and to gather the accompanying spiritual and intellectual wealth, I was open to some problematic teachings and ideas. I was a member of a group that met weekly to learn about tribal knowledge and I remember being told off by one of the men for wearing what he called 'Pākehā' jewellery—I should have been wearing pounamu/greenstone or mako/shark's tooth earrings. I was also given the impression that one must not be too well-dressed and to wear bright clothing, to stand out was being Pākehā and not 'authentically' Māori. Hoskins (2000) explains issues of authenticity as problematic when trying to return to the Māori traditional ways. Not only has the infusion of colonial ideas into Māori history and knowledge resulted in an uncertainty about the legitimacy of the culture and the knowledge being sought, but sometimes there is a policing of the idea of what counts as Māori. In this group, not only had I encountered a stereotype about being Māori—imposed by a Māori person—but I was also being subjected to oppressive male behaviour.

The group was run by the men in our group as they were the ones who had the language and cultural knowledge. In her critique of the role of Māori women in the world of Māori today, Hoskins (2000, p. 39) states that Māori men are seen as the repositories of knowledge, 'the legitimated keepers, interpreters and promoters of what is considered authentic, traditional knowledge and tikanga and kaupapa Māori'. They are the ones who traditionally do the whaikōrero, the main public speaking in a Māori context. But, she argues, the dominance of Māori men in Māori society is the result of colonialism and a power alliance between Pākehā and Māori men in the maintenance of a patriarchal society. Although I accepted the dominant role of men as speakers on the marae ātea/courtyard and speaking area, I could never understand the reason for women having to ask the men for permission to speak within the wharenui/meeting house whenever we were at wānanga. I asked my mother: Where is the place for women to speak? The woman's karanga (the call and the first voice on the marae) seemed part of a formal process and not meant to argue points of interest. My mother assured me that inside the wharenui was the place for women to speak, and that men's permission was not required there. But, afraid to voice the assurances of my mother, I stayed silent. Any opposition from the women in our tribal group about perceived inequalities was silenced by the fear of being labelled as feminists or Pākehā 'stirrers'.

Māori radical movements were happening on the fringes of my life at that time. Māori protests about long-standing grievances came to fruition in the 1987 Māori Language Act that recognised Māori as an official language of New Zealand (May, 2013). I was an undergraduate student at the University of Auckland, learning for the first time about the history of our country. Exposure to the injustices incurred by Māori through colonialism fostered anger in me and a desire to distance myself from my non-Māori heritage—an easy solution to settle the confusing and polarising constructions of 'coloniser' and 'colonised' jostling within my own psyche (Meredith, 1999). I was becoming stronger in my sense of being Māori, but I was hesitant to admit that I had within me a Pākehā ancestry.

The ambivalence about my identity increased when I was referred to as 'part-Māori' and occasionally as a 'half-caste'. Mostly used in a derogatory sense, the negative term 'half-caste' has been reclaimed and celebrated by Meredith (1999) as an acknowledgement of his two beings: Māori and Pākehā. In living as a Māori–Pākehā, he describes himself as 'in a space where two cultures edge each other' (p. 17). In a similar way, Collins (1999) describes the bicultural nature of people of mixed Māori and Pākehā parentage through the analogy of the flowing of two rivers. She has coined the term 'ngā tāngata awarua' to describe Māori–Pākehā who have the ability to slide across the two cultures rather than suffering 'in-between' status.

For me, the 'in-between-ness', the living within my personal state of 'limbo', has now vanished and is replaced instead by a new and liberating stance. When pondering the following questions posed by Bhabha (1994, p. 351) in his discussion on cultural hybridity—'what do I belong to in this present? In what terms do I identify with the 'we', the inter subjective realm of society?'—I realise I have constructed an identity in which my Māori and Pākehā backgrounds combine to form 'a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation' (p. 211). It is here that my living as Māori, my being Māori, is influenced by my middle-class Pākehā background. The Pākehā side of me is tempered by my Māori conditioning. Instead of edging each other, or jumping from one to the other, my two cultures merge, mixing and influencing each other.

In an extension of Collins' analogy of the two rivers representing two cultures, I view the point where two rivers come together as an expression of the meeting point of my two heritages. I see a singular flowing entity (the output from the joining of the rivers) as the construction of an identity that is a combination of my dual cultures. This is symbolised in my home town of Taumarunui, where the Whanganui and Ongārue rivers converge at a place called Ngā Huihuinga and become one strong, flowing force, Te Awa o Whanganui. A place full of childhood memories, a place of comfort and spiritual solace, I see this meeting

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site, 'Ngā huihuinga' much like 'a containment of both cultures' (p. 503) as described by Moeke-Maxwell in her 2005 article on Māori women and hybridity. Resembling the Māori–Pākehā women she discusses, I too, have the ability to create a third space useful for me, for the good of my whānau and the community at large. Like Lee (2007, p. 16) who states, 'I do not choose to be one or the other, I am both', when referring to her Māori and Chinese heritage, I am also both cultures, Māori and Pākehā. Although I can easily move between the two worlds, there are times, depending on the social milieu when one part is more dominant than the other.

Although I acknowledge and am proud of my Pākehā ancestry, I identify as Māori. It has taken 20 years to soothe the ache of not fully belonging, of not truly inhabiting my being, my identity. Today, I am proud to declare the lineage from my mother that links me to the tribes of Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Maniapoto and Waikato and, from my father, the Celtic and Jewish ancestry.

When attending hui or tangihanga, I move with relative ease on the Māori environment of the marae and I understand and practise tikanga among the various Māori communities I mingle with. But, at times, it is a problem being the only one in my family who can speak Māori and understand the Māori world. The majority of my siblings rarely participate in Māori events. If forced to, as in the death of a loved one, they are filled with uncertainty and trepidation at the thought of making mistakes in the Māori protocol. Thus, a sharing of responsibilities and burdens is not always possible. Whanaungatanga, the expectations and responsibilities around relationships (Mead, 2003), is a struggle to achieve and maintain when there is little understanding from others. It is at those moments that I feel alone in my family and miss my mother's support and knowledge about things Māori.

My Daughter's Story (1985–)

Being Māori was a significant part of my daughter's life from the start. When asked about influences on her life Taupunakohe states that she was born into the Māori world and a Māori way of thinking. She remembers 'going to the marae, to hui, to tangi, to wānanga. I was surrounded by learning, reo and tikanga'. Taupunakohe recalls an upbringing imbued with tikanga and the values of whakapapa/genealogy and wairua/Māori spiritual essence while being inspired by her grandmother, who nourished her Māori side. She has fond memories of her primary school days at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Maungawhau and the rumaki reo/Māori-medium immersion unit at Freemans Bay School—the educational places I sent her, determined she would not miss out on her Māori identity as I did as a child. She remembers passionate, caring teachers, kind, understanding kaumātua–kuia/elders as role models and the tight whānau community.

Attending high school was a shock for my daughter. Unsure of the quality of Māori-medium high schools, I had enrolled her in a mainstream-English language high school. My daughter has since told me she disliked her time at secondary school because her Māoriness was denigrated and she 'felt very lonely, really lost'. She talks of teachers mispronouncing her name, being told off for correcting their pronunciation and even being renamed. She recalls the unfairness of being chastised for speaking Māori to a friend in class, whereas other classmates were allowed to speak in their Chinese tongue. The values and ways of behaving were at complete odds with what she had grown up with. She talked about the values of individualism and competitiveness held aloft as beacons for success, which clashed with the values of whanaungatanga (group support), āwhina (assist and care) and aroha (respect) inherent in her since birth. Although she said she did not feel safe in that environment, 'it was knowing who I was as a Māori that made me staunch'. Taupunakohe's declaration that her strong identity enabled her to withstand the negativity she encountered at secondary school reflects elements in Webber's (2012) study about racial–ethnic identity and Māori adolescents. Webber found that a positive self-concept can help young Māori to be resilient at school and enables them to cope with adversity and racism while focussing on learning and achieving goals.

There were positive influences. Taupunakohe likened the Māori teacher at the mainstream secondary school to a kind and supportive aunty and her classroom as a comfortable haven, a place of refuge where there was 'a sense of whānau'. Kapa haka/Māori performing arts also provided a welcome relief, a chance to be proud and show off the beauty of being Māori. Staying at marae during kapa haka practices for the annual Secondary Schools Polynesian Festival was enjoyed, because it meant a return to Māori ways of behaving 'taking me back to what I knew and felt comfortable in'.

A Pākehā teacher of English is remembered for the out-of-school time and tuition she gave as well as her encouragement and support: 'She put extra effort in for me, she saw the potential in me'. A Social Studies teacher was also seen as helpful, especially in allowing my daughter a voice in class when negative, non-Māori views dominated. The counsellor, who provided helpful guidance, is recalled with fondness as a person who 'seemed to understand what it was like to be a young Māori'. The trust and warmth exuded from those teachers and counsellor gave my daughter confidence in her abilities and the belief that she could achieve her goals.

The positive behaviour and supportive teaching skills modelled by these teachers was foregrounded in the 2007 research by Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh and Teddy. Their study on Māori educational experiences showed that caring teachers employed strategies to pursue the cultural wellbeing of their students and successfully bolstered the students' educational achievement. Armed with the

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support of a few committed teachers and encouragement from her family, my daughter nurtured the desire to do well at school in order to attain a good career and future. Consequently she was successful in gaining an 'A' Bursary in her final 7th form year. A bilingual speaker, proficient in both Māori and English literacy skills, my daughter's knowledge of te reo Māori propelled her into a television career as a presenter on a Māori language programme for children.

When asked if schooling had prepared her for 'living as Māori in the world today'—the aim of the New Zealand government's 2008–2012 'Ka Hikitia' Māori Education Strategy (Ministry of Education, 2009)—Taupunakohe cited education as vital, but in second place to the strong and positive influence of a loving family. She describes her Māori-medium primary schooling as an environment that enabled and reinforced her being Māori. The education she received at secondary school taught the skills of the English language and opened her eyes to other cultures, but the dominance of Pākehā values subjected her to challenges about her very core: her being Māori. Perhaps, the need to confront and rebut the negativity developed her strength and the staunch pride she demonstrates today as a young Māori woman.

My daughter's reaction to racism and anti-Māori sentiment is similar to the behaviour and thinking exhibited by the youngest cohort in Houkamau's 2006 study about modern Māori women's identity. The young women in her research were not afraid to speak out against unjust or unfair treatment of Māori. Like my daughter, it is probable that their strength came from growing up during the late 1970s to the mid-1980s, an era of Māori political activism. At that time, Māori were strident in their protests about land rights, foreshore and seabed issues, Māori language malaise and the continuing failure of Māori children within the state system. The involvement of Taupunakohe's father in some of the protests of that time has impacted upon her thinking.

> Daddy had a massive influence on my whakaaro Māori in his staunch activist way. When I was younger and he was carrying on about Māori land, Māori rights—I didn't really take to it. Now, at an age where I'm thinking about the future, those things are important to me and I see the relevance, the fight for our reo, the struggle to be Māori, and to uphold these things in society today.

Mirroring my daughter's primary-school experiences, the women in Houkamau's youngest cohort were also immersed in a Māori-medium education where they learnt about the Māori culture, values and history. They grew up feeling proud to be Māori. Similarly, Taupunakohe is very fervent about being involved in all aspects Māori whether in her workplace or her social life, and she has no qualms about proclaiming: 'I love te reo Māori and the Māori world. I love being Māori!'.

Interestingly, 'being Māori' is viewed by these women and my daughter in a similar way to the thinking of the older women in Houkamau's 2006 study. Both the younger and the older cohorts described traditional ideas such as whakapapa, marae activities, 'whānau loyalty and cohesiveness' as important facets to being and living as Māori (p. 192). The older women appeared similar to my mother in age and in their life experiences. Like my mother, they had been brought up speaking Māori and living Māori values within a communal life-style. Thus, they viewed the ability to speak Māori and having Māori parentage and blood-line as determinants of Māori ethnicity. Like a number of Māori, my mother also viewed certain physical traits as signs of a person's Māoriness: You were Māori if you had brown skin and had a flat nose. What counts as an 'authentic' Māori is problematic for today's generation of Māori. A number of Māori writers (Lee, 2007; McIntosh, 2005; Webber, 2008) report negative challenges to their Māori identity. Judgments about authenticity are often based on skin colour and physical appearance. McIntosh a fair-skinned Māori woman explains she is sometimes challenged for 'not being Māori-looking enough' (p. 39) that she interprets as not being dark enough. My daughter expresses a more open idea of what it is to be Māori than her grandmother's generation who were quite specific with their traditional descriptors. She does not see physical aspects or colour as a marker of Māori ethnicity. Instead she acknowledges the outcomes of intermarriage that permeate the Māori society today and that many Māori look different because of their genealogical connections to other ethnic groups.

On being Māori, Taupunakohe explains her own experiences: 'For me, living as Māori is being able to speak Māori, know tikanga, think in Māori, [and] know the spiritual side, protocol, whakapapa'. Although applying some of the traditional markers for her own identity, she acknowledges being Māori is not static and cannot be clearly defined. 'It is different for everybody because everyone is in a different place in life and has different backgrounds'. Her comments concur with Lee (2007) who argues that Māori identity is moulded by many factors including 'class, gender, sexuality, age and geography' as well as 'whakapapa, iwi, hapū, whānau and whenua' (p. 35). Although Māori are perceived to be a homogenous group, the many layers that contribute to identity result in quite individual descriptions for 'being Māori'.

Stephenson (2004) describes four cultural identity profiles that were constructed from the Te Hoe Nuku Roa Framework (Durie, 1995) research on cultural indicators as measures of Māori identity. The first profile is named a 'Secure identity' and includes Māori who participate in aspects of the Māori world, enjoy Māori language, land, whānau, values and Māori-medium education. A 'Positive identity' is the second profile and defines those who have 'a strong sense of being Māori' (p. 40), but do not have access to the resources of the Māori world. The third

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profile 'Notional identity' refers to a group who declare themselves Māori but do not participate in the Māori world. Māori who do not see themselves as Māori are placed under the fourth term, 'Compromised profile'.

Clearly there are many ways of being Māori. Taupunakohe illustrates the diversity of Māori lives with her comments about some of her own relations: 'some of them don't know how to speak Māori, don't know their whakapapa but they are the ones who are at the marae, still upholding manaaki tangata'. Other cousins name themselves Māori but do not know how to participate in Māori events or activities and have few opportunities to do so.

The crucial nature of identity is demonstrated in the final statement by Taupunakohe: 'Having the grounding and security about who I am has given me the confidence to step out into the world [and] gives me the strength and courage to know what I want. I'm secure in my āhua Māori because of my upbringing and because of my kura experiences'.

Conclusion

The stories of the schooling experiences of my mother, myself and my daughter bring to life the lived realities of the dramatic changes during the 20th century in educational ideas particularly related to the place of Māori language and culture in New Zealand. Born into a traditional Māori world and secure in her identity, living as Māori was never an issue for my mother. Her schooling, influenced by the 1930s Native Schools Curriculum, prepared her to stand tall in the Western world and she left school at ease with the languages and knowledge of two worlds, Māori and Pākehā. Early 20th century attempts to have Māori educated in aspects of Western language and society did not overshadow the power of the language and culture that was strong in the villages and tribal areas. But by the time I entered formal education, Māori language use had weakened, due largely to the belief that English was the way of the future. The resulting effect of parental encouragement to excel at English, and the monolingual education did not support my identity as Māori or encourage me to live as Māori. My own experience mapped on to the loss of language that was discovered in 1977 by Richard Benton, whose research on how few people could fluently speak Māori shocked the Māori world. My daughter, born in the 1980s, lived during a crucial time in the regeneration of the ailing Māori language and is the triumphant product of a Māori-medium learning environment that aims to fit its students with the skills to stand strong as Māori and 'to live as Māori' in the wider world. What she learned at school could then flow back into our home, encouraging me to learn my own language. Living as Māori is taken for granted as demonstrated in her statement: 'I was born Māori. That's all I've ever known. Ever since I can remember, that's what I've been living and breathing'. She and her friends represent the hope for the language that was nearly lost in the short span of three generations.

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