Teacher education in indigenous contexts: Critical considerations of teacher educator understandings and decision-making related to treaty issues and social justice

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Abstract

Despite the existence of a treaty (Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi, 1840) in Aotearoa New Zealand that promised the indigenous Māori that their language and culture would be protected, these rights to autonomy and self-determination have not been fully realised. The persistent gap in the education system's responsiveness to Māori educational aspirations and well-being poses a significant social justice challenge to educators, in particular teacher educators. In order to successfully respond to the educational needs of Māori as tangata whenua (the 'people of the land' or indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand) teacher educators must develop the necessary sociocultural knoweldge and culturally-responsive pedagogies to enact the fullness of their professional responsibilities as treaty partners with Māori. By focusing on the indigenous context of teacher education in Aotearoa New Zealand, we seek to illuminate a particular aspect of this complexity as a means to extend and problematise the discourse around international teacher educator knowledge and practice with respect to issues of diversity, culturally responsive practice, and social justice. In undertaking this inquiry, we draw from a larger qualitative investigation examining the perspectives of a small group of teacher educators regarding their understandings of the treaty in relation to their educational practice. Our analysis is informed by critical theory (Giroux, 2007; Kincheloe, 2008) and the notion of 'teachers as gatekeepers" (Thornton, 1991, p 238).

Introduction

Despite the existence of a treaty (Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi, 1840) in Aotearoa New Zealand[1] that promised the indigenous Māori that their language and culture would be protected, these rights to autonomy and self-determination have not been fully realised. International assessments indicate that many children in Aotearoa New Zealand do well in comparison to students from other countrie; nevertheless, there continues to be 'long-tail' of underachievement for Māori and Pasifika students (Education and Science Committee, 2008). Though some data indicate that the highest performing Māori students score higher than the national average in National Education Monitoring Project tests, other research and statistics indicate that overall the national education system does not well serve the majority of Māori children and youth (Education and Science Committee, 2011; Education Counts, 2014). In the face of this inequity in educational outcomes, the government has increased attention on the potential of education to make a lasting difference for those children and

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[1] Throughout this paper we use the bilingual construction of Aotearoa New Zealand to reflect the national policy of both Te Reo Māori and English being official langauges.

youth most vulnerable to low educational attainment. This group includes Māori, Pasifika, English langauge learners, children from low income families and children with specific learning needs. The government identifies these groups as priority learners requiring specific support to achieve equitable outcomes (Education Review Office [ERO], 2013). The persistent gap in the education system's responsiveness to Māori educational aspirations and well-being poses a significant social justice challenge to educators, in particular teacher educators. In order to successfully respond to the educational needs of Māori as tangata whenua (the 'people of the land' or indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand) teacher educators must develop the necessary sociocultural knoweldge and culturally-responsive pedagogies to enact the fullness of their professional responsibilities as treaty partners with Māori.

Teacher educators in Aotearoa New Zealand are not alone in this need to address the particular professional and social justice considerations of working in partnership with indigenous communities. While teacher educators world-wide seek to be responsive to the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of students, those working in indigenous contexts around the globe must also engage with a set of unique considerations that raise particular complexities and possibilities. By focusing on the indigenous context of teacher education in Aotearoa New Zealand, we seek to illuminate a particular aspect of this complexity as a means to extend and problematise the discourse around international teacher educator knowledge and practice with respect to issues of diversity, culturally responsive practice, and social justice.

In undertaking this inquiry, we draw from a larger qualitative investigation examining the perspectives of a small group of teacher educators regarding their understandings of the Treaty in relation to their educational practice. Our analysis is informed by critical theory (Giroux, 2007; Kincheloe, 2008) and the notion of 'teachers as gatekeepers" (Thornton, 1991, p 238). By entering into this more focused inquiry we have sought to illuminate the ways in which teacher educators' understandings can, as Rarere-Briggs and Stark (2011) have previously argued, serve to both silence and privilege content, perspectives, and pedagogical practices within initial teacher education (ITE) programmes.

Conextualising the Inquiry: The socio-political landscape of education in Aotearoa New Zealand

To provide a brief context for this research, we summarise below two key aspects of the socio-political landscape within which initial teacher education (ITE) is situated, and teacher educators practice. These are the overarching political context created by the Treaty of Waitangi, and the education specific policies and guidelines that have arisen in the last two decades in response.

The Treaty of Waitangi is the underpinning political document of Aotearoa New Zealand and today guides all aspects of the governmental relationships among Māori and non-Māori. Signed in 1840 by representatives of the British Crown and representatives of independent Māori hapū (tribes) it paved the way for British colonisation and the "future political organisation of the nation" (Ritchie, 2002, p. 20). At the time of the development of the Treaty two 'versions' were developed– one an English text (the Treaty of Waitangi), the other a translation of the English text into te reo Māori (Te Tiriti o Waitangi). There are significant differences between the two texts, differences that many scholars have argued had the effect of "rendering the Māori text more saleable" (Consedine & Consedine, 2005, p. 88). While the Māori text of Te Tiriti o Waitangi confirms Māori authority and sovereignty (tino rangatirtanga), the English version states that Māori signatories gave their sovereignty to the Queen (Network Waitangi, 2008; Orange, 2011; State Services Commission, 2006a; 2006b). Yet, the majority of Māori signatories signed the Māori language Tiriti o Waitangi, and in so doing assumed the retention of their sovereignty and "full control and authority over their own people, lands and culture – including their social, political and economic relationships and institutions" (Network Waitangi, 2008, p.13) Despite the promises made in the Treaty, within a decade it had been used not to protect Māori but to "separate them from their land and culture and to boost emigration from an overcrowded Britain" (Drurie, 1998, pp. 319-320). Protests from Māori about the Crown's response to its Treaty obligations arose in the 1840s and continue to the present day (Belich, 1986; Hayward & Wheen, 2004).

Many scholars have argued that ongoing breaches of the Treaty as well as the systemic colonisation process are significant factors in the current disparity in educational outcomes form Māori children. For example, Bertanees and Thornley (2004) assert that the under-achievement of Māori children "emanates from consistent non-compliance with the Treaty of Waitangi" (p. 88). This view is supported by other researchers such as Ritchie and Rau (2012), Consedine and Consedine (2005), Huygens (2007), Manning (2008) and G. Smith (2000) who all refer to the ongoing breaches of the Treaty, and the systemic colonisation

process that has led to the multigenerational marginalisation and alienation of many Māori in contemporary New Zealand society. While G. Smith (2000) contends that the Treaty was an attempt to establish an equal partnership agreement between Māori and the British Crown, the Crown has nevertheless "failed miserably to . . . protect Māori interests . . . and schooling was seldom developed with the specific needs and interests of Māori in mind" (p.63).

These concerns continue to be a problem today with recent research providing evidence that not all children are reaching their full educational potential as indicated by statistics which show a persistent inequality in educational outcomes (Education and Science Committee, 2008, 2011). Māori students are over-represented in these underachievement statistics. And as distinguished Māori educator Professor Mason Drurie has argued, "constant improvement should be the aim for all groups, but until the disparity in Māori achievement is corrected, Māori will continue to feature disproportionately in indicators of poor outcomes and will be a wasted resource for New Zealand" (Education and Science Committee, 2008, p.10).

Given these ongoing concerns regarding the under-achievement of Māori and the clear links to ongoing non-compliance with the Treaty it is apparent that teacher educators have a significant role to play in challenging the status quo (Stark, 2015). However, as noted by Ritchie (2002):

> a policy level acknowledgement of the Treaty of Waitangi does not in itself ensure that this commitment will be implemented, and certainly does not provide the institution with guidance as to how the policy can be translated into action (p.10).

In the intervening years since Richie made this argument the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Teachers Council (now the New Zealand Education Council) have published a range of policy documents and guidelines that provide an interlocking set of criteria for initial teacher education (ITE) programmes and graduating teachers. These policy framworks include for example: *The Māori Education Strategy: Kahikita--Accelerating success, 2013-2017; Graduating Teacher Standards; Registered Teacher Criteria; and Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learner,* among others (Ministry of Education, 2009, 2013; New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009) all of which are aimed providing guidance to lift the achievement of Māori students.

Within this policy context, teachers are required to meet the New Zealand Teachers Council's [NZTC] *Registered Teacher Criteria* (2009) within their first two years of full-time teaching subsequent to the completion of their ITE programme. The criteria place a responsibility on "all teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand to promote equitable learning opportunities" (p. 9). These criteria also set the expectation that teachers need to "practise and develop the relevant use of te reo Māori me ngā tikanga-a-iwi in context" and "address the educational aspirations of ākonga Māori, displaying high expectations for their learning" (p. 14). Additionally, teachers in New Zealand are expected to uphold the *Code of Ethics for Registered Teachers* (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2004), which obliges teachers to "honour the Treaty of Waitangi by paying particular attention to the rights and aspirations of Māori as tangata whenua." In support of the regulatory requirements of the *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Graduating Teacher Standards* the Ministry of Education (2011) released *Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*. This set of guidelines was developed by the Ministry of Education, the New Zealand Teachers Council, and a reference group, to be used alongside these other policy documents. It is designed to be a guide to the development of cultural competence for teachers, their employers, as well as for ITE providers and providers of on-going teacher professional development. As a first step toward meeting the registered teachers' criteria, graduates of ITE programmes must meet the *Graduating Teacher Standards* which require they "demonstrate a commitment to bicultural partnership in Aotearoa New Zealand" and "respect for the heritages, languages and cultures of both partners to the Treaty of Waitangi" (p.11).

These policy documents and guidelines need to be taken into account by teacher eduators when developing their ITE programmes in order to ensure their graduates have had every opportunity to develop and demonstrate competence in these areas. In this context, competency is understood to be able to enact educational practice that engages Māori whānau (extended families) and communities as equal partners, and upholds and supports Māori aspirations with the intent of ensuring more equitable outcomes for Māori children and youth. However, it seems clear that the enactment of such educational practice remains elusive, as researchers in Aotearoa New Zealand such as Bishop & Glynne (1999), Manning (2008), and G. Smith (2000) have consistently noted that the control exerted by teachers over the curriculum and pedagogy continue to deny the voice of Māori, and "worked both overtly and covertly to undermine and marginalise Māori language, knowledge, and culture" (G. Smith, 2000, p. 64)

Conceptual Framework for Considering Teacher Education in Aotearoa New Zealand

Curriculum decisions made by teachers that have perpetuated myths about Aotearoa New Zealand as well as the cultural superiority that is fundamental to colonisation have been noted as factors in the continued poor outcomes for many Māori children. We acknowledge that teaching is not politically neutral (Brown et al., 2008, p. 73); it has an impact on others, particularly the learners in their care. Thus, teachers need to challenge themselves to think critically about their praxis and the social justice, or unjust, outcomes from that practice. Moreover, as Bertenanees & Thornley (2004) have argued, this self-examination of practice holds for teacher educators who are responsible for the pre-service teachers in their care. As these scholars argue, teacher educators must continually review their praxis in order to, "challenge the marginalised status of Māori children in mainstream schools in New Zealand" (p. 91). Neverless, there has been scarce research conducted within Aotearoa New Zealand that has taken the specific focus on teacher educators' understandings of the Treaty of Waitangi and how the Treaty informs their practice. Therefore, the research study that has given rise to the focused inquiry presented here was situated within a conceptual framework drawn from a wider range of international and New Zealand scholarship related to critical theory and pedagogy, teachers as 'gatekeepers', and culturally responsive practice in teacher education.

Critical theory and concepts associated with critical pedagogy underpins this study. The aim of using critical theory for this research was to examine the relationships between education and society and as suggested by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) to interrogate how inequality is perpetuated or reduced, who decides what knowledge is worthwhile and whose interests are best served by education. Giroux also suggests that critical pedagogy should make the "complexity of history" evident (Giroux, 2007, p. 1) which is of particular relevance in this research. This notion highlights the importance for teacher educators in Aotearoa New Zealand to have an understanding of the historical contexts as well as the contemporary educational issues related to the Treaty.

Curriculum has been recognised as complex, contested and culturally bound (MacNaughton, 2003; Ross, 2000; Thornton, 1991). In educational settings, knowledge that is considered most worth knowing differs according to cultural context, and while some knowledge is

privileged, some knowledge remains silenced. Apple (1996, p. 22) suggests that decisions about what counts as valid knowledge are linked to the historical politics of dominance and subordination that are reproduced in wider society. And, as others have argued, teachers make pedagogical and curriculum decisions about what they teach which, in turn, has implications for both educational equity (Fickel, 2000) and their efforts to utilise culturally responsive pedagogies. The notion of "teachers as gatekeepers" has been raised by Thornton (1991) in response to this acknowledge role of teachers in curriculum and identifing "the teacher as *key* to the curriculum experienced by students" (p. 137). Thornton also notes that gatekeeping doesn't occur in "a social vacuum" (p. 238); rather teachers' knowledge is influenced by such factors as social and historical contexts and their underlying personal beliefs. Some scholars writing specifically about Aotearoa New Zealand have noted that fear of particular historical content can influence decisions that teachers make about what they teach. For example, Kunowski (2005) noted that some teachers expressed concerns about teaching "the Treaty of Waitangi topic" due to lack of knowledge or because it was " a high risk, high stakes topic to teach" (p. 139). Such fears of making mistakes and of offending can lead to what Tolich (2002) refers to as '"Pākehā paralysis" resulting in the failure to fulfil Treaty responsibilities.

Education systems worldwide face challenges to address the needs and rights of their indigenous communities (Villegas & Lucas, 2002a). Writing about the Australia context, Harrison (2010) argues that teachers have a powerful role to play in shaping the tone of the ongoing relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous people. He notes that how this future develops is dependent on a range of factors, one of which is the "willingness of teachers to reassess their own place in history" (p. 99), particularly those teachers from the dominant culture of colonised nations. In the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, scholars have argued that teachers need to understand the impact of colonialism on Māori and appreciate that experiences have differed from place to place and over time (Manning, 2008, p. 249). As part of the response to this history, the Ministry of Education (2013) has focused on culturally responsive teaching as a means to ensure Māori students "to enjoy and achieve education success as Māori" (p.4). To this end, the the cultural competencies outlined in *Tātaiako – Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*, though not mandatory, serve both teachers and teacher educators as clear guidelines for enacting culturally responsive practice.

To take up culturally resopnsive practice in indigenous contexts teachers must not only reassess their place in history as sitauted within colonisation, they must also take up the challenge posed by Villegas and Lucas to "expand their sociocultural consciousness" (2002, p. 22). To do this teachers must deepen their understanding of how factors such as ethnicity, social class, and language influence people's ways of thinking, behaving, and being. Thus they argue it is essential for teacher educators to also be aware of the beliefs and assumptions that guide them in the preparation of culturally responsive teachers (p. xvii). Similarly, Ladson-Billings (1995, p. 466) proposes the implementation of "culturally focused pedagogy" within teacher education, suggesting that such a theoretical model "not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (p. 469). However, to enact this 'culturaly focused pedagogy' teacher educators must have the resonant socio-cultural knowledge of their communities, as well as the desire and skills to utlise this knowledge within their curriculum decision-making in support of their ITE pre-service teachers.

Methodology

As previously noted, this focused inquiry is drawn from a larger qualitative research study. The participants in the study were teaching across the early childhood education, primary and secondary schooling sectors at the same university based initial teacher education provider. They were predominantly from the dominant Pākehā culture although among the group were two who identified with with non-European ethnicities. The primary aim of the original study was to gain insights into how they developed their understandings of the Treaty and to illuminate how these five teacher educators sought to meet their legal, moral and ethical obligations in relation to the Treaty. The research was guided by the following primary research question:

> What are ITE teacher educators' understandings of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi in relation to their delivery of ITE programmes?

Using a qualitative approach when seeking to understand a specific phenomena allows researchers to gain insight into individual's perspectives of the world and their authentic voice, while also providing a touchstone for others to reflect on and learn from (Bell, 2005).

Data-collection for this study included individual semi-structured interviews with each of the five participating teacher educators. As suggested by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) "interviews enable participants – be they interviewers or interviewees – to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view" (p. 267).

Each interview was subsequently transcibed verbatim, and a grounded theory approach was used to analyse the transcipts. Ryan and Bernard (2000) note that grounded theory approach is an iterative process of engaging with the data that allows the resaercher to develop "increasingly richer concepts and models of how the phenomenon being studied really works" (p. 373). Consistent with this grounded theory approach, literature was revisited during the analysis process as three key themes emerged from the interview data. The inquiry presented in this paper focses only on data related to two of the grounded themes that emerged from the larger study: 1) teacher educators understandings of the Treaty; and 2) their curriculum decision-making in relation to the Treaty. We focus only on these two themes order to more fully illuminate the relationship of treaty knowledge to their curricular decision-making as teacher educators.

Treaty Knowledge and Enactment: Teacher Educators as Curriculum-Decision Makers
In this study we wanted to more fully understand the relationship of teacher educators knowledge and understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi and their curriculum decision making as they seek to enact their legal and ethical obligations as treaty partners. We look first at their understandings of the Treaty, and then turn our inqiry lens to their descriptions of how they are using this knowledge to inform their actions and praxis as teacher educators.

Teacher educators' understandings of the Treaty
From the interviews it was clear that teacher educator participants' knowledge about the Treaty varied as did the depth of their understandings. This knowledge and understanding ranged from general factual knowledge to broader contextual understandings of the historical and current significance of the Treaty and of associated concepts.

Typical of responses linked to factual knowledge were comments such as "I know it was signed in 1840 . . . it is about the three parts, the three articles . . . the articles are about

governance and protection and rights . . . participation, protection and tino rangatiratanga"
(self-determination). The latter part of this quote refers to Treaty "principles" which were
determined by the Courts (as representatives of the Crown) and the Treaty of Waitangi
Tribunal in 1987. The Waitangi Tribunal was established in 1975 to negotiate claims
alleging breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi by the Crown (Hayward & Wheen, 2004). Three
of the principles that are frequently referred to are partnership, active protection and
participation (State Services Commission, 2006). The common use of these principles rather
than the Treaty text itself is often cited as a cause for a lack of clear understanding about the
Treaty as it can undermine the legal rule of *contra-proferentum* and the standing of the
indigenous (Māori) language text (Jackson, 1991). This legal concept of *contra-proferentum*
provides for the interpretation of treaties when there is a conflict between different language
texts, arguing that the preferred meaning should be the one that works against the interests of
the party who provided the wording. In the case of the Treaty of Waitangi, this would give
legal preference to the te reo Māori version—Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Another common response (from four of the participants) was reference to there being two
'versions' of the Treaty – an English language text and a translation of the English text into te
reo Māori. One participant commented that she preferred to "stick to the Māori version" of
the Treaty because she upheld the Māori text due to the legal rule of *contra-proferentum.*
The two language texts have significant differences and one participant in particular
demonstrated a clear understanding of the disparity created by these differences as illustrated
by the following comment: "In the Māori version of the Treaty there was repositioning of all
that language and it was more a case of how do we shape this so it's actually palatable to the
locals". Such repositioning is framed as deception on the part of the Crown, deception that
was used to convince Māori chiefs to sign the Treaty (Orange, 2011; Waitangi Tribunal,
2014).

Biculturalism was introduced into the interview conversations by four of the five participants
while they were discussing their understandings of the Treaty. Biculturalism is a contested
notion, as there is not one agreed upon definition of this concept in Aotearoa New Zealand.
There is also a common tendency to shroud talk about the Treaty with talk about
biculturalism. The following quote from one of the participants about general Treaty
discussion in the workplace highlights this confusion:

We've talked a lot about the Treaty and conflated that with biculturalism but in actual fact for me the Treaty is much more than biculturalism …I think that it's being problematic to talk about biculturalism, but that's the way it's often been interpreted.   We're talking about Treaty, [therefore] we're talking about biculturalism.

This tendency to conflate discussions about the Treaty with biculturalism was something that had troubled the lead author of this study, and was one impetus for this research. Bicultural practice has frequently been referred to as a way to implement the intent of the Treaty. Yet the ambiguous nature of the concept of biculturalism is a problem. Researchers have variously described biculturalism in an Aotearoa New Zealand context as "inherently colonial" (O'Sullivan, 2007, p. 3), and as a "more culturally sensitive and saleable form of assimilation (Kelsey, 199, p. 743). Some suggest that definitions of biculturalism are fluid and shift over time. The prevalence of talk of biculturalism and bicultural practice among the teacher educator participants is not surprising given the common use of these terms in policy and curriculum documents. It is of note however that researchers and practitioners more frequently refer to the terminology of Tiriti-based curriculum rather than bicultural curriculum (Jenkin, 2009; Ritchie and Rau,2006, 2012; Warren, 2013). Biculturalism is not a politically neutral space and as suggested by Brown et al, (2008. p.74), educators need to position themselves in the debate. Teacher educators' positioning and actions have an impact on others to either maintain or challenge the status quo – which leads to the second theme of curriculum decision-making.

Curriculum decision making in relation to the Treaty

As noted, teachers have decisions to make about what counts as knowledge and whose knowledge is worth knowing and can serve as gate-keepers to knowledge (Apple, 1991; Thornton, 1991, 2001). In Aotearoa New Zealand the Ministry of Education has determined some of what counts as valid knowledge for the educational system through the publication of two curriculum documents, *Te Whāriki* and the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education 1996; 2007). This control over curriculum content and delivery has in New Zealand, "worked to reproduce the interests of dominant Pākehā and has worked both overtly and covertly to undermine and marginalize Māori language, knowledge and culture" (G. Smith, 2000, p. 64). Yet, teacher educators are obligated to ensure that pre-service teachers know and can work with these national curriculum frameworks. Teacher educators also have

other legislative and ethical obligations in relation to the Treaty. But of course how, or if these requirements are delivered depend on the decisions they make, which are influenced by their knowledge, beliefs and values (Thronton, 1991; Villegas & Lucas, 2002b). As curriclum decision-makers they are in a position to both privelege or silence knoweldge.

Experience of what is privileged and what is silenced within the curriculum was referred to by one of the participants from a non-dominant culture. This participant spoke of her culture being mostly silenced and if it was visible it was from a deficit viewpoint. As a result of her experiences she spoke of the importance of using the Treaty as a tool to teach not only about colonial history and past injustices, but also about the on-going Treaty settlement processes as a way to move forward. The experiences of this participant highlight the need for teacher educators to be aware of how they position non-dominant cultures, in this case Māori, to ensure they avoid a deficit discourse that reproduces disempowerment (Harrison, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002b).

The need for teachers from the dominant culture to critique their own position of power in relation to what and how they teach has been noted previously, and was referred to by the three participants from the dominant Pākehā culture. These participants commented on the need to be cognisant of their Pākehā perspectives when making decisions about their curriculum decision-making. One of these participants in particular referred to his own taken-for-granted assumptions and acknowledged that by being "white and middle class", he has had opportunities. This participant spoke of the need to:

> make sure that, because the Pākehā voice is so loud it overwhelms the other voices and making sure that there's that space, that humility and that quieting down of the Pākehā voice to hear other voices.

This same participant reflected on his taken-for-granted assumption when growing up, of "New Zealand as an egalitarian society". He commented that he "took for granted that everybody's got equal opportunities and it turned out to be a myth." The concerns raised by this participant in relation to the privileging of the dominant Pākehā culture reflect concepts within the framework of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy enables agency for "the voices of those who have to struggle to be heard" (Kincheloe, 2008. p. 23).

The implementation of a curriculum that challenges students to critique their taken for granted assumptions and empowers them to reconceptualise their own experiences and those

of society and people was spoken about by three participants. One of these teacher educators spoke of:

> moving people from one place, a place of common-sense to another dialogical place where they're actually considering conversations that move them out of a sense of social complacency … it's more transformative practice.

The implementation of a transformative curriculum challenges students to look outside their own lived experiences and to critique their taken-for-granted assumptions. This practice of self-examination is equally important for teacher educators. Four of the New Zealand educated participants indicated they experienced a schooling system in which Treaty related curriculum content was largely silenced. Personal experience of what is privileged and what is silenced within the schooling system was talked about by one of these participants from a non-dominant culture. She spoke of her culture being mostly absent from the education system and if it was visible it was from a deficit viewpoint.

Being place-responsive in their teaching was noted by two participants as being an important aspect of their teaching. As one of them explained, it was about the importance of "making people a bit more place responsive", noting further: "we're not in a place that's a blank slate but has a rich history that we should acknowledge". These participants were clear about the need to acknowledge the rich histories of place and to encourage students to be more place-responsive, using such concepts at kaitiakitanga (managing the environment). This particular concept is based on a Māori world view and reflects the concept of guardianship of the land. Manning (2009) and Penetito (2004) suggest that teachers are more likely to engage in culturally responsive pedagogy if they develop knowledge of the community in which they teach and understand the connection between the environment and people. From a critical education perspective, Kincheloe (2008) also highlights the need for educators to determine what is important knowledge for the particular community in which they teach.

Fear of 'getting it wrong' was another common thread for all three Pākehā teacher educator participants in relation to reflecting the Treaty in their practice. This fear also refered to concerns about the potential for cultural [mis]appropriation. That is they were concerned with how to balance being a knowledgable Treaty partner, with the always present possibility of being seen to be 'speaking for Māori' in a way that was paternalistic, or tokenism where, "I get the token Māori to do the token karakia for a bunch of Pākehā". However, as one participant explained:

I've come to the conclusion that if I don't do anything out of fear that I'm tokenistic and that I'm misappropriating things, nothing's going to change so I think I just need to do my best . . . and it's probably going to feel a bit fake, it's probably going to feel a bit weird, and if I just go with it and I back myself then I can move. But if I don't make those steps out of fear then I'm not giving students licence to have a go either. I'm saying here's a chance you know, here's another way of looking at things, anyway, so I'm moving with that, saying it's not perfect, I'm a Pākehā who's trying to incorporate some te reo and some aspects of Māori culture to my classes.

Fear of making mistakes, not getting it right and of offending have been significant factors in the silencing of the Treaty within the curriculum as referred to previously. However, this teacher educator had made the decision to overcome any fear and 'get on with it' to the best of his ability while also being mindful of continuing to develop his own knowledge and skills.

Because of this sense of 'fear' each of these Pākehā participants had at some stage of their career as teacher educators, checked with Māori colleagues that they 'had it right' as they did not want to cause offence. One of these participants spoke of her concern to correctly represent content and said that "always I bring my Pākehā perspective and I try to check it with others". These concerns bring to mind not only Tolich's (2001) notion of Pākehā paralysis but also Torepe's (2011) research in which she discusses the 'cultural taxation' of Māori teachers. Torepe describes cultural taxation in the Aotearoa New Zealand context as the practice whereby Māori teachers are called upon by non-Māori colleagues and their institution for support, guidance and to teach 'Māori content'. Fear of offending and of not getting it right, as well as concerns about 'taxing' one's Māori colleagues, can be significant factors in the silencing of the Treaty within the ITE curriculum.

Conclusion

This consideration of the perspectives of a small group of teacher educators suggests that in order for teacher educators in Aotearoa New Zealand to fulfil their legal, ethical and moral obligations, and to ensure the needs of Māori in education are met, they must have adequate understandings of the historical, social and educational issues related to the Treaty. The

experiences of the participants indicate that knowledge of, and confidence with treaty related content and guiding principles serve as a mediating lens in their pedagogical decision-making. In this way their understandings serve to both create spaces of silence and privilege within their practice.

Sensitivity to cultural background is particularly important in today's culturally diverse society. In order to promote success for all students it is important for teachers to be culturally competent and to ensure that the needs of minority students are met. Meeting the learning needs of Māori students should be a priority in terms of "equity and best educational practice" (Macfarlane, 2007, p. 98) and teacher education is identified as having the potential to be a significant lever in this area of cultural competency (Ell, 2011). However, teacher educators involved in ITE, like teachers in other sectors, have control over what they teach and how they teach. This control over curriculum content and delivery has in Aotearoa New Zealand, "worked to reproduce the interests of dominant Pākehā and has worked both overtly and covertly to undermine and marginalise Māori language, knowledge and culture" (G. Smith, 2000, p. 64). It is therefore essential for teacher educators from the dominant Pākehā culture to critique their own position of power and to be cognisant of their Pākehā perspectives in relation to their curriculum decision-making.

The findings presented here suggest that there is a role for professional development to play in the development of teacher educators' understandings of the Treaty and of the way they conceptualise their social justice role as teacher educators working in an indigenous context. Moreover, the findings suggest that such professional development must focus on teacher educators critiquing their own position(s) of power, challenging their considerations of how and what they teach. That is, they must explicitly confront their role as curriculum gatekeepers, and the notions of colonization often embodied within education policy documents and traditional curriculum content. Of particular significance from this study is the importance of the place-based knowledge, including legal and indigenous historical and contemporary perspectives, in supporting the critical examination of power, ethics, and pedagogical practice. In this way, the paper offers critique and extension of the current international literature in teacher education with respect to cultural diversity and social justice issues.

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