

Chapter 8

Retrospection of a Maori Tutor Educator's Bi-Cultural Teaching Discourse in Te Wananga o Aotearoa (TWOA): A Narrative Portfolio

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ABSTRACT

This chapter attempts to explore the possibility of the application of Ako Wananga ontological discourse from the bi-cultural framework teaching perspective within Te Wananga o Aotearoa in Aotearoa New Zealand incorporating Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi as a partnership agreement between Māori and non-Māori. The author's teaching philosophy roots in the belief that effective learning can take place in a safe environment where the Kaiako (educator) and the tauira (student) are enabled to build a relationship that is meaningful.

DESIGN/APPROACH

My teaching philosophy roots in my belief that effective learning can take place in a safe environment where the Kaiako (educator) and the tauira (student) are enabled to build a relationship that is meaningful. Why is this so important to me? To help you to understand I will need to go back to when I first entered the tertiary environment.

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Findings

This article reports on a narrative portfolio self-study research into my negotiations as a Māori Kaiako (educator) within the bicultural teaching framework in Te Wananga o Aotearoa in New Zealand. This can be an informative research experience towards alternative bi-cultural teaching.

Originality/Value

This personal journey in teaching the bicultural aspect of 'Ako' (Māori pedagogy) namely; Whanaungatanga (relationship building) is a framework in which I have grown up with. This framework has many different facets some of these being; Tuakana/Teina (older/younger sibling support), Manaaki (caring and sharing), Kaitiaki (nurture and mentor) and Koha (contributions).

Furthermore, this method of teaching and learning aligns with a student-centred approach whereby the students' contributions are of extreme importance and are highly valued. This for me far outweighs the traditional approach of the teacher-centred method.

Research Limitations

This article is a self-reflective narrative portfolio of my teaching experience using a Māori Kaupapa model of teaching practice within the classroom. The interpretation of the essence of Whanaungatanga as an effective teaching tool.

INTRODUCTION (PERSONAL PORTFOLIO)

In my role as a Kaiako I utilize the concept of 'ako'. The concept of 'ako' depicts a teaching and learning relationship, whereby the Kaiako is learning from the tauira and the tauira is learning from the Kaiako. Ako is founded on the principle of reciprocity and acknowledges that the tauira and the whānau cannot be separated.

From a Māori perspective the concept of ako means to both teach and learn. This acknowledges the information both Kaiako and tauira bring to learning interactions, and also recognizes the way that new information and understandings can develop out of shared learning experiences. Educational research has shown that when Kaiako facilitate reciprocal teaching and learning roles in the classroom, the achievement rate of the tauira improves Alton-Lee (2003).

When it comes to a reciprocal learning relationship the Kaiako is not expected to know everything. In fact, the concept of ako implies that each participant of the classroom brings with them knowledge from which every participant is able to learn. (Keown, Parker, and Tiakiwai 2005 pg.12)

To adopt the principle of ako assists the Kaiako to create caring and inclusive learning environments in which each individual feels that their koha (contribution) is valued and that they are able to participate to their full potential. This is really not about people getting along on a social basis; it is about the building of a productive and caring relationship, between both Kaiako and tauira in which everyone is empowered to learn with and from each other.

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