

Brief Reports

He Whakautu: A response to Abbott and Durie*

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Abbott and Durie (1987) provide a timely and searching challenge to University professional training programmes in clinical psychology and educational psychology concerning their preparation of graduates to assist clients in bi-cultural Aotearoa.

As teachers within a University Department which provides a Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Psychology programme for training educational psychologists, as NZPSS members, and as New Zealanders, we have long been concerned about this serious deficit in our professional training. However, there have been several promising constructive developments within our University and within our programme, which have taken place since Abbott and Durie prepared their article. We would like to take up the challenge provided by Abbott and Durie and to bring the record up to date as far as our programme at the University of Otago is concerned.

1. Teachers on our Postgraduate Dip.Ed Psychology course have invited several important Maori speakers to offer seminars to our staff and postgraduate students, on the topic of what things we need to hear, and what problems and difficulties the New Zealand Education system presents to Maori children and their whanau. Visiting speakers have included Cas Tangare, South Island Advisor for Maori and Pacific Island Education; John Tapiata, Educational Officer, Continuing Education Section, Department of Education, Wellington; Hone Apanui, Inspector of Maori and Pacific Island Education; Godfrey and Toroa Pohatu, lecturers in Maori studies at the University of Otago; and Tania

Ka'ai-Oldham, Auckland College of Education.

2. Taking up some further challenges issued to us by all of these speakers, particularly challenges from Tania Ka'ai-Oldham at a hui held at Arai-te-uru marae, we began in 1987 an informal weekly Maori language learning class, attended by staff and first year Postgraduate Dip.Ed Psychology Students. We are greatly indebted to Alva Kapa, Ani Denham, Godfrey and Toroa Pohatu for their unstinting sharing of their time, their aroha, and their manaaki, in what was for some of us our very first steps in Maori Language learning, and in experiencing an educational setting operated from a Maori perspective.
3. Following from this positive and very constructive beginning, three important further steps were taken for 1988:
 - (a) Formal course time, and formal course work in Maori language and culture has been committed within our training programme. In the paper on Assessment, a weekly 1½ hour Ataarangi Maori Language class has been instituted. This class is required of all first year trainee educational psychologists, and is attended voluntarily by second and third year trainees, other postgraduate students and staff members. The class is taken for us by Alva Kapa, lecturer in Multi-Cultural Studies (Dunedin Teachers College) and Ani Denham, Bi-lingual teaching assistant (Brockville Primary School), supported by other invited guests. The Ataarangi approach is providing us with direct experience of the processes involved in mihi, powhiri, language learning, and Maori art within a responsive social context.

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These classes are formative personal growth experiences for students and staff. As well, they provide an excellent introduction to the practical issues and skills involved for pakeha professionals needing to enter kohanga reo classes, bi-cultural language classes, represent their profession at hui, and provide professional assistance to Maori people.

- (b) Included in the curriculum content of the postgraduate Assessment paper is the study of the document *Tihe Mauri Ora* (Draft Syllabus, Maori Language, Junior Classes to Form 2). This document contains practical and worthwhile content suggestions, introductions to key Maori educational concepts, and suggestions for a coherent and integrated Maori curriculum. In our view it provides a very helpful entry point for education professionals wishing to understand something of Maori Educational values and concepts.
- (c) In mid 1988, a further hui was held, to broaden the experience gained from the previous hui, and to provide an opportunity for deepening some of the learning acquired from the Ataarangi setting. At this hui we were again challenged by Tania Ka'ai-Oldham, who presented a Maori perspective on the history of Education in New Zealand. We were supported in our research for learning by Huata Holmes, a rakatira of Kai Tahu, who shared with us a Kai Tahu perspective on the land and cultural traditions of Dunedin and Otakou.

Some important issues which we will need to address in further development of the educative process begun in 1987 include:

- (1) Appropriate payment and appropriate means of payment for Maori people who contribute to University courses. Rates of payment often reflect levels of qualification by University degrees. Flexibility is needed to recognise, in financial terms, the value of a fluent and native speaker of Maori, who may

not hold University qualifications or professional qualifications. Further, flexibility is needed in arranging payment to be made to Maori community groups, marae councils, or other organisations, rather than exclusively to individual contributors, since contributions from individuals often reflect active support, encouragement, and awahi from individuals' whanau or tribal network.

- (2) Growing demands of courses such as ours place added pressures on the small numbers of lecturing staff in Maori Studies departments and sections in Universities. The time may well have arrived for other University departments, such as Education and Psychology Departments, to appoint Maori people onto their own staff, in order to acknowledge formally the amount and the quality of the work they currently do for our University students and staff and the enormity of the task of preparing graduates to operate in a bi-cultural context. (The University of Auckland Education Department has recently made such an appointment to its staff.)
- (3) As professional educators and psychologists, we have taken only the smallest of steps towards facing the issues of education in a bi-cultural society, particularly at tertiary level. Although we may have begun to address issues of increased access to courses on Maori language and culture in all New Zealand Universities and while we are striving to encourage increased participation of Maori students in professional training programmes, we still have to confront major educational issues. These issues include the sharing of control over course content, teaching style, and especially over the nature of assessment and accreditation of achievement and competence. If an educational institution in New Zealand were striving to become bi-cultural, would not assessment practices reflect the values and styles of *both* cultures? Would not course evaluation need to reflect the process of whakamaatautau — and hence to try to grasp the nettle of

assessing "high interest, enjoyment, spontaneous discussion about Maori language and ideas, willingness to practise the language, and appropriate cultural behaviour both inside and outside of school", as well as "development of self-esteem, personal and group identity and respect for others"? (Tihe Maori Ora, Draft Maori Language Syllabus). These are matters of major educational significance and deserve proper concern and attention, not just at primary school level, but also at University level. These challenges to a bi-cultural education system are not likely to be met from within the framework of only one culture.

We believe we have taken some first steps, within our professional training programme in educational psychology, towards sharing content, teaching, and sharing control over learning interactions with kaiako Maori:

Koia nei te tuumanako/This is the desire
Kia kite, kia maatau/that a deeper understanding

Ki te ao Maori/of the Maori world

Ma te reo/will come through the language.

References

- Abbott, M., & Durie, M., (1987) Taha Maori. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 16, 58-71.