

Ongoing process of bicultural development in new zealand



Speaking of bicultural development, what exactly does it mean? Does it mean being a bilingual? A lot of people will be terrified, well, including me, if we are supposed to be speaking both English and Māori effectively. The good news is we don't need to be bilingual to support the bicultural development. Metge (1990) gave the following definition: "The term 'bicultural development' has been proposed to describe a bicultural agenda for educational settings (p. 18, cited in Ritchie, 2003 a)." Here, I want to draw your attention to the word "development". The word is chosen for its implication of "an on-going process of change toward an equitable bicultural society" (Metge, 1990; Royal Commission on Social Policy, 1988, cited in Ritchie, 2003 a). The goals of this ongoing process include "restoration of tino rangatiratanga (Māori self-determination) and revitalisation of Māori culture and language" (Culpitt, 1994, cited in Ritchie, 2003 a).

Based on the goals, can you think of any bicultural practice you or your centre is doing? Yes, that's all bicultural practices. Practice enables children to "develop knowledge and an understanding of the cultural heritages of both partners to Te Tiriti Ō Waitangi" are all bicultural practices (MoE, 2010). Therefore, when you are reading Māori theme stories, such as Taniwha; when you are singing waiata with children; when you are welcoming children and whānau, you are applying bicultural practice. Bicultural practice is the result of bicultural development and it will promote bicultural development.

Te Tiriti Ō Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi

Some of you might wonder why bicultural development is essential. Grace (2000, cited in Ritchie, 2003b) claims that Te Tiriti Ō Waitangi/ Treaty of Waitangi (hereafter referred to as the Treaty) provides foundation and

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context for bicultural development. “ The Treaty was an agreement between two parties-the tangata whenua(indigenous people) and the British Crown-about the future political organization of the country” (Ritchie, 2003b).

Before 1840, Māori and British already had a contact history of 70 years (Hayward, 2004). Captain James Cook discovered Aotearoa/ New Zealand in 1769 for the purpose of scientific discovery, and expanding trade and empire (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2009.). By 1835, along the coastlines there were semipermanent settlements of traders, who already knew a lot about Māori society. French was the only other European countries besides Britain that showed interest in Aotearoa. As French’s interest in colonising Aotearoa mounted, Māori appealed to British for protection over their independence (Hayward, 2004). “ With the relentless pressure from missionaries and humanitarians”, the British officially intervened. In early 1839, William Hobson was instructed to “ acquire sovereignty over ‘ the whole or any parts’ of the country that Māori wished to cede and to make provision for Māori welfare” (Orange, 1987, cited in Hayward, 2004), leading to signing the Treaty.

There are two different versions of the Treaty. This is the English version, and this is the Māori one. These are key difference of meanings in these two versions. The Waitangi Tribunal (n. d.) summerises them as below. In the preamble, English version emphasises its intention of protecting Māori interests, providing for British settlement and establishing a government of peace and order, while Māori had the purpose of securing “ tribal rangatiratanga” and their “ land ownership”. In Article One, British claimed Māori ceded their “ sovereignty” to Britain. The truth is, Māori just wanted <https://assignbuster.com/ongoing-process-of-bicultural-development-in-new-zealand/>

to give them governance, “ kawanatanga”. In Article Two, Māori stressed their “ tino rangatiratanga”, “ authority over lands and taonga”. British offered “ undisturbed possessions of properties”. Both Article Three in Māori and English versions stated intention of British to provide Māori “ royal protection and full citizenship”. In the epilogue, both parties to the Treaty agreed they entered into the “ full spirit” of the Treaty.

Two different versions are confusing. Nowadays, the principles of the Treaty are emphasised over the literal interpretation of the articles (Orange, 2004, Sorrenson, 1989, cited in New Zealand Tertiary College [NZTC], 2010). The Royal Commission on Social Policy put forward three principles relevant to social policy and education in 1988. They are “ 3 P” for short and all start with the letter “ P”. Anyone has any ideas what they might be? They are: “ partnership, participation and protection” (Bishop & Glynn, 1999, cited in NZTC, 2010).

Local and national government alignment to bicultural development

Back in 1840, when signing Te Tiriti Ō Waitangi, British Crown promised Māori “ partnership and active Crown protection of Māori interests” (Ritchie, 2003a). However, there were many serious injustice breaches of the Treaty. By 1939, Māori only retained about 4% of the land they had originally controlled. Māori were pressured to amalgamate into the developing European society at the tide of European settlement. They were excluded from the decision-making institutions and processes (Hayward, 2004). Māori culture and language were marginalised (Hokowhitu, 2004). “ It is only since 1975 that the New Zealand government has recognised the

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Treaty, and some tentative moves have been made to give effect to the guarantees of 1840” (Ritchie, 2003 a).

In 1987, The Māori Language Act 1987 was made to declare the Māori Language to be an official language of New Zealand. Te Taura Whiri i te reo Māori/the Māori Language Commission was set up “ to promote the use of Māori as a living language and as an ordinary means of communication” (Māori Language Commission, n. d.). In 1975 The Waitangi Tribunal was established to determine claims and redress where injustices have been recognised (NZTC, 2010). In 1992, Te Puni Kāiaki/The Ministry of Māori Affairs was established to “ promote increase in levels of achievement by Māori in education, training and employment, health and economic resource development; to monitor and liaise with other government departments and agencies to ensure their services for Māori are adequate” (Te Puni Kāiaki, 2010). The State Services Commission and the Families Commission also play important roles in supporting Māori culture and families/whānau (NZTC, 2010).

Last but not least, Ministry of Education [MoE]. The 10 year Strategic Plan for early childhood education Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki has specifically considered Māori in developing the goals of participation, quality and collaborative relationships (MoE, 2002, cited in NZTC, 2010). In 1990s, Te Whāriki, the first bicultural nature curriculum framework for all early childhood services was developed and came into effect in 1998(MoE, 1996). We will talk about Te Whāriki in details later.

At the local government level, Auckland Council has set up the Māori Statuary Board independent of Auckland Council to ensure that Māori opinions are included in the decision-making. Māori Strategy and Relationships Department was set up to deal with “ all Māori-specific policy, planning, research and evaluation, stakeholder engagement, relationship management, bicultural development and training, and Māori protocol and process information and activities” (Auckland Council, 2010). Auckland Council also commit to “ engaging with tangata whenua on resource management matters...by maintaining a list of iwi authorities, organisations and individuals representing the interests of tangata whenua iwi and hapū” (Auckland Council, 2010), to show respect for Māori tino rangatiratanga.

Te Whāriki, an expression of biculturalism

As we mentioned earlier, Te Whāriki is not only bilingual (both in English and Māori) but also bicultural nature early childhood curriculum framework. It is an explicit expression of biculturalism (Ritchie, 2003b). In what ways does it show biculturalism? Firstly, early childhood staffs are explicitly required to support Māori language usage. “ The curriculum in early childhood settings should promote te reo and nga tikanga Māori, making them visible and affirming their value for children from all cultural backgrounds” (MoE, 1996, p. 42). Secondly, practices that help children develop “ an appreciation of te reo as a living and relevant language” (p. 76) are suggested: including “ Māori people, places, and artefacts, and opportunities to learn and use the Māori language through social interaction” (p. 43); including Māori phrases and sentences “ as a natural part of the programme” (p. 77); including “ activities, stories, and events

that have connections with Māori children's lives" (p. 41). Thirdly, it is made clear that educators are to be aware of bicultural issues (Ritchie, book). Educators should " understand and be willing to discuss bicultural issues, actively seek Māori contributions to decision making, and ensure that Māori children develop a strong sense of self-worth" (p. 40). Fourthly, educators are required to " have an understanding of Māori views on child development and on the role of the family" (p. 41). Fifthly, Te Whāriki emphasises the importance of involving local Māori in early childhood centres to reflect the Treaty principle of partnership (Ritchie, 2003b). " Decisions about the ways in which bicultural goals and practices are developed within each early childhood education setting should be made in consultation with the appropriate tangata whenua" (p. 11).

Whanaungatanga (implementation through strategies and practices)

As early childhood teachers, we required by Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Whāriki to support the bicultural development within government funded educational settings (Culpitt, 1994, cited in cited in Ritchie, 2003 a). Some of you might feel concerned what exactly to do as we are not that fluent or even just start to learn Māori? Ritchie (2003b) proposes " whanaungatanga as a process for bicultural development" (p. 96). First of all, what is " whanaungatanga"? Whanaungatanga is " building partnerships with whanau" (Ritchie, 2003b). Ritchie (2003b) further explained why we need to implement whanaungatanga. Whanaungatanga is compliant with Māori self-determination and partnership of the Treaty. It is in accordance with Family and Community/Whanau Tangata principle of Te Whāriki. Research also

indicates the “ central importance of whanau involvement in kaupapa Māori decuation” as there is not sufficient Māori educators (Smith, 1995, Smith, 1997, cited in Ritchie, 2003b). However, how exactly can we implement whanaungatanga within early childhood settings? Ritchie (2003, 2003b) suggests there are three levels: “ the interpersonal, the programme, and the structural”. At the interpersonal level, educators are to “ initiate and model interactions with children and with whānau” using appropriate “ language and body language”. Educators can adopt practices of knowing, “ respecting and applying tikanga” and “ including appropriate waiata, whakatauki(aphorism), and pūrākau(legendary story)” in the programme (p. 97). Priority for educators and management is always to welcome whānau and spend time with them to build responsive and reciprocal relationship with them (Ritchie, 2003b). In terms of programme level, the centre is to show “ strong commitment to the Treaty and bicultural development, clearly stated in the centre’s philosophy and other documents” (p. 98). Specific practices include: using Māori phrases, valuing Māori tikanga through introducing relevant waiata and local legends, collecting kaimoana(sea animals), sharing particular Māori books and resources; arranging hui and inviting whānau to participate in centre planning, implementation and evaluation to ensure “ bicultural approaches are relevant and appropriate” (Ritchie, 2003b, p. 98). For the structural level, “ centres can provide a welcoming and inclusive environment by giving visibility and positive status to taonga Māori” (Ritchie, 2003, p. 98). Relevant practices can be “ having welcome signs in te reo”; encouraging children to appreciate and doing Māori art forms such as kōwhiriwhiri; “ showing respect for tikanga by not using food as an art or craft resource; and

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prominently displaying a wide range of books, posters, puzzles, and song-charts using te reo Māori and Māori themes” (p. 98).

Maybe some of you still don't feel confident enough to implement whanaungatanga. Hey, “ Rome wasn't built in one day”. It's ok to take baby steps first. Maybe just start with saying “ kio ora” to the children and whānau, reading Māori theme stories, decorating the environment with Māori arts. Don't be afraid to make mistakes. As long as we show our consideration and respect for Māori people as we show them for our people and any other peoples, I am sure they will feel warm and start to build relationship with us. “ It's the first step that costs troublesome”. I am sure you will enjoy your bicultural journey as much as I do after the first step. It's very promising. J

Here are some resources I found useful to support my bicultural practice. I want to share with you.

Basic te reo Māori resource for early childhood education centres and primary schools by Rangitane o Wairarapa Inc (2002). This can be accessed through the following link: <http://www.rangitane.iwi.nz/education/index.php/language/te-reo-mari>, there are introductions about tikanga, karakia, waiata, words we use in daily routines.

He Waiata Tamariki by Tressa Rose (2000). It is a very good collection of waiata with a mixture of action songs, dance and rhythm games. They're suitable for all age group and easy to learn, for you and the children. You can borrow the CD from your local library and access to the lyrics from

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<http://www.tessarose.co.nz/lyrics.html>. You can also buy the CD collection on this website.

A series of Māori theme stories by Peter Gossage(2005), published by Reed are good resources to share with children. The pictures are vivid, the words are simple to understand, and the story line is easy for children to follow. A lot of children found it interesting and fascinating. They always ask for them again and again. Stories include: How Maui slowed the sun; How Maui found the secret of life; In the Beginning; Battle of Mountains, to name but a few. When you read the story with children, you are introducing Māori world view and legendary stories. These books can be borrowed from your local library too. A little tip for you, if the book is always unavailable, you can log in to your account and make a request of the book. Children's books are free of request fee. When the book is ready to pick up, the librarian will contact you.

I hope all of you are enjoying your bicultural journey. Please remember it's an ongoing process. Keep up the good practices and keep it ongoing.

Hope you all enjoy my presentation and find it helpful. Thank you for your time/ tā nā koutou.