Exploring learner-centredness for adults learning te reo Māori: easing the path to language acquisition

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Abstract

Learner-centredness takes learners and their needs, interests, enthusiasms and aspirations as the starting point of the education process, and this thesis explores what a learner-centred approach might contribute to adult learning of te reo Māori as a second language. Learner-centredness has a significant role in the literature on adult learning, and in one stream of second language learning; it is, however, strongly contested in many approaches to education, and it is unclear how well it would fit in a Māori cultural setting.

The thesis explores the learning experience of ten adult learners, along with the learning and teaching experience of five teachers, and finds minimal presence of learner-centred elements in their learning and teaching. The thesis then presents and analyses the participants' responses to several key principles of learner-centredness. The interviews showed that most of the learners and teachers offered at least qualified support for various elements of learner-centredness. Most learners (and some teachers) supported basing teaching on the needs, interests and aspirations of learners; however, most of the participants were more sceptical about learners being consulted, or negotiating with teachers, on content, learning activities and assessment, and on the idea of learners having more autonomy. One teacher disagreed with the concept of learner-centredness, and another showed little enthusiasm for the idea. Most participants, however, did not consider that learner-centredness clashed with Māori cultural concepts, and most expressed a belief that learner-centredness could affirm the mana (agency, status) of adult learners while still affirming the mana of teachers.

The main potential benefits of a more learner-centred approach appeared to be: increased relevance of learning; a more conversational or communicative approach; a better match of learning activities with learners; stronger engagement through a higher level of mana (agency, control) for learners; and more openness to clarification or questions in class. The first three potential problems were: that it could be impractical or difficult to implement; that individualising programmes could cause fragmentation and lack of continuity; and that implementation could be burdensome for teachers. Two further potential cultural problems were that learner-centredness could clash with Māori

values concerning elders and reo Māori teachers, and that learner-centredness could be viewed with suspicion as a Pākehā concept.

Several beliefs commonly associated with learner-centredness, such as the effectiveness of minimally guided learning, are not well supported in the literature; however, most criticisms of learner-centred principles appear to have less relevance in an adult context. Consequently, the thesis presents an amended, contextualised model of learner-centredness, asserting the need to find out about the learners, and to allow them to have mana in conjunction with teachers. The thesis concludes with proposals for implementation of this model in university, kura reo, and informal settings.

The thesis makes an original contribution by examining learner-centredness in a new educational and cultural context—adult Māori language learning. It is also breaks new ground in a Māori studies setting by adopting the universalist capabilities approach (as espoused by Nussbaum) in conjunction with some key tikanga Māori principles.

Mihi

Firstly, I owe a debt of gratitude to Lachy Paterson. He was my principal adviser throughout my PhD process; he settled me in, and suffered the changes of direction I took as I went along. He assisted enormously with editing, and finally saw me through to the end of the process. Tēnā rawa atu koe, e te rangatira.

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My other main debt of gratitude is to the interview participants in this project. I very much appreciated the way you were all willing to put aside time to share your experience with me, to discuss quite personal aspects of your learning, and to give honest feedback on the ideas that I offered for your consideration. You may or may not agree with my analysis of your words, and of the situation of adult learners and of adult learning of te reo Māori, but I can assure you that I share your enthusiasm and love for the language. Like you, I want to see the language—and its adult users—flourish here in Aotearoa. He mihi nui ki a koutou katoa.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to all the teachers of te reo Māori who have taught me over the years. Each one has opened some new door into aspects of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, and has helped me to new insights. Although I have criticisms

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Glossary

Most definitions here are based on definitions from *Te Aka*, the online Māori dictionary that is part of the *Te Whanake* resources.

N.B. Most words in the Māori language do not have a separate form for the plural.

ako whakatere - accelerated learning; a learning pedagogy developed at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa in the 1990s. The model uses a mixture of learning styles to create a holistic approach to learning a language.

auraki - mainstream schooling – refers to the general school system in New Zealand as opposed to kura kaupapa or wharekura.

AMEP - Australian Migrant English Programme: formerly known as the Australian Migrant Education Programme; instituted in 1948, it is funded by the Australian federal government to assist newly arrived migrants and refugees with English tuition.

hapū - sub-tribe

hui - gathering, meeting, assembly, seminar, conference.

iwi - tribe or tribes

kaiako – teacher

kaitiaki – custodian, guardian, caregiver

kapahaka – in this context, Māori performing arts.

karakia - prayer or chant, often recited collectively. Often used to begin or end a Māori event.

kaumātua - elderly man, elderly woman who is accorded particular respect (not all elderly will be accorded this status).

kaupapa - has a very broad meaning (policy, matter for discussion, plan, purpose, scheme, proposal, agenda, subject, programme, theme, issue, initiative). In this thesis, often used in the phrase 'kaupapa Māori' (see next entry).

kaupapa Māori - in this thesis, mainly refers to a philosophical doctrine or approach to research, based on, and acknowledging and giving primacy to, the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society. Broader meanings are: Māori approach, Māori topic, Māori customary practice, Māori institution, Māori agenda, Māori principles, Māori ideology.

kīwaha - colloquialism, idiom

koha - gift, offering, donation

kōhanga reo - Māori language preschool

kōrero - speech, narrative, story, news, account, discussion, conversation, discourse, statement, information.

kōrero tawhito - old stories or accounts, traditional stories or accounts

koroua – old man, grandfather

kounga - quality

kuia – old woman, grandmother

kupu - word

kura kaupapa Māori- primary school operating under Māori custom and using Māori as the medium of instruction. Often referred to simply as 'kura kaupapa'.

Kura Reo - A high-level Māori language forum for adults and teenagers- usually held on a marae or educational institution at the start of school holidays. There are four full days of classes, with two four-hour classes each day, taught by nationally recognised experts in te reo Māori.

mana - prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power. NB: this word is glossed several times, as the meaning in different contexts can vary considerably.

manaakitanga - hospitality, kindness, generosity, support - the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others.

marae - courtyard - the open area in front of the wharenui (meeting house*)* where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often also used to include the complex of buildings around the marae.

mātauranga - knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill - sometimes used in the plural.

mātauranga Māori - Māori knowledge - the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori world view and perspectives, Māori creativity and cultural practices.

mau rākau - a Māori martial art, using traditional weapons, and following traditional customs.

mihi - to greet, pay tribute, acknowledge, thank.

mihimihi - in this context, an exchange of greetings at the start of the interview, in which the both participants explain (mostly in te reo Māori) their origins, tribal affiliations, family, and any other personal information they may think relevant.

mita – authentic language (usually of an area)

mōteatea - lament, traditional chant, sung poetry - a general term for songs sung in traditional mode.

noa - in this context, it refers to some custom that has become accepted by Māori, even if it is not strictly speaking correct according to Māori customs.

noho marae - a period staying on a marae, in this context, to learn te reo Māori and/or tikanga Māori, in a Māori-oriented setting.

Pākehā - New Zealander of European descent - probably originally applied to English-speaking Europeans living in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

pakiwaitara - legend, story, fiction, folklore, narrative

pātere – song of derision in response to slander; usually chanted

pepeha - tribal saying, tribal motto, proverb (especially about a tribe); also used for formal recital of a person's whakapapa (family tree, genealogy).

poi – a performance in which a light ball on string of varying lengths is swung in various movements, accompanied by singing

reo - language.

rūmaki - immersion (in a language); used for learning contexts where te reo Māori is used exclusively or most of the time. Kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa, and kura reo are examples of such learning contexts.

taiaha - in this thesis, the word refers to 'mau taiaha', a traditional Māori martial art, where a taiaha is one of the weapons used.

tamariki – children

tangata whenuatanga – being a genuine, authentic person of the land

tangihanga – funeral, funeral process

taonga (tuku iho) - a treasure, precious thing (that has been passed down).

tauira - learner, student.

tauiwi - foreigner, European, non-Māori, colonist; the term is often used to include other ethnic groups—for example, Dutch, Chinese and Indian—as well as the people of English or British origin who make up most of the non-Māori settlers in New Zealand.

tauparapara - incantation to begin a speech.

Te Ara Reo - a three-year programme run by Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, designed to take learners form the beginner stage to intermediate level. Typically the programme has one three-hour evening class a week during term time (there may be two evening classes a week in the third year), and 8 noho marae.

Te Ataarangi - a method for teaching adults to learn te reo Māori. It is based on Gattegno's "Silent Way' and uses coloured rods (rākau) to build conversations around. The method has a strong conversational base, and is designed to provided a safe, accepting way for adults to learn. Te Ataarangi is also the name of the organisation that organises teachers who use this method.

Te Aupikitanga - a one-year reo Māori programme for intermediate learners (level 6 in New Zealand's education system), run by Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. The programme typically has one three-hour evening class a week during term time, and 8 or so noho marae. It deals with intermediate-level grammar, translation, using metaphorical language, interpreting texts, tikanga, waiata and haka.

Te Kāea - a Māori language news programme, broadcast on Māori Television.

Te Karere – a half-hour Māori-language news programme, broadcast each weekday on Channel One, one of New Zealand's mainstream television channels.

Te Kupenga - A survey of Māori well-being conducted in 2013 by Statistics New Zealand. Te Kupenga collected information on a wide range of topics to give an overall picture of the social, cultural, and economic well-being of Māori in New Zealand, as well as providing important information about the health of the Māori language and culture.

Te Matatini - national adult kapa haka [Māori performing arts] competition, held every two years.

Te Mātāwai - a new organisation established under Te Ture mō te Reo Māori 2016 (The Māori Language Act 2016) to lead revitalisation of te reo Māori on behalf of iwi and Māori. It has 13 members; iwi appoint seven, Māori language stakeholder organisations four, and the Minister for Māori Development two.

Te Paepae Motuhake - a group of Māori language revival experts assembled in 2011 to review the language revival programmes of the Government. The group made recommendations in their report *Te Reo Mauri Ora* (2011).

Te Pīnakitanga - a one-year reo Māori programme for intermediate to advanced learners (level 7 in New Zealand's education system), run by Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. It focuses on advanced grammar, translation and interpretation, formal and informal language, tikanga, karanga and whaikōrero. The programme is mainly run through noho marae.

te reo Māori –-the Māori language

Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (The Māori language Commission) – sometimes simply known as 'Te Taura Whiri' - an organization set up in 1987 to promote the use of Māori as a living language and as an ordinary means of communication. Some of its previous roles were passed on to Te Mātāwai in 2016, so while Te Taura Whiri is tasked with increasing the use, visibility and status of te reo within government and wider New Zealand, Te Mātāwai will represent and lead iwi, hapū and Māori organisations in supporting the intergenerational transmission of te reo Māori.

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWoA) - a tertiary provider with a Māori basis that provides education for Māori and other peoples of Aotearoa through a wide variety of courses. They provide reo Māori courses to advanced levels, charge no fees, and provide generous resources for learners.

tertiary education - higher or post-secondary education, such as universities, polytechnics and wānanga.

tika - to be true, correct, appropriate

tikanga - custom; customary system of values and practices; based on the word 'tika' - appropriate or correct.

tūturu - genuine, authentic

waiata - song, chant.

wānanga - verb: to meet and discuss, deliberate, consider. Noun: seminar, conference, forum, educational seminar.

wānanga reo - an education seminar for learning te reo Māori, often conducted as teaching sessions rather than in a discussion format.

whaikōrero - formal speeches, usually made by men, during a *pohiri* and other gatherings.

whakaari - drama, play; in this context, skits, or role-plays.

whakaaro - thought, idea

whakaaro Māori - usually refers to a Māori way of thinking, based in tikanga Māori, as opposed to thinking that has accommodated to Pākehā ways.

whakaaro Pākehā - thinking that has accommodated to Pākehā ways, rather than being founded in Māori customary practices.

whakamā - be ashamed, shy, embarrassed.

whakapapa - genealogy, family tree.

whakatauākī - proverb, significant saying, particularly one urging a type of behaviour. These have generally been uttered by people of standing.

whakataukī - proverb, significant saying .

whakawhanaungatanga - process of establishing relationships, relating well to others; the idea of generating a whānau (family) feeling is implied.

whakawhiti kōrero - conversation, conversational interaction, exchange of ideas.

whānau - extended family, family group. In the modern context, the term is sometimes used to include friends who may not have any kinship ties to other members.

whanaungatanga - in the context of adult reo Māori learning, generally means a relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging.

whare – house, building

whare wānanga - university.

wharekura - secondary school level of immersion Māori schooling (years 9 to 13); follows on from kura kaupapa Māori.

Prologue

When Margaret (a Pākehā woman in her fifties) married her Māori husband, she found herself part of a large family—her husband has fifteen siblings still living. She also found people speaking te reo Māori around her at family gatherings, although her husband speaks little Māori himself. Naturally enough, she wanted to know what was being talked about—and as a newcomer to the family, she was particularly keen to know if they were talking about her. Thirty-five years later, she is well settled into the wider whānau, sharing responsibilities with her husband on his marae committee. She has a fair grasp of the language, although she is certainly not fluent, and she now feels comfortable interacting in te reo Māori in most social situations. She has learnt the language in a multitude of settings—high school classes while her children were in kōhanga reo, an extra-curricular university course, a class at the local polytechnic, through Te Wānanga o Aotearoa—and most recently and fruitfully, through Te Ataarangi. She now works in a local social service organisation that works on Māori principles, and she is delighted to be working in a setting that lets her use te reo Māori and exposes her to more competent speakers.

Pita is a Māori man in his fifties (his father is Pākehā) who has finally emerged as a reasonably confident Māori speaker after struggling to learn in a university context. Demoralized after a difficult time in a taxing immersion environment at university, he turned to a simpler, more relaxed course at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. Now, several years later, he feels at last that he has the confidence to converse in Māori with people he knows well. Like Margaret, he has learnt the language in many settings, and at times has had to go back and repeat courses when he lost his proficiency through lack of use. He is now determined to maintain his skills in the language, and does this through private reading and listening, using the language in his teaching, and developing his conversational skills by meeting with other Māori-speaking friends once a week at a local bar.

Jack is a Māori man in his forties; when I interviewed him on Skype, he held his laptop up to the window to show me the view from his apartment fifty-five floors above a

foreign city. He had grown up in a provincial town in New Zealand, and eventually learnt te reo Māori at university and at a variety of courses that he attended as part of his professional development as a teacher and a Māori dean in a New Zealand school. When I interviewed him, he was about to return to New Zealand with the aim of bringing up his children as reo Māori speakers, and planning to learn informally and mostly autonomously when he returned. His passion for the language and for his culture was clear throughout the interview.

This is just a glimpse of three of the fifteen adult learners and teachers whose experience, reflections, and thoughts on learner-centredness make up the heart of this research project. Most of the ten learners have learnt in a variety of settings over many years, and have shown determination and resilience during their learning. Most have quite complex reo Māori learning histories; some have had mostly positive experiences, while others have had a complicated and sometimes troubled relationship with the language and the contexts in which it has been taught over the years. Several have been learning the language for most of their adult lives, in almost every reo Māori learning context available in New Zealand. Most were Māori, although several had one non-Māori parent, and several had non-Māori partners. All, however, had a genuine desire to speak te reo Māori well, and had expended a good deal of effort to learn to do so. For nearly all of them, te reo Māori was a very important part of their lives, and they were all conscious that they were playing a role in the revitalisation of the language within their whānau, hapū, iwi, and in wider society. The participants spoke freely and honestly about their good and bad experiences, and they did not hesitate to disagree if they thought that any ideas the researcher presented lacked merit.

However, there is one other learner involved in this research project who plays a key role—myself. Like most of the other learners, I have a long and varied learning history, and, like most of them, I have had both good and bad experiences. I first began learning te reo Māori at a university course when I was 27 years old; since then I have studied the language in night classes, through extramural-university study, at university again—I have completed all the reo Māori papers at Otago University from Stage 2 onward—and at Kura Reo. My own learning has been at times enjoyable and satisfying, but also at times frustrating, uncomfortable and disempowering—particularly in the

later stages. It was this dissatisfaction, and the feeling of being frustrated, sometimes uncomfortable, and often disempowered, which provided the impetus to search for better ways for adults to learn te reo Māori.

It was not until 2013 that I really encountered learner-centred ideas, and when I did, they were not specifically couched as such. I was investigating second-language acquisition theories when I came across brief guidelines by Muriel Saville-Troike (2012) for language teachers. The first guideline advised teachers to consider the goals that individuals and groups have for learning an additional language; the second guideline was to set priorities for learning/teaching that were compatible with those goals. I realized that I had never been asked about my goals, and that I was being taught what someone else had decided was good for me. Moreover, it seemed to me that the teaching and learning contexts I had experienced had not paid much attention to my goals, and that I had little agency or autonomy in either of the two main learning contexts I had learnt in. I concluded that Saville-Troike's guidelines were essentially learner-centred, or at least student-centred (a distinction discussed below), and I set about investigating how learner-centredness might possibly be applied to adult learning of te reo Māori, so that adult learners could learn and be taught in a fashion that was as appropriate as possible for them. The thesis that follows is a genuine exploration of learner-centredness, rather than advocacy for it; initial enthusiasm for the idea has been tempered somewhat, but as this thesis hopes to demonstrate, aspects of it withstand scrutiny, and have something distinctive to offer in the situation of adult learning of te reo Māori

Chapter 1: Introduction: getting to grips with learner-centredness

This chapter defines the term learner-centredness, and examines its relationship to the idea of student-centredness. It continues with a summary of the history of the idea, and makes a prima facie case for taking the concept seriously, despite it being contested; it does this through looking at its use in the contexts of global education, adult learning, and second-language learning. The chapter continues with a brief history of the Māori language and its use since European settlement started in New Zealand; it then provides a brief analysis of the position of adults learning the language, an outline of the research project, and finally an outline of the chapters that follow.

1.1 Defining learner-centredness

The entry on learner-centredness in *A Dictionary of Education* (online version, DOE for the rest of this paragraph) from Oxford University Press (Wallace, 2009) begins by defining it as:

> An approach to teaching and learning in which the learner, their interests, enthusiasms and aspirations are taken as the starting point of the education process, and the learner is credited with taking responsibility for their own learning.

The learner is placed squarely in the centre of the process, and consideration of the learner's "interests, enthusiasms and aspirations" follows on as a natural progression from placing the learner in the central position of education. By comparison, Schweisfurth's definition of learner-centredness (2013, p. 34) puts a degree of learner control first; it also introduces the importance of meeting learners' needs:

> A pedagogical approach which gives learners, and demands from them, a relatively high level of active control of the content and process of learning. What is learnt, and how, are therefore shaped by the learners' needs, capabilities and interests.

The DOE definition could be said to imply the necessity of meeting learners' needs by placing the learner at the centre of the learning process; however, to avoid the idea that learner-centredness merely revolves around the whims of learners, it is best to specify the importance of addressing learner needs—which may include functioning in a culture, in a particular society, and eventually in a work-force. Schweisfurth's definition implies that, with a degree of learner control in place, it follows that the learners' needs and interests will be catered for. Despite their different emphases, both definitions point to the centrality of the learner in the learning and teaching process, and the expectation the learners will have to take some responsibility for their learning, and will be allowed some control over it.

The DOE definition of learner-centred continues:

> The teacher or educator is regarded, according to this model, as a facilitator of learning, rather than as a dispenser of knowledge or skills; and the learning process itself takes into account not only the academic needs of the learner, but also their emotional, creative, psychological, and developmental needs.

It is clearly important to be wary of setting up a false dichotomy between teachers as facilitators and teachers as instructors; they need to be both. However, in learner-centred education, the role of facilitator of learning takes precedence. This facilitation of learning can happen in a variety of ways; Schweisfurth, for example, states that a learner-centred approach can still accommodate an authoritative teacher role (2015, p. 263). Once again, this question of the teacher's role (facilitator or instructor) is strongly contested, particularly by Kirschner, Sweller and Clark (2006) and Mayer (2004), and this is dealt with more fully in chapter 4. As for the concern for the learners' emotional and psychological needs, it is sufficient to observe that learner-centredness is concerned with the whole person, and that the main concern is that the learners develop, and that they become stronger and better people.

The DOE definition provides further detail about the roles of learners and teachers in determining what happens in the classroom or learning context:

> The lesson planning and teaching … allows for learner control over the learning activities employed; and the curriculum takes as its starting point those topics which are of direct interest and relevance to the learners… In its most radical form it implies a democratic community of learning where learners and teachers have equal status, and learners exercise a choice over what they will learn.

It is important to note that the definition 'allows' for learner control rather than requiring it, but even so, this section of the definition is starting to present a very different picture from what exists in most learning institutions; learner-centredness confers at least some degree of power, control or autonomy on learners, and by doing so expects learners to take responsibility for their learning. A learner-centred approach also clearly places responsibility on teachers to find out in detail about the learners' needs, interests and aspirations, along with an expectation that they will genuinely try to accommodate them, while also bringing their knowledge of teaching and the subject matter to bear on the teaching and learning situation. Learner-centredness requires teachers to work with learners, to consult with them, and ideally to negotiate with them, and to confer power on them by doing so.

The DOE entry also discusses the origin of the concept:

> Based on a humanistic model of education, the learner-centred (or pupil-centred) approach owes much of its underlying philosophy to theorists such as Rogers and educators such as Malaguzzi.

The concept of person-centredness was the key element of Carl Rogers' thinking on education (Rogers, 1969); he believed that the teacher should adopt a facilitative role, that learners learn only material that is significant to themselves, and that a supportive atmosphere was necessary for learning. Loris Malaguzzi focused on education in the early years, and pioneered an approach to early childhood and primary education in which children are active constructors of knowledge, and have a good deal of control over the process of learning, often exercising this through extended projects (Hewett, 2001).

The DOE entry continues as follows:

> It is an approach to education which emphasizes discovery learning and the learner's right to self-determination. From a philosophical point of view it sits uneasily with externally imposed targets and testing and with a standardized curriculum.

The issue of the merits or otherwise of discovery learning—along with inquiry-based learning and problem-based learning—is one of the most important points of contention about the worth of learner-centredness. Although Schweisfurth (2013, p. 21) points to the increasingly widespread use of such methods in the post-secondary setting, and the credibility such methods are gaining (Kember, 2009, for example), there is a strong pedagogical case for more direct teaching, particularly with novice learners (Kirschner et al., 2006). Although discovery learning is implied rather than required in a learner-centred approach, there is a strong association between learner-centredness and inquiry-based learning (see Weimer, 2013, for example); this issue is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 4. As for the potential conflict with targets, testing and a standardized curriculum, these do present problems for a learner-centred approach in institutional settings, although institutions may well be able to exercise flexibility to accommodate such an approach.

The DOE entry finishes as follows:

> It is commonly (and to some extent inaccurately) used, however, simply to describe a style of teaching in which the learners are actively engaged with their learning rather than adopting the role of passive recipients of knowledge. In this sense it is construed as the opposite of teacher-centred learning, in which the teacher takes the active role and the learners are required merely to be receptive.

I have encountered this perception of active learning as learner-centredness many times; however, active learning is certainly a key element of learner-centredness, and there is an expectation in student-centred approaches (see 1.2 for more details of this)

that learners will actively engage in activities to ensure that genuine learning takes place (Biggs & Tang, 2011, p. 11).

Finally, to finish this section, it is worth introducing key principles of learner-centredness from Weimer (2002, 2013), who has been an influential figure in promoting learner-centredness, particularly in the tertiary sector in the United States. Her five main principles are:

1. Changing the role of the teacher to a more facilitative model;

2. Changing the balance of power in the classroom to allow students to have some control of the learning process;

3. Using content for its own sake, but also to develop students' learning skills;

4. Instituting changes that make students more responsible for their own learning;

5. Revisiting the purposes and processes of evaluation to not only certify mastery of material, but to promote learning (Weimer, 2013, pp. 10-11).

Weimer dedicates a chapter in her 2013 edition to research support for learner-centredness (2013, pp. 28-55). She finds support for her ideas in Pintrich (2003) on motivation; Prince (2004), on active learning; and Mazur (2009), on focusing on the student and on active learning. Finally, to round off her chapter (2013, p. 55), Weimer closes with the words of an impressive group of science educators urging their peers (in the pages of the journal *Science*) to adopt what could be broadly described as learner-centred teaching methods (Handelsman et al., 2004).

1.2 Learner-centredness and student-centredness

At this stage, it may help to also address the term 'student-centred' which is often used in a similar or almost identical way to 'learner-centred'. The DOE does not provide a definition for 'student-centred', perhaps because the authors consider that the term

'learner-centred' covers the same broad concept. In fact, there does not appear to be a clear, universally accepted definition of student-centredness, but usage tends to point to two key elements. The most common usage comes through most strongly in the writing of Biggs and Tang (2007). They use the term 'student-centred' to describe learning or teaching that has a strong focus on meeting the learning needs of students of varying ability or inclination, without necessarily expecting that the learners will have much agency in the choice of content or learning activities. For them, student-centred learning is learning that is organised as closely as possible to suit learners in a given teaching and learning situation; they state that their focus is on the design of a teaching and learning system, not on the student as a 'person' (2011, p. xx), and that, by asserting that the purpose of teaching is to support learning, they are promoting a 'student-centred' model of teaching (2011, p. 20). Their main premise is that tertiary institutes have increasingly been expected to educate learners who do not have the same skill set that tertiary learners were assumed to have in the past; therefore, teachers should not assume the presence of these skills, and should adapt their teaching to ensure that all kinds of learners can actually learn. Biggs and Tang assert that student-centred learning on this model will require learners to be active rather than passive in their learning. The expectation is that certain pedagogical principles (such as active learning) will make learning effective for all learners, but the key idea is to ensure that a wide range of learners' needs are met by ensuring they can learn effectively. However, sometimes the term 'student-centred' is used in a similar way to 'learner-centred;' this usage is evident in Cannon and Newble's (2000, p. 16) definition of student-centred learning (SCL) as:

> Ways of thinking and learning that emphasize student responsibility and activity in learning rather than what the teachers are doing. Essentially SCL has student responsibility and activity at its heart, in contrast to a strong emphasis on teacher control and coverage of academic content in much conventional, didactic teaching.

The key difference between student-centredness and learner-centredness is that in student centred learning, there is less expectation that learners will have active choice about content, learning activities and assessment. Teachers have the primary

responsibility for student-centredness, whereas learner-centredness implied shared responsibility for, or negotiation about, key elements of the learning (such as content, learning activities, and assessment).

Another main difference is that the term 'student-centred' could be perceived as placing the activity of learning within a learning institution, whereas the term 'learner-centred' places learning in a wider context. The term 'learner-centred' is used much more in writing about adult learning or second language learning (Knowles, 1978, 1980; Nunan, 1988). Throughout this thesis, where a narrower version of the term 'student-centred' seems most applicable, I use it; where the broader sense is implied, including the idea of some learner agency and choice, I use the term 'learner-centred'.

1.3 History of the concept of learner-centredness

Fay (1988) describes student-centred learning as "a concentration of the ideas of humanist philosophy and psychology that recognises the integrity and freedom of the individual and attempts to convert the teaching/learning process accordingly – running from Socratic method through Dewey to Rogers." Socrates refrained from teaching directly, instead using questioning and dialogue to draw out insight from those who were engaged with him in discussion; in *Meno*, for example, Plato has Socrates saying: "All I'll be doing is asking him questions, not teaching him anything…" (Waterfield, 2005, p. 120). Reese (2001) describes a move towards progressive education and child-centredness in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, with the word 'child-centred' first being used in 1889. John Dewey (1916) championed a style of learning that valued inquiry, allowed students to relate new information to prior learning, promoted active rather than passive learning, and advocated a guiding or facilitative role for the teacher. The psychologist Carl Rogers' concept of client–centred therapy featured a belief in adult agency—that individuals had the means within them to effect change in their own thinking and in their own circumstances (Rogers, 1951). Rogers also promoted the use in his counselling of a facilitative approach to access the resources within each person that were needed for self-understanding. The concept of person-centredness was also central in his thinking on education (1969); he believed that the teacher should adopt a facilitative role, that learners learn only material

significant to themselves, and that a supportive atmosphere was necessary for learning. Rogers' promotion of concern for a person's emotional and psychological needs in the education process have remained crucial elements of learner-centredness.

1.4 A prima facie case for a learner-centred approach

A prima facie case can be made for taking learner-centredness seriously for three main reasons; it has significant support internationally, even though its contribution is disputed; it has a degree of support within New Zealand's mainstream education system; and it has strong backing within the literature on adult education, and amongst some practitioners of teaching English as a second language. All of these reasons will be dealt with briefly here, then in more detail in Chapter 4, the literature review.

1.4.1 Global influence

Schweisfurth states that learner-centredness has had far-reaching impact; she describes it as "a global phenomenon, enshrined in international agreements, promoted by international agencies and powerful at a supranational level" (2013, p. 16). She points out that UNESCO has a particular view of quality education that is strongly related to learner-centredness, particularly in the Dakar Framework (UNESCO, 2000), and that UNICEF also promotes child-friendly and child-centred schooling (UNICEF, n.d.). This does not mean learner-centredness is in fact widely implemented; Harber and Davies have described learner-centredness as a "hooray word" (1997, p. 111), and Schweisfurth admits the term can "invoke all sorts of positive and applaudable things while remaining an empty signifier" (2015, p. 262). Moreover, despite learner-centredness being affirmed at an official level, attempted implementation in school settings of a learner-centred approach internationally has often proved unsuccessful—in South Africa, for example (Harley, Barasa, Bertram, Mattson, & Pillay, 2000), and in China (Dello-Iacovo, 2009; Liu & Dunne, 2009).

At tertiary level, there are numerous articles which testify to ongoing and un-abated interest in learner-centredness—so much so that Boud could say:

> It is often remarked that one of the major changes in higher education over the second half of the twentieth century is that it has become more learner-centred. Indeed, in the literature of teaching and learning a focus on the learner is so taken for granted, that it is decreasingly commented on (Boud, 2006, p. 19).

The literature also highlights the variety of aspects covered by the term—from teaching as facilitation, to problem-based learning, and active learning more generally. Rust (2002, p. 148), writing about assessment in tertiary settings, spoke of a "worldwide paradigm shift towards student-centred outcomes-based approaches," particularly under the influence of Biggs (1999) and the concept of constructive alignment. A number of studies claim to show that a learner-centred approach has made positive changes in a variety of settings, including medical education. One such medical study, based on Weimer's five key principles of learner-centredness (Weimer, 2002), included need-based content, facilitative role of teachers, involvement of trainees in the learning process, and structured feedback; at a later stage, learner autonomy was also introduced (Reh, Ahmed, Li, Laeeq, & Bhatti, 2014).

Elsewhere, Kember (Kember, 2009) reported on a Hong Kong university-wide initiative to promote what he called "student-centred forms of teaching and learning". His team worked from the premise that learning works best when students are actively involved with a variety of learning tasks, and responses from student surveys following the initiative indicate that a range of teaching interventions were successfully introduced.

In the wider world, however, outside Western universities and learning institutions, learner-centredness has often been much less well received (for example, Chiang, Chapman, & Elder, 2010; Le Ha, 2014). Chiang et al. (2010) found that teachers in a Taiwan nursing education institution were genuinely shocked at many of the concepts associated with learner-centredness, and were resistant to them. Le Ha's article provides a fierce critique of the concepts of 'teacher as facilitator' and 'learner-centredness'. The article describes resistance to, and even contempt for, learner-centred concepts and methods, which seemed to be upending the social norms in the Asian

tertiary institutes in which her participants were working. Furthermore, the ideas were proving difficult—if not impossible—to implement. Some of Le Ha's participants also resented the apparent imposition of a Western model of education in their learning institutions. Such studies provide a stark warning of the discomfort and stress that learner-centredness can cause in an environment which is unreceptive.

However, despite the fact that the value of learner-centredness is strongly disputed, the concept is demonstrably playing a significant role in modern education, such that it deserves consideration at least, and merits exploration of ways it could provide benefits in adult reo Māori learning.

1.4.2 The New Zealand context

Learner-centredness itself—in the sense of learner control or input into learning—is not widely supported in the New Zealand context, but student-centredness (in the sense of awareness of students' needs and adapting the programme to ensure they learn) is well recognised. It is a fundamental principle in the New Zealand school education system, with the inquiry model of teaching (not to be confused with inquiry learning) requiring teachers to gain knowledge of students' needs, develop appropriate learning activities on that basis, and follow up with reflection that informs further teaching and learning (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 34). Student-centredness is also acknowledged as a key principle in the tertiary setting as well. For example, the University of Otago's *Guidelines for teaching at Otago* state that "we would hope that most university teachers adopt a student-centred approach to teaching, as research has confirmed that this is far more likely to get students engaged in their learning" (Higher Education Development Centre, University of Otago, 2012, p. 4). It seems unlikely that these institutions are aspiring to achieve the level of learner empowerment alluded to in the more radical version of learner-centredness described earlier; however, the institutions are aware of the value of student-centred principles.

1.4.3 Adult learning

Learner-centredness is a key component of several models of adult learning, particularly andragogy, the model of adult learning propounded by Knowles (1970, 1978, 1980) to distinguish adult learning from pedagogy (education of children or

young people). The learning process that Knowles developed involved learners in every step of programme design, from preparing learners for the programme, establishing the climate for learning, diagnosis of needs, and evaluation of the programme (Holton, Swanson, & Naquin, 2001). Other analyses of adult learning also tie in with learner-centredness by emphasizing the selective and self-directed nature of most adult learning (Illeris, 2010; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2012). Illeris (2010) found that adults learn what they want to learn and what is meaningful for them to learn, and are disinclined to engage with things that do not fit those criteria; like Knowles, he observed that they draw on resources they already have in their learning, and that they may well take responsibility of their own learning if they have the opportunity, although they may choose not to. Merriam et al. describe much adult learning as self-directed (Merriam et al, 2007); such learning is fundamentally learner-centred, and is characterized by being driven by the learner, and being deeply embedded in the learner's life. It ranges from formal to informal, and is often characterized by taking opportunities that present themselves (Merriam et al., 2012, p. 105). The term 'self-directed learning' fits well the opportunistic, deeply-embedded approach many adults take to their Māori language learning, as they seek learning environments to achieve their ends, despite not necessarily being able to exercise much agency within those environments.

1.4.4 English as a second language

Learner-centredness has also had a prominent role in second language teaching since the 1980s, mainly through Nunan, who has consistently championed the approach for adults learning English (Nunan, 1988, 1999, 2012, 2015). Learner-centredness also underpins Nunan's other writing on communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning. (Nunan, 1991, 2004). Nunan's own guidelines for a learner-centred classroom are: that learning experiences should be related to learners' own out-of-class experiences; that learners should take responsibility for their own learning; and that they should be involved in decisions about what to learn, how to learn, and how to be assessed (Nunan, 2015). Nation and Macalister (2010) also include learner-centred approaches in their second language curriculum design, and Nation (2014) specifically explores how it can be integrated.

This brief overview has established that student-centredness at least is affirmed in many international and tertiary settings, and that learner-centredness—the model with a higher level of learner agency—is a strong feature of several approaches to adult learning, and more specifically, in some approaches to adult second-language learning. As such, student centredness and learner-centredness deserve serious consideration in an adult reo Māori learning context as well.

The next part of this introduction provides a brief overview of the situation facing te reo Māori, and then focuses in more closely on the situation of adult second-language learners of the language.

1.5 Te reo Māori in 2016

Whether one considers the Māori language to be endangered or not, it is nevertheless in a difficult position in New Zealand. Only 3.7 percent (148 000 people) of the total population of New Zealand speak it (Ministry of Social Development, 2016). English is the default language in virtually all settings, despite te reo Māori having been an official language since 1987; virtually all New Zealanders speak English, and Māori speakers are either scattered throughout the population or isolated in small pockets, making it difficult for them to maintain use of the language on a regular basis. Furthermore, not only is te reo Māori a minority language within New Zealand, but only a minority of Māori themselves speak it; Māori make up only 14.9 percent of the population, and of that number, in the 2013 census, only 21.3 percent said that they could 'hold a conversation about a lot of everyday things in te reo Māori' (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Moreover, the percentage of Māori who said they could do this has dropped by 4.8 percent since the 2006 census, despite extensive promotion and government support of the language. In *Te Kupenga,* a survey of Māori well-being (2013), the proportion of Māori who self-report as speaking fairly well, well, or very well is about 20 percent for each age group (15-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-5) except for the oldest group, (55 plus) which has a proportion of 26 percent (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). The table which follows presents these figures.

Percentage of Māori over 15 years old who speak te reo Māori

By age group and levels of proficiency

From *Te Kupenga*, 2013 (Survey of Māori well-being)

1. I can speak te reo Māori very well
2. I can speak te reo Māori well
3. I can speak te reo Māori fairly well
4. I can speak about some simple or basic things in te reo Māori
5. I can speak a few words or phrases in te reo Māori

Age group (years)	Proficiency in speaking te reo Māori "I can speak…"				
	Very well	Well	Fairly well	Some simple or basic things in te reo Māori	A few words or phrases in te reo Māori
15—24	2.7	5.5	13.0	32.7	46.1
25—34	5.3	5.3	14.5	33.2	41.6
35—44	4.5	5.7	11.5	33.7	44.7
45—54	3.3	4.9	10.6	31.6	49.6
55+	10.0	6.8	9.9	28.9	44.4

Table 1: Percentage of Māori over 15 years old who speak te reo Māori

On the positive side, a system of Māori language immersion education, ranging from preschool to high school level, has ensured that a cohort of younger speakers have emerged into adulthood, and their contribution has at least partly allayed fears over the possible disappearance of the language in the short term. Many people have also learned the language in mainstream tertiary settings, in reo Māori classes in English-medium schooling, and in specifically Māori organizations such as Te Ataarangi, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, and in various iwi wānanga, such as Te Wānanga o Raukawa. In the years leading up to 2013, there has been an increase in the proportion of younger Māori (15–44) who said they have some ability to speak te reo Māori. Consequently, there is a more even spread of more able Māori speakers throughout the age range than there was in the decade or so prior (*Te Kupenga*, 2013). It is interesting to observe that for more competent speakers (those saying they speak very well, or well), there are substantially more women than men in the 15-54 age band; this difference is most pronounced in the 25-34 age bracket, where the number of competent women is nearly twice that of the men; the proportions even out over the age range, until more men than

women claim to speak 'very well' or 'well' in the 55+ age-group. This disparity between men and women has cultural implications, as men are generally expected to fulfil formal speaking roles on marae and in more formal hui.

It is worth noting that there is no generally used certification system for te reo Māori (along the lines of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) that involves formal assessment of particular levels of achievement. Te Taura Whiri does conduct a 'level-finder' exam (Te Taura Whiri, 2018), using a scale from 1-5 (1: Basic routine language; 2: Basic conversational proficiency; 3: Moderate proficiency; 4: Higher proficiency; 5: Complete proficiency). However, the exam is only held once a year, in one city; only 84 people sat the exam in the 2016/2017 year (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, 2017, p. 18). Proficient language users can be found in all education settings, although the highest respect is probably accorded to graduates of Te Panekiretanga (the Institute of Excellence in Te Reo Māori). Whatever level is used to decide proficiency, the figures do give some idea of the challenge that exists for aspirations to have te reo Māori more widely spoken by adults.

However, it is interesting to put these figures alongside others that reflect interest in Māori culture. In *Te Kupenga* (2013), 70 percent of Māori aged 15 and up said that being involved in Māori culture was important; it seems possible that at least some more of these people would be drawn to increased involvement in te reo Māori, even if it was only to reach a slightly higher proficiency level. Tuhono Research Service (2014) also found a large percentage of Māori expressed an interest in "improving their ability to speak te reo Māori". Their first quarterly survey, based on 1613 respondents, found that while only 24% of respondents were learning the language, 70% would like to improve their ability to speak te reo Māori. Although the desire to learn is stronger in the younger adult age group (80% for ages 18-24), there were reasonably high proportions of all adults agreeing with the statement "I would like to improve my ability to speak te reo Māori" (71% for the 35-44 age group, 66% for the 45-54 age group, 66% for the 55 -64 age group, and 59% for those aged 65-74). Furthermore, 82.8% of participants in the Tuhono survey feel that te reo Māori is important to their future. It appears from this that there is potential for more Māori to be learning the language, if circumstances were right and people were encouraged to learn. Despite all

this, the proportion of Māori who can speak the language still remains low, and although many non-Māori have also learnt te reo Māori, its use remains quite limited within New Zealand. Overall, the proportion of people who claim to speak 'very well' or 'well' in all age brackets below 55 remains low—between 8 and 11 percent. The sobering fact is that a substantial number of Māori are not learning te reo Māori, at least to a level of proficiency where they can 'hold a conversation about a lot of things.'

1.6 A brief history of the fall and rise of te reo Māori

The section that follows gives an outline of how the Māori language came to be in its present situation. Two perspectives inform this brief history, both of which are somewhat controversial. The first is that fears of the demise of the language have been allayed, and that te reo Māori is at least to some degree in good health, despite its users being in "pockets" around the country (Higgins & Rewi, 2014, p. 30). This is certainly a minority viewpoint, as the prevailing discourse holds that te reo Māori is in crisis (Kawharu, 2014; Ngaha, 2014), or that its situation is, at the very least, cause for grave concern (Bauer, 2008; Waitangi Tribunal, 2011). In fact, in 2011 the Waitangi Tribunal stated that "there must be a deep-seated fear for the survival of the reo," with two significant reasons being the ongoing loss of older native speakers, and complacency because of the apparent success of language revival (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, p. 168). More specifically, Bauer (2008) feared that te reo Māori could eventually fall into disuse without substantial communities speaking it consistently. Despite all this, it appears to me that Higgins and Rewi are correct. Both the authors are in touch with Māori speaking communities, and with a range of individual speakers who have high levels of competence in te reo Māori. The fact that at least a narrow band of Māori society is maintaining and sustaining the language engenders confidence that this 'advance guard' of reo Māori speakers can continue to make inroads into wider Māori society—and into New Zealand society more broadly.

The second somewhat controversial aspect of the brief history of te reo Māori presented here is that it aligns with the view of Spolsky (2003, p. 553), who takes issue with the

most prevalent description of the post-contact history of the language as "colonial language destruction followed by postmodern rescue efforts…"; instead, he asserts that the history of te reo Māori is better viewed in the wider framework of decisions about language use by Māori and Pākehā, or what he calls "an accommodation with each other, politically, socially, economically, culturally and linguistically" (2003, p. 553, 554), albeit an accommodation made in circumstances of considerable imbalance of power. Agreement with Spolsky's position does not entail minimising the pressures that Māori and the language faced over the post-contact period to the present; the paragraphs that follow should make this clear. The narrative that follows also owes much to Spolsky's identification of key incidents and key factors that influenced the use of te reo Māori over the post-contact period.

In the 1850s, Māori was spoken by all native New Zealanders, and Europeans who dealt with Māori generally learnt the language to varying degrees. Māori eagerly embraced literacy when their language was written down by Europeans, and generally supported mission schools, mainly to achieve their own ends of accessing European knowledge. But a defining moment for the language, according to Spolsky, was the settler government's passing of the Native Schools Act (1867) during the land wars of the 1860s. The act had the intention of establishing government-run Maori village schools that were to teach through the medium of English, and created "a new and English dominated domain built in the very heart of Māori village life" (Spolsky, p. 557). Eventually there was a shift among Māori from monolingual Māori speaking, through bilingualism, and from there to English monolingualism for most Māori by the 1970s (p. 557).

Spolsky sums up the key factors in the loss of te reo Māori as changes in the demographic balance, changes in the pattern of settlement, and changes in the process of acculturation (p. 558). In other words, Māori have been significantly outnumbered by Pākehā since the late 1850s, the shift from rural to urban areas from the late 1940s to the 1970s made language retention more difficult, and many Māori adopted a similar way of life to Pākehā. By the 1970s Benton found that, although in the North Island most Māori adults could still speak and understand the language (the language was generally lost earlier in the South Island), English was increasingly becoming the

language of the home (R. Benton, 1997). In 2004, a report from Te Puni Kokiri stated that "Māori parents throughout the country seem to have made a collective decision (albeit unconsciously) to use English rather than Māori in bringing up their children." According to Winitana, "it is this collective weight which broke the back of the Māori language" (2011, p. 4).

Benton (1997) breaks down this process in more detail; different regions succumbed to influence of English at different times, but Benton proposes the 1930s as the main time when national language change occurred (1997, p. 17). However, he points to education playing a significant part in this transition, not only through use of English as the medium of instruction, but through punishment of pupils for speaking Māori at school. According to Benton, "The cumulative effect of these experiences was shattering. Most certainly, they produced an attitude of mind which greatly hastened the demise of Māori as an everyday language" (R. A. Benton, 1988, p. 78). Benton states that punishment for speaking Māori in school peaked in the 1920s, and even though authorities in the 1930s in Wellington made it clear that this was not official policy, the practice continued into the 1960s (ibid, p. 78). However, several influential Māori leaders (including Sir Apirana Ngata) were active proponents of English in schools, although they no doubt did not expect English to replace Māori as completely as it eventually did in Māori homes.

Benton ends his account of the period of language loss with this passage:

> There is one question implicit throughout this account which has yet to be answered satisfactorily. Why did so may Māori people collectively and individually decide at some point in the 1930s that the effort required to maintain the language within their homes was too great, even though at the time they seemed to be substantially in control of their immediate social environment, which appears to have been solidly Māori both ethnically and linguistically? There is probably no single answer to this question, just as there seems to be no simple answer to the to the corresponding question, why did some communities and many families resist what had become the general practice in the 1970s? The grassroots reaction in the 1980s makes it obvious that

the decisions of a previous generation were regretted, and the community was certain that more had been lost thereby than had been gained. (1997, p. 30).

Certainly, from the late 1970s, Māori were increasingly realising the extent of their loss. Adults began learning te reo Māori, though night classes, university classes, and through Te Ataarangi, the language learning method based on Gattegno's 'Silent Way' and pioneered by Katarina Mataira (1980) [see 3.8]. Kōhanga reo (Māori language preschools) began a few years later; by the end of 1983 there were 148, and 819 in 1994. In 1985, the first kura kaupapa (Māori immersion primary school) was opened, to enable children who had begun in kōhanga reo to continue to learn in a reo Māori environment; many kura kaupapa eventually went on to add wharekura (secondary sections). The Māori Language Act (1987) made te reo Māori an official language of New Zealand, and the Māori Language Commission was set up in the same year, to "promote the use of Māori as a living language, and as an ordinary means of communication" (http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz).

For all the apparent successes, however, the process of language revival was a painful and difficult struggle. Winitana (2011) traces the revival of te reo Māori from 1972 to 2008, and describes the journey of the language as a "trail of tears" (p. xiii). As a participant in the language revival, he observed that he and his companions in the 80s "have all felt the bite of the no-language cycle, its effects on one's psyche, self-confidence, self-esteem, identity; on one's base insides" (pp. 69-70). The ever-present lack in their lives was a stark reality for these young people; Lee Smith (in Winitana, 2011, p. 30) summed it up thus: "If you do not speak Māori, your kit is not full." Winitana's book provides an intimate and detailed portrayal of the struggle, and of the powerful sense of commitment displayed at the time when people were still learning te reo Māori themselves, as well as battling to make it available to their children.

From the 80s on, Māori participation in Māori immersion education appeared to be expanding until the mid-1990s, when a decline began in the number of children attending kōhanga reo. It later turned out that 1999 was the peak year for the proportion of Māori students involved in pre-tertiary Māori immersion education—and it was still a comparatively low figure at 18% (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, p. 160). Despite this, it

still seemed things were progressing well for te reo Māori early in the new millennium, with increasing numbers learning te reo Māori in tertiary institutions, particularly in TWoA (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, p. 161). The Government had instituted a Māori Language Strategy in 1997, to bring some coordination to the area (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, p. 165). This was revised in 1999, then a new Māori Language Strategy was adopted by the Government in 2003, including specific goals for the next 25 years (Te Puni Kokiri, 2003; Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, pp. 155, 156). De Bres (2015, p. 682) analysed a key passage within the document and found a variety of arguments within it for promotion of te reo Māori. These include spiritual grounds, constitutional grounds (through the Treaty of Waitangi), reasons of strengthening and affirming cultural identity, socio-economic grounds, and reasons of national identity (de Bres added the grounds of indigeneity—implied already—to this list).

However, by 2010, the Minister of Māori Affairs, Dr Peter Sharples was sufficiently concerned about the state of te reo Māori to call for a review of the Māori Language Strategy, "to ensure the programmes and expenditure across the whole of government are responsive to Iwi/Maori aspirations". Consequently, in 2010 the Government appointed a commission (Te Paepae Motuhake) to develop new strategies to strengthen te reo Māori. Their report, *Te Reo Mauriora* (2011) acknowledged the pressures on Māori families: "At the micro level, te reo acquisition would often take a back seat to the pressures and demands of everyday life, securing income for the family, the children's sports and so on" (p. 39). Despite this, the report asserted that re-establishment of te reo Māori in homes was the top priority; it recommended that future developments should be driven by iwi. Albury (2016, p. 290-291) has pointed out the tension that exists between te reo Māori being promoted as a boon for the nation, and what he calls an "ethno-nationalist" approach that focuses on Māori themselves learning te reo Māori, with Māori themselves driving the reo Māori revival process. This tension continues to exist, but it appears that, given that Māori expressed strong preference to Te Paepae Motuhake for Māori control of the process of revitalisation, the recommendations appear to be a good starting point for ongoing language revitalisation. Te Paepae Motuhake recommended that an organization called Te Mātāwai be implemented, consisting of representatives of iwi and other groups with an interest in revitalising the language (Te Paepae Motuhake, 2011, p. 6). This

organisation was to oversee te reo Māori and expenditure on it—roles that were previously held by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori. Te Mātāwai has now been established, and only time will tell how effective both the new structure and strategy will be.

1.7 The situation of adult learners of te reo Māori

Adult Māori speakers are now much more likely to be second-language learners of te reo Māori; just 4 percent of Māori aged 35–44 and 6 percent of adults aged 45–54 learned Māori as their first language, although the figures were slightly higher at 8 percent in the 15-34 age group (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). These second language learners face all the usual difficulties encountered by second-language learners, along with distinctive issues. Although Māori may be learning their heritage language in their own country, they often have limited access to other speakers, and to electronic or print media at their level, apart from instructional material. They face a shortage of resources specifically geared for adults; in 2001, Benton and Benton (2001) wrote: "For adults, the problem is now fundamentally not a lack of ability to read in Māori, but there is an inadequate quantity and variety of material to read…adults still have little to choose from." My own observation is that little has changed since then. Moreover, participants in this project reported that adult learners sometimes also find themselves learning the language alongside younger people who have come up through Māori immersion schooling, and are struggling to keep up with them (details of this are provided in the ensuing chapters). They also sometimes find themselves encountering vocabulary in news broadcasts or written materials that has only recently returned to active use as part of the ongoing language revitalization project, and is not yet widely known (Te Paepae Motuhake, 2011, p. 25). This issue has also been discussed by Te Haumihiata Mason on "Te Kāea", a Māori language news broadcast ("Te Kāea," 2014). However, despite difficulties such as these, my impression is that my fellow adult learners are usually highly motivated, keen to be a part of both the revival of the language, and keen to integrate the language into their own identity and those of generations to come. The participants in this project have certainly shown that they are highly motivated and committed, and they have demonstrated persistence and courage in the face of the difficulties they have encountered.

1.8 The road ahead

In the end, however, the statistics tell the story; the number of Māori speakers remains stubbornly low. Spolsky's analysis of the history of the Māori language proposes that it is more to do with decisions about language use by Māori and Pākehā than a suppression/revival model, and if this analysis holds true into the present, Māori (and Pākehā) are not exercising a choice to learn Māori with as much enthusiasm as some would wish. Given the degree of goodwill shown towards te reo Māori by Māori themselves, it seems wise to ease the path to learning as much as possible. Proposing a model of learning that ensures teachers know as much about learners as possible, and are willing to accommodate their interests and aspirations, appears to offer improvement in the learning process, and to merit further investigation.

My own experience has suggested that learning te reo Māori as an adult can at times be a difficult and frustrating experience; this suggests at least that others may well be experiencing similar difficulties and frustration. My own attempts to analyse why I might be encountering such difficulties—especially in my later years of study at university and in kura reo—led me initially to explore the extent to which second language learning theories were being applied in the teaching I encountered, then to focus more closely on a possible role for a more bilingual approach at all levels of reo Māori learning. However, when I encountered the concept of learner-centredness, it seemed to bring my discontent into sharp focus; it also appeared to offer a path whereby my reo Māori learning—and the learning of others—could be more tailored to the realities of contemporary life, and integrated better into lived experience. Consequently, the thesis that follows is my attempt to explore in depth how a more learner-centred approach could ease acquisition of te reo Māori by adults. The thesis includes a strong thread of auto-ethnography throughout—in particular, an approach known as analytic auto-ethnography (Anderson, 2006), which is explained in some detail in the chapter that follows.

1.9 Outline of the research project

In order to explore the idea of learner-centredness in an adult reo Māori learning setting, I was aware that I needed to find out in more detail about what it has been like to learn Māori in the various learning settings that are available (having spent time in only university and kura reo settings myself). I was aware that learner-centredness has a strong individual emphasis (although it also applies to groups) and that the concept may be regarded with suspicion in a Māori context for not putting enough emphasis on the collective or group; besides this possible objection, I suspected the idea could meet with some wariness simply because it could be viewed as a whakaaro Pākehā (Pākehā idea) with its roots outside the Māori world. I was also aware that most people were not familiar with the idea of learner-centredness, and that it could take some time and some discussion before people could make any meaningful responses to the concept of applying learner-centredness in an adult reo Māori learning context. I eventually decided to conduct extended interviews (90-120 minutes), to find out about participants' learning and/or teaching experience, and to find out if learner-centred ideas had in fact already been incorporated into their learning or teaching. During this process, I was introducing learner-centred concepts so that participants could become familiar with them. In the final section I directly elicited their responses to several key learner-centred principles, if they had not already made it clear how they felt about them. The aim of the interviews was to enable a well-informed response to the question of possible benefits and problems that could eventuate if a greater level of learner-centredness were to be implemented in adult learning of te reo Māori. Participants' direct responses to a set of learner-centred principles could give some guidance at least to the reception that such ideas would be likely to have in the wider reo Māori learning community. Finally, I wanted to work out some proposals for potential implementation of the concept, should there be a reasonable level of acceptance for learner-centredness among my interview participants. These are the research questions I finally decided on:

1. What benefits and problems could reasonably be expected from incorporating a stronger emphasis on learner-centredness into the learning experience of adults learning te reo Māori?

2. What is the response of a sample of adult learners of te reo Māori and teachers of adults learning te reo Māori, to the concept of stronger emphasis on learner-centredness in Māori language learning for adults?

3. What practical measures could be taken to ease adults' acquisition of the Māori language through a more learner-centred approach?

After analysing the interviews, I wrote summaries of the participants' responses, broadly grouped into their experience as learners and/or teachers (also enquiring about the teachers' own learning experiences), the extent to which learner-centred ideas could be discerned in their learning or teaching, and then their responses to learner-centred concepts. Having determined that most participants did not see any major cultural issues with greater implementation of learner-centredness, I then considered together the literature, the interviews, and information about current adult reo Māori learning contexts, to work out what were likely to be the possible benefits or problems of a more learner-centred approach. Having received a reasonably positive response to learner-centred concepts, I went on to suggest some general principles for implementation, and to draft proposals for how learner-centredness could be implemented—firstly and secondly in the two learning contexts I know best, the university setting and kura reo, and thirdly in informal learning.

1.10 Outline of following chapters

Chapter 2 (Methodology) begins by giving an outline of the research project overall. The chapter then explains in some detail the process for arriving at the adoption of critical social science (Sayer, 1997, 2009) and the capabilities approach (Nussbaum, 2000, 20003) as the basic research model used in this thesis. It does so by presenting a partial critique of kaupapa Māori as a theory and a research model, then by explaining how this thesis uses principles derived from the capabilities approach in conjunction with principles derived from tikanga Māori, in order to find an appropriate balance of values that have some international currency, along with culturally specific values for

the adult reo Māori learning context. This chapter also provides more detail about the practical aspects of how the research project was conducted.

Chapter 3 (Contexts for learning) provides more detail about the main learning contexts in which adults learn te reo Māori as a second language. It focuses mainly on various university settings, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, and kura reo, as these are the settings in which most of the interview participants learnt the language, and which provided the context for their discussion of learner-centredness.

Chapter 4 (Literature Review) begins with the basic principles and characteristics of learner-centredness, then explores the literature on the role of learner-centredness in adult learning and in second language acquisition. The chapter examines then examines the literature on revitalization of te reo Māori, and issues with adult learning of the language.

Chapters 5 and 6 present the responses of the ten learners about their reo Māori learning experience. This is followed by their responses about the extent to which learner-centred elements were present in their learning. Each individual's learning experience is then analysed in the light of both the capabilities principles and principles of tikanga Māori.

Chapter 7 presents the five teachers' responses about their reo Māori learning experience, and about their teaching experience; it is followed by their responses on the extent to which learner-centred elements were present in their teaching. As with the previous chapters, their learning and teaching experience is briefly analysed in the light of both the capabilities principles and principles of tikanga Māori.

Chapter 8 (Interviewees' responses to learner-centred concepts) deals with a key element in this thesis—the responses of all the participants to several key principles of learner-centredness. This chapter answers one of the three research questions, and gives some indication—albeit of a modest sample group—of the level of acceptance of the fundamental principles of learner-centredness after some discussion of the ideas. Once

again, the participants' responses are analysed by applying principles of the capability approach, along with principles of tikanga Māori.

Chapter 9 (Discussion) provides the substantive discussion of the topic. This chapter also answers the first research question, by presenting the possible benefits and potential problems in implementing a more learner-centred approach in adult reo Māori learning environments.

Chapter 10 (Proposals and Conclusion) looks at possible ways forward for a learner-centred approach. It sets out proposals for how learner-centredness could be implemented in two learning contexts, university settings and kura reo, and in informal learning. It also looks at possible areas for further research on the topic, and provides a conclusion to the thesis.

Finally, this thesis makes an original contribution to Māori studies by closely examining the concept of learner-centredness in the context of adult reo Māori learning, and by applying principles of the capabilities approach as part of the process of deciding what a proposed social change should look like—in this case, applying learner-centredness to adult reo Māori learning.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter has briefly explained the origins of the project, and established what learner-centredness is. It has shown that there is at least a *prima facie* case to be made for a more learner-centred approach to reo Māori learning for adults, by showing that learner-centredness has a measure of international acceptance, that it has a prominent role in various adult learning models, and that it has had a role in a prominent thread of second language acquisition teaching. It has briefly outlined the state of te reo Māori at this point in time, and explained where this project fits within the field of adult reo Māori learning. Finally, the chapter provided a brief outline of the entire project.

The chapter that follows presents the theoretical basis used to frame this thesis, and the process of research that provided the data for it.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by explaining the framework within which the topic is examined and the data analysed; this framework is based on the capabilities approach, arrived at through Sayer's version of critical social science, and informed by tikanga Māori. The chapter continues with a closer examination of my role as researcher in this project, and the adoption of the model of 'analytic auto-ethnography' to frame my own part in the thesis. This section includes some detail about the process of conscientization and reflection that I experienced during the project. The chapter then goes on to describe the process of research in more detail, including development of the interview questions, conduct of the interviews, and methods used to analyse the data. The chapter continues with an explanation of how 'analytic autoethnography' (Anderson, 2006) has been applied in this project, and how this model allows for, and legitimises, substantive integration of my experience as an adult learner of te reo Māori in the research process. The chapter finishes with a brief outline of the process of data collection, data analysis and presentation of the insights gained from the research.

2.2 My epistemology

According to the *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (Steup, 2016), epistemology is the study of knowledge and justified belief, and more broadly, deals with "the creation and dissemination of knowledge in particular areas of inquiry." Researchers clearly need to be aware of their own beliefs about knowledge, and of how these beliefs about knowledge affect the way they approach their research. I would describe my view of knowledge as scientifically based, sceptical about received wisdom, agnostic about spirituality, and, in terms of ethnicity and culture, universalist rather than essentialist (where essentialist is defined as believing that specific characteristics of ethnic or gender groupings have overriding significance). This sceptical approach to 'knowledge and justified beliefs' is what I bring to the experience of speaking te reo Māori, and to Māori cultural activities I take part in. I do not believe it is necessary for me as a reo

Māori speaker to necessarily share commonly held Māori beliefs about customs and spirituality, for example, but I am aware that I should be well informed about these beliefs, and should respect the expression of these beliefs in culture.

This epistemological stance, along with my Pākehā ethnicity, presents some barriers to my adoption of the model of research most commonly adopted in Māori studies—the model known as Kaupapa Māori. Kaupapa Māori can be briefly described as being based on Māori control of research on Māori communities or issues, generally by Māori researchers, and proceeding from Māori epistemology and ontology (G. H. Smith, 1997; L. T. Smith, 2012). A Kaupapa Māori approach appears "almost routinely in the work of researchers in the field of Māori indigenous education," according to Hoskins and Jones (2012, p. 3). Kaupapa Māori research is, at the most fundamental level, a Māori space, and some involved in Kaupapa Māori actively disapprove of Pākehā involvement in theorizing about it (see Hoskins & Jones, 2012, pp. 4-6). At the same time, researchers working in Māori society are increasingly expected to meet broadly accepted guidelines from which specific Kaupapa Māori principles developed (Mead, 2003, p. 349-351). Hill & May (2013) provide an example of non-Māori researchers working on education issues relating to te reo Māori, and following Kaupapa Māori processes in a conscientious and detailed fashion. In fact, they assert that only when researchers adhere to a "culturally specific methodological framework" can genuinely beneficial results be assured (Hill & May, 2013, p. 48). I respect their stance, but am not convinced that such a methodological framework is essential.

For my part, I make no claim to be operating under the principles of Kaupapa Māori theory, and my research engaged with individuals (Māori and non-Māori) rather than a Māori community. However, without making a glib claim, I would argue that my research meets most of the expectations that Kaupapa Māori theory suggests that such a research project should meet (L. T. Smith, 2012, p. 175, 176), particularly the expectation that research on Māori society will deal with genuine Māori concerns. In this case, the aspiration to see more adults learning te reo Māori in a satisfactory manner is a long-standing preoccupation within te ao Māori. The underlying issue of limited uptake of te reo Māori by adults, and limited ongoing proficiency in the language, is recognised as significant within the Māori world, as well as within the

wider community in New Zealand. It seems to me there should be a place for respectfully conducted research to find ways to alleviate these issues, whether or not the full strictures of Kaupapa Māori research are adhered to.

Kaupapa Māori research principles are intended to make research in Māori settings "more respectful, ethical, sympathetic and useful" (L. Smith, 2012, p. 9), but these things may well also be accomplished from a more universalist theoretical base. In this connection, Linda Smith outlines Kaupapa Māori principles for the actual conduct of research—showing respect, presenting oneself to people face-to-face, looking and listening prior to speaking, sharing with people in a generous way, being cautious, not trampling the mana of other people, and being humble (L. Smith, 2012, p. 124). However, as Stevens (2015, p. 57) points out, most of these are already well-established principles for sensitively conducted research, although principles such as presenting oneself to people face-to-face and sharing with people in a generous way are more culturally specific to Māori. Furthermore, both of the more universalist frameworks that I am using to frame the issue—critical social science and the capabilities approach— recognize that any social change should emerge from the Māori cultural setting itself, rather than being imposed or tacked on; indeed, critical social science insists on 'immanence'—the need for any proposed change to appeal to principles within the culture itself (Sayer, 2009, p. 772,773). Ultimately, I find myself agreeing with Stevens when he says: "In any event, if an engagement with kaupapa Māori generates insightful research into mātauranga Māori, and in ways that are relevant to Māori communities, I strongly contend that its absence does not `prevent these things" (Stevens, 2015, p. 57).

The next three sections of this chapter describe my process of arriving at the models of critical social science and the capabilities approach (balanced with tikanga Māori), and justifies my use of these models.

2.3 Critical social science (Sayer), leading to the capabilities approach

Sayer's approach (called critical social science) developed from critical realism, an approach to social science that maintains that values can be arrived at from examining society, and that the values arrived at through this analysis can be used to propose reformation in society; Marx is an example of a critical social scientist (T. Benton,

2004). Critical social scientists believe it is possible to derive values from "scientific explanation on the realist model—hence the possibility of 'critical' social science, which is oriented to a vision of human emancipation" (Benton, p. 4). Andrew Sayer's version of critical social science adds another essential element, asserting that, prior to criticizing the state of society as it exists, genuine critical social science requires some provisional concept of what constitutes positive change (T. Benton, 2004). In the broadest terms, Sayer proposes that social change should promote 'flourishing', and lessen 'suffering'. Both these terms are, of course, capable of widely differing interpretation, and any 'suffering' undergone by adult reo Māori language learners would be on a different qualitative scale from 'suffering' experienced in many other circumstances where social change seems desirable, but the broad terms are still useful. In fact, the theme of 'flourishing' is the main focus in this thesis. Sayer finds the best outline of what constitutes positive change in the capabilities approach, as articulated by Nussbaum (2003, 2001) and more specifically, in Nussbaum's list of characteristics that characterise well-being (2003, p. 42,43).

Very briefly, the central aim of the capabilities approach is to achieve well-being. The approach was originated by Amartya Sen, and is based on the idea that well-being can to a great extent be measured by working out what things people can actually do (or are free to do) in a society; these things are their capabilities. Less important, but following on from these capabilities, are what people actually do with their capabilities; these are their 'functionings' (Nussbaum, 2000, 2003: Sen, 1985). According to this approach, people can be considered to have a good level of well-being if they have a broad range of capabilities, even if they do not develop or utilise all of them.

The capabilities approach originally grew from a need to find better measures of well-being than the usual economic measures in development situations: GNP (gross national product) and growth were perceived as inadequate measures, because deprived people and particularly women (in some countries) were clearly not always sharing in increasing prosperity. Other researchers have developed Sen's work across a range of disciplines, but a key idea remains the importance of freedom to enable well-being. My use of the capabilities approach is in the spirit of extending the approach to determine

what is a reasonable expectation of freedom (or capability to act) for an adult in a reo Māori learning situation, using as culturally neutral a set of criteria as possible.

The capabilities approach lays out fundamental principles of what a person or persons should be able to do in a society, and proposes that change should be based on ensuring that people are actually able to exercise those freedoms. I had encountered the approach early in the research process, and approved it in theory, but had not explored the implications. Moreover, I only had a vague knowledge of the capabilities approach while I was conducting then initially analysing the interviews. However, I began to explore Nussbaum's principles in more depth a month or so after conducting interviews. As I investigated further, the more relevant the appeared, and the more potential they appeared to have to provide the broad normative framework within which the issue of learner-centredness in both the adult setting and the Māori cultural setting could be examined. The capabilities approach is central to how I have theorized and articulated this research project. It enabled me to integrate the various elements of the project into a coherent theoretical pattern; it also enabled me to point to a theoretical approach where universalist (rather than essentialist) principles have been applied in non-Western settings. The capabilities approach also provided a sound theoretical backing for why a change could be justified, and a sound explanation (adaptive preference—see p. 33) for why change may be unwelcome.

Although the capabilities approach is most commonly applied in a development setting (often in analysis of quality of life in developing countries), it is sufficiently broad and comprehensive to be applied to other contexts (Robeyns, 2005). It can be applied to the context of adult language learning, particularly if such learning is not just seen as an educational matter but as a political and social issue as well. There is, however, a sense in which adult reo Māori language learning and language use can be viewed as a development issue; it is acknowledged within Māori society as an area that requires more impetus and where there is a need for change, particularly in increasing the numbers of adults learning and using the language. Even though the teaching of te reo Māori to adults is well theorised and organised, and there are well-established organizations that teach te reo Māori to adults, the teaching of the language (and more particularly the ongoing use of the language among learners) is in an ongoing stage of

development, and users of te reo Māori are in ongoing struggle to help to elevate the language into a stable, healthy state in Maori society, and in New Zealand at large.

The capabilities approach asks the basic question "What is the person able to do and be?" It begins with the basic intuition that certain human abilities exert a moral claim that they should be developed, and that people as individuals should be free enough that they can flourish. The capabilities approach is unabashedly normative, and rejects a culturalist and essentialist approach as too narrow (Nussbaum, 2001, pp. 41–49). Nussbaum has made a major contribution to the capabilities approach by developing a list of capabilities that provide a working set of culturally neutral criteria for things a person should be able to do in a decent society (2003, p. 41,42). She considers her list as a "partial moral conception," and says it was "explicitly introduced for political purposes only, and without any grounding in metaphysical ideas of the sort that divide people along lines of culture and religion." This assertion (avoiding metaphysical ideas etc.) may raise immediate concerns for many Māori, for whom mātauranga Māori is grounded in just such 'metaphysical ideas' (Pihama, 2015). Attempting to avoid such metaphysical elements may be construed as a feature of Western knowledge, and may mark off the approach as antithetical to Māori knowledge, perhaps irredeemably so. Despite this possible objection, the capabilities approach is clearly intended to be as culturally neutral as possible, and to be as universally applicable as possible.

In broad terms, Nussbaum proposes that a normative framework should contain several key elements: it should allow room for what she calls 'fully human functioning' (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 40) and the dignity of the person; it should ensure that people are be treated as ends rather than as means; it should affirm that people should have agency in their own lives; and it should ensure that the difference between people is acknowledged. This set of principles is designed to be as culturally neutral as possible, but to still make fundamental, unabashed moral assertions. Nussbaum urges people to take the key principles and apply the relevant elements to a specific social or cultural situation (2003, p. 42), and I have done this by developing a set of principles that are tailored to the situation of adults learning te reo Māori.

The capabilities approach also deals well with the fact that people are sometimes satisfied with their lot in with what is clearly a less than ideal situation. According to Nussbaum, Sen points out that repressed women (in countries such as India, for example) often exhibit 'adaptive preferences,' or preferences that have adjusted to their position in society and in the general scheme of things (2003, p. 33,34). Nussbaum asserts that, while due consideration should be given for people's satisfaction with their situation, some external criteria can and should be applied to a situation to determine if things are as they should be.

This chapter continues with developing a list of appropriate capabilities based on Nussbaum's list applied to the situation of adults learning te reo Māori.

2.4 Key principles for analysing adults as reo Māori learners

Nussbaum does not specifically mention language use in her discussion of capabilities, so deciding on what appropriate capabilities are for adult reo Māori learners requires a certain amount of working up from the principles she does provide, to develop a separate list of things that could be considered good. In the broadest terms, Nussbaum says that "the basic intuition from which the capability approach begins... is that certain human abilities exert a moral claim that they should be developed" (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 83). Failing to do this gives a sense of waste and tragedy, a sense that people are a shadow of themselves. The list should start with affirming learners' human dignity, both individually and collectively, and should be "informed by an intuitive idea of a life that is worthy of the dignity of the human being" (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 5). In New Zealand society, despite its failings, people are afforded dignity, their capabilities are developed by education, and they are free to associate with whom they wish, within certain cultural limits. Moreover, in the present social and political situation, adult reo Māori learners are free to learn the language, and are to some extent actively encouraged to do so by both the government and by some degree of goodwill, especially in Māori communities. For the moment, it may be best to set aside the question of whether Māori are entitled, as a political right, to exercise their senses, imagination and thought in their own indigenous tongue, to exercise their practical reason, enjoy and pursue affiliation, experience their emotions and control their own

environment through the vehicle of te reo Māori. However, even though te reo Māori is an official language, people cannot exercise all these functions in wider society in te reo Māori. English is clearly the dominant language used in society at large, and there is little sign that this will change significantly in the near future. It is probably more worthwhile to focus on what learners should be able to do, or be free to do, in situations where they are actually learning te reo Māori.

To set the scene for the process of working out principles from Nussbaum's list of central human capabilities, here is the list, with key elements in bold type and italics. I have chosen elements which I believe are related in some way to language use, under these headings: senses, imagination, thought; practical reason; affiliation; and control over one's environment. The capabilities I have chosen relate to using language as an individual and in groups, and using language to be fulfilled as a human being, with self-respect, and respect from others. They focus on having the capability to use language oneself, as an expression of oneself and one's society, rather than being concerned with external constraints on one's language use.

The Central Human Capabilities (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 41, 42)

1. **Life**

Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely, or before one's life is so reduced as to be not worth living.

2. **Bodily Health**

Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter.

3. **Bodily Integrity**

Being able to move freely from place to place; to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.

4. **Senses, Imagination, and Thought**

Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason – and to do these things in a ''truly human'' way, a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education, including, but by no means limited to, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training.

Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth. Being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech, and freedom of religious exercise. Being able to have pleasurable experiences and to avoid non-beneficial pain.

5. **Emotions**

Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; to love those who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger. Not having one's emotional development blighted by fear and anxiety. (Supporting this capability means supporting forms of human association that can be shown to be crucial in their development.)

6. **Practical Reason**

Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life. (This entails protection for the liberty of conscience and religious observance.)

7. **Affiliation**

A. *Being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction;* to be able to imagine the situation of another. (Protecting this capability means protecting institutions that constitute and nourish such forms of affiliation, and also protecting the freedom of assembly and political speech.)

B. *Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others.*

This entails provisions of non-discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion, national origin.

8. **Other Species**

Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.

9. Play

Being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities.

10. Control Over One's Environment

A. *Political. Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life; having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association.*

B. Material. Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods), and having property rights on an equal basis with others; having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others; having the freedom from unwarranted search and seizure. In work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason, and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers.

Table 2: The Central Human Capabilities (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 41, 42)

The list that follows is my attempt to adapt the sections in bold and italicised print to fit the context of adult learning of te reo Māori. It begins with the over-arching principle that reo Māori learning for adults should promote 'flourishing' through fully human functioning. Of course, in theory at least, all adults who are learning te reo Māori are able to do all of these things—but the principles summarize well what it means to have fully human functioning as an adult learner and user of te reo Māori. The principles are aspirational, but a reasonable expectation, and the other principles on my chart (2-6) are also based on elements within this set of capabilities.

Selected capabilities relevant to adult reo Māori learning

4. Senses, Imagination, and Thought

Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason – and to do these things in a ''truly human'' way, a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education… Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth…

6. Practical Reason

Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life.

7. Affiliation

A. Being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction…

B. Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others.

10. Control Over One's Environment

A. Political. Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life; having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association.

Table 3: Selected capabilities relevant to adult reo Māori learning

Here is a suggested set of capabilities, based on the above, freely adapted for adult reo Māori learners:

Adult reo Māori learners should:

- be able to or be free to develop their reo Māori use across the broad spectrum of human and adult language use, including imagining, thinking, reasoning, experiencing and producing works of their own choice, and developing political, artistic and religious language (as appropriate).

- be able to or be free to develop their reo Māori use to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of their life.

- be able to or be free to develop their reo Māori use in living with and toward others, recognizing and showing concern for other human beings, engaging in various forms of social interaction, and being able to imagine the situation of others.

- be able to or be free to develop their reo Māori use to participate effectively in political choices that govern their lives.

Table 4: Normative principles (capability approach) adapted for adult reo Māori learners

It is immediately apparent that these principles are broad, based on a wide view of being human. In terms of te reo Māori learning, it is more useful to use these background ideas to propose a more relevant list of which still maintains key principles of Nussbaum's list. Here is my suggested list—the one I will use throughout this thesis to frame what adult reo Māori learning should look like.

Capabilities approach: broad concepts and normative principles applied to adult reo Māori learning
1. Adult learners of te reo Māori should be achieving wellbeing.
Their learning should promote flourishing as a language learner and speaker.
Their learning should promote fully human adult functioning.
2. Adult learners of te reo Māori should be accorded dignity as persons.
3. Adult learners of te reo Māori should be treated as important in themselves, as an end, not just as a means to an end.
4. Adult learners of te reo Māori should have their differences as learners (including age) acknowledged and acted on.
5. Adult learners of te reo Māori should be able to exercise adult agency
6. Adult learners of te reo Māori should be able to choose how much or little they wish to learn.

Table 5: Capabilities approach: broad concepts and normative principles applied to adult reo Māori learning

Principle 1 is derived from the broadest concepts of the capabilities approach. Principles 2 to 6 are based on aspects of the above set of capabilities. Principle 2 (Dignity as a person) addresses the need to maintain the dignity of the person, and to acknowledge their worth, whoever they are. Principle 3 is related to the principle of dignity as person, and stresses the need for every individual to have the opportunity to flourish, and not be regarded by elements of society simply as a means to an end (bringing up children in te reo Māori, for example). Principle 4 also relates to the principle that all individuals should be given the opportunity to flourish in their own way, while Principle 5 is based on the idea of fully human functioning, and the principle that adults should have control over their environment. Principle 6 emphasises that people should have capabilities, but they can choose themselves the extent to which they take these up (their functionings).

2.5 The role of tikanga Māori in deciding guiding principles

It is all very well to have a 'universalist' or cross-cultural list of ideals, but it is also vital to consider tikanga Māori, and to have a set of ideals that will accord with these. In this case, I have tried to work out aspects of tikanga Māori in relation to the adapted

principles of the capabilities approach. The interview participants all had a strong feel for what a Māori view was likely to be on most of the aspects of learner-centredness that I raised with them, and would no doubt have had comments to make about the capabilities approach if they had the opportunity to address it. After all, most of the participants lived in some version of te ao Māori (the Māori world), and were well aware in their own fashion of the main principles that govern it—indeed, this is one reason why two participants felt there was little merit in learner-centred ideas, because from their perspective such ideas clashed with Māori thinking.

The word tikanga derives from the word tika (right, or correct), and focuses on the correct way of doing things—what Mead calls 'moral judgments about appropriate ways of behaving in everyday life' (2003, p. 6). Mead goes on to describe tikanga Māori as "Māori philosophy in practice and… the practical face of Māori knowledge" (2003, p. 7). Ka'ai and Higgins describe tikanga as "customary concepts" (2004, p. 13) and, later, in more detail, as "a system of protocols that are observed within te ao Māori, based on cultural traditions, practices, values and beliefs" (2004, p. 18). Mead states that tikanga may be translated as customary actions, or refer to customary concepts (the set of ideas); the latter meaning is the main sense in which tikanga will be considered in this setting. Further to this, Durie explains that Māori operated not so much by reference to a set of rules, but "by reference to principles, goals, and values that were not necessarily achievable. They were largely idealised standards attributed to famous ancestors" (Durie, 1994, p. 3-4, cited in Mead, 2003, p. 23). Mead acknowledges that Māori society has changed and that many of the social distinctions of the past no longer exist (2003, p. 45). He emphasizes that tikanga Māori are dynamic (2003, p. 353), although the fundamental principles of tikanga Māori retain their integrity over long periods of time.

Mead also addresses the issue of the extent to which other cultures are free to participate in tikanga Māori; he is quite definite in affirming that Māori are the cultural owners of tikanga Māori, but he also acknowledges that it is the nature of cultures to borrow from one another, and Māori themselves are sometimes selective about how much of tikanga Māori they consider themselves bound to in the modern world (2003, p. 354). In fact, there is a general expectation in adult reo Māori learning settings that

tikanga Māori will be followed, although the degree to which this is done may be much less in institutions such as mainstream universities compared with TWoA, for example. Moreover, most people who are currently learning te reo Māori as adults expect this to be the case and accede to it. In the present case, where a change to a more learner-centred approach is mooted, there may be a higher expectation of the approach aligning with tikanga Māori, just because, according to the critical social science model, a change should proceed from an 'immanent' basis, from within the culture.

Before proceeding with a discussion of tikanga that apply to adult reo Māori learning, the question of sources of information needs to be addressed. I considered Mead (2003) to be both the most useful and authoritative source on tikanga and its application in modern society; this text is widely used by Māori institutions such as TWoA as a foundational guide to tikanga. Other scholars such as Barlow (1994) and Marsden (2003) deal with tikanga Māori, but do so in a more esoteric fashion, as evidenced in Barlow's entry on mana (1994, p. 60-62). Barlow's treatment of manaakitanga (1994, p. 63-65) is also very narrowly focused, and lacks broader application of the concept to modern life. Likewise, Marsden (2003) defines mana in esoteric terms, linking it strongly with tapu (pp. 4, 40), but he is less concerned with its application in such situations as this thesis deals with.

There are several key aspects of tikanga Māori that could be considered in an adult reo Māori learning situation, but the main three I will focus on are manaakitanga, whanaungatanga and mana. Mead asserts that manaakitanga is the underlying basis of all tikanga; he defines it as "nurturing relationships, looking after people, and being very careful about how others are treated" (2003, p. 29). This seems an appropriate foundational principle for adult reo Māori learning too. The next key value is whanaungatanga (engaging together as a family—defined broadly), which once again focuses on relationships, usually in a whakapapa sense, but in the wider sense of a group working together in a close, caring, and mutually supportive way. One key aspect of whanaungatanga, according to Mead, is the mutual interplay between individuals expecting to be supported by the wider group, and the collective group in turn expecting the support of individuals within it (2003, p. 28) The term whanaungatanga also extends to people with whom people share experiences, becoming like family

through this (2003, p. 28); this is the most relevant meaning of the term whanaungatanga in most learning situations. The variation of this key idea most often heard is whakawhanaungatanga, which means to consciously bring about cohesiveness within a group by cultivating a family feeling; an effort is made to achieve this in most learning situations.

Mead also has separate sets of tikanga criteria for evaluating what he calls 'ngā ahi e ngiha mai nei'—the fires that flare up, or issues that arise in this changing world (2003, p. 335). He proposes applying what he calls the principles test (2003, p. 344); the issue is examined in the light of five key principles: whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, mana, noa—whether an idea is becoming normal or accepted, and finally tika—whether the proposed solution matches up overall with what feels right in a Māori setting. In the context of learner-centredness, and the capabilities approach, one could say that a strongly individualised approach is recognised in mainstream education circles in New Zealand, where learning is expected to be individualised to some extent, and in the wider education discourse in this country; in other words, the concepts are not completely foreign, and could be considered noa (more normal or accepted).

The other key concept for individuals in society—and it applies to individuals within a learning situation as well—is mana, for which the most relevant meanings from Williams' dictionary are 'authority, control', and 'influence, prestige, power' (Williams, 1975). Mead says that "Personal and group relationships are always mediated and guided by the high value placed upon mana" (p. 29). It is probably accurate to say that Māori society is acutely conscious of status, on its own terms; consequently, mana must be navigated carefully, and, as Mead points out, "as a general rule mana must be respected and public events should enhance the mana of participants"; furthermore, says Mead, "actions that diminish mana result in trouble" (2003, p. 30). In fact, mana is probably the term that applies most strongly in working out whether a learner-centred approach is the best way to operate in a Māori setting.

2.6 Combining the capabilities approach and tikanga Māori

Having ascertained the key relevant aspects of tikanga that appear to apply in adult reo Māori learning situations, these can now be set side by side with the adapted list of principles of the capabilities approach. First, it is probably fair to say that tikanga Māori are less concerned with what any given individual is able or free to do, and more concerned with the well-being of the collective group. It is also probably fair to say that they are less concerned with a person's dignity as a person or individual, and more concerned with dignity as Māori, or within the collective group. In fact, the main concept from tikanga Māori where there is likely to be a difference from the capabilities approach is that tikanga Māori tends to acknowledge the importance of the group rather than the individual. This does not mean that individuals do not matter; Mead firmly rejects this notion, claiming that there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary, and supporting Firth's assertion that a wide range of individual activities demonstrated that there was substantial room for individual action within Māori society (Firth 1959, p. 138, in Mead, 2003, p. 37). For his part, Firth (Firth & Tawney, 1959, p. 135, cited in Mead, 2003) claimed that writers such as Best and others placed too much stress on Māori collectivism, and specifically challenged Best's assertion that "In Māori society the individual could scarcely be termed a social unit, he was lost in the *whanau* or family group." (Best, 1924, p. 341, cited in Mead, 2003).

Mead also argues that Māori have become more individualised with the passage of time, acknowledging that "Māori have been increasingly affected by the western ethic of the individual…" (Mead, 2003, p. 37). He appears to accept that an increasing level of individualism is part of the influence of the wider world. Despite this, excessive individualism is still looked upon generally with some suspicion—it was certainly so regarded by several of the interview participants. This especially applies in the context of a group activity, and one such as learning and teaching te reo Māori which is so central to te ao Māori.

Table 6 (p. 56) sums up most aspects where tikanga Māori may differ from the capabilities approach. The most significant differences may be in No. 3 (Learners as an end, not a means) The cultural principle of putting the collective first may need the

corrective, more individualistic emphasis of the capabilities approach, even if it is done for a collective good—for the health of te reo Māori, or the benefit of the next generation, perhaps. There is a prominent view in the Māori world which holds that adults should learn te reo Māori principally to pass the language on to the next generation, rather than learning it for their own sakes. Belief in the importance of learning te reo Māori for the benefit of the Māori community and generations to come is strong, to the extent that Rātima's research (2013, p. 146-149) led him to propose 'social service theory' as a major motivational influence for adult learners. Furthermore, Chrisp (2016, personal communication) is adamant that learning the process of intergenerational transmission should be an integral part of adult reo Māori courses. This view, in which adult learners are seen primarily as a means to an end, is typified by the comment of Glenis Philip-Barbara, CEO of Te Taura Whiri, on Māori Language Day 2014, when she announced that the theme for 2015 would be 'Whāngaihia te reo ki ngā mātua' (Nourish the parents with the language). She stated that the principle aim was "to support the strengthening of the parents' language so that they can pass it on to their children." This aim is laudable in itself, and it may well be accepted, and even embraced by many parents, who often decide to learn te reo Māori when the arrival of children is imminent. However, if adult learners' personal needs and wants are met first, intergenerational transmission my well be more authentic and firmly grounded.

In No. 5 (Learners to have adult agency), the respective mana of learners and teachers needs to be worked through with considerable care and concern for all. To return to Mead's warnings in this regard; mana must be respected, public events should enhance the mana of participants—and actions that diminish mana can only cause trouble.

Normative principles: capabilities approach / tikanga Māori	
Capabilities approach	**Tikanga Māori**
Overarching principle: Well-being 'flourishing' Fully human functioning	Flourishing encouraged, within the context of strong sense of roles within society (e.g. limited formal speaking for women). Key ideas: mana, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga Having mana as a fully functioning learner/language user Having mana in terms of the language (full control in a full range of human functioning)
2. Dignity as a person	Dignity as a human regarded as important. Dignity related to whakapapa or as Māori may be considered more important. Strong sense of roles within society. Mana (status, standing) to be treated with care.
3. Learners as an end, not just a means	Strong collective sense; powerful obligations to future and previous generations. Expectation that members will serve society (whānau, hapū, iwi). Key ideas – whanaungatanga, manaakitanga. Respect/veneration of te reo Māori may mean the health of te reo Māori is the major focus. Also the need to focus on the mana of the individual learner.
4. Learners to have learner differences (including age) acknowledged and acted on	Learner differences acknowledged, but expectation of working within a wider setting; community interests come first Respect given to elders, but conditional to some extent on cultural knowledge and knowledge of te reo Māori. High respect given to people knowledgeable in te reo Māori, irrespective of age. Manaakitanga – caring for all learners. Develop the mana (power, capability) of all learners
5. Learners to have adult agency	Some adult agency encouraged, but within strong collective framework that may limit individual agency. Manaakitanga and whanaungatanga. May be tension between the mana of the learner and mana of the teacher.

6. Learners should be able to choose how much or little they wish to learn	Expectations may exist within the Māori community that people will learn te reo Māori, for the benefit of the reo itself, and the wider group (e.g. Tainui strategic plan for the iwi). Individual mana (right to choose) balanced with whanaungatanga, and manaakitanga (consideration of the needs of others, including future generations).

Table 6: Normative principles: capabilities approach / tikanga Māori

Normative Principles	
Capabilities approach	**Synthesis of capabilities approach with tikanga Māori ('immanent' approach)**
Overarching principle: Well-being 'flourishing' Fully human functioning	Promotion of flourishing, but with some variation of roles (e.g., limited formal speaking for women)
2. Dignity as a person	Dignity as human important; in te ao Māori, dignity related to whakapapa or as Māori may be considered more important. Capabilities approach may supply corrective influence.
3. Learner as an end, not just a means	"Learner as an end" valued, but less highly; high willingness amongst Māori to serve the wider community, especially for the benefit of future generations. May need more emphasis on 'Learners as an end' in a Māori setting. Possible culturally appropriate compromise: to treat learners as an end to achieve the more distant goal (the health and flourishing of te reo Māori). The health of te reo Māori may be regarded as the aim, rather than full functioning of the language user; capabilities principles asserts the importance of the individual.
4 Learners to have learner differences (including age) acknowledged and acted on	Learner differences need to be acknowledged, but with an expectation of compromise in the interests of working within a wider setting. Learning should preserve adults' dignity, including age-related respect - a fundamental principle. Capabilities principles provide a corrective for this.
5. Learners to have adult agency	Adult agency is important, as individual and as part of a group; however, adults can also expect to have their agency limited as they are part of a bigger group. Dynamic / flexible relationship between mana of learner and mana of teacher. May be tension / complexity.
6. Learners should be able to choose how much or little they wish to learn	Learners should be able to be selective about what they learn; however, wider legitimate societal pressures may apply (e.g. iwi aim for high level of involvement with te reo Māori)

Table 7: Normative principles: capabilities approach/synthesis with tikanga Māori ('immanent' approach)

In this table, synthesis of the capabilities approach with tikanga Māori becomes the focus. Both are important components in the final synthesis, but one side may provide a 'corrective' influence. The capabilities approach is the main model being proposed here, so its tenets could be expected to remain reasonably intact, while still being influenced by tikanga Māori. The tension between the capabilities approach and tikanga Māori is perhaps most evident in No. 3 (Learner as an end, not just a means). No. 5 and No. 6 also provide examples of such tension, and possible resolutions.

2.7 My own process of conscientisation and reflection

The next section deals with my own thought processes and reflection during the course of the research project, the effect these processes had on the research, and provides an explanation for why the model of analytic auto-ethnography is used in this thesis.

My own processes of conscientisation and reflection upon my experience have affected my research process, the way I participated in the interview process, and my analysis of the data, so it seems necessary to articulate these. A process of conscientisation occurred in me when I began to examine my own learning experience, and to compare it with a more learner-centred model; this process continued to develop through the process of research. It began with dissatisfaction, brought about by observing that the learning contexts I was in seemed to pay little regard to me as an individual and as someone different from many of those younger learners (mostly young Māori) with whom I was sharing classes. This questioning meant adopting a more socio-cultural or even political stance to my language learning, rather than focusing primarily on pedagogical aspects. I changed, and my thinking about myself changed; I became more questioning and more assertive during the research process. As I became more conscious of my own disempowerment as a learner, I responded by becoming more assertive, and by declaring myself to be a reo Māori speaker rather than a reo Māori learner. I also made a conscious decision to declare myself significant as a learner, and not to see myself as someone on the margins just because I was not Māori myself.

The concept of learner-centredness not only encouraged me to frame my own experience as important and worthy of consideration, but also to take one step further, and frame myself as a full participant in reo Māori learning—not as a person

marginalised because I was Pākehā. This was in fact my de facto position when I was interviewing the participants, as I discussed their reo Māori learning and teaching with them as a learner and teacher of many years standing—but in terms of theorising, I had always set myself apart as someone with only honorary status as a reo Māori learner. However, in the later stages of the project when I was writing up the thesis, I felt emboldened to assert my own status as a full participant—not only in the teaching and learning of te reo Māori, but also, in my own small way, in the revitalization of the language. I am aware that hearing Pākehā talking of being 'marginalised' raises the hackles of many Māori, and I acknowledge that my situation is in no way equivalent to the marginalization Māori as a group and as individuals undergo in New Zealand society; however, the term relates accurately to how a learner such as myself can experience learning te reo, and it takes a certain assertion of agency to deal with it.

2.8 Analytic auto-ethnography

This thesis has auto-ethnographic elements, and I identify most strongly with an analytic approach to auto-ethnography. Anderson describes analytic auto-ethnography as combining a fully engaged auto-ethnographic approach—which involves full participation with the studied group—along with commitment to "an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena" (p. 375). He sets this off against a more introspective, more qualitative approach.

The only problematic element here is whether a Pākehā learner of te reo Māori can be said to have full participation with the studied group, and be engaged in the fullest sense. I have written briefly in the preface about my extensive experience as a learner and teacher of te reo Māori, and when I conducted the interviews, I approached them as an adult learner of te reo Māori, and made it quite clear that I was Pākehā; participants were generally known to me in some way prior to the interview, and only one said that he had not expected an older Pākehā to be turning up to conduct the interview. I had experienced many—if not most—of the learning contexts the interviewees had taken part in, to some degree at least, and had often had similar experiences to them, both positive and negative. None of the Māori participants showed any reticence to be

involved or to share their experiences or feelings with me, even though they did at times point out that some of my ideas might not sit comfortably in the Māori world.

Despite the ready acceptance shown to me by both the learners and teachers I interviewed, it took some time for me to fully identify with 'analytic auto-ethnography' and to accept that I was 'fully engaged'; finally doing so was part of the conscientisation process. In terms of the analytic aspect, I was concerned that I maintained an analytic approach, even though the interviews are strongly informed by my own experience. I did actively compare my own experience with that of the participants where appropriate during the interviews, but I took care to ensure that my own opinions did not have undue influence on the research; besides, the interviewees were all adults with strongly held opinions, and they felt free to disagree with me, and did so at times. Consequently, I believe I have satisfied both key aspects of the term 'analytic auto-ethnography'. The main way I have introduced elements of my own learning is as part of the dialogue with participants within the interviews. I systematically wrote answers of my own to the questions I put to the other learner participants after I had completed all the interviews, as I needed to ensure I had all my (quite lengthy) experience at the forefront of my thinking while I was analysing the responses of others. Interviewing myself also sharpened my focus on the different aspects of my learning experience.

2.9 Selection of participants

I initially sought participants amongst people I knew (one teacher and three learners), then through advertising more widely at the University of Otago, and other learning institutions around the country, and through advertising on a Facebook page called 'Te Mana o te Reo Māori'. One participant (a teacher) offered to take part after hearing me speak at a conference on reo-Māori revitalization; I asked another teacher to participate after hearing her speak at the same conference. Yet another teacher contacted me after I advertised on Facebook; I had previously commented frequently on her blog (on te reo Māori) and she believed it was only right to reciprocate the support she had received. Two participants (learners) contacted me after seeing the advertisement on Facebook, and one of those suggested to a friend that he contact me as well; I interviewed all

three. The last four participants responded to another request for participants on the Facebook page 'Te Mana o te Reo Māori'. One of these was interviewed as a learner, but she was also a teacher, and it became clear that her thinking about teaching was a predominant feature of the interview; I finally decided to include her amongst the teachers. I had made arrangements to interview a Kura Reo teacher, but this interview did not go ahead. One of the teachers had taught one of the learners; I have not given further details in this thesis to preserve both participants' anonymity.

I originally called for adult learners over the age of 20, but although some younger learners originally agreed to participate, they all pulled out for various reasons. As it turned out, most learner participants were in their forties, several were in their thirties, or fifties and one was sixty. Interestingly, three of the teachers were in their twenties. I tried to achieve a balance of males and females in the learner group, but was less concerned to get such a balance in the teachers.

The participants were generally well educated; most of the learners had tertiary or professional qualifications. The Māori participants certainly had higher education levels than the Māori population overall, so they can not be taken as representative of the Māori population at large, or even of adult Māori learners of te reo Māori.

2.10 Conduct of the interviews

For my first few interviews (Mikaere, Katarina, Hēni and Tīmoti, Margaret and Amīria), I found myself adopting a fairly free-flowing interview style; my curiosity about the different learning experiences and learning contexts of my learners led me to follow aspects of their learning that were intriguing, but not strictly related to my topic. In the two interviews which followed (with Irihāpeti and Hera), I followed the questions more rigorously while still maintaining an exploratory approach. For several of the later interviews (with Pita, Amy, Jack, Brian and Cathy), I provided copies of the questions, and the participants worked systematically through them. The last two interviews (with Hine and Mere) were more free-flowing, as each of these interviewees had a number of learning experiences which were outside the range I had previously encountered. Each interview consisted of a genuine conversation about the learning

and/or teaching process, with me comparing my experience where appropriate. As I became more informed about the different learning contexts, some of my questions became more focused than they had been in the first few interviews.

Most of the interviews were conducted in English, although they all began with mihimihi (an exchange of greetings in te reo Māori). I decided to conduct my interview with Irihāpeti in Māori—mainly because I had first encountered her speaking at a conference, delivering her speech in te reo Māori. I also regarded it as a challenge which I was keen to take up. This was a face-to-face interview, and it went well; I was satisfied that I understood what she was saying, and that the flow of the conversation made it clear that there was genuine conversation and exchange of ideas going on. We did switch to English for a few sentences to clarify some aspects of learner-centredness. Emboldened by this, I conducted my next interview (with Hera) in te reo Māori for the most part. However, Hera switched to English about two-thirds of the way through, and we mainly stayed in Māori for the rest of the interview. I do not believe too much significance should be attached to the change to English, as it often occurs between speakers of te reo Māori. I am a reasonably competent speaker of te reo Māori, and it was quite natural to me to conduct these two interviews in Māori, particularly as I was confident that both women would be quite relaxed about it. I conducted the other interviews in English. The main reason for this was ease of communication. In many cases I did so because I was uncertain of the language proficiency of the participants, but also because I was going to write the thesis in English. As it is, I am quite confident that I have translated the words of Irihāpeti and Hera correctly (I only translated parts that I was quoting).

I did most of the transcription myself, and used NVivo 10 to code the interviews. I initially coded for the interview questions, then created folders for: institutions, reo aspects, individual aspects, learning, teaching, resources, practicality of learner-centredness, societal contexts, and quotations. I returned to NVivo to code again for aspects relevant to the capabilities approach, although I found that I had already identified most of the relevant material within the interviews. After analysing the interviews, I wrote summaries of the participants' responses, broadly grouped into their experience as learners and/or teachers (including the learning experience of the

teachers), the extent to which elements of learner-centredness could be discerned in their learning or teaching, and then their responses to some learner-centred concepts.

I had by now determined that I would adopt the model of critical social science, as espoused by Sayer, but it was only when I was writing the first draft of the thesis that I realised more fully the theoretical power of the capabilities approach (see also 2.3, p. 31). It appeared to provide sound, universalist norms to analyse the present learning and teaching situation for adults, and to evaluate the potential worth of change to a different, more learner-centred approach. This required re-visiting the three main chapters that provided details about the learners' and teachers' responses in the interviews, and the discussion and specific proposals that followed. However, this process provided coherence and a clearer theoretical framework than had existed before—and one that I believed I could defend with integrity. The principal disadvantage of this late espousal of a theoretical framework was that my participants were unaware that their interviews were going to be analysed through the capabilities approach. I did not seriously consider going back to them and broaching the subject with them at that late stage; they had already had to become familiar with the concept of learner-centredness, and it would have added another layer of complication to the project.

I then considered together the literature, the interview responses, and information about current adult reo Māori learning contexts, to work out what were likely to be the possible benefits or problems of a learner-centred approach in adult learning and teaching of te reo Māori. Finally, having received a reasonably positive response to learner-centred concepts, I went on to suggest some general principles for implementation, and to draft proposals for how learner-centredness could be implemented in the university setting and kura reo—the two learning contexts I know best—and in informal learning. Finally, I made suggestions for how the concept of learner-centredness in adult reo Māori learning could be explored further.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an outline of the research project, and outlined my epistemology and the reservations I have about Kaupapa Māori theory as an appropriate methodology or set of principles. The chapter went on to explain my choice of Sayer's version of critical social science as an approach, and my choice of Nussbaum's normative principles (based on the capabilities approach) as a basis for analysing the present reality of adult reo Māori teaching and learning, and the more learner-centred change I proposed. This was followed by presentation of adapted principles from Nussbaum, set against principles of tikanga Māori, to provide a clear set of criteria by which to measure the essential 'rightness' (or otherwise) of a learner-centred approach. Following on from this was an explanation of how these principles were arrived at, then an explanation of my own process of conscientisation and its effect on the research project. This led into an explanation of why the model of analytic-autoethnography fits the level of intervention I have carried out in the research, particularly in the interviewing process. The chapter finished with a brief outline of the process I followed in conducting the research itself—recruitment of participants, the interview process, and the process of dealing with the data.

The next chapter provides an outline of the main learning contexts in which the participants learnt te reo Māori.

Chapter 3: Contexts for learning

3.1 Introduction

This chapter very briefly explains about the main contexts in which adults in this project learnt te reo Māori as a second language. It begins with a brief explanation of how te reo Māori is taught in preschools, primary schools and secondary schools, and continues with an outline of the main characteristics of four main adult reo Māori learning contexts that the interview participants have experienced: university, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, Te Ataarangi, and Kura Reo. Although the reo Māori courses at different universities have some features in common, I provide some detail about how they differ as well. In this chapter I also briefly outline the involvement of interview participants in the particular learning contexts they engaged in; more specific detail is provided about learner and teacher experiences in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Although the capabilities approach, informed by tikanga Māori, is used as the main framework to analyse aspects of the teaching and learning experience of the participants, most analysis of this kind will be left until the individual participants' experiences and responses are dealt with in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, rather than being applied to the learning contexts at this stage.

Information about the various institutions' reo Māori courses has been taken from the relevant websites, along with personal communication (usually via email) with the person in charge of each institution's reo Māori programme.

3.2 Preschool and school

Preschools and kindergartens in New Zealand are expected to be bi-cultural and to teach children some reo Māori and to engage them in Māori cultural activities (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2017, p. 2). Kōhanga Reo (Māori immersion preschools) were initiated in 1982 as part of the effort to revitalize te reo Māori, but only ever catered to a minority of Māori children (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, p. 155, p. 159, Fig 5.3). At the time the two oldest participants in this study went to preschool or primary school, there were no reo Māori immersion preschools; one participant (a

teacher in her late 20s) did attend kōhanga reo, but did not go on to Māori immersion primary or secondary school.

3.3 Primary school

The 'Treaty of Waitangi' principle of the New Zealand curriculum (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 9) "acknowledges the bi-cultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand," and affirms that "all students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga." It should be noted that this document applies to both primary and secondary schools. In practice, most New Zealand children in mainstream primary schools learn a little reo Māori, most often simple greetings, colours, numbers, and some other key words. Depending on the school and its ethnic makeup, pupils may have learnt some songs, action songs, poi and haka, as well as myths and legends; one learner participant spoke fondly of memories of learning a little reo Māori through Māori cultural activities at primary school. Resources are available online and in print from the Ministry of Education to assist teachers to teach a good deal of reo Māori (http://tereomaori.tki.org.nz/Reo-Maori-resources). However, few mainstream primary schools would attempt to teach any substantial amount of conversational language. Kura kaupapa (Māori immersion primary schools) began in 1985, to cater for children who were emerging from kōhanga reo (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, p. 156); however, one of the participants in this study attended kura kaupapa.

3.4 Secondary schools

Te reo Māori is currently offered as a separate subject in many if not most high schools in New Zealand, but when this study's participants were at school, only schools with a substantial Māori population offered te reo Māori as a subject. I have some personal knowledge of the issues that affect success or otherwise of teaching and learning of te reo Māori in high schools, having been a reo Māori teacher in mainstream secondary schools from 2003 to 2010, and involved at different times as secretary and chairperson of a local Māori teachers' group. Where I taught, in Dunedin, hours of teaching and the extent of the programme offered in the first two years of high school varied considerably from school to school, and by the time students were due to sit external

exams in te reo Māori (usually with four hours a week tuition time in the third year of secondary schooling), many had only been exposed to a comparatively small amount of teaching on the language, and consequently do not do well in the subject. The quality of teachers and teaching was also often quite uneven, and teachers often struggled to find really relevant material for young teenagers with modest language skills. Nock (2013) presents a similarly negative picture of reo Māori teaching and learning in high schools. Among other things, she found inadequacies in teacher training, and expressed concern about inadequacy of resources, and lack of genuine communicative focus in much reo Māori teaching in high schools (Nock, 2013, pp. iii, iv). It is interesting to note that, although four of the five teacher participants and one learner studied te reo Māori in high school, all except one said that in retrospect they believed they had not learnt a great deal during that time.

3.5 Adult learning contexts

There are a number of ways adults can learn te reo Māori in New Zealand, and the participants in this project had taken part in most of them during their learning journeys. This breadth of choice applies mainly to urban centres; there is less choice available in provincial centres, small towns and country areas. Details of courses are readily available on the institutions' websites, so I have kept referencing minimal for current practice in this chapter.

The main settings for adult learning of te reo Māori are: mainstream universities; Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWoA); Te Ataarangi; kura reo; various iwi-based schools or Wānanga; and school night-classes. There is also a large variety of material now available online to support learners; the most notable is *Te Whanake,* the set of resources created, assembled and put online (http://www.tewhanake.maori.nz/) in recent years by John Moorfield to support his textbooks, which have been a mainstay of adult reo Māori learning since the first book, *Te Kākano*, came out in 1987.

One significant difference between the learning institutions is cost. Most universities charge the normal fees for a humanities course. For example, a domestic student studying the language for a year at the University of Otago (two papers) would have

paid $1703.70 in 2016. By contrast, the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) offers beginner and intermediate papers in te reo Māori free of charge. It does so because it is "committed to building an inclusive Aotearoa, and in recognition of the value of te reo Māori" (AUT, 2018). TWoA also offers classes in te reo Māori free of charge, as part of its more general commitment to "maintain a low- or no-fees approach to eliminate financial barriers to engagement," according to a BERL report (2014, p. 18) for Te Tauihu o Ngā Wānanga, the umbrella organization for Wānanga Māori. Students at TWoA also receive a generous supply of free resources such as workbooks, dictionaries, DVDs and CDs, and even items such as digital recorders and tablets.

The largest part of the funding for universities and wānanga (such as TWoA) come from the Student Achievement Component (SAC); this funding goes towards the direct cost of teaching and other costs, and is based on student numbers (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 6). It is likely that Wānanga such as TWoA have lower overheads, with lower salaries, lower building costs, and less requirement for research, and are in a better position to get by on SAC funding rather than relying on fees. Te Ataarangi maintains financial independence from the Government, so either charges fees, asks for koha (donations), or provides courses free of charge (see further detail in 3.5.3).

3.5.1 Universities

New Zealand universities have been slow to accept te reo Māori, although the situation is very different now, with complete reo Māori programmes in all New Zealand universities. In 1926 the University of New Zealand, under the urging of Āpirana Ngata, agreed to accept te reo Māori as a degree subject, but in fact this decision was not implemented (Walker, 2014a). The first reo Māori programme at a New Zealand university was at the University of Auckland in 1951, when Bruce Biggs was appointed as a lecturer. There was some resistance to te reo Māori from the professor of French at the time, because he did not consider there was a substantial literature to study—an assertion that Biggs was swift to refute (Walker, 2014b). Classes in te reo Māori did not begin at Victoria University until 1965 (Walker, 2014c). Although the University of Otago ran classes through the Department of University extension from 1957 on, reo Māori classes did not begin in the main university until 1981, and it was not until 1989 that 200-level papers were offered, with a full degree programme to 300 level achieved

the following year (Blackman, 2015; University of Otago, 2016). However, universities (along with school night classes) have gone on to become one of the mainstays of reo Māori teaching for adults since the 1970s. They offer a number of benefits to learners, including a certain academic rigour, credit towards degrees, and modest contact hour requirements (most university reo Māori papers have two two-hour lectures a week, with some tutorial time on top of that). Several universities base their curriculum on a comprehensive set of resources called *Te Whanake*. This consists of a set of Māori language learning textbooks, study guides, podcasts containing all the exercises and activities of the four textbooks of *Te Whanake*, teacher manuals, and a Māori dictionary for learners and teachers. The programme is based on a set of four textbooks: *Te Kākano* (the seed), *Te Pihinga* (the young plant), *Te Māhuri* (the sapling), and *Te Kōhure* (the young tree).

There is considerable variation how this programme is taught, even within individual universities. At the University of Otago, for instance, different lecturers teach different levels from year to year, and each lecturer brings his or her own approach to the course. Complete beginners start with an introductory one-semester course that covers the material in the first three chapters of *Te Kākano*; from there they can progress to a full-year course that covers the rest of the material in *Te Kākano*. They can then proceed to a second-year course based on *Te Pihinga*, followed by two more years based on *Te Māhuri*, then *Te Kōhure* *(http://www.otago.ac.nz/te-tumu/study/maori-studies/index.html).* Other universities structure these courses differently: Waikato University (https://www.waikato.ac.nz/study/subjects/maori-language-te-reo-maori) and AUT (http://www.aut.ac.nz/study-at-aut/study-areas/te-ara-poutama/qualifications/te-reo-maori), for example, offer *Te Kōhure* in the second semester of the third year.

Two of the learner participants and one teacher of this project agreed that a university programme based on *Te Whanake* can be quite challenging for second-language learners; I certainly found it so myself, especially at the level of *Te Māhuri* and *Te Kōhure*, the third- and fourth-year programmes at the University of Otago. Many learners flounder at the start of the second full year (usually based on *Te Pihinga*), after which the programmes are generally taught only or mainly in te reo Māori. Interview participants also observed that there was a high dropout rate near the beginning of the

second-year course, as learners struggled with the step to full immersion in te reo Māori.

The situation for adult second-language learners in universities has also been complicated in recent years by the presence of large numbers of students in these classes who are effectively first-language speakers, having attended kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa and wharekura, even if the grammar and syntax of these students may not be as technically correct as their teachers would wish. (Three learner participants and one teacher raised this as an issue in their interviews.) Second-language university students, once they get to intermediate classes, now find themselves in classes where the majority of the class may have considerable proficiency, affecting the level of comfort these learners experience in class. It also makes it difficult for teachers to decide an appropriate pace for classes, and has implications for the extent to which second-language learners can expect assistance. The presence of learners with a higher expectation of full immersion also presents difficulties for using English to assist with explaining things to less proficient learners, as the more fluent learners can be more averse to the use of English (Tawhara, 2015). This situation is being partly eased by the fact that universities appear to be increasingly allowing learners to enter the programme at a level that lecturers or course coordinators deem appropriate, rather than expecting all to go through the full *Te Whanake* programme. For example, the University of Otago offers recognition of prior learning, and students can be credited with papers at the level of *Te Kākano*. The University of Otago has also attempted to partially address the sometimes uneasy relationship between students with different levels of reo Māori competence by instituting sessions where students across different year levels interact together, and the more confident students interact with the less confident (Megan Ellison, 2018, personal communication).

In this project, four of the five teacher participants had completed university courses, and two had gone on to postgraduate study in te reo Māori, while six of the ten learner participants had some experience of learning te reo Māori at university (three had completed degrees with a major in te reo Māori). It is interesting to observe that two of the learners repeated *Te Pihinga* (the second of three main levels of *Te Whanake*) after

a gap of several years, as they believed their language proficiency had slipped considerably in that time.

Three universities attended by participants in this study base their courses on *Te Whanake*, the resources developed by John Moorfield. In one university, quite different approaches were taken in year two and year three of the course; although both years could be described as immersion approaches (rūmaki), one teacher favoured a strongly aural approach, while the other preferred a more balanced use of different modes.

Several spoke of the academic rigour of the university approach, usually approvingly, but several also lamented the pressure they felt in the system, and the feeling that it was more difficult to develop whakawhanaungatanga (warm relationships, with a 'whānau' feeling) in the university (with the exception of one person who experienced a full year immersion programme in a university). The participants who attended university classes did so from the early 1980s to 2015.

The following section briefly describes the reo Māori programme at each of the New Zealand universities, with the main focus being on distinctive features of each university, and any available information about how the programmes are run. The reo Māori programme at the University of Otago has already been briefly described in the previous section of this chapter.

3.5.1.1 University of Waikato

One distinguishing feature of the University of Waikato is *Te Tohu Paetahi*, a total immersion Māori language programme, begun in 1991 in response to concerns that the regular but limited hours available to students majoring in te reo Māori for a Bachelor's degree did not really enable them to reach a high enough standard to make a significant difference to the overall picture of language retention and revitalization (http://www.waikato.ac.nz/fmis/study/te-tohu-paetahi). *Te Tohu Paetahi*'s key difference to a usual degree is that in their first year of study, students are required to take six compulsory reo Māori papers, and study te reo Māori Monday to Friday from 9am to 3pm. They may also do a number of papers in the second and third years in which te reo Māori is the medium of teaching.

Other reo Māori papers at Waikato use *Te Whanake* as the key resource, and lecturers have a certain amount of latitude as to how they use the material. Waikato is also well known for promoting a more communicative approach (especially Nock, 2014). Nock has criticized the *Te Kākano* resources (2014, p. 159-173) but still uses them, presumably combined with a more communicative approach.

3.5.1.2 Victoria University

As mentioned earlier, the reo Māori programme at Victoria University (https://www.victoria.ac.nz/explore/study-areas/te-reo-maori/study) is not based on *Te Whanake.* The university uses their own set of teaching notes, passed on by a series of teachers who were highly regarded in the Māori world. According to Professor Rawinia Higgins (personal communication), there has been discussion in the past about using *Te Whanake*, but the staff considered they were well served by the resources they have. Student material is made available in printed form and on Blackboard (a virtual learning environment). It is interesting to observe that from Stage 2 on, the only set textbook used at Victoria is an edited collection of essays about the state of the Māori language and the ongoing project of revitalization—most of it written in English (Higgins, Rewi, & Olsen-Reeder, 2014). This places the students' language learning firmly within a dynamic contemporary social, political and linguistic context. Victoria also addresses a need expressed by some participants in this project by providing a course on the language of karanga and whaikōrero.

3.5.1.3 Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

The most notable difference between AUT and the other universities (as mentioned in 3.5) is the fact that AUT charges no fees for reo Māori programmes at beginner and intermediate level (all the papers up to and including *Te Pihinga*). This policy also applies to international students, and perhaps as a result, AUT have a very high rate of uptake for beginner programmes such as *Te Kākano*. In terms of the use of English in teaching, the first of the advanced courses (*Te Māhuri 1*) allows for about 20% of class time to be conducted in English, but classes that follow are conducted entirely in Māori. The course description says that at AUT, the second part of *Te Māhuri* is 'delivered online with supporting lectures and tutorials'. John Moorfield, the developer of *Te Whanake,* was until recently based at AUT (as Professor of Māori in Māori and

Indigenous Development), and as could be expected, *Te Whanake* is the basis of the courses there.

3.5.1.4 University of Auckland

Much of the information which follows was provided in an email by Professor Margaret Mutu (personal communication, 2016). The University of Auckland divides the two main papers taught at any given level into 'Spoken Māori' and 'Written Māori'(http://www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/subjects-and-courses/maori-studies.html). They do not use the *Te Whanake* resources, preferring to use those they designed and update themselves (Margaret Mutu, personal communication, 2016). For the first paper of the 'Spoken Māori' course (MĀORI 103), students are provided with weekly worksheets that are updated yearly to ensure relevance. For the next oral paper, MĀORI 203, the lecturer prepares her own materials and ensures language use is contemporary. A similar pattern is followed for MĀORI 302, for which the lecturer prepares all the materials, drawing from a wide range of sources.

The first course in written Māori uses a course workbook written by Pat Hōhepa, revised by Margaret Mutu and further revised by Arapera Ngaha. Dictations and in-class exercises are compiled for each week and focus on current events in the Māori world. For the second part of the written course (MĀORI 201) they use a workbook written initially by Bruce Biggs (as far as staff are aware) and adapted by Margaret Mutu, Deanne Wilson and Arapera Ngaha. Apart from adaptations to fit changing timeframes for the course, the exemplars, dictation and translation materials have also been varied to ensure that the material is contemporary. For the third part of the written course (MĀORI 301), students work from a workbook compiled by Margaret Mutu, and on the *Waka Huia* television series and Māori Television broadcasts. They also use a prescribed text called *Te Whānau Moana – ngā Kaupapa me ngā Tikanga (*Mutu and Matiu, 2003), which is used for recording and analysis of oral traditions.

The university also has several post-graduate courses relating to te reo, each of which each draws on a wide range of resources.

3.5.2 Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWoA)

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWoA) was originally founded—in their own words—"to "provide training and education for those who were being failed by the mainstream education system" (Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, 2016). TWoA began in 1983 at secondary level, gradually took on tertiary training, and was finally accorded Wānanga status in 1993 (ibid). Classes through Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWoA) have become a popular means of adult learners entering te reo Māori learning; details about the courses are available on the TWoA website (https://www.twoa.ac.nz/Nga-Akoranga-Our-Programmes/Te-Reo-Maori-Maori-Language). The classes are firmly based in Māori cultural practice, and, compared with university, generally have a more relaxed atmosphere, less academic rigour in the assessments, and more opportunity for interpersonal communication. The courses do require a considerable time commitment, with a three-hour class every week for 36 weeks, and eight weekends spent on noho marae. The beginner level course is a three-year programme called Te Ara Reo, and is designed to take learners from the beginner stage to intermediate level. This course generally has one three-hour evening class a week during term time (there may be two evening classes a week in the third year), and eight noho marae. The main programmes that follow Te Ara Reo are Te Pūtaketanga (o te Reo), Te Aupikitanga (ki te Reo Kairangi), and Te Pīnakitanga (ki te Reo Kairangi). They are commonly known by their shortened names, and follow a similar pattern of evening classes and noho marae—except for Te Pīnakitanga, which consists of noho marae only. In the New Zealand educational framework, Te Pūtaketanga is at Certificate level (level 4) and Te Aupikitanga is at Diploma level (level 6). To give some comparison with the intensity of study at university, by the time learners have completed the second year of Te Ara Reo (the second of two years at one night per week, with some weekend noho marae included), one would expect them to be at a similar level to someone who had completed a course based on *Te Kākano.*

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa have developed their own resources, characterized by a lively approach, designed to make learning enjoyable; I have had the opportunity to examine some of these resources. TWoA refer to the learning method these materials are based on as Ako Whakatere, or accelerated learning (Adamski, 2014). Written resources for the first two years of Te Ara Reo are usually very colourful, set out like primary school

learning material, and built around brief dialogues called 'scripts'. These are often quite silly (one learner participant found them more annoying than entertaining), but the silliness is supposed to make them striking, and thus memorable. The scripts are accompanied by illustrations that map the conversation along a timeline with bold and amusing line drawings (called 'mind-maps' in this programme). Learners take part in various repeated activities to reinforce their learning, in a manner designed to be enjoyable.

Most of the participants had some experience of learning te reo Māori through TWoA. For those who had attended both university courses and TWoA courses, much of the discussion about satisfaction with the learning experience centred around a comparison between these two main systems. Three participants who initially learnt through the university system went on in recent years to the more advanced TWoA courses, Te Aupikitanga and Te Pīnakitanga, even though their university learning had been at as high a level if not higher. All three already had quite high proficiency in Māori from their university study, and all three spoke highly of the experience of doing the TWoA course, especially in terms of promoting confidence in speaking te reo Māori. One had earlier emerged from university study still quite shy about speaking te reo Māori, but reached a different level of proficiency through completing Te Aupikitanga and Te Pīnakitanga. Another participant had a similar experience, doing Te Pihinga at university, then progressing through the three years of Te Ara Reo (the beginners' course). This participant gained considerable confidence as a reo Māori speaker as a result. It is worth noting that another participant, who recently completed university courses in te reo Māori to stage 3 level, intended to go to TWoA courses at next year, based on the positive reports from other people of developing confidence in speaking and experiencing whanaungatanga.

3.5.3 Te Ataarangi

Te Ataarangi uses a language learning method based on Cattegno's silent way (Te Ataarangi, 2016), initiated and developed by Dame Kāterina Mataira, a Māori writer and teacher (Mataira, 1980; Te Ataarangi, 2016); details of courses are available on their website (http://teataarangi.org.nz/?q=speak-maori). The method uses coloured Cuisenaire rods (called 'rākau' or sticks in te reo Māori) to support language learning.

Te Ataarangi is a community-based programme for adult Māori language learning, designed to be portable and to be used in homes and on marae; this was mainly because many adult Māori had negative experiences in mainstream educational institutions. Te Ataarangi comprises 10 independently-operating regions, and processes may vary from region to region. Some courses are run without fees, others are run on a koha (donation) basis. However, for a 36 week course in one major city in 2017, with one three-hour class per week and extra hui or noho marae included, participants were expected to pay a basic fee of $450, with some extra costs for noho mare and transport (personal communication, Makere Roa, Te Ataarangi, 2018).

The teaching process used in Te Ataarangi was designed to enable native speakers to begin teaching te reo Māori with very little training. Many people have benefited from this approach to learning te reo Māori, and the method is regarded with pride and affection in the Māori world as a genuine Māori initiative that played a major role in the revitalization of te reo Māori. The organization claims to have supported more than 50,000 people to speak Māori in homes and communities since it started in 1979 (Te Ataarangi, 2016). Te Ataarangi was specifically designed to meet the perceived needs of adult Māori learners, so it could be called student-centred, if not really learner-centred. It was designed to get adults speaking the language straight away, and is an informal, gently paced approach with a strong focus on oral communication and listening. Despite these advantages, some learners find that strong focus on oral communication is at the expensive of possible beneficial input from reading and writing, and say that the method does not suit them.

Several participants had spent time learning with Te Ataarangi. One teacher was an early convert to the method, embraced it wholeheartedly, and is employed as a Te Ataarangi teacher. One learner learnt much of her reo through the method, under the guidance of a nationally known teacher. She did however find the method of learning very difficult to come to grips with at first. Another learner tried the method and is adamant that it does not work for her, believing that she needs to see words as well as hear them to really retain them.

3.5.4 Kura Reo Whakapakari Reo (Kura Reo)

Kura Reo, as they are more generally known, are another key learning context for improving the quality of language of more competent learners (Te Taura Whiri, 2015). Kura Reo were initiated in 1989, and are national events run by regional providers. They are typically run at marae or at a learning institution in the first week of the school holidays, and generally begin on Sunday afternoon, and finish on the following Thursday evening. Classes run for four full days, with two four-hour classes each day. Nationally known experts in te reo Māori run the classes, and Kura Reo attract reo Māori learners of all ages from all over the country. Learners vary a great deal in competence, from people with modest proficiency to extremely competent speakers; they are streamed in groups in order of competence, initially on the basis of a brief conversation with a teacher, or more usually on the basis of being known by the teachers (many learners attend several Kura Reo each year). In recent years there have been two sections in Kura Reo. The first is Kura Whakapakari Reo, for intermediate to advanced learners who are used to immersion settings. The second is Te Kuhunga ki te Reo (Getting into the language), which is designed for beginners, and is facilitated separately, sometimes by Te Ataarangi. There is a set programme of classes, with groups rotating to each class, covering the same material but at different language levels. Students do duties together, and perform functions such as leading karakia at certain times of the day. Participants pay fees to attend Kura Reo; for the 2016 Kura Reo ki Rotorua, for example, fees were $320 (employer sponsored), $280 (individual), and $250 (university student or secondary student). Funding for Kura Reo mainly comes from 'Mā Te Reo', a contestable fund administered by Te Taura Whiri until 2017, then by Te Mātāwai (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, 2016).

Certain topics (or variants of them) are generally included in the programme: te wetewete reo (grammar and syntax, so described in the programme), ngā kīwaha (idioms), te whakamāori (translating into Māori), te whakapākehā (translating into English), te aroā (comprehension), and tuhituhi (writing). Other topics may vary from one Kura Reo to the next; for example, mahere reo (language planning), ngā whetū (astronomy), and he reo whakaari (drama) have featured in recent Kura Reo. Learners are provided with a book containing the materials to be studied, but the level of difficulty is high, and learners are exposed to a great deal of new vocabulary and

challenging material in a short time; correct answers are not systematically provided at the end, and I personally have found the books difficult to return to after a period of time.

Many learners find Kura Reo daunting, at least at first (three participants in this project had unpleasant or difficult experiences initially), and the style of learning and intensity of the programmes does not suit everyone; one teacher in this project disapproved of the general tone and manner of teaching, even though she appreciated the challenge of participating. On the other hand, two of the teachers who have attended Kura Reo were very positive about them, and the three learners who had difficult or unpleasant experiences all later returned to Kura Reo and had better experiences; one has become a regular attender, enjoying both the challenge and the increasing companionship with other learners. Furthermore, one learner with limited speaking proficiency enjoyed the specialised treatment that the lowest group received in a recent Kura Reo.

3.5.5   Other learning contexts

There are a number of other contexts where adults can learn te reo Māori, Perhaps the most notable is Te Wānanga o Raukawa, founded in 1981 (https://www.wananga.com/). Hana O'Regan points to the powerful influence of this iwi wānanga and its language immersion programmes, and the inspiration they gave to other iwi who wanted to reclaim their own reo (O'Regan, 2012, p. 310). There are a wide range of other institutions throughout the country, from Ara, Whitireia Polytechnic, Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, the University of Canterbury, and Massey University. At the most advanced level, Te Panekiretanga takes students by invitation only and develops their reo Māori to a high degree of excellence; one of the participants in this study aspired to being accepted in this programme.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has summarised the main features of the main learning contexts in which participants in this project learnt te reo Māori. Each learning context has its own strong points, and its disadvantages for learners. University provides some academic rigour, and requires only a comparatively short time commitment for lectures or classes, but

can be academically and emotionally demanding, and lack a feeling of whanaungatanga. TWoA provides a more relaxed environment and more opportunities to develop conversational skills, but the time commitment is considerable, and the courses do not suit everyone. Te Ataarangi provides a comparatively gentle, strongly conversational approach that is well embedded in Māori culture, but the mainly oral and aural focus can be a considerable barrier for many people, and may be depriving learners of a really useful element to strengthen their learning. Finally, Kura Reo are respected for the deep knowledge and expertise of the teachers, the challenge, and the intensity of the experience—but they are also criticised for the critical approach of some teachers, and the emotionally draining effect of an intensive linguistic environment. The chapters that follow provide more detail on participants' experiences in all these contexts.

The next chapter provides a review of the literature on learner-centredness, on adult learning, on learner-centredness in adult second language learning, and finally on several specific issues for adult learning of te reo Māori.

Chapter 4: Literature review

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have provided an introduction to learner-centredness, and shown that learner-centredness has some recognition, but also faces opposition, or at least scepticism, for pedagogical, cognitive and cultural reasons. The second chapter indicated that learner-centredness in a reo-Māori learning settings will be considered through the lens of the capabilities approach, in conjunction with key ideas from tikanga Māori. Finally, the third chapter has given some idea of the learning contexts in which adults learn te reo Māori.

This chapter reviews the literature, and is in four parts; the first part introduces three main justifications for a learner-centred approach, then explores literature on the cognitive reasons for adopting it. Much of this literature (for example, on guided learning rather than direct instruction) is strongly contested, and although both sides consider the needs of the learner to be paramount, the means to this end are significantly different. This section is where this thesis diverges significantly from the usual model of learner-centredness, by including strong approval of direct instruction while also valuing inquiry learning and problem-based learning for more expert learners. This first section also points to the presence of student-centred or learner-centred ideas in the New Zealand education system and internationally.

The second section works through literature on learner-centredness in adult education, beginning with broad approaches to the distinctive ways adults tend to approach their learning. This section covers self-directed learning, the opportunistic approach adults tend to take, the role of transformational learning (Mezirow, 1991), emancipatory learning (Freire, 1972; Roberts, 1999b), and critical reflection. From there, this second part follows through what Hodge (2010) identified as two separate but similar paths towards a student-centred approach, as distinct from a more narrowly defined learner-centred approach; the first is through Knowles and his concept of andragogy, and the second is through Marton and Saljö's concept of 'deep' and 'surface' learning (1976), which in turn influenced the movement that followed towards greater student-

centredness in tertiary education (Biggs, 1996, 1999, Biggs & Tang, 2007, 2009; Ramsden, 2003). This section also provides an initial exploration of literature on curriculum design that involves implementing negotiated curricula (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000; I. S. P. Nation & Macalister, 2010), an aspect that is explored in more detail in the context of second language learning in the next section.

The third part of this literature review looks at learner-centredness in second-language learning, beginning with the rise of learner-centredness in language teaching in the 1980s, particularly through the influence of Nunan (1988). This section examines the implementation of a learner-centred approach in the Australian Migrant Education Programme (AMEP), and the lessons that can be drawn from their withdrawal to a more structured and less individualised approach. This section then moves forward from the examination of negotiated curricula begun in the previous section, and examines approaches to curriculum design and negotiated curricula in a second-language learning context. This section also examines communicative language teaching (CLT) in terms of learner-centredness; it then examines how a more bilingual approach might or might not contribute to learner-centredness.

The final section of this literature review focuses directly on literature on the situation of adults learning te reo Māori as a second language, to determine whether the literature shows a need for, or the desirability of, a learner-centred approach. This section covers not only pedagogical aspect of adult reo Māori aspects of adult reo Māori learning, but also the psychological, pedagogical and societal aspects. The section concludes by verifying that the present thesis does indeed fill a gap by examining a modified version of learner-centredness in an adult reo Māori learning context.

4.2 Part one: justifications, and cognitive aspects

4.2.1 Contested aspects of learner-centredness

Chapter 1 has used definitions of learner-centredness from the *A Dictionary of Education* (Oxford University Press*)* and from Schweisfurth (2013) to point to the centrality of the learner in the learning and teaching process, and the expectation that the learner will have a level of control. Schweisfurth (2015) has also approached the

concept of learner-centredness by setting out a set of seven principles that pedagogy should adhere to before it can truly be considered genuinely learner-centred. The first three are that lessons should be engaging and motivate students to learn; that there should be mutual respect between teachers and learners, and an appropriate atmosphere in classes; and that what is taught builds on learners' existing knowledge and skills. The fourth requirement is that teaching should be 'dialogic' (with students and teacher joining together in addressing questions) and thus visible (Hattie, 2009, 2015). The final three are: that the curriculum should be relevant to learners' present and future lives; that skill and attitude outcomes should be recognised as well as gaining knowledge; and that assessment should be meaningful for learners and contribute to further learning.

The most notable omission from this set of principles is any reference to any substantial learner control in the education process. It is true that Schweisfurth provides this list in the context of pre-tertiary schooling internationally, and to propose the minimal things education should offer; however, it is interesting to observe that she is willing to back away from what appears to be an important element of learner-centredness. Despite this, the principles she provides are useful as a guideline for good practice even in adult reo Māori learning.

Schweisfurth (2013, p. 34) also provides three 'justificatory narratives' in support of learner-centred education. The first is cognitive, and relates to factors that are conducive to learning; Schweisfurth asserts that "people, by virtue of their essential natures, learn more effectively when they have more control over their learning, and are guided in the process, that is, rather than having a fixed curriculum imposed on them in set ways" (p. 34). However, this assertion is more problematic than it first appears. The first issue here is that learning with minimal guidance appears not to be as effective as is often claimed (Kirschner et al., 2006). Greater learner control is also a worthwhile aim, but is to some extent problematic as well, as learners do not always know how they will learn most effectively (Kirschner & Merriënboer, 2013, pp. 174–176), nor do they always choose the learning activities that will best achieve their learning goal. Moreover, although the concept of a "fixed curriculum imposed ... in set ways" does not fit learner-centredness, a clear curriculum based on learners' needs, interests and

aspirations may well be taught quite directly and still meet learner-centred aims; this is covered later in more detail.

The second justificatory narrative is emancipatory, a concept linked with Freire (Freire, 1972, p. 19), who believed that learning that is centred in the learners' experience has a liberating effect. The emancipatory effect may be particularly relevant to Māori adults for whom a self-validating model of learning, combined with learning their heritage language may well have an empowering effect (see Smith, 1999, in Roberts, 1999, on the effect of Freire's vist to New Zealand on Māori who were working toward social and political change). It may also, however, be relevant for Pākehā / tauiwi who seek to be empowered by being genuinely bilingual and/or bicultural.

The third justificatory narrative is that learner-centred education is better preparation for life, either philosophically by providing a better platform than more traditional education does for dealing with "the ambivalence of contemporary existence" (Schweisfurth, 2013, p. 36), or by involving learners in a type of learning that is "flexible and personal, and develops metacognition and research skills" (ibid.). Some elements of this third justification are of less concern for this thesis, although the idea that learning should be flexible and to some extent personal is central to a learner-centred approach, and pursuing learner-centred principles may well achieve a closer relationship between learners, te reo Māori and the hybrid, complex society in which contemporary adults are learning.

The first justificatory narrative (cognitive) fundamentally says that aspects of the learner-centred approach (such as engagement because of relevance or interest, and a learning environment that acknowledges learners' goals and interests) lead to better learning. Alexander and Murphy (1998) point to numerous studies dealing with motivation and affect that support this idea (Lepper, 1988; Meece, Blumenfeld, & Hoyle, 1988). Schweisfurth (2013, p. 156) asserts as a principle that:

> ... people generally learn best when learning activities align with the kinds of basic principles set out in the cognitive narrative literature. These include high levels of learner engagement and motivation, building on learners' existing

understandings to construct patterns of meaning, use of dialogue and setting appropriate levels of challenge.

The reference to "building on learners' existing understandings to construct patterns of meaning" (above) indicates that learner-centredness is based on a constructivist approach, emphasizing learners' active involvement in the learning process, and a facilitative role for teachers, who act as co-constructors of knowledge with learners. This approach is associated with Vygotsky and his concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZDP), which is the zone between a learner's actual capability at any given time and their potential development when guided by a more capable other—a teacher, other adult, or more capable peer (Frawley & Lantolf, 1985). In the most commonly accepted conception of learner-centredness, the process of learning through 'working things out' to construct knowledge is generally believed to be best achieved through minimal guidance and not providing ready-made meaning. Duffy and Kirkley, for example, propose a constructivist model of learning, focusing on engaging learners in inquiry, providing structure and support to learners as they do this, and maintaining a facilitative approach (2004, p. 110). Weimer also supports such an approach (Weimer, 2002, 2013).

It is important to note, however, that, while constructivism as a model of how people learn is accepted in a variety of approaches to teaching, a more specific constructivist approach to teaching (associated with focus on inquiry learning and minimally guided learning) is strongly contested (Tobias & Duffy, 2009). Mayer (2004, p. 14) states that "Overall, the constructivist view of learning may be best supported by methods of instruction that involve cognitive activity rather than behavioural activity, instructional guidance rather than pure discovery, and curricular focus rather than unstructured exploration." Kirschner et al. (2006) agree that direct instruction is much more strongly supported in empirical studies. They define guided instruction as "providing information that fully explains the concepts and procedures that students are required to learn as well as learning strategy support that is compatible with human cognitive architecture" (p. 75). They state that studies consistently show that such instruction is more effective than minimally guided learning, despite the latter approaches being both popular and "intuitively appealing" (p. 75). The advantage of external guidance only

recedes when learners already have a fairly high level of expertise, and can provide internal guidance. Furthermore, they point out that provision of minimal guidance for learners often requires a great deal of effort from the teacher, who may end up giving a great deal of subsequent guidance to individuals to compensate for the minimal guidance they receive initially.

Kirschner et al. mainly base their objection to minimally guided learning on cognitive load theory (Sweller, 1994, 2012); they assert that too much working memory is used up on the discovery process in minimally-guided learning, and too little is available to enable real learning, which involves transfer of knowledge to long-term memory. They agree that the constructivist model of learning is in fact accurate, but that the pedagogical conclusions reached by advocates of minimal guidance do not necessarily follow on from it. However, this does not necessarily mean that direct instruction cannot combine with self-directed learning; van Merriënboer and Sluijsmans (2009) recognise that it can, and that such learning can allow for individual difference by allowing a selection of variably supported learning activities that allow learners to take responsibility for their own learning.

Another significant inference commonly drawn from the constructivist approach is a strong emphasis on the difference between individuals and the need for individual attention to learners, to bridge the gap between their particular needs and their potential development through the process known as scaffolding. The inference drawn from this is that learners are significantly different from each other, so much so that they have specific learning styles (Coffield, Moseley, Hall, & Ecclestone, 2004; Vermunt, 2005). However, Kirschner and van Merriënboer (2013) claim that no study of importance has shown that there is any significant difference in uptake of learning in controlled experiments when people are being taught according to their preferred learning styles. Furthermore, they claim that learners' preferred way of learning are often not the best way for them to learn (p. 174-176), and that teaching on sound principles— allowing for different cognitive abilities with varying amounts of scaffolding—is the most effective way to allow for individual difference. They claim that teaching with awareness of cognitive architecture—particularly the importance of avoiding cognitive

overload through too much demand on working memory—is much more important than catering to personal differences.

The question of learner choice is also a more vexed question than it first appears. Although much research on motivation advocates granting autonomy to students (Stefanou, Perencevich, DiCintio, & Turner, 2004), Kirschner and van Merriënboer (2013) dispute claims that giving learners full control over the learning process will have positive effects on learning. They argue that learners often make choices about learning activities that are not productive for them, and that they lack expertise about what they do not know and thus what they need to learn. Furthermore, students often lack expertise in controlling their learning, and expecting them to exert control over their learning can be counterproductive, although they do agree that some student choice and autonomy is important. The situation may however be different for many adult learners of te reo Māori, as they may have higher levels of awareness of their learning processes, gained through learning in a variety of settings; consequently, they may be better placed to exercise autonomy and choice in their learning. They may also be more able to deal with more open-ended activities that require minimal guidance, and to make meaningful and fruitful choices in their learning situations.

These refutations of widely held beliefs around learner-centredness may seem to place the concept itself on an uncertain footing, but in fact there can still be learner-centred elements present in direct instruction situations, and despite lessening of focus on individual differences through the concept of learning styles. Effective direct instruction requires good knowledge of what individual learners are capable of—a key element of learner-centredness and student-centredness—and good instructional design can free up teachers to provide scaffolding as needed. Moreover, teachers can focus on more specific scaffolding without the pressure of feeling they have to deal with a plethora of learning styles. Learner-centredness could still be maintained by basing instructional materials around what learners believe they need, or what interests them.

The refutation of elements associated with learner-centredness—such as minimal guidance, 'learning styles' and even elements of learner choice—are features of a wider movement against 'progressive' education, and in favour of empirically based

education that affirms didactic teaching (or what could be called teacher-centred education). The movement is mainly propagated through the internet, through organizations such as 'The Learning Scientists'(http://www.learningscientists.org/), 'Deans for Impact' (https://deansforimpact.org), and, in the United Kingdom, 'researchED' (http://www.workingoutwhatworks.com/en-GB). Each of these organizations presents accessible and readable information for teachers and students, with strong links to research literature. The main point here is that the movement to return to a more traditional, didactic approach to teaching and learning exists, and is backed up well by numerous studies. In fact this approach ties in—to some extent at least—with most existing practice in adult reo Māori teaching, which focuses on direct instruction, with room for learners to practise skills as well. One of the challenges for this thesis is to acknowledge the strength of research that opposes elements that have been seen as part of learner-centredness, and to see if a more strongly learner-centred model can be maintained in the face of this opposition.

The other major influence in education that needs to be taken into account is Hattie's concept of visible learning (Hattie, 2009, 2015). Hattie states that "The fundamental premise of Visible Learning is that when educators focus on defining, evaluating, and understanding their impact, this leads to maximizing student learning and achievement" (2015, p. 90). According to him, high teacher impact occurs where teaching is based on students' prior learning, when students are informed what success looks like, where programmes encourage optimal proportions of surface and deep learning, and when teachers set appropriate levels of challenge (2015, p. 81). The 'visible' element comes from the "teacher seeing learning through the eyes of students and helping them become their own teachers" (a quote from Hattie's website). There is nothing facile about this, as it requires the deployment of numerous skills to become aware of impact on student learning and to adapt to continually improve this (Hattie, 2013, pp. 103–110). Visible learning very much emphasizes teacher skill rather than learner control or initiative, and it would be glib to describe it as learner-centred; however, it prioritises student learning and student achievement, and can no doubt be used for learner-centred ends.

The model of learner-centredness as defined in Chapter 1 is clearly not as positive as it may seem initially. Cognitive aspects of learning do not appear to support several aspects that may be considered pillars of a learner-centred approach—aspects such as allowing for different learning styles, the value of minimal guidance in learning rather than direct instruction, and learner choice. However, a learner-centred approach can still be defended and supported, although it is important to acknowledge the vital role of the teacher in providing instruction, considering individual difference without insisting on the existence of learning styles, and allowing for the need for learners of all ages to be guided to make good choices about learning activities. As mentioned earlier, adopting more guided instruction frees up the teacher to provide specific scaffolding for learners within a stronger instructional framework; less emphasis on learner differences may mean more emphasis on good cognitive principles rather than being concerned with providing a plethora of different types of learner activities. Likewise, learners can still exercise choice, but choice conducted with an awareness that learners may sometimes not choose the activities that will do them most benefit, and may need guidance to choose well. Despite the dubious merit of some aspects that are generally associated with it, learner-centredness is able to accommodate a variety of approaches while maintaining its integrity. As Schweisfurth (2015, p. 262) points out, "Ultimately, learner-centred education is not just one continuum (from less to more learner-centred); it includes many continua, including epistemological, technique, and relational dimensions." She acknowledges that the teacher and school will always be a powerful element, even in a learner-centred approach, and that the term 'learner-centredness' itself emphasizes only one side of the learning transaction. She specifically warns against polarising pedagogy into teacher- and learner-centred, and encourages "conceptualising learner-centred education beyond fixed roles for teachers which they live up to or do not" (2015, p. 262). Learner-centredness that is based on finding out what is relevant to learners, and what they need and are interested in, has much to offer, even if it is not learner-centredness as it is often promoted—as a strongly constructivist project, heavily featuring discovery learning, learning styles, and other similar elements.

The previous section has presented some of the cognitive principles that can be seen to underpin learner-centredness, and shown that they are often contested; the following

section looks at how well or otherwise student-centred or learner-centred ideas are accepted in New Zealand and elsewhere.

1.2.2. The New Zealand setting

A student-centred approach (ensuring that student needs are met) already figures prominently in New Zealand's mainstream education system, as a concept at least. It is a fundamental principle in the New Zealand school education system, with the inquiry model of teaching requiring knowledge of students' needs, consequent appropriate learning activities, followed by reflection that informs further teaching and learning (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 37). Student-centredness is also acknowledged as a key principle by a number of New Zealand tertiary institutes; for example, as already mentioned, the writers of the University of Otago's *Guidelines for teaching at Otago* urge teachers to take a student-centred approach, with high levels of active engagement by learners. Other New Zealand tertiary institutions, such as Otago Polytechnic and Auckland University of Technology, also proclaim on their web-pages that they are student-centred. The extent to which these different institutions are actually student-centred is debatable, but it is clear that the principle of meeting the needs of learners—one of the main elements of the student-centred or learner-centred approach—is widely acknowledged within New Zealand.

4.2.3 The international setting

Student-centredness or learner-centredness has achieved international acceptance too. Schweisfurth (2013, p. 53) points out that, in the international tertiary context, learner-centredness is acknowledged as a key principle in the Bologna Process, which is the European inter-governmental initiative to improve student learning and to improve the transferability of education throughout Europe (European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, 2009, pt. II: para 14); in this document they state that "Student-centred learning requires empowering individual learners, new approaches to teaching and learning, effective support and guidance structures and a curriculum focused more clearly on the learner." The Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project has as one of its principles that "the intentions and resources of the learner should be the controlling factors for reaching proper decisions as to what he should learn and how he should learn it" (Oskarsson,1978: xi, cited in (Tudor, 1993, p. 24). However, practice

does not always match the rhetoric (Farrington, 1991), and, as already mentioned, Schweisfurth (2013, p. 33) refers to learner-centredness having "a rich life as an ill-defined but very powerful discourse" rather than as a principle to necessarily be implemented.

The next part of the chapter goes on to consider the role of learner-centredness and student-centredness in adult learning.

4.3.1 Part two: learner-centredness in adult education

The present project is firmly based in the context of adult learning, and it is here that learner-centredness has perhaps the strongest acceptance, particularly through Knowles (1970, 1978, 1980) and the concept of andragogy, which Knowles is said to have described as the art and science of helping adults learn, as opposed to pedagogy, or teaching children. Adult learning also provides a more comfortable fit for the idea of learner autonomy and an expectation that learners should have the right to be consulted by, and the right to negotiate with their teachers. After all, they are expected to take responsibility in other areas of their lives, and to have some say in how their lives are run. The capabilities approach, as discussed in Chapter 2, strongly endorses adult rights, and it is in this section that the key capabilities concepts of flourishing, of the dignity of the person, and of adults having agency in their lives starts to seem a more natural fit.

Hodge (2010) provides a useful analysis of two separate paths that learner-centredness has developed in adult education. He traces one path of development of student-centredness in adult education through Lindeman (a disciple of Dewey), through to Malcolm Knowles, one of the best-known figures in adult education and the founder of andragogy. Dewey's main focus was on child learning, whereas Lindeman (1926) applied Dewey's principles to adult learning (Hodge, 2010, p. 3), criticizing the higher education of his time because of its basis in authoritarian teaching, and traditional transmission of learning about disciplines. Instead he proposed life-long learning through 'situations' rather than 'subjects', and envisioned adults' learning being based

in their own experience, guided by fellow "searchers after wisdom, not oracles" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 7).

Knowles in turn was inspired by Lindeman, and based his concept of andragogy on analysis of adult learners and their needs. Knowles derived four key elements from this analysis: that adults become increasing self-directing, that they increasingly gain experience to draw from, that their readiness to learn relates to their current life situation, and that they increasingly seek relevance to their life in their learning (Knowles, 1978). He later added two other elements: the importance of internal rather than external motivators, and the need for adults to know why they are learning something. Apart from the practical aspects of learning (to gain practical skills, or avoid obsolescence, for example), Knowles also believed that adults needed to have more general needs met, such as achieving "complete self-identity through the development of the full potentialities" (1970, p. 23). Knowles carried his theories into practical application with his "andragogical process design", which involved learners in every step of program design, from preparing learners for the program, establishing the climate for learning, diagnosis of needs right though to evaluation (Holton, Swanson, & Naquin, 2001).

Andragogy has many elements with potential relevance for adults learning te reo Māori; many, though not all, become increasingly self-directing; they certainly have life experience to draw from; they are often spurred into learning the language because of a change in their life situation, or because the language is increasingly relevant to their lives. But the more important elements are the combining of practical skill learning with the concept of making genuine change in one's life, either by coming more fully into their Māori (or bicultural) identity, or, for non-Māori, becoming a more genuinely bicultural person. Knowles' model combines keen awareness of how adults as a group engage with learning as their life proceeds, along with a genuine respect for their individuality and their uniqueness; whether such a model, with its strong individualistic elements, would have cultural resonance with Māori is another matter.

As well as the route through Lindeman and Knowles, Hodge (2010, p. 6) traces a different route to student-centredness in higher education settings. Within such tertiary

institutions internationally, as more people started accessing tertiary education in the late 1980s, there was increasing awareness that traditional teaching methods were not catering well for a widening range of learner abilities (Biggs, 1999). Learners were increasingly demanding value for money from their tertiary courses; there was also increasing diversity in age and experience of learners, increasing numbers in classes, and more courses having a vocational focus (Hodge, 2010, p. 6,7). The search for ways to improve learning in such settings led to a focus on psychological research that suggested that active involvement in the learning process led to 'deep' as opposed to 'surface' learning (Marton & Säljö, 1976). This research was part of an approach to psychology called phenomenography, which appeared to be particularly relevant to disciplinary knowledge (Hodge, 2010, p. 7). This approach attracted those who were searching for a new paradigm of university learning and teaching. Biggs (1999) and others, who were concerned with ensuring deep-level processing occurred, worked on ensuring that learning activities made such deep-level thinking possible or likely.

Biggs and Tang (2007) articulate a model called constructive alignment, in which the teaching and learning activities (and assessments) are systematically aligned to the intended learning outcomes (p. 7), and are designed to achieve deep rather than surface learning. The process is fundamentally student-centred (rather than learner-centred), as the learning activities are consciously tailored to the learner (Biggs & Tang, 2007, p. 19), and are designed to focus on what students do and the quality of the resulting learning outcomes (Hodge 2010, p. 9). This model is mainly concerned with ensuring learning is effective for all learners, but does embrace giving learners a level of active control in the curriculum content, learning activities and assessment (Prendergast, 1994). However, while it is laudable to have students actively involved in learning, the fundamental issue remains that direct instruction, with extensive support material readily available, still appears to be the most effective way of learning. As Mayer points out (Mayer, 2009, pp. 184–200), a constructivist theory of knowledge does not mean that learners need to construct their learning from minimal resources; Biggs and Tang's approach seems to be aiming for a balance between direct instruction and discovery learning.

4.3.2 Other theorists on adult learning

Illeris (2010) stated, in his overview of principles of adult learning, that being an adult also means, in principle, "that the individual accepts responsibility for his or her own learning, that is, more or less consciously sorts information and decides what he or she wants and does not want to learn." He sees adult learning is mostly selective and self-directed, that adults learn what they want to learn and what is meaningful for them to learn, and are disinclined to learn things that do not fit those criteria. He also observes that they draw on resources they already have in their learning, and "take as much responsibility for their learning as they want to take (if they are allowed to)". This reflects the capabilities approach that recognises the right of people to claim as much or as little autonomy as they wish. For adults learning te reo Māori, there is choice amongst various courses on offer, but little opportunity for being selective and self-directed once they are involved in a reo Māori programme.

The concept of self-directed learning has been studied and theorized extensively (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 104); it has significant learner-centred elements, and appears to fit the way many adult learners pursue their journey of learning te reo Māori. Merriam (Merriam, 2008) states that self-directed learning is by definition driven and directed by the learner, and is also often so deeply embedded in the learner's life that it is integral to their identity; indeed, it is often so embedded that it is almost invisible. It ranges from formal to informal, and is often characterized by taking opportunities that present themselves (described as 'organizing circumstances', or 'environmental determinants' by (Spear & Mocker, 1984). There is a clear match here with the often complex and lengthy learning journeys of many adult reo Māori learners, and the deep integration of their reo Māori learning in their life and identity; however, they would have more opportunity for self-direction within any individual reo Māori course if a more learner-centred approach was cultivated within them.

Learner-centredness encourages a reflective, self-aware approach to learning, particularly in learning that is carried out through the course of one's life—as learning te reo Māori often is for adult learners. There are a number of approaches to learning that strongly incorporate reflectiveness, including greater focus on biography or life history, transformational learning, and emancipatory learning. West (2010) claims that

there has been a significant turn to biography or life history in adult learning; this turn values personal, subjective experience, the importance of meaning in a person's life, and the importance of personal agency. The biographic perspective sheds light on the interplay between what he calls formal, non-formal and informal learning, as well as on the shifting identity issues that are part of modern life, and are particularly relevant for Māori adult learners of te reo Māori. Transformational learning is best known through Mezirow (1991); his transformation theory asserts that how people interpret and explain the events in their life has more impact than the events themselves, and learners' interpretation of events can lead to deep perspective shift that is facilitated by questioning, critical reflection and critical self-reflection, often through either discourse or journaling. Learners of te reo Māori often expect learning the language to change them (Pohe, 2012; Rātima, 2013), and questioning, critical reflection and critical self-reflection can assist in such change.

Hammond and Collins (1991) extend transformational learning to emancipatory learning, a concept most famous through Freire (1972), and embraced by many Māori working toward social and political change (Roberts, 1999b). Freire coupled literacy learning with increasing awareness of the world; in his theory, education becomes part of ongoing action through dialogue and reflection. Critical reflection, either through discourse or journaling, has potential for deepening the experience of adult reo Māori learners, and fits well with a learner-centred approach.

4.4 Part three: learner-centredness in second-language learning

4.4.1 Nunan and learner-centredness in adult language learning settings

Nunan (1988, 1999, 2012, 2015) has written extensively on learner-centredness in the context of adults learning English as a second language, and the concept has underpinned his other writing on communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning He has provided the most widely-known exposition of learner-centredness in SLA (second language acquisition), and was strongly influential in the move within the Australian Migrant Education Programme (AMEP) to a learner-centred approach to English language learning in 1980. In tracing the beginnings of learner-centred influence on SLA, Nunan points to the learner-centred principles of

Brundage and MacKeracher (1980) as influential in language teaching circles (Nunan, 1988, p. 22). They focused on adult learning, and key elements of their principles were: the need for learning objectives to be congruent with learners' "current and idealised self-concept"; the belief that adults have developed a 'cognitive style'; the primacy of learners' perception rather than those of teachers; the need to avoid over-stimulation and anxiety; and the importance of relevance to the learners' own experience (p. 21-31). Nunan (1988, p. 23) drew the following conclusions from the principles:

> Adults are profoundly influenced by past learning experiences, present concerns, and future prospects. They are less interested in learning for learning's sake than in learning to achieve some immediate or not too far distant life goals. Translated to the field of language teaching, this suggests that a learner-centred rather than subject-centred approach is more likely to be consonant with the principles of adult learning.

Nunan also found support for adult learner-centredness in Brindley's study of adult learners, in which he proposed that education should "develop in individuals the capacity to control their own destiny and that, therefore, the learner should be seen as being at the centre of the educational process" (Brindley, 1984, p. 18). Brindley advocated for learners being able to exercise substantial responsibility in choosing learning objectives, as well as content, learning methods and assessment.

However, there was acknowledgement at the time that not all learners were prepared for such responsibility, or saw it as appropriate. Nunan pointed to a study by Willing (1985) that suggested that "adult learners vary markedly in their attitudes towards learning, their preferred learning styles and their perceptions of what is of value and what is not" (cited in Nunan 1988, p. 23). This strong variation in how adults perceived learning should proceed was brought into sharp focus in events that followed within the AMEP, when a strongly learner-centred approach was introduced. Indeed, the implementation of the approach in AMEP (described in the paragraph that follows) provides sobering lessons for anyone wishing to give it a stronger place in a second-language learning setting.

4.4.2 Learner-centredness in AMEP – lessons for implementation

The teaching of English to migrants in Australia was mainly conducted through the Australian Migrant Education Programme (AMEP), which in its time was one of the largest single language programmes in the world (A. Burns & De Silva Joyce, 2007; Nunan, 1988). In 1980, AMEP switched from a centralized curriculum to a learner-centred curriculum, but, as Nunan says, "It quickly became apparent that the most tangible result of the abandonment of a centralised curriculum was fragmentation and perceived lack of continuity in the curriculum" (Nunan,1988, p. 151). Burns and de Silva Joyce describe the problems that arose from the individualised curriculum as "lack of continuity and feedback to learners on their progress and uncertainty about syllabus planning and content" (2007, p. 9). Bartlett and Butler conducted a study of 60 teachers involved in AMEP, to investigate the attempt to develop a learner-centred curriculum model at a national level (cited in Nunan, 1988, p. 37). The survey found that "the learner-centred curriculum created a great deal of stress, that teachers were required to have a range of new skills if the ideals of the learner-centred curriculum were to become a reality, and that teachers required assistance and support in a number of areas" (these included needs-assessment skills, course guidelines to ensure continuity, bilingual help in negotiating the curriculum, continuity in the programme, skills in educational counselling, conflict resolution and teacher-role specifications). Bartlett and Butler stated that "the task of continually negotiating the curriculum with the students puts enormous strain on the teachers" (Bartlett & Butler, 1985, pp. 112–113). Learners had their own issues with the decentralised curriculum; many were concerned about the lack of a clear learning pathway, and felt insecure because of unfamiliar methods of teaching. As a result, a more standardized programme called *The Certificate in spoken and written English* (CSWE) was introduced in 1992. This provided a "higher-level generic framework within which teachers developed individual syllabuses based on student needs and goals" (A. Burns & De Silva Joyce, 2007). This programme still allowed a degree of learner-centredness within a broad framework, an approach that is still in evidence in AMEP today.

The Australian experience provides both a model and a warning. Learner-centredness was considered important enough to retain despite the issues teachers faced; most teachers still supported learner-centredness, although learner-centredness was now seen

as more of a teacher responsibility (Anne Burns & de Silva Joyce, 2000, pp. vi, vii). However, learner-centredness could lead to lack of continuity and coherence in the learner experience, as well as confusion and frustration for learners and stress for teachers (Burns & de Silva Joyce, 2007). However, the cautionary effect of the AMEP experience needs to be tempered by acknowledging that the immigrant learners in AMEP were a hugely disparate group, with people arriving from several different countries with widely varying linguistic and cultural backgrounds, along with an enormous range of educational attainment. By contrast, adult participants in reo Māori classes have a reasonably similar cultural background as New Zealanders, and most adults who come to learn te reo Māori have a good grasp of English. Classes are generally reasonably small (at least at levels higher than beginner), often with fewer than 20 people, so the opportunity exists to provide some tailoring of learning without risking too much fragmentation. Meanwhile, Nunan, who was a significant influence in the change to a learner-centred model, continues to exert a powerful influence as an expert on SLA, and to advocate for a learner-centred approach; further details of the approach he advocates can be found later in this section of the literature review.

The next section of this chapter examines two main approaches to language learning in terms of learner-centredness; these are communicative language teaching (CLT), and broadly bilingual approaches. Although CLT is strongly favoured by those who adopt a learner-centred approach, and is widely regarded, particularly in English-speaking circles, as the best approach, it appears that it may be less learner-centred than a more bilingual approach, particularly if (as this thesis proposes) direct instruction is acknowledged as the best means of teaching rather than a constructivist approach.

4.4.3 Communicative language teaching, bilingual teaching, and learner-centredness

Savignon (2007, p. 209) defines communicative language teaching (CLT) as "the engagement of learners in communication to allow them to develop their communicative competence." Furthermore, this communication should involve "interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning" in a variety of contexts (p. 213). Learners may need "to ask for information, to seek clarification, to use circumlocution and whatever other linguistic or non-linguistic resources they could

muster to negotiate meaning" (Savignon 2007, p. 209). According to this model, language learning occurs in the process of negotiating for meaning. The approach is mainly monolingual, with the expectation (as far as possible) the target language is used for all purposes. It is clearly a constructivist approach in the pedagogical sense, rather than one that relies on direct instruction, though it does incorporate some direct instruction, so questions immediately arise about whether it is the most efficient way to teach and to learn.

CLT is the prevailing approach to language teaching, both internationally (May, 2013, p. 13) and in the New Zealand setting. It is promoted by the Ministry of Education for language teaching in New Zealand Schools, for foreign languages and for te reo Māori (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009, pp. 22–24). It is also promoted for Māori language teaching by a number of academics based at the University of Waikato, although this is mainly in connection with primary and secondary education (see, for example, (Crombie & Whaanga, 2003; Johnson, 2003; Johnson & Houia, 2005; Nock, 2014). CLT is also strongly favoured by proponents of learner-centredness; for example, Nunan (1999, pp. 9–11) states that learner-centredness implies a communicative teaching approach.

4.4.4 Contesting CLT – a bilingual approach

However, the effectiveness of CLT as a method of teaching and learning comes into question if it is considered in the light of the theory of direct instruction. It is primarily an indirect method of learning, and involves navigating conversations, and learning through working out what is right and wrong in a context where several things are going on at once (coming to grips with language concepts, procedural issues, and social contact), all in the target language. The assumption is that learning is through the negotiation of meaning, but the process by which this learning occurs seems unnecessarily complex. Teachers or peers can supply some form of scaffolding, but it still seems less than ideal, particularly if it is in the target language. As Sweller (2012, p. 306) says, "the ultimate form of scaffolding is to inform the learner about what they should do and why", and while ideally the target language will be used to inform, some use of the learner's first language is likely to be essential at all levels for quality learning.

In fact, the monolingual approach to second language learning has been increasingly challenged by a bilingual/multilingual approach (Cummins, 2008; May, 2013; Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009) that recognises the value of use of the first language as an integral part of learning other languages. Cummins (2008, p.1) summarizes the bilingual position thus:

> When we free ourselves from exclusive reliance on monolingual instructional approaches, a wide variety of opportunities arise for teaching bilingual students by means of bilingual instruction strategies that acknowledge the reality of, and strongly promote, cross-language transfer.

Cummins still prefers a more broadly defined communicative approach, but he advocates use of both L1 and L2, with translation, explanations in L1 (between peers or by a teacher), and bilingual texts all having a place in language learning.

A bilingual approach is based on the fact the language skills attained in one language (reading, writing, listening and speaking) are not just related to one language, but are reflective of deeper conceptual and linguistic proficiency that is transferable to another language. As Cummins (2008, p.2) puts it, "this common underlying proficiency makes possible the transfer of cognitive/academic or literacy-related proficiency from one language to another". It is also student-centred because it acknowledges, respects, and uses the learner or learners' existing language as the basis for further learning. It does not dismiss the learners' first language as irrelevant or an impediment to the learning process, and it makes use of the learner's language to build on, to compare with or contrast, and maximize the meaningfulness of the new language as it is encountered.

Cook (2001) and Cummins (2008) assert that monolingual classroom practice is based on a doubtful analogy with first language acquisition, and that the monolingual model creates an inappropriate model of compartmentalization of the two languages in the learner's mind (Cummins calls this 'The two solitudes'). Cummins claims that evidence is lacking that the monolingual approach works as well as proponents contend. Butzkamm (2011) compares the monolingual model with making learners crawl when they can walk; he says that the first language is a vital and fundamental tool in SLA.

Brooks-Lewis (2009) has demonstrated that where L1 has been consciously and deliberately used in L2 teaching (in this case Mexican adult learners of English), not only was learning more effective, but the learners appreciated having their identity and language valued. May (2013), in the process of promoting a 'multilingual turn' in applied linguistics, criticizes mainstream SLA and TESOL practice for continuing to treat the acquisition of an additional language as "an ideally hermetic process uncontaminated by knowledge and use of one's other languages" (2013, p. 2). In practical terms, such an approach is widely followed in adult reo Māori teaching and learning, and it deserves critical scrutiny.

Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009) examine the issue from both a pedagogical and a sociolinguistic viewpoint, casting the learner in the communicative or immersion classroom as a developing bilingual, and viewing selective and principled code-switching (alternating between languages in a single conversation) as a reflection of what bilingual speakers do in everyday life. They maintain that sociolinguistic research into bilingual conversation shows that code-switching is a genuine feature of bilingual talk rather than a sign of deficiency. They summarize their position (p. 183) as follows:

> Optimal first language use in communicative and immersion second and foreign language classrooms recognizes the benefits of the learner's first language as a cognitive and meta-cognitive tool, as a strategic organizer, and as a scaffold for language development. In addition, the first language helps learners navigate a bilingual identity and thereby learn to function as a bilingual.

Despite these apparent advantages of a bilingual approach, use of English may be unwelcome in reo Māori classrooms or learning settings, for a variety of reasons. Whereas te reo Māori is widely regarded by Māori as a taonga (treasured possession), English may bear the stigma of being a language imposed on Māori from colonial times, and an interloper that caused te reo Māori to be suppressed. A monolingual approach to teaching and learning Māori appears to be the most favoured, theoretically at least; the *Te Whanake* programme is mainly taught monolingually after the initial stages, Te Ataarangi is a monolingual approach, CLT strongly encourages use of the target language only, and Kura Reo maintain a staunch 'reo Māori only' stance (except

in certain classes that deal with translation). Moreover, the short time available in reo Māori classes, especially in university programmes, means that people want to hear as much reo Māori as possible in the time they are present. The use of English may also be opposed because of reluctance to interfere with the flow of Māori language, especially for those who consider English interferes with or diminishes the wairua (spirit or ethos) of te reo Māori. For example, in many kura kaupapa, English is only spoken in certain places within the school—usually a designated room.

May and Hill assert, in the course of writing about Māori-medium education in school settings, that immersion education is regarded in international settings as one form of bilingual education, rather than as a a separate category (May & Hill, 2005, p. 377). They also point out that New Zealand had distinctive reasons for adopting a full immersion approach:

> The widespread adoption of a full immersion approach among Māori-medium programmes emerged out of a specific commitment to additive bilingualism, an associated awareness of the limitations of transitional bilingual education, and a wider social and political commitment to reversing language shift and loss of te reo Māori (May & Hill, 2005, p. 392).

Issues of terminology aside, however, an immersion approach is clearly favoured in most adult reo Māori teaching contexts, and this approach presents definite challenges to adult learners. Although the settings are clearly different, May and Hill point out that partial immersion programmes can also be effective in imparting a general education to young learners, as long as the minimum level of the language used is at least 50% (2005, p. 393). In the end, a strong case can be made for using English judiciously but unapologetically in helping teach or learn te reo Māori, and there is also a strong case for the learner-centredness of this approach. Furthermore, whatever language is being used within the classroom for pedagogical purposes, learners could still have a say in content, learning activities and assessment.

4.4.5 Learner-centredness in the framework of language curriculum development

This section places the idea of learner-centredness within the framework of language curriculum development, by examining the language curriculum development approach proposed by Nation and Macalister (2010) and determining where and how learner-centred ideas fit within this structure. Their treatment of language curriculum development already contains a strong emphasis on the importance of knowing about the learners, being flexible enough to adapt to learners' needs, wants and learning styles, and negotiating various elements within a language course. Nation and Macalister's framework proposes several stages for curriculum development:

- examining the environment
- assessing needs
- deciding on principles
- setting goals and choosing and sequencing content
- designing the lesson format
- including assessment procedures
- evaluating the course.

The first stage (examining the environment) also needs to take into account wider societal factors. Dubin and Olshtain (1986) sort these into the following categories: political and national context, the language setting, patterns of language use in society, and group and individual attitudes. The second stage of Nation and Macalister's framework (assessing needs) would be crucial for achieving a learner-centred course, and would ideally cover the interests and aspirations of the learners. The authors provide a long list of ways to find out the learners' needs, from the obvious and direct (tests, questioning the learners, interviews) to the less evident and more indirect (consulting employers, teachers and others involved, finding out what material the learners will have to read, and investigating the situations where learners will have to use the language). Although Nation and Macalister do not profess to be promoting a learner-centred approach, they point out that a course can also be based on what the learners request (p. 5). However, one would normally expect that basing the course on what learners want would be balanced to some extent at least with what the teacher regards as important, or is capable of teaching.

The next stage in Nation and Macalister's model is to decide on principles. They believe that the research on learning and on language learning points to the need to prioritize principles on "the importance of repetition and thoughtful processing of material, on the importance of taking account of individual differences and learning style, and on learner attitudes and motivation" (p. 5). Nation and Macalister's own set of 20 principles is firmly based on these underlying ideas and on the research that underpins them, and they express concern that often "curriculum design and therefore learners do not benefit from developments in knowledge gained from research because connections are not made between research and practical teaching" (p. 6). The four principles that are most clearly learner-centred focus on encouraging learners to become independent, ensuring that learners are interested and excited by their learning, ensuring that the learning suits the different students' learning styles, and ensuring that the course should be based on (among other things) 'a continuing careful consideration of the learners and their needs.'

Learners would likely have a role in the fourth stage (setting goals and choosing and sequencing content). Nation and Macalister point out that their model puts 'goals' at the centre; if a learner-centred goal were to be adopted, the goal should address the key learner-centred principles dealt with throughout this thesis. For a learner-centred course, one key goal would be that the content is dealing at least partly with what the learners want to be learning and are interested in, despite whatever compromises might be necessary.

For the fifth stage (deciding the format of lessons), Nation and Macalister make the key point that "the material in a course needs to be presented to learners in a form that will help learning" (p. 9). This means setting material at a level that will suit the learners, and quite possibly having a range of materials that will achieve the same learning for different students. For the assessment stage, a learner-centred approach would require teachers to be aware of learner preferences for types of assessment, and ideally allow for negotiation with learners, or at least consultation with them.

The final stage is evaluation of the course; this is done to determine if the course is fulfilling its purpose, satisfying the learners, and providing what they need. It is quite

possible a learner-centred approach would lead to smaller changes in ensuing iterations of a course, as learners in the following course may have similar wants and interests, and the material covered may well become more consistently relevant over time.

4.4.6 Negotiated syllabuses

A negotiated syllabus involves teacher and learners working together to make decisions about what is taught and how it is taught. This approach makes allowance for learner needs and desires, and allows for flexibility in ongoing learning; the advantages come largely from the responsiveness to the 'wants' of the learners and the involvement of the learners entailed in the negotiation process (Nation and Macalister, 2009, p. 156). Breen and Littlejohn (2000, pp. 19, 20) identify four major perspectives in support of negotiating a syllabus; these combine the expectation of improved learning with a normative or moral expectation that learning should allow for learner agency. They argue that a negotiated syllabus is a means to achieving responsible membership in the learning process, that it is emancipatory, that it can "activate the social and cultural resources of the classroom group" (p. 20), and that it acknowledges the learner as an active agent. Clarke (1991) provides a sobering assessment of the potential difficulties of the negotiation process, and despite his conviction that the benefits are considerable, he also acknowledges that there are potential problems as well. Slembrouck (2000) provides a good example of how difficult such negotiation can be in tertiary settings. In fact, Clarke concludes that 'the strong version of the negotiated model, involving full learner participation, would for all practical purposes be unworkable in any other circumstances than with a very small group or in a one-to-one situation" (p. 13). However, Clarke believes that it would be possible and worthwhile to have a negotiated element in each component of a syllabus, and that it would be worthwhile to give learners an opportunity to negotiate on aspects of an existing syllabus or existing course material, to make it as appropriate as possible for them (p. 25). There is potential for teachers to provide an outline of the contents and main activities within a course book, and open up negotiation with learners about which parts to use, how the different sections could be approached, and the learning activities that would bring out the best in the material contained in any chapter or section.

Nation and Macalister provide a list of ways in which some aspects of a syllabus could be open to negotiation; for example, a fixed lesson or time of day could be set aside for negotiated activities, or assessment activities could be open for negotiation. They also point out that that even in situations where a course has considerable structural constraints (a university course for example, constrained not just by time limits but institutional expectations), there is still a good deal of opportunity for negotiation, particularly in how activities are carried out and how internal assessment is done. A genuine learner-centred approach, particularly in a context of adult learning, implies that all involved should be aspiring to provide choice and agency for the learner as far as is practicable for all concerned.

Nation and Macalister provide a comprehensive list of the possible problems in implementing a negotiated syllabus (2009, p. 156), although they claim there is a possible solution for each problem. The first potential problem from the learner perspective is that learners may have limited awareness of the range of activities or strategies that could be used in learning a language. In this case, the solution could be that the teacher could present out a broad menu of options and lead discussion of the range of possibilities. Another potential problem for negotiation is that students may be happy enough to leave all control in the teacher's hands, or that cultural factors may make learners reluctant to negotiate with teachers. This particular issue may well exist even for adult learners of te reo Māori; a good deal of deference to teachers was expressed in the interviews I conducted. However, ultimately learners should be guided towards a more independent, autonomous approach, and some expectation of negotiation is a good way to encourage this. Another potential problem raised by Nation and Macalister is that the wishes or needs of learners may be so divergent that it proves difficult to reach agreement; one would hope that in this situation the learners and teacher would be able to work out a compromise. As pointed out earlier, a syllabus can be negotiated to widely varying degrees and with a focus on different elements of the course. However, despite the considerable room for flexibility, a genuinely principled learner-centred approach should work towards a substantial element of negotiation and learner input into the teaching and learning process.

Elements of learner-centredness can be implemented to a very modest degree, and this may be the full extent of its implementation. Nation (2014, p. 46) gives the example of the teacher suggesting, after a few weeks of class, that learners discuss what they want to do over the next week or so; this is followed by teacher and learners negotiating about the suggestions, then the teacher putting the suggestions into practice. He not only encourages learners to be independent, but to be assertive about asking teachers to engage in negotiated learning (pp. 46-47). Nation states that he wants to make the learner aware of "the full range of possibilities that can occur when learning a language" (p. 47), and to set the learner up as someone who could "play a very useful and informed part in negotiating a syllabus" (p. 47). He actively encourages learners to ask their teachers if they are willing to run part of the class using a negotiated syllabus (p. 46), and goes on to explain how such a situation could be negotiated, while also admitting that such a suggestion may not always be welcomed by some teachers (p. 47). He states that this is the most usual way to implement a learner-centred element, and despite the apparent casualness, this approach does find out what learners want to some degree at least, and is genuinely learner-centred in its own way.

Nunan gives the example of another approach, where in the first lesson the teacher gives new students a survey about what they want to learn, how they want to learn, and how they want to be assessed (Nunan, 2015, p. 22). Groups discuss the surveys, and at a later stage in the course, the teacher uses the information gained to influence what they teach and how they teach it. In this approach, the students learn at the very beginning that they will be actively involved in making decisions about their learning, and that there will be negotiation amongst learners and teachers about what happens in the classroom (p. 23). Elsewhere Nunan explains that he will sometimes take a much more indirect approach to getting learners more actively involved in their own learning; he does this by 'sensitizing' them to the role they must play in their own learning process, and as time goes on, introducing more opportunity for choices. At the same time, he makes them increasingly aware of their learning processes, so they can choose approaches to their learning that suit them (p. 24). In each of these approaches, the teacher has the intention of moving towards a more learner-centred way of teaching, despite the different degrees of directness he or she employs.

4.5 Part 4: Adults learning te reo Māori as a second language

This section begins by briefly presenting the main points of a number of studies on adult learning of te reo Māori, then continues with and examination of a number of key factors affecting adult learners of the language. The main issues dealt with here are identity issues, the importance of a language community for learners, and examining how learners can develop and exercise agency (or mana) in the process of their language learning. The section ends by summarising the contribution a more learner-centred approach could make for these issues.

4.5.1 Factors affecting adult reo Māori learners

This section of the literature review focuses on several studies dealing with adult reo Māori learners. Chrisp (2005) examined intergenerational transmission of te reo Māori; most of the parents in his study experienced difficulty in doing this, as they had learned Māori as adults, in various tertiary settings or in night classes. His study sheds light on factors that help and hinder language use and language learning. Rātima (2013) looked for factors that contributed to the successful language acquisition of 17 highly proficient reo Māori speakers who learnt as adults. Te Huia (2013) studied a group of undergraduate and post-graduate reo Māori learners associated with her university; most were of Māori descent. Each of these studies has some insight to offer into adult reo Māori learning. Several other studies, including those by Nock (2006, 2010) have examined specific programmes in some detail. Greenwood and Te Aika (2008) have examined four successful tertiary education settings with high number of Māori participating and succeeding, and deduced a number of features that make them work for Māori. However, of all these studies, Chrisp's provides perhaps the most succinct and learner-centred recommendations for improving adults' learning of te reo Māori (2005, p. 179). He recommends recognising existing Māori language skills, assisting learners to identify their needs and preferred learning approaches, a focus on everyday language, acknowledging identity issues, the use and empowerment of community 'leads', provision of safe learning environments, advice to fluent speakers to guide them in helping learners, and improving learners' knowledge of how language learning works. These proposals still provide the most straightforward and the most learner-

centred way forward, and there is little evidence that the passage of ten years has made them redundant.

A number of significant issues for adult reo Māori learners emerged from the literature. The most prominent of these were: complicated identity issues for Māori learning their own language; anxiety over perceived pressure to reach a standard of reo that seemed too difficult for them; whakamā (shame or shyness) about using the language; and the difficulty of accessing a language community for some people. All these issues are discussed in the section that follows.

4.5.2 Identity issues

Chrisp (2005) found that identifying as Māori and seeking to more completely fulfil this identity was important to participants in his study; many identified key life events such as births and tangihanga (funerals) as trigger events that got them started with te reo Māori. However, his adult Māori participants had mixed emotions about Māori language and identity, and experienced psychological conflicts, with some avoiding te reo Māori to lessen the opportunity for "overt and direct challenges to their identity as Māori" (p. 172). Chrisp recommends that "Māori-language training providers should be encouraged to recognise and acknowledge the complex identity issues for Māori learning Māori as adults, and the resulting anxiety" (p. 179). Te Huia (2014) agrees that, for Māori learning their own language, the process is "highly complex and emotionally strenuous" (p. 223). She advocates working towards a psychological state she calls 'te mauri ka tau', which describes a psychological platform of security from which Māori learners can function in a healthy way. Te Huia emphasizes that it is not just a psychological or individual phenomenon, but is defined in terms of relationships with other people. The main factors that contribute to this platform of security are: cultural affirmation; positive learning HL2 (heritage second-language) experiences; access to a language community (including peers and mentors); external support from both kaupapa and whakapapa whānau (language-based relationship, and blood relations); and finally, increased familiarity with Māori-governed domains (p. 203, 204). This describes an ideal situation and one or more of the factors may be lacking at any given time, and although it may be geared specifically to Māori, similar factors may well provide an ideal platform for Pākehā or other tauiwi learners as well. These

factors are learner-centred in the sense of providing strong relational surrounding circumstances to allow the learner to flourish, while not directly addressing individual factors such as needs, preferences or aspirations.

4.5.3 The importance of community for learners

In societal terms, Māori language users are scattered, but there are differing views on how serious a matter this is. As mentioned previously, Higgins and Rewi (2013, p. 30) believe that the language is maintaining some health despite existing in "pockets". By contrast, Bauer (2008, p. 60-67), following Benton (1991, p. 15-23), sees this scattering of speakers as a major concern, causing the 'dilution effect' (speakers being spread too thinly throughout the population), making it difficult to maintain the language. She recommends concentrating effort on geographical communities where Māori is spoken more widely to ensure intergenerational maintenance of a Māori speaking community (p. 66, 67). This may be less of a concern several years on from her time of writing, as internet communication, especially on social media, has hugely increased access to communication, lessening the impact of geographical distance.

However, a language community for learners is still important, and several recent studies have pointed to the value of these. The highly proficient adult reo Māori learners in Rātima's study (2013) placed a high value on being in a Māori-speaking community with peers and more highly skilled speakers. His group was not typical of language learners generally, however, as they were taught and intensively mentored by experts in te reo Māori in a way few other learners are. Pohe (2012) found that achieving whakawhanaungatanga-ā-reo (being a community of language learners) within the micro-ecology of the class was key to successful learning in the group he was involved with, although he is cautious about extending his conclusion to other learning settings. Te Huia (2013) says that the need for language communities was one of the main findings of her research (p. 208); however, she acknowledges that such language communities, including kura reo, will generally be classroom based rather than part of society at large (p. 210).

Hond (2013) also stresses the concept of a language community, but his focus on revitalisation of te reo Māori, particularly in his local context in the Taranaki region,

means he approaches the concept differently. Hond redefines the term 'speaker community' as defining a group that is actively working towards language revitalization, speaking te reo Māori as an act of resistance, and grappling with issues of re-establishing normalised use. Members of this kind of 'speaker community' are "protecting the integrity of the language while many of the participants are developing proficiency" (p. 278). He sums up the term thus: "Speaker community denotes the act of speech in a threatened language as a defining characteristic of shared engagement and collective vision for the revitalization of that language." (p.278, 279). Hond's view of a language community may have some characteristics in common with a less intentional and less intense idea of language community, but for most adult learners, a language community is principally a supportive group in which they can interact in te reo Māori to a greater or lesser extent. Te Huia's notion of a language community (2013, p. 210), containing both peers and mentors, is more likely to fit the perceived needs of most adult learners.

The level of proficiency within such language communities can have a big influence. Chrisp (2005, p. 178) found that most Māori adult learners in his study were most comfortable with people of the same proficiency as themselves, and some felt intimidated in the presence of more fluent speakers. Despite this, Chrisp (p. 178) also found that found that learners also acknowledged the role of 'leads' (people who created safe spaces for the participants); he recommends identifying such people, training them further in this role, and funding them as well. One of Chrisp's final recommendations (2005, p. 179) for Māori adult learners is that "consideration should be given to the creation and development of safe Māori language environments" where they could be "empowered to make meaningful, real-life use of their Māori language skills …without fear of criticism". Te Huia (p. 223) also recommends supporting language initiatives that promote the development of language communities, even to the extent of supporting Bauer's proposition (2008, p. 67) that specific geographical locations with high concentrations of speakers be supported. There is little evidence of such purposeful development of safe learning environments on any scale in New Zealand, although micro-environments may emerge with groups intentionally gathering to speak te reo Māori. A learner-centred approach would aim to specifically acknowledge the importance of a language community, respect the expressed wishes of

learners about the make-up of such communities, and endeavour to facilitate such groupings.

4.5.4 Agency in learning te reo Māori

The idea of agency has mainly occurred so far in this thesis in terms of exerting some level of control within the learning situation, or acting as an adult and making choices about what to do and what not to do. The idea of agency is not often raised in connection with what happens within specific reo-Māori learning contexts, as adults are generally offered little opportunity to exercise much control within these. Rātima and May, however, acknowledge the relevance of a different sense of agency for language learners—the idea that a person needs to assert their dignity and their worth as a language user, in the face of slighting or belittling by more proficient language users (2011, p. 10). They recognise that unequal power relationships operate in language settings in the wider social sphere, citing Peirce (1995, p. 13): "It is through language that a person gains access to—or is denied access to—powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak". Rātima and May say that "a good language learner can use their agency to reposition themselves and redefine their L2 identity even when conditions may not be optimal" (2011, p. 11); they provide several examples from Norton and Toohey (2001) of learners asserting agency by taking their place as worthy participants in social intercourse, in the face of being considered of little importance by others. In fact, Rātima and May state that learners of te reo Māori will also need to exercise similar agency in their learning situations (2011, p. 12):

> Te reo learners will face adversity in order to develop high levels of proficiency in the target languages… the power of and over language resides with the dominant group or with target language speakers. That power must be met with assertion and agency from learners in order for gains to be made.

Rātima and May do not elaborate on this aspect, and the highly competent adult reo Māori learners Rātima (2013) studied in his thesis do not appear to have needed to assert such agency. However, the situation was different for some of Chrisp's participants who believed they were looked down on for their lack of competence in te reo Māori (Chrisp, 2005, p. 167, 168). A learner-centred approach at the level of

language planning would endeavour to ensure that using power over language to disadvantage or disparage learners was actively discouraged, in favour of an approach that respected the dignity of the learners, and that welcomed them as language users despite their shortcomings.

The ongoing concern for retaining and maintaining the quality of te reo Māori being spoken has an effect on learners of te reo Māori. This concern for the quality of the language is laudable in itself, and in fact, learners as well as teachers generally aspire to a high quality of te reo Māori (Chrisp, 2005; Rātima 2013). However, for adult learners, the concern for maintaining a high quality of te reo Māori can lessen adult learners' willingness to communicate. Chrisp (2005, p. 175) points out that preoccupation with both quality and authenticity of language can create barriers to learning, and he gives examples of the harmful effects of excessive criticism on adult learners in his own study (p. 126). Higgins and Rewi (2014, p. 26) also point out that language purists can in fact cause a shift towards negative attitudes towards te reo Māori by deterring or discouraging language use unless it is of a very high standard. They compare purists unfavourably with those with a more liberal view who are just happy to see the language being spoken (p. 12). In terms of learner-centredness, putting the learner first would mean ensuring the language user feels safe and encouraged while still being challenged to improve, rather than making the integrity of te reo Māori the most important thing.

In this final part of the section looking at factors that affect adult learners, two resources are briefly examined and compared; the first is Moorfield's *Te Whanake* set of resources, and the second is a book called *Mai i te Kākano* (Jacob, 2012). The merits and disadvantages of *Te Whanake* deserve special examination because it is widely used in tertiary settings to teach te reo Māori to adults. *Te Whanake* is a formidable resource, developed with the assistance and contribution of some of the finest exponents of te reo Māori (for example, Tīmoti Karetū and Wharehuia Milroy, among others). The resource is discussed in some detail in the previous chapter.

Moorfield (2008) says his teaching methodology is based on Dodson's bilingual method (Dodson, 1967), which endeavours to replicate the learning experience of a

child becoming bilingual. Dodson's method uses the first language—in this case English—for certain functions, particularly for giving word meanings, and endeavours to increasingly work from medium-oriented focus (talking about language) to message-oriented focus (using language in authentic situations). The books in *Te Whanake* follow this pattern initially at first, with the first two books in the series using English to explain the grammar, and all books using English to translate sample sentences, and to translate vocabulary lists. However, after *Te Kākano,* the first book in the series of four*, Te Whanake* tends to be used in full immersion, rather than bilingually (although some grammatical points are explained in English) thereby relinquishing the full benefits of bilingualism.

Moorfield acknowledges the importance of communicative situations (2008, p. 114-121), and is clearly aware of the importance of communication for meaning in learning, though the communicative activities he provides may be used less by teachers than he intends. In terms of learner-centredness, *Te Whanake* does place key material for everyday use in *Te Kākano*, the first book in the series, but chapters in later books may not be providing content on topics that learners really want or need. For example, the first chapter in the second book, *Te Pihinga*, is based around birds in New Zealand. Encountering such topics at the start of the intermediate stage of learning te reo Māori, especially when accompanied by long lists of vocabulary with little relevance to their lives, may deter learners rather than encouraging them to continue. Much of the material is also dated. Clearly the vast amount of information in the resources provides opportunities for worthwhile learning, but it requires creative and flexible use if it is to be part of a learner-centred course, despite its substantial merits.

The next resource, *Mai i te Kākano* (Jacob, 2013) although not a textbook, is an excellent example of a resource that is relevant to modern life, and immediately useful for Māori speakers at intermediate level or above. It was written in response to the author's observations of parents and children in the kōhanga reo she was involved with; the purpose of the book is to correct common errors and to enrich the parents' and the families' language with material relevant to their everyday lives. Jacob points out cultural issues such as claiming things as one's own, rather than sharing (p. 78, 79), and provides detailed and thorough alternatives to incorrect language, backed up with many

examples. She addresses everyday situations in which parents find themselves, such as going to the beach and visiting the supermarket. The book is written in te reo Māori, but has key definitions in English, and difficult vocabulary discreetly translated into English in footnotes. Explanations are thorough and written in a conversational and lively style, and many examples of good, everyday practice are provided. The book is learner-centred, responsive to perceived need, and user-friendly. A similar book addressing adult issues (as opposed to child-raising issues) would no doubt be enormously valuable for adult learners.

4.6 Conclusion: a place for learner-centredness in adult reo Māori learning

This review of the literature has shown that there is only qualified support for a learner-centred approach as it is generally defined, and in fact, several ideas usually strongly identified with learner-centredness are not well supported in the literature. Minimal guidance, associated with inquiry learning or problem-based learning, is only well supported for more expert learners. Substantial differences, sufficient to constitute separate learning styles, are not well supported in the literature either. Furthermore, the very idea of learners choosing worthwhile learning activities is also not well supported. These are substantial strikes against the idea. However, for adult learners, the benefit of strong engagement with learning through following interests and perceived needs or wants seems considerable, and the lessening of the need for intensive support of learners in minimally guided learning activities may make the teacher's life easier, and may make it possible for teachers to provide more pertinent scaffolding assistance and to maintain a more dialogic approach, dealing with substantive issues instead of procedural matters. Indeed, the first section of this review has provided a reminder of the vital role of teachers, despite the term 'learner-centred' seeming to side-line them. Teachers clearly play a vital role, as instructors as well as facilitators of learning.

The second section provided more support for learner-centredness, with most models of adult education having a strong learner-centred orientation—from andragogy to constructive alignment, and from self-directed leaning to emancipatory and transformative learning. The third section, which deals with second language acquisition (SLA), also provides some support for a learner-centred approach, although

the AMEP experience also provides a warning of how a learner-centred approach can cause fragmentation, dissatisfaction, and stress for teachers. Nunan, along with Nation and Macalister, give several examples of how a learner-centred approach can be introduced quite unobtrusively and partially, as well as more systematically. This section has also shown that communicative language teaching (CLT) may well be compatible with a learner-centred approach, but that in fact a bilingual approach may serve the needs of learners better. Finally, section 3 provides examples of how change to a more learner-centred approach could be implemented in a curriculum-planning framework, along with various ways a negotiated curriculum can be introduced.

The final section has demonstrated that adult learners of te reo Māori have a number of issues to grapple with, including identity issues, whakamā and anxiety, difficulties in accessing language communities, and the possibility that learners may need to exercise agency by standing up for themselves and asserting their worth as language users. Little evidence emerges in the literature of adult learners of te reo Māori having any significant agency within their learning contexts, or the opportunity to exercise choice or control within their learning environments. Finally, it has shown that learner-centredness as a concept has not been directly addressed in the context of adult learning of te reo Māori, and that a number of issues exist that may well be remedied by using a more learner-centred approach.

Chapter 5: Learners' experience - Mikaere, Amīria, Amy, Tīmoti, Brian

5.1 Introduction

This is the first of two chapters that provide details about the learners' experience as learners, and analysis of the quality of that experience according to the principles outlined in Chapter 2 (primacy given to the capabilities approach, acknowledgment of the importance of tikanga Māori, and an attempt made to integrate the two while preserving the essence of each). It is worth reiterating here that the learners had no opportunity to comment on my use of the capabilities approach, as I had not embraced it at the time of the interviews (see 2.10, p. 53).

The learners for each chapter were selected randomly. This chapter examines the learning experience of Mikaere, Amīria, Amy, Tīmoti and Brian; it provides a personal profile of each interview participant, including brief details of formal learning they have undertaken, demographic details, their evaluation of their level of competence in te reo Māori, and details about their aspirations and motivation as reo Māori learners. This leads in to a more detailed description of each participant's learning experiences, and the extent to which learner-centred principles were part of those experiences, followed by brief analysis in terms of the above principles, along with learner-centred principles.

5.2 The interview questions

I asked learners how long they had been learning te reo Māori, and for details about courses they had taken. I asked them to rate their own reo Māori proficiency on the following scale:

Self-reporting scale: reo Māori proficiency
From *Te Kupenga*, 2013 (Survey of Māori well-being)
1. I can speak te reo Māori very well 2. I can speak te reo Māori well 3. I can speak te reo Māori fairly well 4. I can speak about some simple or basic things in te reo Māori 5. I can speak a few words or phrases in te reo Māori

Table 8: Self-reporting scale: reo Māori proficiency

I asked about learning they engaged in outside the class, what they did or were still doing to strengthen their learning, and how they went about learning when not enrolled in a course. I also asked them about their level of satisfaction with their learning overall, with individual courses, as well as with informal learning. They were also asked about aspects they found most and least satisfying in both their formal and informal learning. I put the questions (see Appendix A) to the participants orally, but participants in some of the later interviews had a copy of the questions, and we worked through the list: these served as a framework for discussion and often led to digressions on points of special interest.There are widely differing experiences presented within this chapter; Mikaere slogged his way through university study, struggling most of the way, despite a high level of motivation and desire to succeed. Amīria brought considerable intelligence and experience of learning another language to a high level to her reo Māori learning, but expressed frustration and a feeling of disempowerment with her reo Māori learning. Amy had a roller-coaster ride in her university experience, with a huge struggle in one year, and much more positive experiences at other times; overall, she has not found her learning has been a mana-enhancing experience. Tīmoti, by contrast, had a fairly straightforward and positive intensive immersion experience, while Brian, who is less engaged with his learning, has been carried along with others' enthusiasm, and is generally enjoying the low-key, lively learning experiences he is encountering at TWoA.

Learners (Chapter 5)					
Name	**Mikaere**	**Amīria**	**Amy**	**Tīmoti**	**Brian**
Age/Gender	40s/M	40s/F	40s/F	40s/M	30s/M
General education	BA	Professional qualification	BA	High school	University degree
Māori/non-Māori	Māori	Māori	Māori/Pākehā	Māori	Pākehā
Learning Contexts (te reo Māori)					
University	BA (Māori Studies)		BA (Māori Studies)		
Kura reo	1	1	1		
TWoA		Iwi course Under auspices of TWoA			2nd year of Te Ara Reo
Te Ataarangi					
Other				Full year immersion Course	
Proficiency (1 high) (self-evaluated)	3	3	3	2	4
Motivation (10 high)	7-9 (4)	8,9	10	5	6,7
Proficiency aspiration (10 high)	8-10	10	10	8	6,7

Table 9: Key information about learners in Chapter 5

5.3.1 Mikaere

Learning experience

Mikaere is Māori, in his early 40s. He was born in a small town in the central North Island, and was raised there until his family moved to the South Island when he was young. He is married with young children, and has ended up teaching a variety of subjects at high school. He learnt some reo Māori through various programmes, before enrolling part-time in his mid-thirties in a university degree in Māori studies. He studied te reo Māori for three consecutive years, passed his papers (although with difficulty), and is now employed in a South Island urban high school. He has attended two kura reo; he found them hard, but believes he has benefitted from them. He still

lacks confidence in speaking Māori, and admits that he has not used te reo Māori much since leaving university.

Mikaere gave a straightforward response when asked what he needed most; "I'm most interested in learning how to have a basic conversation– to be able to understand when somebody is talking in Maori." He explained early in the interview that he wanted to be able to speak formally, but he acknowledged that he needs to develop his general Māori knowledge; he also made it clear that it was very important to him to be able to pass on te reo Māori to his children.

> But I know I need more language. So it's gotta be everyday language. And a good rounding of what those things are in different dialects… Then whaikōrero. And that's solely based on mana. My own thing which would give me more confidence to speak those things at home and bring those kids in.

When asked about his motivation to learn, he initially rated it at "at about a seven, eight, or nine."

> But the actual reality of time is probably more like a four. Yeah, it's just a time thing. I want to do it. It's like wanting to go to the gym. Or wanting to get skinny, you know. You gotta do some work.

Mikaere freely admitted that he really wanted to be a good reo Māori speaker; "I'd love to be an eight or nine. Even ten. I'd love to be that. I just want to be comfortable when anybody speaks, and I can go…" (clicks fingers). He embraced learner-centred ideas, and was keen to negotiate with teachers about every aspect of his learning.

Mikaere turned to university to build his knowledge of te reo Māori when he was teaching another subject at high school; he wanted to eventually teach the language at secondary level. He studied the first three main courses of *Te Whanake* (*Te Kākano*, *Te Pihinga* and *Te Māhuri*) in consecutive years, finishing in 2014. He found the experience quite stressful and difficult, particularly once the course switched to full immersion in te reo Māori in *Te Pihinga*, the second year of the programme ("Yeah it

was really hard. It's a big jump from no… a little bit of Māori and all the rest was Pākehā to just fully Māori - shit there was a massive jump").

Mikaere, like others struggling in university situations, found that he had to use a number of strategies throughout the course to get through and eventually pass all the papers. Some of these would be regarded as good learning strategies anyway (cooperative learning, translating material before coming to class, getting help from more capable members of the class), but in his case, it was driven by the feeling he would quickly be left behind if he did not use them. One key element that affected his learning was lack of time; he was working, and had a young family as well.

> I kept on having all the lecturers go, oh look you've gotta just do another 10 hours a week on top of what you're doing, you'll be sweet, you know, but that was hard, it was hard to do.

He also found it difficult to adjust to being in a Māori-speaking environment at the start of a class in which only Māori was spoken, said that it would take him five or six minutes before "the ears come in." He also found that unfamiliar words would create a fear reaction:

> There's always that fear, you know…… when someone chucks out a word that you don't know, and for me, I focus on that word, I don't focus on the rest of the context (laughs).

He did not really have a way to deal with this particular reaction until his third year of university study, when his lecturer in *Te Māhuri* helped him with a specific strategy to deal with it.

Mikaere gave a fairly low satisfaction rating to his reo Māori learning, but did not blame anyone else for this situation.

> Yeah, if it was on a scale basis I'd be a three or a four. And that's not due to anybody else's failings. That's my own failings, really. And it's definitely not

due to any courses or lecturers or anything like that. It's all just my own inability to put it all into, timewise… stuff like that.

His description made the university experience sound like a struggle to survive, rather than something enjoyable. However, he did have a good relationship with his lecturers, and was made to feel at home in the department.

Mikaere had attended two kura reo when I interviewed him. He found the work difficult, but appreciated the challenge.

Yeah, I've been to two of those. You get motivated in those. You come into them quite quickly and it's good to have that sort of calibre of tutor… Ah, again it's like jumping into a frying pan and just getting fried really. They're really supportive but I think they know the weaknesses, you know, and how to get the best out of you.

He appreciated teaching on language structures, and was quite willing to have a grammar point 'hammered' until the tutor believed the group should move on. Although he believed he learnt from the kura reo experiences, and that they spurred him on to do further independent learning, he was less positive about the teaching methods of some teachers at the kura reo he attended:

… whereas others like […] would just fly a pile of questions at you at like a hundred miles an hour and then he'd just sit there and wait for you to answer… And half of us were like, what the hell did he just say? But, again, so at the time it's not a lot of fun but when you come out of it you go, geez man, I feel like I learnt something. And you know, I've got to get this, I've got to get that. And you go through, I've still got the books, I still pull out certain things.

Despite seeing positives in his kura reo experience, especially in the classes of teachers who taught using lively, entertaining methods, he admitted that he still came out of them not knowing more about speaking in formal situations, which was the thing he most wanted to learn.

Mikaere constantly buys books on te reo Māori; he is currently hunting for old copies of the *Ngā Mōteatea*, a selection of old chants collected by Apirana Ngata. He reads the Bible in a bilingual version, though not for religious purposes, and he also watches the Māori news on TV. He has friends with whom he speaks te reo Māori, but he still has a fear of conversing with other, better speakers of the language ("Ooh shit, I'm going to bunch in with those guys and they're way ahead!"). He is always conscious of wanting to know more language related to everyday contemporary life, and still has an unfulfilled desire to learn more about formal speaking, so he can be prepared for such situations as they occur; as far as he is concerned, the level to which he performs in those situations can raise or lower his mana (status). He was also conscious that a year out from finishing his degree, he was not utilising his reo Māori very much.

Learner-centred elements in his learning

Mikaere took it as a given that he had no control over the formal university learning situation, and that the only province where he had control was how and when he learnt certain things. He took the initiative to return to using memory systems that had worked for him, although he admitted that they had limited utility, as they tended to be short-term strategies to pass exams.

> Formally, I was never in control. Well, the system was built so the things I had control over were when I learnt it, when I did the work and all that stuff. But I didn't have any control about how I learnt it. And so I needed to work out systems to do that.

Mikaere agreed there was little control over content in his university course; according to him, the approach was: 'Ok, here's the book, here's the structure. Learn it.' Mikaere agreed that learning activities were planned for them in their university learning, rather than him having any input. He was also stated that he had no learner choice in assessment in his university work.

Mikaere responded energetically when offered the opportunity to talk about what would constitute an ideal autonomy situation in his learning.

> Content… if I had autonomy, that would be all about things that I use today, something that I can use in the home, I can use on the street or, you know, on the marae – something that's going to interest me - ah yeah, things to do with whaikōrero…

In terms of learning activities, his main priority was that they be enjoyable ("For the activities, anything fun is good"). He also wanted to do things related to music, because he found he learnt things so well through that medium.

For assessment, he emphasized that he would like some sort of dialogue with his teacher ("I'd like some *dialogue* – it's not actually *autonomy*, I wouldn't want full autonomy over the assessment…") so that he could present and be assessed in a way that worked best for him.

> … for me it would be it has to be some sort of dialogue that would go… well actually, you don't have write this essay but you can SING it and play it or whatever, and you can compose – you know what I mean?

Mikaere did say that his university teachers had a facilitative approach rather than over-emphasizing instruction (he was able to point to a stronger instructive approach in other university subjects he had studied).

Analysis

In his university study, Mikaere was encountering a situation where he was exposed to teaching that allowed him to flourish to some extent, but did not take the extra step to ensure he was able to meet his occasional need to speak in formal situations—a situation that he believed affected his mana. In his university learning, he found himself in a slightly undignified situation of scrambling and struggling to keep up, and to ask for help from younger members of the class. This may have been unavoidable in the circumstances, but ideally a learning situation would allow adult learners more dignity

than appeared to have been the case. University learning does confer strong individual benefit on learners, so to some extent treats learners as an end; furthermore, Mikaere himself acknowledged the importance of passing on te reo Māori to his children, so he was willing to be a means rather than an end. Although Mikaere stated that he would have liked to have dialogue with teaching staff about aspects of his learning, there was no evidence this occurred; there was little evidence of adult agency being conferred on Mikaere in his learning situation. The concept of 'adaptive preference' may well be in operation here as well, in that Mikaere accepted his situation and worked within the constraints he experienced, in both university and kura reo, even though some elements were less than ideal for him.

In terms of learner-centredness, Mikaere appeared to have little autonomy, and was not consulted about what he wanted to learn, or how he would learn or be assessed. He was well aware of the concept through his teaching training and experience, and although he accepted all his learning circumstances and made the best of them, he would have been willing to take a more active role in negotiating about how his reo Māori learning should go if this had been available.

5.3.2 Amīria

Amīria is a Maori professional woman in her early 40s, who was brought up in a large North Island urban centre. She has a Māori father and Pākehā mother, but did not have a strong Māori identity growing up, although her family were involved at their marae. She learnt Māori at school, but did particularly well at a foreign language. She went overseas as an exchange student and later as an adult, and her experiences with that language have made her a more analytical and critical thinker than most about her reo Māori learning. She is particularly critical of the over-emphasis on cultural aspects at an early stage, and the lack of a genuine communicative focus. She also believes that reo Māori users need a wide vocabulary at an early stage to enable communication, and that grammar aspects can be corrected once a critical mass of speakers are able to communicate, even in an imperfect fashion; "It's like we're trying to carve the house as we are building it. Build the house, and then carve it later… let's just build a critical mass of speakers of the reo…"

Her partner is Māori, and an excellent speaker of the language; however, she is reluctant to adopt the role of learner with him as teacher, as the dynamic of the relationship shifts in a way she finds uncomfortable. She says, "I'm used to achieving and being an achiever, and to feel inferior, it's a big barrier to my learning." She has links with iwi and Māori organisations through her work, and uses te reo Māori on a daily basis. On discussing the principles of learner-centredness, she was keen to explore the idea of using these in adult reo Māori learning.

Amīria used the descriptor "I can speak te reo Māori fairly well" to describe her proficiency. The main specific thing she wanted to learn was to have "the ability to spontaneously converse on as wide a range of topics as possible." She also wanted to really understand about whakaaro Māori (a genuinely Māori way of thinking, or speaking from a Māori world view), and how to interpret that in a contemporary setting. She has high motivation to learn te reo Māori ("… pretty high motivation, but a lot of barriers to learning, so maybe about a 9, 8 or 9?"), and she promptly chose 10 as the level of reo Māori she aspired to.

Learning experience

Amīria had no university reo Māori learning, but has attended two kura reo, and has recently returned to learning the reo "in a commitment to try and get fluent." To do this, she has recently attended iwi wānanga reo under the auspices of TWoA (the wānanga reo were aligned to the Te Pīnakitanga level of TWoA courses). These were weekend wānanga held ten times a year. Unfortunately, she was not impressed with several aspects of these—particularly the balance between listening and speaking.

> There were a lot of inefficiencies in the learning of the reo which I found really frustrating – for example, you can't learn a language if you don't speak the language… those faculties are not engaged until you are forced to speak the reo.

For cultural reasons, this imbalance was particularly evident on the first evening of the wānanga.

> …the first night it was, what was it for— ōkawa —formal language exchange kind of thing, but only men were able to speak in this environment… so I thought, what's the use of me being here if I'm not going to be speaking myself?

She attended the wānanga hoping for some dialogue about balance of cultural aspects with communicative aspects, but felt that no such dialogue occurred. Even though she appreciated being in an environment where te reo Māori was being used, she was concerned that "there were not enough examples around to attune my ear to well-spoken Māori." The student to teacher ratio was quite high, with about 25 to 30 people in a class. All in all, she was not particularly satisfied with the events. She has also attended two kura reo, and, although she did not elaborate on this experience, stated that she enjoyed them.

Amīria endeavours to get together weekly to have lunch with Māori speaking friends at work. She is involved in iwi development and in governance of iwi wānanga reo, as well as having a Māori speaking partner, so there is always some reo Māori around in her everyday life. She enjoys watching a reo Māori programme called *Ako*, a lively classroom-based programme featuring Pānia Papa, a nationally known reo Māori teacher, and several young adult learners who are quite proficient.

Learner-centred elements in her learning

Like many other participants, Amīria felt it was up to her to make sure she learnt te reo Māori, but stated that once in a learning situation she found she had little control of learning activities, and had in fact experienced a "scatter-gun approach", where "some of it would hit, or it won't." Nor did Amīria have significant choice or autonomy in assessment in the wānanga reo-ā-iwi she experienced. She was not aware of there being any possibility to vary assessments. In fact, Amīria had very definite ideas about what would constitute an ideal level of autonomy and control in her own learning.

> A tailored programme that recognised what my needs were, what my existing skills were, and identified what my goals in the language were, and then

partnered with the appropriate kaiako that had the skills that I wished to acquire, so really, it's a tailored approach to learning.

Amīria agreed quite vehemently that autonomy for the learner was appropriate, and fitted well within a Māori learning situation. For her, it was consistent with the principle of mana, particularly the mana of the learner.

One of the most important principles of mātauranga Māori is mana, and that what we are—striving for is—for each of us to have an experience of our own mana—the ability to articulate what your needs are and to have control over how those things are met. It is both an expression of mana and the realisation of it…

It's totally inconsistent to have an approach that fails to recognise those qualities or that mana that naturally arises in the student – and this is what the whole whare wānanga was founded on - the whole whare wānanga was founded upon what naturally arises from - 'puta māori ai i te tangata', you know, 'i te tamaiti' … what qualities naturally arise in that student, and how can those qualities be fostered in in order to give rise to their own mana and enable them to have an experience of their own mana…

At this stage I shared my feeling that I felt disempowered as an adult reo Māori learner, and Amīria strongly agreed.

It's totally disempowering—I've seen it, I've heard it, I've—friends of mine that are—other students on wānanga reo, we talk about it and yet, we do nothing about it … we really are looking for people that are willing to engage in this conversation about it.

Analysis

The frustration felt by Amīria implies that flourishing is being hampered to some degree in her learning, partly as a result of the roles assigned to women in Māori society. Amīria encountered 'inefficiencies" (particularly not enough opportunity to

speak) that prevented her from fully flourishing as a learner; similarly, lack of a strongly communicative approach is contributing to the language not achieving a critical mass of speakers, with the result that the language lacks the dynamism that comes with wide-spread use. She did not encounter any belittling of the dignity of the person in her learning, if one accepts the cultural restrictions on women speaking in some situations. In terms of learners being an end rather than a means to an end, it does appear that the health of te reo Māori within the iwi is more highly valued than individual flourishing in the iwi wānanga she attended. There seemed to be little acknowledgment of learner difference in evidence, and even less of adult agency. Her previous experience as a language learner and user could be seen as disruptive of the process of 'adaptive preference', insofar as she was unwilling to accept widely accepted practice in reo Māori teaching, because she believed there was a better way to do things.

In terms of learner-centredness, there was little direct evidence of any attempt to find out what learners needed or wanted, although there is little doubt that participants in such wānanga wanted the reo to flourish in their iwi and in their community. There was also little evidence that Amīria had any significant agency in her own learning situation. Moreover, Amīria made it clear that she went to the iwi wānanga hoping to engage in some dialogue about how things were run; even though she is an articulate woman with some standing in her iwi, it appears there was little allowance for discussion about how things were run.

5.3.2 Amy

Amy is a woman in her 40s, with a complex family background; she identifies as Māori and Pākehā. She was born in a small North Island town, is married with two grown-up children, and works in education. She studied te reo Māori at university, part time for two years, then fulltime, finishing her degree in Māori Studies in 2015. She had a mixed experience at university; she was very positive about her study in an introductory reo Māori class, and her class at Stage 3 level, and was quite positive about her study in *Te Kākano*, but she found study at Stage 2 very difficult, and needed a tutor to help get her through. She also felt that her mana as a person in her 40s, and as a person in wider society was given little acknowledgment. She is extremely diligent and very

enthusiastic, but is not yet a confident speaker. She is keen to attend TWoA in coming years to build her confidence. She has attended one kura reo, and enjoyed the experience.

Learning experience

Amy initially attended university while also working fulltime, and she proceeded to work her way through all the undergraduate papers through to *Te Māhuri*, finishing in 2015. She gave a very high satisfaction rating to her experience in the initial conversational Māori course, and she was also positive overall about her experience in her stage 1 course; she gave it a satisfaction rating of 8, despite only being able to attend the second half of some two-hour lectures, as she was unable to get time off in her education role.

Like Mikaere, she found the transition to immersion teaching in her stage 2 course difficult, despite putting in considerable effort on learning te reo Māori in the holidays prior to the course starting. She also found that some of the teaching methods of her lecturer in that year did not suit her well; discussion of this led to a somewhat heated exchange between them, with no attempt made by the teacher to adjust the teaching practices. Amy also felt there was a division in the class between those who had come up through kura kaupapa and those who were genuine second language learners, with the lecturer adopting the pace of those who were already reasonably competent speakers, at the expense of the others. She hired a tutor for this paper because she believed that she would fail otherwise.

She was much happier in her stage 3 course, where the lecturer endeavoured to incorporate the learners' experience as much as possible, focused on everyday language, and had designed a regime of pre-tests and tests that meant success was easier to achieve through following the course closely. This lecturer maintained an immersion approach in the classroom most of the time, but would turn to English as a

last resort. The lecturer also conducted informal tutorials outside designated class time, and was more willing to use English there if it seemed helpful.

Amy made strong distinctions between her level of satisfaction in different levels at university. She gave a very high satisfaction rating to her experience in the initial conversational Māori course, and mostly enjoyed her stage 1 class, though her learning was hampered by her not being able to attend part of most classes because of work commitments. She was quite unhappy with her learning in her stage 2 class (she stated that she dreaded coming to class), and gave that class a rating of 3. As mentioned earlier, she was really enthusiastic about her learning in her stage 3 class, giving the lecturer a satisfaction rating of 10. The lecturer had a structured programme, with a good variety of activities, and good follow-up and revision of material covered in previous lessons.

Amy has attended just one kura reo, in the last year of her university study. She was part of the lowest and smallest group, whose members received special bilingual tuition from two prominent reo Māori stalwarts; Amy enjoyed this tuition a great deal, and said that as far as she was concerned, it was learner-centred.

Amy puts considerable effort into informal learning. At the time of the interview she was still completing her degree, and was doing two hours a day of extra work on learning Māori, though she considered much of this formal learning, or related to what was done in class. However, she also watches *Te Whanake* programmes such as *Te Kai a Te Rangatira* (a challenging programme even for reasonably advanced learners), *Te Kākano* videos, and even the te reo-Māori dubbed *Dora the Explorer*. She aims to undertake two 15-minute memorization sessions a day, using an app called Memrise, which tailors the learning to the user's personal needs. She completes an exercise a day from John Foster's textbook resource called *He Whakamārama* (Foster, 2012), and she gets *Kupu o te Rā* (Word of the Day) via email. In the year prior to the interview, she set up a study group with friends who were struggling in their reo Māori course, and was still meeting with some members of this group at the time of the interview. She watches Māori TV, and shows initiative in using contacts outside her own circle, for example, prompting a reo Māori blogger to post on specific grammar points. Much of

this informal learning is motivated by her belief that it is vital to her success in class; "I assume that if I stop doing it, it will all get lost, so that's why I keep doing it."

Amy would like to learn more kīwaha and whakataukī, but finds it difficult to remember these. Her underlying motive is to learn to converse and to be able to deal with basic questions in conversation, but her ultimate goal is to become a really proficient reo Māori speaker.

Learner-centred elements in her learning

Amy expressed a current need to "lock in, to bed in those basics" (she gave examples of simple reo Māori structures that one would assume she would have learnt in earlier years). She attributed this need to her partial attendance in her first year of study, and her difficulty in coping with the immersion environment in her 200-level class.

Amy was definite that she was "most interested in learning how to have a basic conversation – to be able to understand when somebody is talking in Maori." However, she also talked about how learning some reo Māori has fed back into her wider learning and awareness; "… the learning of the language has sparked or reignited interest in Māori issues."

Like most others, Amy asserted the fact that she had control over her own external learning, before stating that she had no real control of the learning programme.

> [I had] complete control over what happens outside of lectures... this year, [I had] the choice to do topics that are relevant to me… but as far as the way that the courses are structured, it feels like there's no choice really.

Amy appreciated the relevance of her most recent university learning, in contrast to the year before, which seemed to have excessively large vocabulary lists, with many words not very relevant to her life (although she believed the lecturer was constrained by the set textbook). For Amy, as for other participants in this project, too strict adherence to the *Te Whanake* course was counterproductive; she appreciated the improved relevance when her teachers took the liberty of adjusting the programme to suit the learners.

Amy was finding the pace of her final paper, based on *Te Māhuri*, suited her well; she believed that this was because of her increasing proficiency in the language, along with a teaching style that suited her better. This was in contrast to her frustration two years earlier, when the teacher appeared to allow the slowest participant to set the pace.

Amy has been given a wide variety of learning activities in her university and kura reo learning; she likes a mix of activities (writing, translation from English to Māori and vice versa), including the opportunity to get things wrong and learn from her mistakes. She likes group work, so long as she feels safe with the group, and she enjoys tactile activities or having to physically shape things—for example, by working as a group to put cards with words on them into sentences. She also enjoyed discussing topics in pairs or groups.

For Amy, autonomy would mean "being able to speak English sometimes," which she followed with the comment "but I know it's not good for me." I took issue with this, which led to a discussion about deep learning and the important of really understanding why certain things were done in te reo Māori. Amy gave one example of the help she had received from a blogger's explanation in English of a reo Māori issue.

> And that's where I like that [Name of blogger] - the guy… was able to explain why 'i' and 'ki' were done like this – the background behind it and the theory behind it, as a deeper learning, that made more sense to me… And if it's all in Māori, those complex explanations can be lost when you are a second language learner.

A significant issue that arose was that Amy felt that the identity she brought to her reo Māori class was not affirmed at all.

> I feel who I am, and that is none (sic) at all in the class. What matters is the language, and the mana of the language… I can understand it, because it's quite political… and because I understand that position, I kind of shrug it off, and go, well, when I step out of [the Māori department at university] I can go and enjoy

>whatever it is I want for patting me on the back, but I certainly feel small when I come in here.

Amy identified two of her university teachers as having a facilitative approach that had enabled her learning. However, like the others, she acknowledged the need for a teacher to have genuine expertise.

Amy sees a need for regular conversation with friends, and liked her friend's idea of books in which the story is replicated with more complex language as the learners move forward. She would like a simpler *Te Whanake* study guide, to make the most of the considerable resources on the *Te Whanake* website. Amy would also like to see more graduated reading material available.

Analysis

Amy has found some aspects of re reo Māori learning have made it difficult for her to flourish, both as a learner and as a person. Amy believed that there was a prevailing ethos that te reo Māori was the most important thing, rather than her as learner; although she accepted this, she agreed that it did not feel good to her. She felt her mana or dignity as an adult with some standing in the community was diminished rather than enhanced by her reo Māori learning experience, although this was not the case in every class. Her initial experience of full immersion was not pleasant, and there seemed to be little acknowledgment and adjustment to learner difference in one year of her learning—there was however considerably more in other years, and in her one experience of kura reo. Overall, however, she appeared to have little adult agency within the learning situations.

It appears that 'adaptive preference' was not applying in Amy's university learning, as she was well aware from her teaching experience that things were not working as well for her as they should. However, her efforts to query the teaching practice she experienced were not heeded, and she was left to struggle on as best she could.

Overall, it appears that Amy's learning experience left much to be desired, especially in terms of enhancing her mana, acknowledging her difference to other, younger members of her classes, and accommodating to the difficulty she experienced with a full immersion environment. Having said that, she has at times had excellent experiences learning te reo Māori as well. Amy has experienced some learning that was relevant to her life, and some that was much less so. She has experienced a wide range of learning activities that suited her. The pace of the lessons has not always suited her, however, and attention did not always seem to be paid to addressing this. She also did not appear to have any significant agency or choices within her reo Māori learning. More concerning was her perception that she did not matter much as an individual, and that her mana was diminished rather than enhanced in her Māori classes.

5.3.3 Tīmoti
Learning experience

Tīmoti was in an unusual and perhaps privileged position in terms of his reo Māori learning. He is a single Māori man in his early 40s, who lives with his daughter in a major urban North Island centre. He was brought up there, then moved independently at 16 to another city in his last years of high school, which rounded off his formal education. While there, he was introduced by his uncle, a high school reo Māori teacher, to one of the sons of a nationally known figure in the Māori world; this man accepted Tīmoti (then aged 17) into a one-year immersion course, held on a rural marae outside a small provincial town. The course was fulltime, mainly oral or aural learning, with a strong emphasis on tikanga Māori in all aspects of life. It was esoteric at times, and had a strong emphasis on karakia and tikanga of the local iwi. The tutors were quite selective about whom they invited to participate, as they were cautious about passing on iwi knowledge, and were conscious of the depth of the karakia and tikanga that they were passing on. The participants in the course went on to assist with week-long hui rūmaki held on marae throughout the region. Participants were on a benefit, but they would be fed while on the hui, and given generous koha of food on completion of each hui. Tīmoti himself emerged as a competent and confident speaker of te reo Māori, and

has done no formal reo Māori learning since. He currently teaches an aspect of Māori culture part-time at a local high school.

Tīmoti chose the sentence 'I can speak te reo Māori well', and explained that his main aspirations at this stage were to gain some sort of tertiary certification to acknowledge his competence in te reo Māori, and to deepen his knowledge of aspects such as karakia that applied to the Māori martial art he taught. He described the quality he was aiming for as "about an eight, I think—just enough to be able to get up on a marae and not embarrass my bones (iwi, or tribe)."

The course Tīmoti took part in had three levels, and participants moved up through the levels as their proficiency improved. The methods were mainly oral and aural, with a focus on memorisation.

> Kāore he pepa, me mau ā-rae te katoa o te māramamatanga... ētahi o ngā mea, ngā karakia i ako ai au i taua wā, kāore anō kia tuhituhi…

> There was no paper, you had to learn all this knowledge off by heart… some of the things, the karakia that I learnt at that time, I still haven't written down…

The teacher did in fact provide some worksheets, but they were written by him and based on his experience. The content of classes was based on Māori language, but also focused heavily on tikanga related to all aspects of Māori life, with some of the material being quite esoteric. Classes were held in the wharenui (meetinghouse), with participants seated in circles; they were quite structured, with full days of learning from nine to five. Participants would be collected and driven to the marae by the teacher each day and returned to town in the evening. There was range of ages from 16 to people in their 50s, and there were roughly even numbers of males and females. There was no formal certification at the end of the course, but Tīmoti observed that when they encountered a group of 300-level reo Māori students from a mainstream university, it soon became apparent that Tīmoti and the others were clearly ahead in their reo proficiency. Tīmoti emerged as a confident, competent speaker of te reo Māori.

In terms of satisfaction, Tīmoti said, "I would put that at one of the highest ratings that I could because that was just something special, and he's never done one since – well not that I know of."

Learner-centred elements in his learning

In response to a question about the level of autonomy he had in his course, Tīmoti agreed there was virtually no autonomy for learners in the course he attended; he was not offered any choice in the learning activities, nor did he have any choice about assessment within his learning environment. He said that his teacher gave tests and assessments, but also used other methods (perhaps more instinctive and informal) for group participants. Memorisation rather than writing was particularly important to his teacher. For his own ideal situation for autonomy and control over his own learning, Tīmoti turned to the idea of "an app or some sort of software." For him, the main things he would look for in an ideal situation would be a way of allowing free interaction between teacher and learner, use of a student forum, and sharing of answers to questions that had been raised.

In terms of pace, Tīmoti's learning experience was very different from learners on other courses, as he was in an immersion environment very early.

> The first initial stage was very difficult, for the first couple, maybe eight weeks, and then after that it was sink or swim, so when you started swimming, then you're good…I think it gave about a six-week window at the beginning, if you know, if this isn't for you, we'll have a little assessment, you talk to me, and this may not be for you…

Tīmoti found that he had some variety in his learning, and that generally he was happy with the learning activities.

> Some of them were a little foreign… at the same time, it wasn't too far away from the normal thing, where the teacher will say, 'Right we're learning this today,' and you learn it… a lot of the time it was like that...

At times, however, his teacher would expect his students to do research, or to use what could be called discovery learning.

> …he wouldn't give his full māramatanga (knowledge) or something, he'd let you find it out, and I think that part of the journey was good for me – it's where I get to scramble through the words and go, what's this? … because I love words too…

Tīmoti particularly enjoyed activities that required more exploratory learning; sometimes the group would be led into the bush, and the teacher would do activities like explain about the uses of different plants. He found sitting down and studying for long periods difficult.

> What I didn't like mostly was sitting down stuff all the time, I'm not really keen on it all the time, I like to get – I like to move and do stuff, but I knew it was necessary, you know, but sometimes it's just a bit boring to be sitting down for ages.

Tīmoti took a more radical view than the others on the issue of respecting the teacher, because his teacher used to encourage him to 'werohia' (challenge) the learning he was given.

> I think our people are … I think – one of the essences of being Māori in a way is inquisitiveness, you know? Little bit cheeky, a little bit inquisitive, run with that, and have a laugh - you know, obviously be serious about your learning …

Tīmoti was quite positive about the relevance of the language he learned; although he did say that there was some quite esoteric language involved in his course, he was adamant that "pretty much everything" was relevant.

Tīmoti expressed a belief that rather than having his identity affirmed, he believed that his identity deepened and broadened to become part of something larger, and that his

individual identity was diminished in favour of identification with Māori society and even the wider world.

> I actually feel like – it may be more connected – to – to being Maori, more so than my own individualism. In fact, I think that it's - possibly in a way it could be even viewed by myself as the opposite, I sort of lost an individuality in a way, because that separation was kind of whittled away a little bit, and I became a bigger part of something – it was almost like an inclusive thing more than a discovery of myself...

Tīmoti believed that his teacher had mainly acted as a facilitator.

> … I think he was doing both, but I would actually say that facilitating was probably more his game – the other thing is that he used to do like I was saying before, that he wouldn't tell you the answer to something. He'd give you something, and you'd have to go away and then come back and you'd have to explain to him what it was.

He agreed that facilitation fitted within Māori values, but compared the need for to ensure correctness and safety in the language with his own area of expertise, mau rākau, where learners needed to be told certain things for their own safety.

Finally, in terms of informal learning, Tīmoti expressed appreciation for the large amount of material available on the internet, and said he would like to see even more. He also raised the issue of a good, conducive learning environment as an important factor for informal learning, without clarifying what that might entail.

Analysis

Tīmoti was in the unusual position of having been in a highly-structured immersion environment, and he received a good deal of benefit from doing so; his reo Māori was well established as a young adult, and he has felt strong and confident in his reo Māori since then. He provides a very different perspective on the issue of individuality; in terms of the capabilities approach, he asserted that he was flourishing, and achieving

fuller human functioning, but within a strong collective feeling—not only in terms of Māori, but as a human as well. He still clearly values his individual identity, but observes that his learning gave him a deeper connection with the world around him. Other participants, such as Pita (see Chapter 6), have similar experiences, which supply a useful corrective to taking an approach that is too individualistic.

There was evidence that Tīmoti was being used as a means to an end (passing on karakia and other knowledge to a new generation within the iwi), but he had no sense that he was not regarded as important himself. The knowledge appears to have been passed on carefully and with expectation that it would be used appropriately, but it appears that he was being genuinely entrusted with the reo and the tikanga knowledge as an individual, no doubt with the expectation that it would be passed on to others at some time. There is little evidence of adult agency or choice as a learner in the course; the course was clearly the initiative of the Māori leader concerned, and participants entered it on his terms. However, it was clear from Tīmoti's description of how the leader conducted himself, that he was a genuine servant of the people, cooking for them and driving them to the course. He exemplified qualities of both proactiveness and humility.

In terms of learner-centredness, there was little evidence of learner-centred ideas being put into practice; however, Tīmoti was clear that the teacher had a facilitative approach, and was willing to give people time to work things out for themselves. The course clearly had a wider aim than just to teach learners te reo Māori, and could be perhaps considered an exception to the expectation that learner-centredness should apply—although if the leader of the course had more detailed knowledge about learners before the course began, and allowed participants more say in the conduct of the course, the benefits may have possibly been even greater.

5.3.4 Brian

Brian is a single Pākehā man in his early 30s. He was born and brought up in the upper North Island, eventually went to university. He then moved overseas, where he learnt the local language while working as an English teacher. After returning to New Zealand, he was urged by friends to attend the first year of Te Ara Reo, a TWoA

course; he did so, and quite enjoyed it. Once again, he was encouraged by others to do the second year of Te Ara Reo, and was part-way through this when he was interviewed. He says that he does what is required (he also has other things he wants to do with his time), and is reasonably interested, but has no real passion for te reo Māori. He has interesting observations to make from his experience of becoming a competent speaker in a foreign language.

Brian chose descriptor 4 ('I can speak about some simple or basic things in te reo Māori'). Of his motivation, he said, "I'd have to say, realistically, it's probably a six or a seven. Like, I'm motivated in the sense that I want to learn it. But I don't do much about it." He agreed that his aspirations for quality of language were quite modest; "Just conversation. I just want to... I want to be able to have a conversation, basically."

Learning experience

Brian is very positive about the course he is doing. He enjoys the integration of tikanga with language learning, and compares the TWoA course favourably with other foreign language learning he has experienced through university.

> I think with that course… it's engaging. Like, it's not like studying at a university. It's like you're doing the language. You know, you're doing the kapa haka. You're singing the songs. You go to the marae. You're kind of being a part of the language.

He is impressed with his current teacher (unlike his previous teacher, who was less organised and less willing to answer questions). However, he did not have a high opinion of some of the course material, especially the short scripts that are meant to be funny and engaging, but which he—and others—sometimes found more confusing than funny.

Brian appreciates the importance of informal learning, but does not do a great deal. He does the required homework for his TWoA course, although he focuses on sentence

structures rather than vocabulary, mainly because his foreign language learning impressed on him the importance of knowing how to construct sentences. Brian's class have been urged by their teacher to watch the Māori news programme *Te Kaea*, but Brian rarely does this. His group of classmates have not yet organised a time to get together to talk Māori, and Brian admits he really wants to have his week nights to himself. He gets *Te Kupu o te Rā* in his email inbox, and checks out the example if he knows the word.

Brian strongly affirmed the idea that learners need to have an understanding of tikanga Māori, as the cultural setting for the language. He believes this helps learners to know what words really mean in a Māori context ("…so you have an understanding of why people use words like manaakitanga or kaitiaki"). Brian also expressed the need for grammar, and the feeling that this was a key to being empowered to create sentences—to "put things together." He expressed some frustration that he wanted to find out things at his own pace rather than the pace of the class, although he accepted that there was a need to go with the group: "I just want to be able to make sentences. I'm frustrated that I can't put things together… I'm just impatient I guess." This keen awareness of the importance of grammar carried over from his earlier learning of a foreign language to a high level of proficiency. Brian also observed that his interest in learning more was stimulated by recognising words or sentences in te reo Māori; he found that as he recognised more, he became keen to know more.

I was aware that he surfed, and asked if it was important to him to learn how to speak about surfing, as an activity relevant to his personal life. However, he did not follow that line of conversation, and said instead that he was more interested in the process of sharing in discussion, and that it was more important to have the stimulation of sharing about things he and fellow learners had done recently than to be able to talk about specific topics.

> When we want to talk and stuff, we've got to find a topic in Māori. It's easy to chat away in English, but alright, what are we going to—what sort of topic in Māori [is there] that we've got some common ground on? Maybe if we were encouraged to bring things in and share them, you know? (Interviewer: Like,

from your life?). Yeah, yeah. Come in and tell us about something you did on the weekend and how you did it.

Learner-centred elements in his learning

Brian believes he did not have much autonomy in his TWoA course, and felt a certain frustration at not being able to find out what he wants when he wants it.

> Maybe that's the source of some of my frustration sometimes. We're learning one thing and I feel like argh, there's all these other things I want to know, and fill these gaps in. But I have to wait for it to come up in the course… We haven't done frequency adverbs yet. I don't know how to say 'sometimes', 'always', 'often'. When are we going to do that? But now that I'm in this learning system, I'm just waiting for it to happen.

Brian agreed that he had virtually no choice of content in his comparatively early stages of learning in Te Ara Reo. When asked what content he would particularly like, he replied that he would like more space to work on things that arose as the class went on, and for following up on things he feels he would use in his daily life.

> To me, I'd be like, can we stop for a sec? And do that? Because I feel like I can incorporate that into my day a lot more.

He acknowledges that he needs to fit in with the needs of the class ("There's twenty of us and we can't all get what we want"), but he would still like the opportunity to follow up on specific things he is keen to learn.

> It's good to have that structure. But at the same time, it would be really good to just have a bit of space to be like, I really want to learn this. Can we spend some time on it?

For Brian, autonomy meant the opportunity to take time to ask questions, or to focus on a particular piece of learning, either individually or as a group.

I think I'd like a little bit more opportunity to be able to ask questions… Or even as a group, the class, decide what we want to focus on. Because there's surely other people who feel like, I'm missing something, I don't know how to say it. And before we keep moving on, I want to stop and work on that.

Brian had been offered some choices in learning activities in the previous year of his TWoA course, particularly in things like games. He pointed out that one method of assessment at TWoA has been through whakaari (skits or role-plays), and he believed that these may have been an uncomfortable experience for some learners. He had not experienced a significant element of choice about assessment, although he did appreciate the comparative easiness of the assessment activities he experienced in TWoA, and felt that they were set up for students to pass and move on.

Brian said that he did not know much about the teacher-student relationship in Māori culture, but that he did not see a problem with learners having more autonomy. He was also positive about the relevance of the language he learned; he found that he was learning language he could "take home and use around the home." The pace of his current course suits him well, and appears to suit the other class members well too ("I think everyone in our class is pretty much at the same level and keeping up with the class and it seems to work pretty well"). He was less pleased with the pace the previous year when he felt the teacher spent too much time on some aspects ("I just felt like we were spending a lot of time on nothing… same thing, or going over one word or how to say one thing"). He now feels that he has the chance to stop and clarify things if needed, something he very much appreciates.

Brian observed that some of the learning activities in Te Ara did not really suit everybody.

Um, it's an interesting one about the learning activities. Because there's heaps of singing. You know, there's always heaps of waiata in Māori and at first, and there's, I think also, with Māori, there's a lot of expectation that you'll put yourself out there and sing and engage in … like a really outgoing kind of way. And I remember when I started [teacher's] class, it took me a while to really get

comfortable with that. Especially the singing. I didn't feel comfortable singing. I think a lot of people didn't.

Although Brian became more comfortable with singing over time, he felt uncomfortable with an expectation that he would be able to haka, for example.

And like when we went to the noho [marae] last year, you know, we had to do a haka and skits and all sorts of stuff where you kind of had to put yourself out there. And I felt uncomfortable. Like I had to lead a haka at one point which I kind of struggle with. It takes me a while to pick up a song and the movements.

He felt that there was an accepting environment, but observed that despite this, such activities may have put some people off continuing with the course.

I think a lot of people, a lot of people last year, I probably knew people who dropped off the course because they didn't feel comfortable with that. Especially the noho [marae]. A couple of people left the noho [marae] because they were just finding it a bit intense I think.

I commented that I personally did not enjoy having to take part in skits in reo Māori classes, and that I preferred just discussing things. Brian agreed, and suggested that more guided conversations would be useful.

… It would be good to have the opportunity to sit down and like, discuss a topic. Like a guided conversation… It's not like I don't know what to talk to people about. Like I can chat away to people in English but when it comes to Māori, because I'm not sure how to say things, I don't often quite know where to start. So, you kind of need someone to push you along a track and start you off.

He gave an example of initiating this sort of conversation himself.

> As I was driving to class I thought... I was actually listening to the radio article about the kererū [native wood pigeon] being eaten. And I just thought, ah that would be an interesting thing to talk about. So I just sat down with some people and just said, Did you guys hear about it? And then we talked about it. You know? And it was like, there - we almost needed a topic. Yeah. And often we don't have that. It's like, 'All right, break time. Speak Māori.' And you can see everyone sort of shuffle around a bit uncomfortably. 'Ok... what can I say to this person?'

Brian agreed that his learning had been more instruction than facilitation, but that as the class advanced further, he could perceive a change of approach.

> I think it's been more along the instructive lines. But I think that that's probably relevant because now we're getting to a point where I think, hopefully we get more into a bit of facilitation… I think you've got to have a mix of both.

He agreed that language learners needed direct instruction on issues such as saying karakia before eating, taking part in mihimihi, and more generally on the appropriate way to use the language; after some thought, he decided that expecting a teacher to be mainly a facilitator of learning was "kind of culturally inappropriate." Finally, Brian said that he did not know much about the teacher-student relationship in Māori culture, but that he did not see a problem with learners having more autonomy.

Analysis

Brian was generally enjoying the experience of learning, and appeared to be flourishing in the learning setting, though he felt hampered to some extent by a lack of opportunity to follow up on some things that cropped up in his learning. In terms of dignity as a learner, he found himself being put in uncomfortable situations at times, with expectations that he would have more cultural knowledge than he actually had. There did not seem to be any particular issue with him being used as a means rather than an end; as a fairly young Pākehā man, te reo Māori was being freely shared with him. Furthermore, his mana was not diminished in any noticeable way in his learning process. However, he had little adult agency in his learning, and little allowance seems

to have been made for individual difference, evidenced by him being restricted in asking questions, or following up on aspects he was particularly interested in.

In terms of learner-centredness, it was clear that Brian's kaiako made a genuine effort to provide enjoyable and entertaining classes, and to provide important cultural guidance on conduct in the Māori world, so the course could be described as student-centred to a degree. The teacher also conducted an initial interview with the student before the course began; this at least partly met the learner-centred criterion of the teacher being aware of the learner's needs, interests and aspirations. However, there was little evidence of choice, or individual or group agency in the learning setting around course content and assessment.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the learning experience of five of the learners, and set it within the framework of the capabilities approach, modified by tikanga Māori. The chapter has highlighted the difficulties experienced by Mikaere and Amy in adjusting to immersion in te reo Māori in a university setting, particularly where this immersion is not well managed or facilitated; the chapter also highlighted the difficulties that have occurred in university settings where reasonably fluent speakers are sharing the same classes as genuine first language learners. The chapter also brought attention to Amy's feeling that her mana had been diminished in the process of her reo Māori learning, and, for both Mikaere and Amy, the grit and determination that is sometimes needed to finish a course or a paper in the face of adverse circumstances. The chapter also shows how, in the case of Amīria and Brian, previous language learning experience, or even previous teaching experience in other subjects, can bring a different perspective, and cause a more critical eye to be cast on practices that are generally accepted in reo Māori teaching circles. This chapter also shows the difficulty adult learners experience when they attempt to influence the learning process in some way; three of the learners (Amīria, Amy and Brian) made some effort to question teaching practice in their respective learning environments, and were unsuccessful in influencing their circumstances.

The next chapter presents the experience of others who also experienced some difficulties and dissatisfaction in their learning, but who took a less questioning approach.

Chapter 6: Learners' experience – Margaret, Pita, Jack, Hine and Cathy

6.1 Introduction

This chapter continues with the learning experience of five more learners, Margaret, Pita, Jack, Hine and Cathy. It follows the same pattern as the previous one; each learner's experience is outlined, including the degree to which learner-centredness was present in their learning, followed by analysis based on the principles of the capabilities principle (modified by tikanga Māori), and then in terms of learner-centredness. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key elements that emerge from the learners' experiences.

Learners (Chapter 6)					
Name	**Margaret**	**Jack**	**Pita**	**Hine**	**Cathy**
Age/Gender	50s / F	40s / M	50s / M	40s / F	40s / F
General education	Did not discuss	Tertiary	Tertiary	Tertiary	Tertiary
Māori/non-Māori	Pākehā	Māori	Māori	Māori	Māori
Learning Contexts (te reo Māori)					
University	Extramural paper	University papers	Completed papers up to Stage 3 (repeated Stage 2 after several years gap)	Completed stage 1 and 2 papers	Completed Stage 4 papers (repeated stage 2 after several years gap)
Kura reo	0	0	0	2	12
TWoA	Occasional course	1 year	Te Ara reo (3 years) completed, plus course prior to Te Ara Reo	2 years completed	Te Aupikitanga, Te Pīnakitanga
Te Ataarangi	Extensive study	Course under auspices of Te Ataarangi			Tried, did not like it
Other	Occasional seminars	Course at iwi whare wānanga		Training college for kura kaupapa teachers completed, post-graduate study at iwi whare wānanga	Postgraduate programme using te reo Māori, but not learning it.
Proficiency, Motivation, Proficiency aim					
Proficiency (1 high) (self-evaluated)	4 (2-3)	3	3	Did not ask	2
Motivation (10 high)	7	8,9 (has been higher)	7	7	20!
Proficiency aim (10 high)	7	8,9	8	9 (Te Panekiretanga)	High

Table 10: Key information about learners in Chapter 6

6.2.1 Margaret

Margaret is a Pākehā woman in her mid-50s. She was born in the lower North Island, and is married to a Māori man who is the eldest in a large family and speaks only a little reo Māori. She now lives with her husband in a small provincial town in the North Island, where she works in a local Māori health organization. She has been learning Māori for 35 years, starting when she got married; she wanted to understand what was being said among her husband's wider family, and to take more of a role in the wider family. She is involved in her husband's marae and in the marae committee. Her most worthwhile learning has been through Te Ataarangi, but she also did year 9 Māori through the Correspondence School, sat in on high school classes while her children were little, and has attended various other classes and courses, such as at TWoA. She is a reasonably proficient speaker, whose main desire is to feel comfortable in various Māori situations, to be able to converse, and to be able to understand conversations. She believes she has reached a place where she now feels comfortable using te reo Māori in family situations.

When asked to rate her proficiency, she initially placed herself quite low ('I can speak about some simple or basic things in te reo Māori), but admitted that this low ranking was influenced by the fact that she was often in the company of really proficient speakers; after further thought, she rated her proficiency at "between 2 and 3" by comparison with others who know far less. She said her aspirations were still similar to what they were when she began learning - "just to be able to participate more fully in the family that I was part of." She also wanted to pass on the language to her children and grandchildren. As for motivation, she rated hers at about 7, and gave the same rating to the quality of reo Māori she wanted to achieve.

Learning experience

Margaret completed an extramural reo Māori paper through Massey University in the late 1980s, then a beginner course through the Correspondence School. She did not say much about these courses, focusing mainly on her more recent learning environments. She appreciated the convenience of extramural learning (through the Correspondence

School and through Massey University), and though she did not find it particularly effective, she believed she gained something from it.

> Obviously extramural is ... has its own scale of learning because you're basically self-taught and you're self-motivated, so it's all self-book learning... personally, I find extramural – sometimes I mean it suited my lifestyle - I didn't find it effective learning but I did grasp what I could from it...

Margaret went on to attend various courses through TWoA; in these, the quality of her experience largely hinged on the quality of the teaching, or more specifically the quality of facilitation. In 2013, she was enrolled in and participated in a Level 4 course run by TWoA, but when she looked at the available options for 2014, she saw that the next course involved weekend noho marae, which would constitute the bulk of the work and the assessments as well. She felt that her commitments at committee level on her home marae precluded her taking part. It appears that, for Margaret, the TWoA courses were just part of the mix of different programmes she accessed when it suited her. She took part in courses if she felt she would gain benefit from them; she was particularly wary of the quality of teacher, and would increasingly avoid courses if she thought the teaching—especially the classroom facilitation—was likely to be of poor quality.

Margaret gave her overall experience in TWoA a satisfaction rating of 7, with the quality varying from course to course.

> Again, that's basically because of the ability, the resource, the human resources they have available to… Again, for me most of my learning is coming down to the person who has been available.

Margaret lives in a provincial area where the Te Ataarangi method has been expertly employed by some nationally known figures, but admits that the method did not come easily to her. She attributes this to being brought up with and being familiar with a different way of learning.

When I first started, when I went to Te Ataarangi, I struggled immensely even to learn, you know, the very basics of when we did the 'te' and the 'ngā', as this was one block [rākau] and there were many blocks, to physically look at them, it took quite a while to be able to unlock that thing of not seeing it *written*… But... when it's constantly spoken to you, and you visualise it and you hear it and then you have to say it, after a while your brain actually connects all three together, but it took quite a while to actually open up, to learn that, to accept that…

Margaret has also observed other people really struggling with the method.

Recently I was in a class with a couple who were in their late 60s, and [they] struggled immensely with the Te Ataarangi method … Really hard… But when they had it written – because there was no writing, because in Te Ataarangi you don't write, you don't have anything written, all you do is you've got to listen, and then you've got to speak, you know, 'Whakarongo, kōrero, titiro' kind of thing, and they found that just so, so difficult that they nearly – they walked away, they nearly walked away, but when it was written on a piece of paper and they could physically see it… they didn't have a problem at all.

Despite these issues, Margaret gave her Te Ataarangi learning a satisfaction rating of 8.

[Te Ataarangi was the] format of learning where I was put in a position where I had to interact… so you are put in that position, but in a gentle thing... it was the most effective learning for me.

Learner-centred elements in her learning

Margaret said that her main need and want as a learner had been met: "My main desire has been to converse and understand." She found occasional opportunities to have autonomy, such as an independently run weekend wānanga that allowed for some control over the content of the course.

… we gave him [the teacher] what we wanted to work on a little bit, and that was mainly around grammar, so we were—even though it was structured to a point, we'd say 'Okay we're all really struggling with this, so shall we just stick to this part?' So it wasn't so... lesson one, lesson two, lesson three, and this is what we're going to do this time…

She acknowledged that the organisers of this seminar, run by a private trust, had more liberty to be flexible, whereas tertiary institutions have requirements to teach to a curriculum. She was still uncertain about whether she wanted more autonomy.

When I first started learning… I wanted to be in the hands of somebody skilled who could impart knowledge on to me that I could take in… and I don't know if I'm at that point yet where I want to have more autonomy over what I need to know.

However, after further discussion, she concluded that autonomy did matter to her.

… so now, I would say that it's more important to me to have autonomy over what I really want to learn, and then unfortunately those opportunities aren't – aren't here, unless you were going to purchase a one on one package with somebody…

Margaret spontaneously connected the idea of lack of autonomy with the high drop-out rate she observed in various reo Māori courses she has attended.

I would say too that is a lot of the reason for some of the dropout from courses… I don't know whether that comes under autonomy but people don't have control over their own learning…I couldn't even think of the number of courses that I've enrolled in, and on the first night there'll be 30 or 40, and for whatever reason, it may not be autonomy over their own learning, and I think a lot of that also that had to do with the facilitation of the courses, and that by the sixth or seventh week you may only have half of that. By the end of the year you'd be lucky if he had a quarter of that number.

She returned to the same point, and even allowing for factors such as the difficulty of learning another language as an adult, she still asserted that lack of autonomy in courses was a factor in people dropping out.

> For people who tend to enrol and then drop out… I'm not sure, I've thought about why that would be, but I think some of that is because the choice of their learning is not been what they wanted… They don't have any control over it - like I said, they just have to sit there and take the way it's given, and if it doesn't suit what they need... it's a drop or leave it kind of situation.

Margaret agreed that the degree to which learners could have autonomy was potentially problematic, and that it depended on the teacher facilitating a relationship where some autonomy could be exercised.

> They're in control I guess, and you don't want to push past that boundary… I think it's a personality thing sometimes… that depends who the teacher, who the kaiako is and what level of relationship the student, the tauira have with that person…

Finally, when asked about choice of activities, Margaret agreed that she had been offered little, but the she did not expect much either ("They've got their framework in place, and you either stick with it or you don't participate, I guess").

Analysis

Margaret appears to have had the opportunity to flourish as learner, and has been accorded full dignity as a learner. She does not appear to have treated as a means rather than an end, and she did not express any concern about the diminishing of her mana as a learner or as a person, although she has experienced frustration at times. On the other hand, she has only occasionally had the chance to exercise adult agency within her courses.

In terms of learner-centredness, Margaret has not experienced any significant attempt by teachers to find out about her as a learner, although her courses (particularly with Te

Ataarangi) appear to have satisfied her desires to learn how to converse. She could only point to one significant example of having real choice about any aspect of her learning, in the independently run course mentioned previously.

6.2.2 Jack
Learning experience

Jack is a Māori man in his early 40s, from a small North Island town where Māori form a significant proportion of the population. He went to university, but said he had identity issues as a fair-skinned Māori in an unfamiliar place, and did not really enjoy any aspect of his varied university learning, including learning te reo Māori. He did however start learning taiaha there, and has continued that through his life. He eventually gained a BA, and moved to England. While there, he found he had more contact with Māori people, Māori culture, and te reo Māori than he did at home, and his experience there created a new desire to connect more with his own culture. On returning home, he followed a relative's urging to train as a high school teacher, and was eventually employed as a Māori dean in a major urban area in the North Island. He did three consecutive years of different reo Māori training as professional development; the first course was at an iwi wānanga, the second was a TWoA course (though he was not formally enrolled), and the third was a reo Māori course that was under the auspices of *Te Ataarangi*, but run on very different lines. He particularly valued the last of these, mainly because of both the quality of the teaching, and his respect for the teacher.

Jack moved overseas again, where he taught English for 5 years, and married a foreign woman and had two children. He returned home subsequent to the interview, partly prompted by wanting to bring up his children as Māori (he speaks to them in Māori). He intends to learn informally rather than formally now that he has returned.

Jack chose the descriptor 'I can speak te reo Māori fairly well' to describe his level of proficiency. He specifically wants to learn to deal with formal situations, although he said he was aware that this requires more general language skills as well. He said, "I think all the formal things are really important … so that I can perform roles in a confident way so that they don't stress me out when I have to do it - because it is kind of stressful, to be honest." He rated his motivation to learn te reo Māori at 9 on a scale

of 10, but with one proviso; "It's like everything else – it's got to fit in with everything else."

Jack did a year of te reo Māori at university, in 1992. He says that he didn't find the atmosphere at the university overall particularly welcoming, and admits that, although he eventually graduated with a BA after doing a wide variety of subjects, he didn't really like any of it, including the reo Māori learning.

> I had this strange idea that university should be fun you see. I went there and thought everything was kind of crap. I didn't enjoy any of those subjects I learnt.

Jack took part informally in a TWoA course in 2007. He was not enrolled, but the teacher was happy for him to take part. As he recalls, it was a six-month course, and he only attended for about half of the time. He was a high school teacher at the time, and he was varying his professional development each year. Jack declared himself very satisfied with the experience, although he could see the humorous side of it: "Well I've got to be very satisfied, given the fact that I wasn't even enrolled."

When Jack was enrolled in other courses in past years, he was also in a pastoral teaching role in a high school, so he would use his reo Māori a good deal, using mihimihi and karakia in particular with parents and students, as well as using te reo in taiaha training. He said that "Whatever I was learning, I was using." He watched some Māori TV, and he would also frequently turn to his book resources, looking up words and checking things. He maintains an active interest in older forms of Māori, such as mōteatea. Once he left to go overseas, he corresponded for a year with a fluent speaker; he found this useful learning, as it forced him to look up a lot of words. While overseas, he has met someone who also practices taiaha, so he has been using te reo Māori in that context. He has been speaking te reo Māori to his children, and keeps a dictionary at his side to learn new words.

At the time of the interview, he was planning to return to New Zealand, where he had plans to attend kura reo and go along to his children's kōhanga reo, but had no plans to

pursue formal learning. He believed that he could continue to learn informally, using Māori TV and print and electronic resources. He is concerned about people being steered to institutions rather than marae, and would like to see kaumātua rewarded financially for assisting people with learning te reo ("What would be the best Māori language teacher I could have right now? That would be a kaumātua sitting in my house.").

Learner-centred elements in his learning

Jack had a somewhat dismissive attitude to the idea of the learner having autonomy in his formal learning (although later in the interview he warmed to the idea).

> No, the content's usually prescribed or it's usually laid out. And I can choose to enter that course or enter that programme. So I've had some control over that. I could say yes or no…I don't have ultimate control. If I had ultimate control, as I say, I'd have a kuia at my house even for an hour a day. And she'd be paid $100,000 a year.

He associated the idea of learner autonomy with excessive individualisation, which had negative effects on Māori society, especially in terms of individualisation of land and subsequent land loss.

> I'm not sure, I'm not totally sure about this. I definitely know that I have definite ways that I like to learn… So I am definitely an individual. But I am definitely part of a collective… And we have to, as a collective, as Māori as a collective, we have to think about what's not only best for me as an individual, what's best for us as a people. And what's best for us as a group of learners.

Jack believed that there could be a clash with Māori values if the learner had too much autonomy.

> I have control and autonomy over learning outside of the class. When I go to a class I'm there to interact within a community. That's our tikanga, that's our guide to how that community functions. And we look for our leaders, that is, the

teacher, to be guiding that tikanga and how that thing goes. So possibly, to answer your question, possibly that could … be a clash there.

Analysis

Jack has found ways to flourish within most of the courses he has attended as a reo Māori learner. However, he has not been offered the opportunity to learn the skills of formal speaking in any purposeful way, despite this being important to him, and something he feels he lacks and is inadequately equipped for. He does not appear to have been treated as a means rather than an end, and his learning seems to have enhanced his mana rather than diminishing it. He does not appear to have had any significant adult agency within the courses he has attended, although he seems unperturbed by this, and believes his agency is exercised by deciding which courses to attend, and making appropriate use of his own time. This willingness to go along with a comparatively disempowered stance could be viewed as adaptive preference, or accepting what is familiar as right and normal.

In terms of learner-centredness, Jack does not appear to have been questioned by teachers about what he needs or wants, and, like Mikaere, he has not had a serious opportunity to develop formal speaking skills. As mentioned in the earlier paragraph, he has had little opportunity to exercise any significant agency within courses he attended, although he does not really aspire to have such agency, mainly for cultural reasons (valuing the collective over the individual).

6.2.3 Pita
Learning experience

Pita is a Māori man (his father is Pākehā) in his mid-50s. He was brought up in the lower North Island, where he experienced minimal reo Māori learning. He is a teacher, and is married to a Pākehā woman who has been extremely supportive of his reo Māori journey.

Pita chose the descriptor "I can speak te reo Māori fairly well," and explained that for him, the key thing was being able to understand what people are saying:

>That's really what I want to learn to do - because I believe that if I can understand what they're saying then it's going to be easy for me to replicate that and therefore I will be able to speak, read and write as well.

Although he has occasional need for more formal speaking skills, these were not a priority for him.

>It may become a priority in my future... I'd like to learn a lot more about the tauparapara and the kōrero of my own iwi and hapū in particular, but I sort of feel you need to get to a reasonable level in just your general reo before you go there...

He rated his motivation at 7.

>I think the fact that I haven't been able to find the time outside the class to put in much time is very much an indication of motivation...but I'd like to think that's moving up the scale at the moment (laughs).

As far as the quality of language he aspired to, Pita said. "I think I would be happy if I got to maybe an 8 ... I think that's a realistic goal." He had explored options for more intensive immersion courses, but was aware that this was not a realistic option for him at that stage of his life.

Pita has been learning te reo Māori for 25-30 years, starting when a fellow teacher set up a class using the Te Ataarangi method. As he recalls, he did not attend many times, but he was impressed with how quickly they made progress using the rākau method (Cuisenaire rods), and how memorable the method was. After that, he took a first-year extramural university paper in te reo Māori; this included two or three noho marae during the year. He later shifted to a small provincial town in the South Island, before eventually moving with his family to an urban area, where he attended university part-time, where he completed Stage 1 and Stage 2 reo Māori papers in 2000 and 2001. He also studied for a year in an evening class with TWoA in the early 2000s, when the

institution was just finding its feet. The course was poorly organised, and he found many issues with it.

Pita returned to part-time university study in 2007, intending to finish his degree by doing the Stage 3 paper; unfortunately, by then he had lost much of his proficiency in the language, so he followed the Māori department's recommendation and did the Stage 2 paper again. Although he gained a good mark, he felt that he did not understood much of the work, and his confidence was knocked by the experience. However, he continued his reo Māori learning through Te Ara Reo at TWoA over the course of several years, working at a simpler level than he had been doing at university, and emerging as a much more confident speaker. He is very conscious of the need to maintain his reo, and does so through a conversation group, some reading, and some involvement through his work.

Pita's most positive experience has been with TWoA. Despite the disappointment of his first experience with the institution, Pita has been much more satisfied with his recent study there; he has found the teaching more professional, resources enormously improved, and more consideration given to the way people learn. He found that TWoA offered him an environment that was conducive to learning: "Even though the Wānanga o Aotearoa course is actually quite set in its way, there's time and space within it. I think that gives you autonomy to follow your interests…" His passage through Te Ara Reo took longer than three years, and demonstrates the level of comfort he felt in the institution and the programme. He did the first two years, then, when there were insufficient numbers to run the third year, he continued to go on and off to the second-year class until they had sufficient numbers to run the third-year class.

> I went quite a lot the year after I'd done my first lot of second year; the next time I didn't go that much but just enough to sort of know who the people were, for the whanaungatanga in case once it started I knew a few of the people.

Pita found that not much of the reo was new in the first year of study in Te Ara Reo, but he appreciated the knowledge of tikanga amongst the tutors and amongst the other participants as well. He believed that he would have been better suited to starting in the

second year, and that the tutor underestimated his level of language in the brief interview used to place him within the course (he was unfamiliar with the term 'pepeha' as used as an outline of where a person comes from – he was more familiar with the term as 'tribal saying'). Pita seemed relatively unconcerned about this, however.

> I no longer look at learning te reo Māori as a course to pass, it's just a journey you go on, and wherever your journey takes you, if it takes you back a little bit, or sideways, hei aha (it doesn't matter) – it's a journey.

He was particularly keen to maintain his reo Māori, having experienced losing the language in the years before he returned to do the course based on *Te Pihinga*.

> From 2001 to 2007 I basically lost just about everything, so I know that I've really got to – got to keep – kōrero, particularly the speaking bit of it, to have that confidence and that input.

Pita wanted to continue in Te Pīnakitanga, the fourth-year TWoA programme, but did not enrol, as it involved travel on a Friday afternoon to another urban centre, and a time commitment of a weekend every month. He acknowledged that the third year of Te Ara Reo had been difficult, with a course commitment of three hours twice a week in the evenings, coupled with his own whānau responsibilities and work pressures. However, he gave a satisfaction rating of 8 or 9 for his study in TWoA, and declared, "I'm a great fan of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa."

Pita is aware of the importance of informal learning, and he finds he needs to integrate it on a daily basis; working out how to effectively integrate such learning into his busy life is an ongoing process. When Pita was taking part in a university course, he would usually spend four to five hours per week on private study (the lecturers recommended 10). He found that much of this was vocabulary work, which he felt was often more for assessments than for real life. When doing a TWoA course, he would usually spend a couple of hours a week on private language study. He reads something on the internet every day, and occasionally followed the example of a friend who reads aloud to

himself in te reo Māori every day. He regularly attends a local conversation group that meets for an hour or so in a local pub each week. He enjoys singing and playing the guitar for leisure, and nowadays generally turns to waiata Māori when he does this, so this becomes part of his informal learning. Despite this, he feels he does not do enough, but is also aware of time pressures of a demanding job and family commitments.

Pita believes learners have a huge amount of material available to them if they choose to access it.

> …there are all the resources in the world nowadays, the oral resources, you know, the old TV, and on the internet – everything's there, you know you can make a lot of progress ... I've got books, there's a place for all sorts of different things… I can't think of anything that would make a big difference.

He did, however, see a need for programmes such as *Kōrero Mai* to be indexed properly, so they could be accessed more readily and in a more focused way. Finally, he expressed interest in older Māori forms such as mōteatea, and sometimes engages with working through the meaning of these.

Learner-centred elements in his learning

Pita was clear that he wanted to develop his listening comprehension ("I wanted to understand what was being said."). In some cases, this meant knowing more vocabulary. However, he did not have really specific things he wanted to learn; he believed that whatever he learnt would contribute to his reo Māori knowledge.

Pita responded enthusiastically to the query about his interests.

> There a lot of things I like – I like kōrero, whakapapa, kōrero - but then maybe even whakataukī and waiata and haka – I enjoy the kōrero, the stories - because, in the end… they permeate behind the waiata, the haka, the whakataukī, the pakiwaitara… I really enjoy…. the narratives that go with the reo…

He has found that his classes in TWoA provides him with these sorts of background stories.

Learners with university experience generally agreed they had little autonomy in their learning, and Pita's response was typical:

> … very little autonomy, certainly in the university systems – I mean it was based on *Te Whanake*, just working through that, yeah… it's the nature of the beast I think… so I don't feel like there was a lot of autonomy in there – sometimes you were able to work within a particular kaupapa, choose a topic for things ...

Pita believed he experienced more autonomy in his TWoA course than in his other learning, because he had the feeling that he had space within the class time.

> .... built into it was a lot of down time, like when doing your games at the beginning, your breaks, where you would kōrero Māori – I think that's where… you felt like you have a lot more autonomy – it wasn't so much in the programme they were offering, it was about the spaces in the programme… you could be yourself and you had time to interact with other people, and build your interest in te reo and the things you wanted to use in the time…

> … those breaks, ten, fifteen minute breaks for a cup of tea and kōrero Māori and - you've got the freedom to try out your own - what it is you want to do, and other people understand it - and even within the group that you have, you know that this person will speak like this and this person's going to be less confident and you can choose your level you want to converse at that time as well as you get to know your classmates.

Pita said that his TWoA course offered some flexibility about content, but that he was not particularly concerned about what he learned.

> There are so many things to learn that it doesn't really matter… There's no particular vocab or structures that I particularly want to learn, though there are a lot of kīwaha (idioms) I suppose, or very common phrases on the marae, even formal speaking…

He reiterated his belief that the TWoA course allowed enough time and space for him to feel he had a measure of autonomy.

> … having a little bit of time and space – as opposed to the university system where – it was crammed in, you know, you only had so many, a very high level, and done very, very quickly – you didn't have that time and space to try your own interests as such… for me, that's what I think is autonomy, a little bit of time, a little bit of breathing space.

Pita was one of only two whom I directly asked how well the classes had suited them as individuals. Pita responded that his learning at TWoA suited him very well, and his university learning much less so. He expressed a belief that rather than being affirmed, his identity had been confirmed, or more firmly established:

> I don't know if affirmed is the word – I almost feel like ... my identity's been created by starting learning te reo Māori… how I feel is that I – I have become - me! Before, I don't know – I wasn't 'me' perhaps, some Pākehā fulla!

Pita had definitely experienced both facilitative and direct instructional approaches in his learning at university and through TWoA; he said that time pressure tended to bring out a stronger emphasis on instruction.

Analysis

Pita has, over time, found himself flourishing as a language learner and language user, though he has had a long and difficult journey to reaching a state of some satisfaction and comfort with his own proficiency in te reo Māori. He does not appear to have been treated as a means rather than an end, and apart from struggling as a learner in his university course, he does not appear to feel that his mana was diminished in his

learning. Although the courses he has been involved with allowed little place for him to have choices within them, he personally found that the more relaxed format of Te Ara Reo (with extended classes, and break times between activities) gave him a sense that he could explore his language use, and talk and learn without the pressure he experienced in a university setting.

6.2.4 Hine
Learning experience

Hine is a Māori woman in her early 40s, born and raised in the upper central North Island; her father is a native speaker of te reo Māori. She is married to a Pacific Islander, and has two children; she speaks Māori at home with them, and they attend Māori immersion schools. Hine wants to help raise her family into a different socio-economic and cultural level, and to give her children a better future; she now lives and works as a primary teacher in a major urban centre in North Island. She made the decision to learn te reo Māori when her daughter was born, and began by studying for two years (2000, 20001) in Te Ara Reo, when TWoA was just starting. She continued with a stage 2 course based on *Te Pihinga* at university, then attended a training college for kura kaupapa teachers for three years; this involved full immersion in te reo Māori. Since then she has taught briefly in various kura kaupapa as well as in mainstream schools, and at the time of the interview was working towards a Master's degree at an iwi wānanga. She has also attended two kura reo.

When asked what specific things she wanted to learn, she responded; "My aspirations are to be always to be – tūturu (genuine, authentic) to the kounga (quality) of reo, to the mita (authentic language for the area) of te reo." She acknowledged that achieving this always seemed to be out of reach, but she also believed she did not need to feel bad about it; "I find that we're too critical of our reo, so we're supposed to learn te reo, which I've done, but now I realise that it's never enough, that it's never ever good quality."

Hine rated her motivation to learn te reo Māori at "about 7." She is genuinely enthusiastic about te reo Māori, but wants to keep a balance in her life, with room for sport and church. Her partner speaks only a little Māori, and Hine acknowledges that in

her wider community network it is not practical for her to use te reo Māori. She did not want to feel pressured to be consistently excellent at te reo Māori, but she made it clear that she aspires to a high standard, aiming to eventually be accepted into the advanced Te Panekiretanga course. She has a long-term goal to be an excellent reo Māori speaker by the age of 50, and she believes she is on track for this.

She believed that Te Ara Reo provided a good combination of three elements:

> One, you not only spoke te reo, two, you learned the principles of the theory of te reo, and three, the tikanga Māori of whakawhanaungatanga, all intertwined, for your learning...

Hine believed that actively using te reo was vital; "The other [important] thing was to get out into a coffee group, and speak, and have the courage to put your reo where your mouth is!" She believed that "those relationships that you make take you to that next level." She also really appreciated such things as the free resources provided by TWoA, like the digital recorder, with which she could record material to listen to in her own time.

Hine gave a satisfaction rating of 7 for her learning experience in Te Ara Reo, but despite her generally positive experience with the course, there were aspects she was not so happy with. She believed that each year's programme was too rushed, and she ended up feeling discouraged: "I was a happy bubbly student, going 'Oh I love te reo!' and by the end of it I was like over it!" She also felt that the teaching methods that required people to be involved in skits, singing and other such relatively public and extroverted activities actually deterred some people from continuing (Brian expressed the same concern). It is worth noting that her TWoA experiences occurred some time ago, and although the teaching style remains similar (extensive use of skits and singing, for example) the brisk pace of learning has possibly been moderated.

Hine's main experience of mainstream university was in 2003 and 2004. She acknowledges that it was an introduction to a different, higher quality of reo, and to

academic language in connection with te reo Māori, but it was also in many ways a disappointing experience for her.

> I'd gone to [university] with the experience of Te Ara Reo, and... I thought it was going to be, I thought it was going to be - hard, and exciting, and, good methods of teaching - it wasn't.

The course was based on *Te Whanake*, and she found herself doing a lot of reading and doing solitary language lab work: "Whakawhiti kōrero wasn't necessarily between you and people, just between you and the machine." She had a nationally known reo-Māori figure as her teacher, but she found the work daunting: "Yeah – he was good! But it was too difficult for me to – it was too steep a [learning curve] - in terms of – the relationship wasn't there." She believed it was important for the teacher to come down to the level of the class with their language, but also to apply pressure to students and make them accountable for their learning, and to make sure that they prepared learners adequately for the assessments; the implication was that these things did not always happen in the university environment.

She also found the atmosphere unconducive to speaking up in class:

> It's not a good grounding, like, you wanna be able to kōrero even though you get it wrong – you always had that thought of – I don't wanna speak because I know I'm gonna get it wrong.

She found a gap between the ideals of the course and the actual experience:

> The idea of [the university] was to be user-friendly, but it wasn't communicated and it wasn't transferred over enough... it didn't cross the divide of whakawhanaungatanga... and the feelings that you get from the whakawhanaungatanga is what seals the learning.

Hine missed the face-to-face element, and was not always impressed with her fellow learners either, summing up their attitude with: "It was filled with students that knew it all" (laughs).

However, despite the many examples of things she was dissatisfied with, she gave the university course a satisfaction rating of 7 out of 10. When I expressed surprise at this rating, given her negative comments, Hine returned to the point that the course was dealing with difficult material, teaching what she called "academic reo", and providing a solid theory background.

Hine later trained as a primary teacher for three years in a training college for kura kaupapa teachers in a major urban centre in the North Island. She valued the constant exposure to good Māori language speakers, and also the staunchness of staying in te reo Māori throughout the work and study day. She gave this form of learning a satisfaction rating of 9, not so much because of the pedagogical principles (she believed that mainstream schools and the local mainstream teachers college were better in this regard) but because of the development she gained in her reo Māori.

Hine did not mention that she had been to kura reo till late in the interview; She observed that "...it can be very stressful, very very stressful in a kura reo." She first went when she was doing a stage 2 paper at university through evening classes, and found the kura reo experience difficult.

> They were too... too stringent on being - rūmaki, so for a beginner student, it was too hard. Didn't like it, cried – (laughs)... Now they seem to be a lot more user-friendly... the attitude to kura reo now is better, it should have been like that from the beginning.

She admits that she generally finds the pressure to speak te reo Māori correctly quite burdensome.

> There is that ... kōrero about your mita (authentic language) of te reo which is always going to be – I mean you know, we live in the modern world. We speak

too much English to speak back to front – (laughs) – Your principles, my principles and my theory principles sometimes go out the window, even as far as I've come along...

As the conversation unfolded, Hine expressed her frustration at never feeling good enough, and the constant pressure to improve.

It's huge just being there [kura reo], because, even just getting there, you know what I mean, let alone having to, start that discipline of getting your reo up, get your reo up, get your reo up, quality of te reo, blah blah blah...

She appreciated the need to improve, but believed there needed to be a balance about te reo Māori:

I need to still put in the work to get to that level, but I don't want to have to at the risk of balancing, you know, my life to totally te reo Māori, and the rest of my life being nothing. You've got to have that discipline to fit that into your life and make it balanced and make it work.

Hine said she still felt apprehensive being in kura reo (she last attended one in 2014), and says she does not consider it a supportive and constructive approach to learning te reo Māori. She believes more attention needs to be paid to making sure there is a supportive atmosphere and that it is a positive experience for participants at all levels, partly through taking more care to group participants to avoid unnecessary stress. However, despite these negative comments, Hine still gave Kura Reo a satisfaction rating of 7: "It's not – not a very nice, supportive, constructive approach to learning te reo, but I still put myself through that, you know."

Hine believes that informal learning is as important as formal, but that the pressures of getting on with life can diminish the importance of informal learning, so that it becomes a chore - "kind of like homework." She has a varied life, and feels she needs to find a balance, rather than being too obsessed about te reo Māori. She does, however, speak Māori at home with her children, and has a sense of achievement and satisfaction from

doing so: "There was no method, like – it was just a sense of purpose to keep speaking te reo." For the last four years, she has also been studying in Māori-language environments that maintain a staunch policy of rūmaki. She also speaks some reo at church, and actively supports bilingual kaupapa in her local area, such as bilingual exhibitions at the art gallery, bilingual use at the supermarket, kapa haka events and so on.

Learner-centred elements in her learning

The interview with Hine had been more free-flowing than most, so, rather than go through all the questions about the extent to which elements of learner-centredness had been present in her learning, we moved directly to discussing the principles of learner-centredness. However, it was clear that she had had little opportunity to have any say in how her learning was conducted in any of the learning contexts she had experienced. Despite this, she appreciated different aspects of all the learning contexts she had been involved in.

Analysis

Hine has shown a great deal of determination in her reo Māori learning, and despite some frustrations and struggles as a learner, has appreciated what each course has had to offer her and has found herself flourishing as a learner. She has been in some uncomfortable positions as part of her learning journey, and has learnt to resist pressures to always be using high quality reo Māori, and to manage expectations that she should attain a high standard of language. However, she does seem to have felt some pressure on her dignity as a person and an adult in doing so. She does not appear to have been treated as a means rather than an end; however, she does not appear to have had any significant adult agency within the courses she attended.

In terms of learner-centredness, teachers have not asked her about her needs, wants, interests or aspirations at any stage, and she does not appear to have had any significant choices within the different learning environments.

6.2.5 Cathy
Learning experience

Cathy is a married woman in her mid-40s; she lives in a major urban area in the North Island, and works in the media. She has a Pākehā mother and a Māori father, although the Māori links had almost vanished till she made the effort to revive them. She has travelled extensively overseas, is very competent in a foreign language, and is a strong proponent of immersion in the language as a result of her experience. She attended university in her mid-20s, completing stage 1 and stage 2 courses based on *Te Kākano* and *Te Pihinga*. She then spent 10 years building a career, during which time she lost her proficiency in te reo Māori. She returned to it, repeating the stage 2 course at university, but again lost her proficiency after going overseas for several years. Having returned, she is now a focused and determined reo Māori learner who has completed a university degree in te reo Māori, as well as completing Te Aupikitanga, which she credits with transforming her reo Māori skills. She has also completed Te Pīnakitanga. She has attended numerous kura reo since 2013, and immerses herself in Māori media and reading material.

Cathy chose the descriptor 'I can speak te reo Māori well' (she reserved the highest level for native speakers), and rated her motivation to learn te reo Māori at 20 on a scale of 1 to 10. She aspired to reach as high a level as possible, given the two constraints she believed affected her aspiration—that she started late, and does not live in a reo Māori community.

Cathy's experience of losing her reo Māori proficiency twice has made her resolve not to let it happen again.

> And so… you're really not making progress. Still felt guilty and no, my story's not unusual… I decided I was going to change the way I live my life and I was going to organise my life so I could prioritise Māori. And that's what I've done since 2008.

She has since studied in courses based on *Te Māhuri* and *Te Kohure* and completed a degree with a major Maori component, going on to do a postgraduate diploma, which

she finished in 2010. Since then she has pursued her learning informally or through courses at TWoA, and is currently doing another university-based postgraduate diploma; this involves using te reo Māori but not formally learning it.

Cathy admired the resources of *Te Whanake*, and appreciated the textbooks' clear exposition of grammar and the historical material covered, but sums up her feelings like this:

> We spent quite a lot of time with our noses in a book. We didn't use te reo Māori of everyday life as we should have… So for me the courses are really good for broadening my mind. But where they were weaker was in activities that got us to use our language and build confidence at the same time. Most of us suffered from whakamā (shyness, reluctance to speak) until quite late in the piece. And I was one of them.

> I have to say that I do well in both systems [university and TWoA] though I prefer... I like that fact that the academic system kicks my butt and makes me work that much harder - different sorts of hoops to jump through.

Cathy (along with Hine) provided the most detailed comparison between university learning and TWoA learning. She had done extensive learning at university, but was aware of what she lacked.

> I knew what I was missing was the sort of spontaneous conversation that really tests your skills. I mean I think the skill that's hardest to perfect is spontaneous social conversation, the language skills.

In 2013, she found out about and enrolled in a fulltime version of Te Aupikitanga. She had benefitted from an immersion experience when learning a foreign language for many years, and finally had the "immersion environment most of the time" that she had been wanting for te reo Māori. She later enrolled in Te Pīnakitanga.

They're very good courses and they have done a lot to … get my proficiency up… But Te Aupikitanga, the immersion course in 2013, that was like the [foreign country]. It was that year of immersion that made all the difference. It was not just extending my abilities but also building confidence because those two things need to go side by side.

Cathy was clearly happy with the impact of TWoA courses on her proficiency. She was also very positive about the types of assessment at TWoA, and the general atmosphere and family feeling.

What I liked about Te Wānanga [o Aotearoa] is the assessments were more holistic, they were looking at all of our contributions in class, not just what we handed in at certain times of the year. And I know that the way the Wānanga works, it's got a very good family, it's a very whānau supportive atmosphere… it was to take risks in a safe environment that made the Wānanga courses very successful.

By contrast, Cathy was definite that the Te Ataarangi method did not work for her.

I really got frustrated with it because I found it difficult to remember what I'd heard and to try and render the words in my head and remember what rod stood for what. So it didn't work at all. I know, I've come across some people who speak beautiful te reo learning from Te Ataarangi but that doesn't work for me.

Cathy first went to a kura reo as a comparative beginner in 2008, and had a negative experience.

I went to one kura reo in [place] in 2008 and that scared the crap out of me so I didn't go back again for a couple of years… there were quite a large group of us who had gone knowing they had provision for beginners but that wasn't the case and that put us all off. Some of the teachers were not very tolerant of this group of beginners, that they didn't know were coming… I didn't go back to a kura reo until 2013 (laughs).

She returned as a more competent speaker, and is well settled as a regular participant. She has friends there, and her language is at the level that means she can really enjoy them.

> I'm at the level now where I do know a lot of people who are fluent speakers and we can get carried away about all sorts of things, so that's good. But I tend to only come across them at kura reo… I don't have a lot of fluent speakers around me. So that's what kura reo's for, I suppose. You need to try and make those sorts of attachments to other people who have, you know, that ability.

Even though she is currently involved in Māori related study, she finds that kura reo can stretch her in a way that her current study doesn't do. She also finds kura reo provide a remedy for the lack of Māori speakers in her everyday life.

> The kura reo keep me in touch with contemporary sort of Māori circles… I can get what I don't get in everyday life and that's the whole point about kura. Most of us don't have Māori language environments, unless you're a teacher of te reo Māori.

Cathy's approach to informal learning is determined and focused, and can be summed up in her statement: "I try to Māorify my world as much as possible." For example, she "religiously" downloads Waatea interview podcasts from *Manako*, *Take o te Wā*, and *Kōrero Mai ki Ahau*, three current affairs programmes in te reo Māori on Radio Waatea. She focuses on recording people she knows are native speakers, to ensure she is listening to the best possible examples. She looks for specific speakers on TV programmes such as *Paepae*, and also has Māori TV on in the background while doing such activities as cooking dinner. She says, "I consume a lot of Māori media as part of Māorifying my world." She also meets up with Māori speaking friends as much as possible, and reads a great deal of reo Māori material. Cathy also acknowledged the wide range of material now available on the internet, but pointed to a lack of print material.

Learner-centred elements in her learning

Cathy had a definite response about what she needed to learn; "For me, grammar… get the grammar sorted early… I've always been a rote learner of grammar, I have to remember patterns." Like Brian, her learning of a foreign language to a high level had led her to this conclusion.

Cathy was most interested in learning how "to use the reo in everyday life." I knew she worked in media, so I asked if she was interested in discussing and reading about politics and other contemporary issues; she confirmed that it did bother her that she could not regularly talk about such issues in te reo Māori. She finds she must wait for kura reo to do this; with her friends, she tends to just discuss what they have been up to in their everyday lives.

Cathy distinguished clearly between autonomy within a formal learning setting (which she does not expect to have), and her own personal autonomy as a learner.

> I look over my kura reo books, and I consider that autonomy. I'm choosing to do that…But I also understand that you know, if you're in the classroom you must jump through certain hoops. But that's only part of the learning journey.

Cathy agreed that she had no choice of content, apart from in research or some assessment tasks in both university and TWoA. She was unperturbed by this ("The teacher knows best"), but when I questioned her further about what material she would like to learn more about, she agreed that there were things that she could reasonably be expected to be taught as an adult learner, but which were not covered, even in kura reo ("Well, me being me, I'd want the vocab that helps me discuss issues in the news. But that… kura reo tends not to do that…").

Cathy said she had little choice about assessments (though she has encountered some flexibility in choosing topics in both university and TWoA settings).

> I've had all sorts of assessments and they all work for me. I just do what's necessary. So, the [TWoA] assessments, the [university] assessments, they're all

fine. They're very different. [University] is very academic, [TWoA] is a pass/fail only. So, you know, two people who've passed could be working at quite different levels.

In both her university and TWOA learning contexts, her assessment had also featured formal acknowledgement of 'ū ki te kaupapa' (commitment and participation). Cathy valued this, and observed that it was most consistently applied in Te Aupikitanga. She also recognised a certain value in exams, though she admits she does not like them as much as other assessments because she struggles with the time pressure, and does not do as well in them as in other forms of assessment. Generally, however, her response to assessment was consistent with her approach to other aspects of her learning; she acknowledged and respected the expertise of teachers, and was willing to go along with whatever task was set for her.

Cathy believed her autonomy as learner would be advanced by working as a group with a teacher available for quick checking.

I would love to think that we could be in a class, a group of us, all working away on our thing, but with a teacher handy. So, we could move at our own pace, but have someone there to give the correct answer. I'm one of these people that… If I have a question or I think I might have made an error or I want to check I'm not making an error, if I can get a quick response that tends to sit with me forever… Like [teacher] corrected me on something last week and I know I'll never forget it now…

Cathy also took the position that the classroom is the teacher's space; in fact, she does not think she needs control over her own learning.

I don't think it's a Māori values thing. I think Māori understand that everyone learns in different ways. But it's the teacher's space. The teacher, it's the quality of the teacher and the attitudes of the teacher, attributes of the teacher that's critical to learning success. I think if the teacher taught in that particular way where autonomy was able to be had, a greater degree of autonomy was possible

then that would be great. I don't think it would be disrespectful, because these things all need to be driven by the teacher.

Pita and Cathy were the only ones I directly asked how well the classes had suited them as individuals. Cathy answered this question only indirectly, implying that the welfare of the group was more important than what suited her personally.

> Um, yeah it depends on the size of the class though. When I was doing Te Aupikitanga there were only about twelve of us by the end of the year. So— quite well by then, but there's never a large amount of space for individual attention or treatment in a group. And if you go to a class I think you know it's not about you. It's about the group. Especially in Te Wānanga o Aotearoa which is very whānau oriented. You move collectively.

Cathy found that much of her learning in the *Te Whanake* series was not particularly relevant ("It was good on history, for looking backwards, but not very good for looking at language for today"). She also pointed out that at the time she did the *Te Whanake* course, there was little use made of Māori television, although she experienced it being used to good effect in a TWoA course a few years later.

> Here we had this Māori Television telling us about our world but none of it ever popped up in class… And I was a bit disappointed in that because what more relevant than whakaata Māori (Māori TV)?

Cathy is a highly-motivated learner, and the pace of lessons did not always suit her; she admits that she is impatient, and that she needs to "sit on her hands" from time to time. However, she did once find a class too fast for her in the initial stages (moving from a course based on *Te Māhuri* to one based on *Te Kohure* in the *Te Whanake* programme at university). She has observed that teachers generally check with the whole class to see if people need more time.

> What I find in most Māori language classrooms is that the teacher occasionally checks by saying, is that ok? Can we move on? And if people aren't ready to

move on then you just wait. So that's what I'm used to at kura reo generally. Generally there's a check in. How are we? Are we ready to go? … It's good to move together.

Cathy believed her identity had been affirmed despite her pale skin. She gave an example of a kura reo teacher who called her after her mountain after Cathy had introduced herself in a distinctive way. However, she approached the issue of individuality by affirming the Māori perspective that an individual is very much positioned in the wider world, and has a place there.

> Well, in Māori society you always know where someone's from and that's important. It's one of the first things you talk about it your first day in class. So that is affirming in itself, expressing your identity and telling the group where you sit in the Māori world… That's whakawhanaungatanga (feeling of belonging in a family) and that's where you feel, that cloak of … safety and comfort sort of falls around everybody.

All the learners who were asked if their teacher had taken a directly instructive or a facilitative approach agreed that both approaches had their place, and that their teachers had generally taken a facilitative approach. Cathy summed up this issue by saying, "Depends on the subject. I occasionally want my teacher to be the oracle. Sometimes I want them to stick their oar in when I need it." She expanded on this by saying:

> It depends on the subject. I think for example, if you are working in a group putting together a presentation, doing some research, that's where there needs to be a facilitator. But I think when it's coming to the finer points of grammar, I want an instructor who knows what they're speaking about (laughs).

Analysis

Cathy's story is one of high motivation and impressive application over a long period of time. She has maintained an attitude of respect for her teachers and for the different learning processes, even when they have not always served her as well as they might. She has been given room to flourish as a learner, even though some aspects of adult life

have not been incorporated into her learning experience (talk about the media, or politics, for example). She does not appear to have been used as a means rather than an end, and has been accorded dignity as an adult, with the possible exception of a negative experience in her first kura reo. She has experienced at least a degree of choice in choosing topics in some courses, but generally she has been willing to cede autonomy in such matters to the teachers in the various courses she has attended. This could be interpreted as adaptive preference, and suggests that her respect for the Māori principle of working for the benefit of the collective has hampered her personal growth in te reo Māori somewhat by putting the perceived needs of others before her own.

In terms of learner-centredness, she has not been specifically asked about her needs, but she is confident that her teachers will be aware of what she needs to learn. She agrees that there are things she would like to talk more about (the media and politics), but she has little expectation that such wishes would be met. However, despite lacking agency within courses, she has shown a high level of initiative and energy in endeavouring to make her reo Māori learning as good as possible, and as relevant as possible to her life.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the learning experience of a group of people who have had long and varied paths as learners of te reo Māori. Margaret has reached a position of some satisfaction with her reo Māori knowledge, achieving her modest goal to be comfortable in her wider family setting. Pita has also regained confidence after a difficult and pressured experience of learning in a university setting, while Jack has attained some proficiency from a mix of methods and learning environments. Hine has continued to develop her reo Māori in TWoA, university, kura reo, reo Māori training college and iwi wānanga; while she has some criticism of all these environments, she has also received benefit from them all. Finally, Cathy's drive and determination have yielded results, and she acknowledges the part that university, TWoA, and kura reo have played in her long journey.

Those with university experience have commented on some negative aspects (excessive bookishness, lack of whakawhanaungatanga, limited compatibility of different groups

of learners), yet nearly all they felt that they had received some benefit from their university learning. Several participants in this chapter have had favourable experiences with TWoA, especially in following on after university courses and enjoying a more relaxed, conversational approach. The chapter also presents the experience of the main adult learner in this project who received considerable benefit from learning with the Te Ataarangi method, especially in terms of being encouraged to speak the language.

Overall, the participants' experience in this chapter shows little evidence of a learner-centred approach. There was no assessment of their needs, no inquiry into what they wanted to learn (with the exception of Margaret, in one setting), and no evidence that their individual aspirations were taken seriously. Nor did their teachers consult them about content, learning activities or assessment, with the exception of Cathy in some of her TWoA learning.

As mentioned earlier, the participants in this chapter observed less than ideal elements in their learning just as clearly as the participants in the previous chapter, but were less inclined to actively question or to try and initiate change. However, Margaret did point out that many people dropped out from courses, and she suspected that the fact that they had so little control of their learning meant they had no option but to drop out if they were unsatisfied. Some participants in this chapter (particularly Pita, Jack and Cathy) were strong supporters of the principle that the group's needs should come first, perhaps at the expense of aspects of their own learning; they saw this as the appropriate response in a Māori setting. However, despite the principled basis of their thinking, their responses to the difficulties they encountered could also be seen as fitting with the capabilities principle of 'adaptive preference'; that is, they were willing to accept situations that they may well have sought to change outside of a Māori cultural setting. Such willingness to suppress or disregard individual wants for the benefit of the wider group may well be to the detriment of full flourishing of the person as a speaker and user of te reo Māori.

Chapter 7: Teachers' experience of learning and teaching

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the learning and teaching experience of the five teachers, Katarina, Hēni, Irihāpeti, Hera and Mere, who were interviewed for this project, along with the degree to which learner-centred ideas map on to their teaching experience. Each teacher's learning and teaching experience is outlined, and then analysed; this analysis follows the pattern of the two previous chapters by first applying the principles of the capability approach, modified to some extent to accommodate tikanga Māori, and then providing analysis in terms of learner-centredness.

The five teachers have some different characteristics to the learner group; firstly, all are Māori, and all are women; secondly, three of the teachers (Katarina, Hēni and Irihāpeti) followed their high school learning with further reo Māori learning resulting in a fairly smooth path and mostly positive experiences through the university system (unlike Hera and Mere). All five teachers are clearly reflective, enthusiastic and committed practitioners, and even though their approaches to teaching may differ in many respects, they clearly care a great deal about te reo Māori, their students, and tikanga Māori.

Mere was originally interviewed as an adult learner, although I was aware she ran evening classes for beginner adults as well; however, it became increasingly clear as the interview progressed that her enthusiasm for teaching adults was strongly permeating the interview, and that an increasingly strong emphasis on teaching was emerging. Moreover, the interview was one of the least structured of the fifteen, so it was more straightforward to transfer the material about Mere to the teacher group rather than the learner group. Her interview also presented a side of adult teaching that deserves more attention—the teaching of te reo Māori in independent evening classes in schools, outside any formal system such as Te Ataarangi or TWoA.

I only observed one class, run by Hera, who teaches in Te Ataarangi. It was not my intention to observe teaching as part of this research, but I attended Hera's class because I was in town for the evening, and she invited me to do so. I had never previously attended a class run by Te Ataarangi.

The first three teachers in this chapter are the ones who had a straightforward path through the university system. At the time of the interview, Katarina was a successful and popular teacher at TWoA, Hēni was teaching mainly beginner level classes in te reo Māori in a North Island university, and Irihāpeti was also teaching in a university in the North Island. Hera, who stopped learning te reo Māori at university after one year, was teaching using the Te Ataarangi method, and running several evening classes that were regularly oversubscribed. She was a strong supporter of every aspect of Te Ataarangi, and spoke with evident conviction and enthusiasm about the method. Mere was a little unusual in this group, as her main teaching experience was as a primary teacher, but she also taught adults in evening classes, at the most elementary level.

The interview with Irihāpeti was conducted in Māori, as was the interview with Hera until two-thirds of the way through, when she turned to English. The other three interviews were conducted in English, apart from mihimihi at the start, and occasional forays into te reo Māori.

Teachers (Chapter 7)					
Name	**Hēni**	**Irihāpeti**	**Katarina**	**Hera**	**Mere**
Age/Gender	20s / F	40s / F	20s / F	20s / F	60s / F
Learning contexts					
University	Masters level	Masters level, qualification in SLA	Honours level	One year	Undergraduate degree
Te Ataarangi	Brief courses			Extensive training in this organisation, including one-year immersion course	
Kura Reo	0	1	2, 3	5, 6	0
TWoA	Te Pīnakitanga		Te Pīnakitanga		
Other					Marae-based course run by polytechnic
Teaching context	University	University	TWoA	Te Ataarangi	Night class
Proficiency (self-evaluation)	2	2,1	2	1	3 (later changed to 2)

Table 11: Key information about teachers in Chapter 7

7.2.1 Katarina

Katarina was a teacher at TWoA at the time of the interview. She is in her late 20s, and was brought up in a small North Island town. Te reo Māori is the main language in use in her family home, and she chose the descriptor 'I can speak te reo Māori well.' Katarina went to university to pursue a science degree, but included some reo Māori papers, and ended up majoring in both in te reo Māori and science. She continued with a BA (Hons) in a Māori related post-graduate programme. She tutored basic Māori and kapa haka while at university, and went on to become a teacher at TWoA, where she has taught for 5 years. She has also attended two or three kura reo, and Te Pīnakitanga.

Experience of learning

Katarina worked through all the papers from *Te Kākano* on in the *Te Whanake* series at university, even though she would probably have had enough knowledge of the

fundamentals of te reo Māori from her home and school experience to miss the 100-level *Te Kākano* papers. In the interview with Katarina, I mainly focused on her teaching experience, but her learning experience as she described it appears to have been quite straightforward. She went to kōhanga reo as a child, comes from a Māori-speaking environment, and studied te reo Māori at high school, although she admits she did not do particularly well at the subject and went mostly "under the radar". She admitted that at university she initially put minimal effort into her reo Māori studies; "I just got by on what was there rather than like study or anything like that, so… I think I was kind of lucky but that made me lazy as well". However, she started to study more seriously in *Te Pihinga*, the 200-level course in *Te Whanake*. Part of her impetus to study harder came from her competitive streak; she was in classes with Māori friends who were on a similar level to her, and she was determined to get better marks than them.

Like many learners who come to the course with some proficiency already, Katarina's learning at university mainly developed specific skills, in her case writing. She also studied two postgraduate language-based papers, *Te Kohure* and *Te Whakarakei*. The second of these two papers focused on the creative use of te reo Māori; she did particularly well in it and enjoyed it a great deal.

Much like several of the learners, Katarina said she was only moderately satisfied with her university learning overall, placing it in the middle of a satisfaction scale from one to ten; this was mainly because she felt it was too detached from everyday life.

> I'd probably say like 6 – 5 to 6 - so you l**earnt** stuff, but you didn't **live** stuff. It was all kind of just - regurgitated stuff. It wasn't like practised or anything like that - or at least that's what I felt anyway. It was more like 'Remember this, write it down, say it' – you don't even really need to say it properly …

She preferred her experience with kura reo, which she gave a satisfaction rating of 8 out of 10, mainly because the language learning there felt like part of her life.

> In a classroom, it's just like two hours here, all right, go and kind of carry on with your own life, sort of thing… with kura reo, it's a bit different to class, because you know … you've got breakfast lunch and tea there, you sleep there, so you're actually doing it like – naturally.

She felt the learning at kura reo was having the desired effect, because it became natural for her to keep speaking te reo Māori when she left. She also enjoyed the opportunity to interact with others, reflecting a common theme that emerges with other more competent reo Māori learners such as Cathy.

Katarina gained an honours degree in Māori Studies in 2008, and later attended Te Pīnakitanga in another urban centre in 2014.

> I kind of missed the learning environment a bit… yeah, I needed to refine my reo a bit more because I teach second and third years… and obviously *kua huri te ao* (the world has changed and is changing), so… words are changing all the time…

Katarina enjoyed her learning in Te Pīnakitanga, although once again she expressed a wish that her learning had been more relevant to her life, and based on te ao hou (the contemporary world) rather than emphasizing traditional material: "It was all very traditional, I guess… and that's kind of elitist reo really." Her response to both her university learning and to Te Pīnakitanga suggest that if she had been given the opportunity to express a desire for learning that was well grounded in everyday life and the contemporary world, she may well have had a more satisfactory learning experience.

Outside of formal learning situations, Katarina uses te reo Māori extensively in her work as a teacher at TWoA. Most of her colleagues converse in Māori in the work place, and Māori is the predominant language used when she returns to her family home. She made no mention of Māori media in her comments.

Experience of teaching

Katarina began this section by talking with considerable confidence about the whanaungatanga (family feeling) that is engendered in the TWoA system; she may however have been a little too sure about the power of whanaungatanga to break down barriers so quickly.

> … the Wānanga has its own kind of system in place, in that it's a like whānau kind of oriented thing, so when we go to class, the very first class is pretty much all about whanaungatanga, so that when you pass that barrier, you're able to just ask questions in front of your brothers and sisters. So - and that's like that wall gets taken down straight away.

Katarina had received no formal training when she began teaching, though she had worked at university as a tutor for a beginner-level conversational Māori paper and a kapa haka paper. Initially she was given some advice about what to do, and provided with a curriculum, but for some time at the start of her teaching career, she was learning through hands-on experience. She has since completed a TWoA teacher training course, which focuses on aspects such as core Māori values that TWoA considers are key to learning, such as setting the scene in class, principles for how teachers should communicate with learners, and lesson planning. Katarina also outlined the distinctive set of principles known as ako whakatere (accelerated learning, or allowing the learning to flow), which focus on relaxation activities at the start of class, and making learning enjoyable ("having fun with the language whilst being relaxed, I guess"). Katarina's performance is reviewed every year under professional development within her employment. She usually takes study leave for attendance at kura reo or courses such as Te Pīnakitanga.

The amount of training Katarina received seemed less than ideal, especially at the initial stage, although she did have some tutoring experience at university, and is a competent, confident young woman. Her students (encountered elsewhere) were enthusiastic about her classes; they spoke highly of her competence as a teacher, describing her as organised and firm, and affirming that she organizes enjoyable lessons.

Katarina described her teaching style as the way she would personally like to be taught, in an active, hands-on fashion; this was in contrast to the way she claimed she was often taught, particularly at university.

> I'll just go with what we did last night, so we did … active sentences like "Kei te hīkoi ia" (he or she is walking) and we did whakakāhore (negating) - so… I got them in groups and they all come up and they looked at the thing and they had to act it out - act it out to their group and then once they got it they had to write it down and then negate it and then bring it back to me, so it was like, getting them out of their chairs, using it, making it like a competition…

Katarina used English as the language of instruction in her Te Ara Reo classes. She explained that TWoA gave no specific instruction about the extent of use of English in class, but she gradually works towards full immersion mid-way through the three-year course.

> … so for first years, it's obviously all English, but you want to build them up and like, challenge them every year - they want to feel like they're moving forward, so second year… by about August actually, I turn to all te reo Māori, but it's not going to be just English, just te reo Māori, so obviously we filtered, then by the time the transition happens, they shouldn't notice it, and then third year's all te reo Māori…

Katarina gave no indication of how difficult or otherwise the learners found the transition to full immersion in te reo Māori; however, another informant who had been through her class found the transition straightforward, whereas he found the transition to full immersion at university level very hard.

Katarina is clearly responsive to students' moods and energy levels, and she watches closely for what she called "changes of mauri" (energy levels, broadly translated) in the class, and changes activities to re-energise the class if necessary. She provides a wide variety of activities, and goes outside the classroom for some activities (for example, a visit to the local supermarket for a lesson on paying for things). She has to ensure that

she covers the curriculum, the basis for assessment, but has a good deal of latitude about what and how she teaches. The courses are free, and students receive free dictionaries, text books, and digital recorders.

Mapping learner-centred ideas on teaching

Katarina explained that student interviews before the course were a standard practice for teachers in TWoA. Katarina was confident that she knew as much about her students as she needed to.

> Before our students actually enrol, we have interviews with them so we get to know them a little bit first, like what do they like, why do you want to do it…

> Before they start I know enough. When they end, they're like my family, pretty much, so I know like - what they do, who their kids are, where they work, you know, everything pretty much.

She explained that the interviews were conducted partly to ensure that applicants for the course were genuinely interested and would be committed students, but also to get an idea of their goals and aspirations.

> … obviously there might be some people that come to do the course because it's free… so we ask them about their goals and stuff - you know, do you want to be fluent? Do you want to just have a conversation? Or whatever…

The interview format involves inquiring about activities they like, and things they do in their spare time, although Katarina explained that this was not so much to enable the teacher to adapt the content of the lessons accordingly, but to give guidance to teachers to encourage the learners to practise their language when they are doing activities they like, thus providing positive associations to using te reo Māori. However, she also said that the interviews are used to some extent to tailor the course to the learners.

> Some people come to class and they want to practise structure, the written reo, some people want to practise listening, understanding - some people kōrero

[speaking], some people want kupu hou [new words]- you know? So that's the sort of thing that we ask in the thing beforehand, and then you can kind of tailor it to make it work best for them.

Katarina sometimes offered a small element of choice in learning activities, mainly by allowing learners to vote about which activity they preferred to finish a class. Often these choices would be between a language structure they might need more work on, or a more relaxed activity like a waiata. Learners could also make suggestions in the evaluations for one-day wānanga (classes) and the noho marae (weekends spent on marae) about what should be included in future courses. Katarina agreed that her learners did not have a choice of content or activities for the one-day wānanga and two noho marae, but she did use the autonomy given to her by TWoA to set assessment tasks that she believed her group of learners wanted.

They don't have a choice but I went on what sort of things they like to see in the class. So there's four main assessments - the first one is like, they wanted to be able to talk with their tamariki, so the first assessment is to create a book that you could read to tamariki. Another one was like, they wanted to be able to - just use it in everyday life, like in the kitchen, so the next one is like a cooking show.

Overall, however, she did not see a place for learners having much say in the curriculum.

I think they should have a say, but not too much (laughs), because that would detract from the learning of others as well, so you kind of - want to have them all on a level playing field but with tending to their need...

She did ask new learners during the initial interview process about how well they dealt with such learning activities as public speaking, and would attempt to ease their engagement with such activities if they admitted that they get anxious in such situations.

Katarina was confident her TWoA course was relevant to learners, without specifically saying why. She was also confident that her students' individual identity was affirmed and respected, although students needed to be willing to follow tikanga Māori (Māori customs) during the course. Katarina was also quite definite that facilitation of learning was the major component of her teaching, and made it clear to her students that she was there to facilitate learning, and that the learners needed to take responsibility for their own learning.

Analysis

Katarina is clearly a competent, well-regarded and responsive teacher; the TWoA initial interview process gives her some information about her students, which she makes some effort to integrate into her programme, and she endeavours to provide a lively, relevant learning experience within a warm, friendly environment. Her teaching situation could be best described as learner-friendly (agreeable or enjoyable for the learner) rather than learner-centred, however, because although she has a good level of awareness of her learners' situation, she does not necessarily integrate that knowledge into the teaching content or learning activities, and because the learners in her class do not have significant input into the content or learning activities in her class. It is also important to acknowledge that activities that many regard as enjoyable do not suit other learners. Brian commented in his interview that some of the activities that Katarina employs, and are commonly employed in TWoA learning (such as extensive use of role play, waiata, writing and performing haka) can be intimidating for some learners. Brian also observed that some learners had actually been put off continuing to learn by having to take part in such activities.

Katarina's learning seems to have been generally positive and uncomplicated at university, although she clearly preferred the learning in kura reo and in TWoA courses. Her learning path was somewhat outside the focus of this study, as she had a home background of te reo Māori, and a straightforward path from school to university.

In terms of the capabilities approach, Katarina had the opportunity to flourish as a learner, and to exercise full human functioning. There was no sense her dignity had been troubled in her learning, nor any sense that she had been used as a means rather

than an end in herself. She did not need to have any differences allowed for (although she may have gained benefit from extension in some of the early courses she undertook), and although she seems to have had little autonomy or choice in her learning, she does not seem to have aspired to have any. The concept of 'adaptive preference' applies here, as for any other learners—where learners have never had any autonomy, they do not know there is any other way to operate. Finally, Katarina is completely comfortable within her own Māori culture, and feels no conflict there.

7.2.2 Hēni

Hēni is a university lecturer in te reo Māori, where she mainly teaches at the level based on *Te Kākano*. She is in her late 20s, with a Pākehā mother and a Māori father, and was brought up in a major North Island urban centre. Following a gap year after high school, she started at university, in a degree with a large Māori component. She loved her reo Māori learning, and was offered work as kaiāwhina/tutor (helping with waiata, workshops etc.) At the end of her BA she went on to do Honours and then a Master's degree, both on reo Māori issues. She is keen to attend Kura Reo, but has not yet managed to do so. She has also recently attended Te Pīnakitanga. Hēni used descriptor 2 ('I can speak te reo Māori well') to describe her own proficiency.

Experience of learning

Hēni has had quite a straightforward and enjoyable journey learning te reo Māori in her tertiary education. She also learnt te reo Māori as a subject at high school for five years, but admits she learned a bare minimum, and was quite disappointed that she had learnt so little despite gaining good grades. After a year's break, she went on to study at university, and it was there that she really started to enjoy her reo Māori learning ("I loved it, loved all of the reo learning"), as she studied for an arts degree with a strong Māori language component. Her only regret was that she had only one reo Māori paper each semester; she believes she would have learnt better with a more concentrated focus on the language. She went on to study for her Masters, for which three of the five papers were taught in te reo Māori. She admits that at that time she was still really shy about speaking Māori, but despite this, she was really enthusiastic about her experience.

She is happy to gain further learning, and recently attended Te Pīnakitanga. Her appreciation of the course is evident:

> I've done Te Pīnakitanga … awesome. You're not learning the reo so much as you've got a class of people who can all kōrero Māori, that all come from different backgrounds, and, you go through eight modules and – but it's basically wānanga - every class is like a wānanga – you're just sharing ideas…

Hēni was the only interviewee who expressed strong appreciation for all her reo Māori learning at university. I did not ask her why this was the case, although if I had interviewed her later, I would certainly have done so, after hearing very mixed responses to university reo Māori learning from other interviewees.

Experience of teaching

Hēni currently teaches at the level of *Te Kākano* to several classes at her university, but she began by assisting with classes and wānanga at her university, taking groups and teaching them skills such as cooking using te reo Māori, poi making, and learning waiata. Like Katarina, Hēni began teaching with virtually no formal teaching training.

> My initial job was to assist the Māori language lecturers... the first teacher took me and she said, I want you to just to observe what I do, and she would sit me down before every class, she would go through lesson plans - she would tell me what she was going to do, what the focus of the lesson was, and then I would observe it in practice...

The only formal language-teaching learning she has undertaken has been a CELTA (Cambridge English Language Teaching Association) course in the semester before the interview was conducted. She has gained a good deal of benefit from the course.

> There's lots of teaching methodologies, if I can call them that, that I learnt from there – just little tips and tricks here and there, the importance of always actively giving feedback, differences between fluency and accuracy tasks, receptive skills, productive skills – just all the terminology as well…

She also discovered that the course was quite student-centred; "That was something that came up in there that I wasn't actively looking at in class, and I'm moving towards it slowly." Since doing the course, she has found herself eliciting more information from students, getting them to express their opinions on issues, and "creating exercises that are fun and engaging for the students so that they have to work it out themselves." She believes that the CELTA training has taught her to be better prepared, and that better preparation means that the class can be more student-centred and require less teacher intervention; she does however believe it would be easier to be more student-centred if she was teaching te reo Māori at a higher level.

Hēni has also sat in on a teachers' course in the Te Ataarangi method, and was very impressed with what she saw of the method.

> After learning how to do the first few lessons that you teach in Te Ataarangi, with no English spoken at all, it's amazing. That was really eye-opening – a big eye-opener for me, because I'd never witnessed it before. I'd never witnessed Te Ataarangi being taught before, let alone the method of it – it's a more Māori approach, more humble…

She has also received some professional development through the university, and it was there that she first encountered learner-centred ideas.

Mapping learner-centred ideas on teaching

Hēni admitted that she knew nothing about students in her classes before they arrived, although she soon gets to know more about them through activities to generate whakawhanaungatanga and through the course's focus on language about the learners and their family. She is not happy about knowing so little about them, but says that the focus of the course means they all soon find out more about each other. She also believes that because the course based on *Te Kākano* is introductory, it is less important for her to know a lot about the learners. Hēni was quite confident the course she taught was meeting the needs of students, either because they are starting their journey of learning te reo Māori, or because they are there to get credits, a situation she accepted with equanimity and amusement as a reality of university life.

I appreciate a student-centred approach and meeting the needs of the students – yeah, I guess that's what we here for as lecturers and as teachers, but in saying that I think that – I guess it's one and the same if you're here to become fluent in the language, and this is the start of their journey, or whether they're here to get credits, but you're still catering for their needs… (laughs).

Hēni agreed that she did not consult or negotiate with learners to any great extent, although she does offer limited choices for class activities, and is flexible about catering for different preferences within class activities by allowing some to work in groups, others in pairs, and some individually. This flexibility does reflect her responsiveness to learners and their learning needs, which is at least part of learner-centredness.

Hēni believes there is indirect evidence that her course is relevant to the learners from the fact that her students come to her classes in the evening after work, eager and willing to learn.

Yeah, it's amazing that they'll, you know, spend all day all week somewhere 40 hours a week somewhere, and that they still find time to ... yeah, so it's for their own life - I guess everyone's got a different reason why they're learning, but for those particular ones that come after working all day, I think it's, it's satisfying their – it's not too much, it's not *not* enough, and we often find those are the students that will… keep coming back…

Hēni agreed with all the other teachers that facilitation of learning rather than instruction was her main function as a teacher.

We often will say to the students right at the beginning - 'We're here to facilitate your learning – what that means for us is that we give you all the tools, give you all the tools that you need to build your whare (house), or your whare of the reo, and what you do with those tools is up to you.

Analysis

Hēni is clearly a warm, positive and responsive teacher who invites feedback and endeavours to act on it. She has at least thought about incorporating learner-centred ideas such as encouraging the class to set rules of behaviour, though she has not yet implemented this. She allows her learners a small degree of autonomy, such as variation in-group work; she is satisfied that there is evidence that her class is relevant to her learners, and she teaches mainly through facilitation. However, despite all this, and her positive attitudes to learner-centredness, she is not convinced that learner-centredness is particularly relevant at the beginner level. Her learning of te reo Māori mainly occurred in a normal secondary-to-tertiary progression, so is outside the main area of focus of this study; however, it is noticeable that she had an enjoyable and uncomplicated experience of learning te reo Māori at university, despite encountering some difficulties at post-graduate level.

In terms of the capabilities approach, she seems to have flourished as a learner, and have had a learning experience that did not impair her dignity as an adult or as a person; as a teacher, she clearly acknowledges the dignity of her learners too. There was no sense that she had been used as a means rather than as an end in her own right, and although she says she has minor difficulties with her hearing, these do not seem to have detracted significantly from her learning experience. There was no evidence in her learning that she had any significant adult agency in choosing anything to do with content, learning activities or assessment, but she seemed untroubled by this; as for Katarina, this could be framed as 'adaptive preference'. Finally, she had no issues with how much or little she wished to learn, as she clearly had a strong appetite to always learn more. In terms of tikanga Māori, she clearly embraced its principles, experienced tikanga Māori in a positive way, and shared it in the same way as a teacher.

7.2.3 Irihāpeti

Irihāpeti is a university lecturer in te reo Māori whom I interviewed because I was aware she had taken a flexible, learner-centred approach to teaching a course based on *Te Pihinga*. She is in her 40s, married, with three children who attend Māori immersion schools. She was brought up in a major urban centre in the North Island, and studied te

reo Māori at high school without really absorbing much. She attended university in the late nineties, where she enrolled in *Te Tohu Paetahi*, an immersion year of te reo Māori. This year of study laid a strong foundation for her Māori language proficiency. She also had the opportunity to take several other papers in her BA that were taught in te reo Māori (Geography and History). She then spent three years part-time, gaining a postgraduate diploma in second language teaching. She has also completed a BA (Hons) and an MA while employed at university. While doing her first degree, she also did an additional paper with a nationally known Māori expert on aspects of te reo Māori such as whakataukī and kīwaha, as well as a one week wānanga reo (similar to kura reo) with a nationally known reo Māori teacher. She has attended one Kura reo.

She chose to place herself between descriptors 1 and 2 (between 'very well' and 'well'). Her interview was conducted completely in te reo Māori; translations of extracts are my own.

Experience of learning

Irihāpeti had an unusual university reo Māori learning experience; she spent the first year of her university learning in a reo Māori immersion environment, and was also taught in te reo Māori in a number of other papers, including geography and history. Like Hera, she believed that she learnt most of her reo Māori in that key period of full immersion.

> Āe, nō reira ko te pūtake o te reo, ā, ngā momo... ngā kupu, ngā kupu waewae o te reo, ngā tino whakatakotoranga o te reo, ērā tū momo mea katoa i ako au i tērā tau.

> Yes, so those basics of the reo, those kind of… the words, that foundational language, how things are expressed in te reo, I learnt all those sorts of things in that year.

Like Hēni, Irihāpeti was clearly well satisfied with her university reo Māori experience, which extended for several years after her first year of immersion. She enjoyed all aspects of her learning, including the teaching she received; she mentioned that some

aspects were less than ideal, but did not elaborate on this. She made special mention of one teacher with an entertaining approach who could hold the attention of the class from start to finish. She acknowledged that others had a different style, and she appreciated them all.

Irihāpeti enjoyed 'wetewete reo' (grammar and syntax), and enjoyed learning the rules of Māori to find ways to express herself in Māori. She was also encouraged to use the language in imaginative ways, through writing songs and skits, for example. She was not particularly fond of such activities, however, as she did not feel she was an especially imaginative person; ("Kei tērā taha kē ōku pūkenga - he kaha au ki te wetewete reo, ērā tū momo āhuatanga" / My skills are really on the other side – I'm good at grammar, those sorts of things).

Irihāpeti has also attended a week-long course run by a nationally-known teacher of te reo Māori; and was able to fulfil a long-held dream of hers, two years before the interview was held, to attend a kura reo, something she had been unable to do previously due to work and childcare commitments. Irihāpeti loved her experience of kura reo, and is very keen to go back for more of the same experience.

Irihāpeti uses te reo Māori extensively in her work as a university lecturer, in classroom situations, in discussion with learners and fellow academics, and in social interactions at the university, where people switch in and out of te reo Māori. It is the only language she speaks to her children, who were schooled in immersion settings; she is a little disappointed that they are increasingly choosing to reply in English. Irihāpeti made no reference to Māori media playing a role in her ongoing learning.

Experience of teaching

Irihāpeti currently teaches a course based on *Te Pihinga* at university. She enjoys her teaching, but finds that having second-language learners working alongside first-language reo Māori learners can cause difficulties with grouping students and with the pace of the class. She is making an effort to make her course relevant to her learners by providing more contemporary settings for class activities and assessments.

Mapping learner-centred ideas on teaching

Irihāpeti stated that applicants for her class were not interviewed beforehand, nor did they do any questionnaire to find out about their needs, interests and aspirations. She did, however, consciously build elements of her course around things that she thought students of the younger generation would enjoy.

> I te whakaaro… mehemea he tauira ahau, he aha ngā momo kaupapa ka pai ki ahau? – me te whakaaro hoki ki ngā momo kaupapa e mōhio ana ahau ka rata ki aku ake tamariki, ki aku irāmutu – engari, kāore anō au kia uiui i ngā tauira.

> I was thinking… if I was a student, what would be the sort of things I would like? – and I also thought about the sort of topics I knew that my own children and my nieces and nephews liked - but in fact, I haven't yet asked the students.

She contrasted her choice of topics for oral assessment with the rather 'maroke' (dry, or boring) topics that had been offered previously in the *Te Pihinga* course at her university.

> I tīmata au i reira… me te whakaaro, he āhua maroke ētahi o ngā kaupapa kua tirohia i mua, ā… kāore ētahi o ngā kaupapa i te tino hāngai ki ngā mahi o ia rā, me ngā kaupapa o tēnei ao…

> I started there, with the thought that some of the topics I had looked at previously… some of them weren't really relevant to things people do every day, and (weren't) topics that related to the modern world…

Her strategy was to pick an English-language TV programme that was currently showing, and to build the class assessments around it.

Irihāpeti allowed her students some degree of choice by letting them pick three out of four topics as part of preparation for a larger oral presentation. Despite this, Irihāpeti organized the bulk of the course content, learning activities, and assessment, and students had no major input. Her awareness of learners' situations was evident,

although students were only granted a small level of autonomy. In terms of pace, Irihāpeti acknowledged the difficulty that was raised elsewhere by university learners Amy and Mikaere, that learners of very different levels of experience and proficiency are doing the same course. She agreed that teachers find it difficult having learners with very different needs in their classes, that the more capable students are not challenged enough and quickly get bored, and the students for whom the course was designed become reluctant to participate. Irihāpeti attempted to deal with the issue by trying to place better students into higher level courses, and by grouping students appropriately (with the aim of "kāore he pēhitanga ki runga i a rātou" – so that early-stage learners won't feel pressured or hassled).

Finally, Irihāpeti agreed with the other teachers that her work consisted much more in facilitating learning than in direct instruction; it was apparent from her description of her work that her students did a good deal of active learning, and that facilitation of work in groups made up the bulk of her teaching.

It is probably fair to say that Irihāpeti was actively adjusting her programme to provide a more contemporary learning context, that she was actively managing the issue of learners working at a different pace, and that she was encouraging active learning, but she had not gone to the next step of allowing learners significant input into their learning.

Analysis

Irihāpeti, like Katarina and Hēni, had a straightforward learning journey with te reo Māori, and, although she had some reservations about the teaching she encountered at one stage, has found learning te reo Māori a pleasurable experience. She is clearly a reflective and thoughtful teacher, and was the only teacher in this project who has had extensive training in second language teaching (although Hēni has done a CELTA teaching course, and Hera has done extensive and ongoing training with Te Ataarangi methods). She has been aware of the lack of relevance of some aspects of *Te Whanake* resources, and adapted her teaching accordingly to make some assessment activities more relevant and more enjoyable. She has been proactive in endeavouring to ensure that learners are really in the most relevant course for them. She seemed intrigued by

learner-centred ideas and receptive to the key principles, and had clearly tried to put student-centred ideas into operation by showing initiative about making her course up-to-date and relevant, as well as allowing some choice with assessment topics.

In terms of the capabilities approach, Irihāpeti does not appear to have any of her capabilities denied or suppressed. She flourished as a learner, enjoyed dignity throughout her experience, and had only positive things to say about kura reo—the main learning context in which learners have had negative experiences. In terms of autonomy, Irihāpeti neither experienced nor expected it—another example of 'adaptive preference'. Like Katarina and Hēni, Irihāpeti appears very comfortable in the Māori setting. She was actively adjusting her programme to provide a more contemporary learning context, she was actively managing the issue of learners working at a different pace, and that she was encouraging active learning, but she had not gone to the next step of allowing learners significant input into their learning.

7.2.4 Hera

Hera teaches several Te Ataarangi night classes in a major urban centre. She is Māori, and in her late 20s. She was born and raised in a provincial centre in the North Island, and learnt some reo Māori at school. She moved to an urban centre to attend university, but did not enjoy learning te reo Māori there, despite the good marks she achieved in the one year she studied it. She discovered the Te Ataarangi method, and became a firm convert, attending several courses based on this method. Soon after, she left her job to attend a one-year immersion course based on Te Ataarangi methods; this provided a strong foundation for her future reo Māori learning and use. She went on to train as a Te Ataarangi teacher, and this is now her main job. She has attended five or six kura reo, although she does not really approve of the methods used there.

Hera agreed that descriptor 1 best described her proficiency ('I can speak te reo Māori very well'). This interview was mostly conducted in te reo Māori, but Hera switched to English about two thirds of the way through, and we continued in English till the end; translations of excerpts in te reo Māori are my own.

Experience of learning

Hera's journey of learning te reo Māori is one of determination and commitment, one that saw her leave work and move with a friend to a nearby town to attend a fulltime immersion course, and to immerse herself completely in te reo Māori for a year. Her learning path was unlike the other teachers in this group, who all had a fairly straightforward experience of learning at university. After a brief and not very satisfactory experience of university, Hera began learning through Te Ataarangi, setting herself on a more complex and demanding journey, which she undertook with complete commitment.

Hera got high marks in her initial university reo Māori paper, but did not really know why; she is definite that she did not understand how the grammar worked, or the link between grammar and what someone was saying. However, she stated clearly that this was her personal experience, and she did not attribute this difficulty to faults in the university system, although she was adamant that the university style of learning had little to offer her.

> Ko tōku whāinga mō te reo, kia kōrero. Nō reira, hei aha te whai tohu, me te whakaoti pepa, kia whiwhi tiwhikete ai, ā - he aha tēnei ki a au? Nō reira, kāore au e whai hua i roto i tērā mahi.

> My aim for the language was to speak it. So, I didn't care about getting a qualification, or finishing papers, getting a certificate – what did that matter to me? So – that type of learning didn't get me what I wanted.

Hera encountered the Te Ataarangi method at the same time she was studying te reo Māori at university, and felt that the method quickly allowed her to break through into speaking. Her moment of discovering the communicative power of the method occurred in class when she first learnt how to ask for a cup of tea. Impressed by the technique, she became an adherent of Te Ataarangi as both learner and teacher from then on. She currently teaches adults in several thriving evening classes using Te Ataarangi methods.

Hera attributes a large amount of her success as a user of te reo Māori to her experience of full immersion in te reo Māori for a year. In the year after her first Te Ataarangi night class (two three-hour classes every week), she and a friend decided to move to a nearby town to do a one-year fulltime immersion course under the Te Ataarangi umbrella. They both also committed themselves to making te reo Māori their only means of communication for the year they were there.

> Mai te iwa karaka i te ata ki te haurua mai i te rua, e whā ngā rā ia wiki. He rawe, he rawe. I te mōhio ahau, me pērā taku āhuatanga noho, kia rere pai ai i te reo ... i te waha... i te mea he kaha nō māua ko taku hoa ki te akiaki i a māua anō, nō reira i haere māua, i hunuku māua ki [ingoa o te tāone], āe, i noho tahi ki reira, engari, kāore ō mātou hoa ki reira, tua atu i ngā ākonga o te kura, nō reira, i kōrero Māori i te kāinga, i kōrero Māori i te kura, ka kitea he hoa i te rori, i kōrero Māori...

> From nine o'clock in the morning to half past two, four days a week. It was great, it was excellent. I knew that I should live like that, to get the language flowing, orally that is… because my friend and I urged each other on, we went there, we shifted there, to [name of town], yeah, we lived together there, but seeing we had no friends there apart from students at the school, we talked Māori at home, at school, if we saw a friend on the street, we spoke Māori…

She attributes the quality of her reo Māori to both her learning through Te Ataarangi and her immersion experience.

> Ehara i te mea nō Te Ataarangi anake, engari i taua āhua, i waiho taku mahi i te tāone ki muri, kia huri tōku āhuatanga noho katoa ki te reo – kotahi te tau noa iho i pērā, kātahi hoki mai ki te tāone ki [ingoa o te tāone nui]. Engari, āe, koia te tino hua.

> So [my language proficiency] is not just from Te Ataarangi, but it's because I left my work in town behind, I turned my whole living situation to the language

– it was just one year doing that, then I went back to the city, to [name of city]. But, yes, that was what really bore fruit.

Hera has also attended several kura reo in the last three years, but she admits that for a long time she was reluctant to go.

> …i te mataku rawa atu kia haere ki reira – i rongo au i te kōrero, a ngā tāngata nō Te Ataarangi, me - (Interviewer: He mea whakamataku) Āe! Āe!... ... i te kōrero mai ētahi mō te - mō te – mō ngā taniwha- he kaha ki te – ehara i te kohete, engari he mārō te whakatika (laughs).

> … I was really scared to go there – I'd heard stories, from people in Te Ataarangi that – (Interviewer: That they were scary) Yes! That's it! … some people told me about the 'dragons' - they were tough on – not telling you off, but they'd correct you in a hard-line way (laughs).

She disliked this sort of correction, not only because she personally did not like it, but also because, as far as she was concerned, it was not good teaching practice. Eventually however she decided to attend kura reo, as it seemed there was no other way to gain exposure to that sort of teaching. She managed her reluctance to be corrected in a harsh or firm way by making sure she was in a group where expectations would not be too high.

> Engari i kuhu au ki te rōpū tuarua, i te mea i te mōhio au ki taua taumata kāre au i hē rawa atu, he hē rawa atu taku kōrero, e kore tērā kaiako e ... whakatika i ahau (laughs). Pērā i te tamaiti!

> But I went into the second group, because I knew that at that level I wouldn't make lots of errors, that my speech wouldn't be full of mistakes, and the teacher wouldn't correct me (laughs). Just like a child!

Hera was one of two interviewees who expressed reluctance to attend kura reo, and the only one to give principled objections to what she perceives as the unduly firm style of

teaching; she regarded it as contrary to the principles of gentle, supportive teaching espoused by Te Ataarangi. It is interesting to observe that she did not feel empowered to object to the teaching style.

Experience of teaching

Hera began her description of her teaching career with a description of the particular character of Te Ataarangi and its methods, and what she saw as its focus on the learners and their wellbeing.

> E ai ki ētahi, he momo hāhi pea Te Ataarangi... kei reira ngā mātāpono, me te whakapono, te whai i ērā momo mea. Āe, he rerekē, ko te reo he wāhanga noa iho o te whakaako, me aro atu ki te āhuatanga o ngā ākonga me tuatahi, um, i te mea, mehemea ka mataku te ākonga ki te pātai, ka mataku ki te whakaputa i te reo, kāore ia i ako, e kore e taea, nō reira, koia te mahi nui a te kaiako, te whakahaere kia pai te noho o tērā wāhi (āe), mā te ākonga.

> According to some people, Te Ataarangi is like a religion – it has its principles, and its beliefs – it has all those sorts of things. It's true, it is different, the language is only one aspect of teaching, first of all you have to pay attention to the learner, because if the learners are scared to ask questions, and fearful of speaking out, they won't learn, they won't be able to, so that's the main job of the teacher, to organize things so that [the learning environment] is a good place to be for the learner.

She trained by assisting in classes, then was trained to teach as an individual; however, there are also regular training sessions run by national leaders of the movement, at which local teachers also present, and at which teachers learn from each other. There were three of these regional hui (meetings) in her area every year. There is also a national hui every year, where teachers present, and prominent kuia and koroua in Te Ataarangi look on and provide guidance. Sometimes those kuia or koroua will present a class, and the teachers will be in the fortunate position of being taught by them. Hera described how one of her teachers ran the class for the first-year teachers (she had mainly switched to English by this stage in the interview).

> I remember the way that she ran the class – she didn't show you how to do it, she said "This is - this is what you have to teach…there are the words, the rods, the colours. You go off and... you work out how you're going to teach this" and then we all came back – and each one had to do something, and i roto i tērā i kitea he rerekē rawa atu ngā mahi i whakaako katoa! (and in that you could see the teaching activities were just so different)!

Some teachers had a very gentle approach, whereas hers was much more animated and lively, but she appreciated the variety of styles, and appreciates what she learns from her peers as well as the more established figures. In terms of resources and technology, Hera provides a mix of traditional face-to-face technology with carefully selected use of the internet to support learning. She stated that the teacher and his or her imagination are the main resources in Te Ataarangi classes, but that she does provide support for learners through a Google site. This is mainly material from past lessons, to prevent people who miss several lessons from becoming discouraged and dropping out. She also provides word lists on Quizlet (an online learning tool); these are not compulsory reading, but met an expressed desire from her learners.

Mapping learner-centred ideas on teaching

Like Katarina, Hera interviewed all applicants for her courses beforehand, but she made it clear to me that she was not particularly interested in knowing too much about the learners beforehand, apparently because, as far as she is concerned, knowing about their individual needs, interests and aspirations is irrelevant at that stage of the learning journey. Her explanation was that Te Ataarangi has the principle that no one should be turned away, so she is prepared to accept anyone. She was more concerned that the prospective learners understand how things are run in Te Ataarangi so that they are not disconcerted or perplexed when they start classes. In fact, the main reason Hera gave for not paying much attention to the concept of learner-centredness in general was that learners needed to entrust themselves to the learning process; they would not be rushed or pressured, and would learn in a structured way, following a well-trodden path.

> One of the things I've always buzzed about te ao Māori (the Māori world) and Te Ataarangi in particular, is that… you just have to be humble – you will get

told things (Interviewer: Ā tōna wā / All in good time)…it's not about you, it's not about you getting what you want – you'll get lots of things! They may just be not what you initially wanted, and you just have to wait for them to come.

Following this teaching and learning process does not necessarily preclude taking an active interest in learners' needs, interests and aspirations, but does make them less relevant, as the learning experience is unlikely to be adapted to any great extent for particular learners. Certainly there is little room within Te Ataarangi for basing the learning on learners' expressed needs, interests and aspirations, though presumably the course is designed to meet the broad needs and aspirations of anyone undergoing a reo Māori course with a major focus on oral communication.

As a natural consequence, Hera agreed that for her, the issue of learners having choices in learning situations was not particularly relevant, as her learners are following the process and curriculum laid out in Te Ataarangi. It may be that individual choice in learning activities in Te Ataarangi is still possible, but Hera had clearly not seriously considered this possibility. I did not enquire further about relevance of her classes to learners, or about treatment of individual differences or variations in pace to suit individual learners, as Hera clearly believed that teaching appropriately in that mode would deal with such issues as they arose (for example, learners are not hurried to grasp any particular word or language form, but given time to achieve things at their own pace).

Likewise, Hera did not believe that affirming individual learners' identity was particularly important, though she acknowledged that people needed to have a good sense of who they were. When she elaborated on this point, however, it was clear that she considered that people coming to the course needed to do so with a sense of humility.

> Yeah, you have to be OK with the culture of the class, which is a Māori environment anyway (laughs)… but then also within that there is that element of - knowing who you are, and where you come from, and being confident in that aspect… koia tētahi o ngā tino waiata o Te Ataarangi (that's what one of

the main songs of Te Ataarangi says) you know, ahakoa he roia, he tamariki (whether you're a lawyer or a child) – you know it's like, it doesn't matter who you are and how you identify yourself outside, it's of no consequence, because everyone in that group is starting from the bottom. (laughs).

The latter part of this quote appears to indicate that within Te Ataarangi a certain amount of the learner's identity needed to be put aside. By contrast, a learner-centred approach would affirm all aspects the person brings to their learning. This does not mean that a reo Māori learner should approach their learning from an arrogant standpoint, although a lawyer (to take her example) may well have quite different skills and aptitudes to bring to the learning environment than other learners.

Like all the other teachers, Hera did not see facilitation of learning as a practice confined to learner-centred teaching. She affirmed that in Te Ataarangi, the teacher's main job was to facilitate learning, after having initially taught a structure, and she affirmed that this was her practice too. She gave examples of how learners would take structures and vocabulary they had learnt and work in groups to create imaginative sentences, developing and expanding their speaking skills.

It became increasingly clear as the interview progressed that Hera was not favourably inclined to learner-centredness, and that she trusted the process of Te Ataarangi to create a learning space where her adult learners could flourish as reo Māori learners. It was also clear that the Te Ataarangi system as she described it was designed to be considerate of learners and their needs, to be flexible enough so that learners could work at their own pace, and to eventually produce confident, capable speakers of te reo Māori.

Analysis

Hera is a lively, animated person, who has followed her own convictions about the learning method that works for her, and consequently immersed herself in te reo Māori as a learner and as a teacher. She strongly believes in the principles and cultural appropriateness of Te Ataarangi, and the class of hers that I observed was focused but relaxed, and successfully imparting te reo Māori to a group of adult learners. Her

learning journey was less straightforward than those of Katarina, Hēni and Irihāpeti, but once she had found the method that suited her, she showed commitment and energy in pursuing it.

In terms of the capabilities approach, Hera appears to have been given opportunities to flourish, and achieve full human functioning. She does not appear to have been used as a means rather than an end, and, in most of her learning through Te Ataarangi, experienced dignity despite Te Ataarangi requiring the learner to come humbly to their learning. The only exception to this in her learning was her kura reo experience, which she clearly felt she had to navigate carefully to avoid exposing herself to correction in a way she felt was inappropriately strict or harsh. The kura reo experience also points to a lack of adult agency; normally in a situation where adults felt they were being corrected in a way they felt was unhelpful, they would likely object, or request that they be treated differently. It appears that the respect accorded to the teachers in kura reo has meant that the adult learners who attend are willing to suffer a certain amount of indignity in the cause of improving their reo Māori.

Finally, it is clear that Hera embraced tikanga Māori, especially as embodied in the methods and ethos of Te Ataarangi. For her, this means acknowledging the importance of the group and the culture, and according importance to the individual (while still maintaining her individuality); for her, this is clearly good and right.

7.2.5 Mere
Experience of learning

Mere is a Māori woman in her late 50s, living in a major North Island urban centre. She teaches night classes in te reo Māori for adults at beginner level at a local school. When she was in her late 30s she started learning te reo Māori as professional development for her job at a tertiary learning institution. Her initial reo Māori learning was marae-based, and was more implicit than explicit; she then started studying part-time at university, eventually gaining a diploma in Māori Studies, then a BA, followed by a Graduate Diploma in secondary teaching. She found she did not enjoy secondary teaching, and she has worked mainly in primary schools as a Māori resource teacher and reliever. She is particularly enthusiastic about teaching adults, and is keen to design

new resources. She was initially interviewed as a learner, but she focused more strongly on her teaching in the interview, so has been treated mainly as a teacher in this thesis.

Mere eventually settled on descriptor 2 ('I can speak te reo Māori well') to describe her proficiency. When asked what specific things she wanted to learn, she answered, "Just how to teach it better." However, she also made it clear that she also wanted to improve in a general sense as a reo Māori speaker. She rated her motivation to learn as "about 7 or 8." When asked how good she wanted to become at speaking te reo Māori, she was adamant that she wanted to reach "that really good level… I think for me, absolutely, 10."

As mentioned earlier, Mere's early learning in the polytechnic course was mainly implicit language learning, picked up indirectly in an introduction to tikanga Māori based at the polytechnic's own marae. This was a real contrast with her later learning at university, which focused on the structures and grammar of te reo Māori. She was unfamiliar with English grammar when she started, but she adapted to the grammatical approach, and stated that she was quite happy with both the analytical approach at university and the more implicit, marae-based approach through the polytechnic course. She did however comment that her university learning lacked spiritual vitality (she made the comment "... kore he wairua"). She was conscious of the fact that she came late to her reo Māori learning, and believes that this has set limits on how good she could get at the language. She appeared to be resigned to this.

Despite having expressed some satisfaction with her more grammatically based learning at university, she believed it was important to have a real-life context for learning, and a cultural context as well.

> I think, I mean you can do the exercises and all that stuff, and I mean, some people are used to learning like that, but for some reason it's hard to retain it when you learn it in such a mechanical way. You need to have some context, some cultural context – that's why it's amazing to use things like the haere ki te marae [going to the marae] as a learning tool.

She also acknowledged that despite the somewhat mechanistic nature of the learning, that deep changes were occurring in the lives of Māori who were learning their own language.

> They're sort of trying to learn Māori – so what's going on for you as a Māori when this happens is that you have all this stuff psychologically and spiritually invested in the acquisition of this language, because it's not just another language... It's that opening of your heart, it's addressing things and healing things, I guess, you know, on the one hand, and on the other hand, it was presenting you with a lot of dilemmas and problems...

Mere felt very comfortable at university despite being an adult student. I did not specifically ask Mere for her level of satisfaction with the university, but she appeared to be quite happy with it, with the proviso that she felt it lacked "wairua" (spirituality), and that it was often decontextualized. Because of various quite severe health issues, Mere had not been involved in formal reo Māori learning for some time, although she was keen to attend kura reo at some stage. She believed that the teaching she does in evening classes has improved her language skills. She expressed enthusiasm for being in situations such as kōhanga reo where she is learning indirectly rather than directly, and learns better if the language is being used in an activity she is engaged in or which is going on around her. She rarely watches Māori TV or listens to iwi radio, but when she does, she likes to listen to older people speaking ("Their reo is so ngāwari (easy)").

Experience of teaching

Mere teaches te reo Māori at an elementary level for an evening class in an urban centre. Her teaching occupies her thoughts a great deal; she is quite passionate about it ("I love what I do, and people know that I'm passionate about my reo and my Māori and my tikanga"), and wants to develop her own resources. She feels confident to teach te reo Māori up to level 4 ("I know what I know and I can certainly teach what I know"), and believes being a second language learner has been an advantage rather than a disadvantage for her as a teacher.

I always found that as a second language learner, I was at an advantage, in the sense that I could think through things, I understood, you know - the questions that we ask as second language learners – what is that there for? How do you translate that? I find that with some native speakers too, they take a lot of things for granted...

She believes the more analytical, grammar-based style of teaching she encountered at university has helped her as a teacher:

... it took a long time looking back, and I realised the value of what I actually learnt... because you know, I'm naturally analytical, I sort of thought my way through. I was always like breaking things down into manageable chunks - I kind of like getting information and breaking it down, so, oh well, ok, that's how that works, so how would I teach that?

She believes it is important to teach in a cultural context, and appreciates being able to use the marae of a local teaching institution as a base for lessons. She believes that using waiata, haka and pakiwaitara (stories) is "a brilliant way of learning."

I think, I mean you can do the exercises and all that stuff, and I mean, some people are used to learning like that, but for some reason it's hard to retain it when you learn it in such a mechanical way - you need to have some context, some cultural context...

She trained as a secondary teacher, but found that she did not enjoy teaching at that level, and now does relieving work in primary schools, as well as teaching an eight-week adult evening class. Her students are mostly non-Māori professional people. She has modest aims for these classes; she teaches pronunciation, basic communication, and teaches people to say their mihi or pepeha (identifying themselves in Māori terms). She describes the course as "treaty-based," in that it acknowledges the partnership between Māori and non-Māori, something she believes gives an inclusive and welcoming approach to her course.

... as a kaiako (teacher), someone who's been around that situation, I'm aware that people come with their own baggage, y'know, as Kiwis, as New Zealanders, whether we're Māori or Pākehā, we come with our own baggage to learning te reo... and I just find that a lot of that I can just defuse a lot of that by having that inclusiveness... It's really cool to see people relax, and laugh.

She is very impressed with what she has seen of the Te Ataarangi method, particularly its visual and kinaesthetic qualities; she wants to learn to teach using it, but has not yet been able to do so yet for health reasons. She has made some progress on designing her own resources, with an emphasis on liveliness, colour coding, and multi-sensory learning.

Mapping learner-centred ideas on teaching

Mere gave no evidence of finding about her learners before they began their course, nor did she say anything that indicated she thought it was important. Once they were in her class, she clearly observed them closely and in a caring way, and provided them with vocabulary applicable to their lives. She expressed surprise at the idea that learners could have input into the learning, on the grounds that learners were not in a position to know what they should be taught. On the other hand, she is also aware that there has sometimes been an uncomfortable mismatch between what learners have wanted or expected, and what they have received.

> I've been down that road, I feel sorry for my students, you know the ones who quietly think, oh shit, no, this is too hard – you know what I mean? You know I try and recognise it, I learn enough about them to recognise the ones, and try and help them out…

During her course, she does enquire about the learners' work or domestic situation, so she can provide them with lists of relevant vocabulary.

> …what I try and do, in those short eight weeks that we have, is cater to them specifically… asking people if they want to, you know, like get a list of kupu (words) together – that's where… you use your vocab list, and you learn all the

things that are in your immediate environment – if you work in an office, everything that you'd like to name or use in the office, or some of the phrases…

Mere was quite confident that her beginner's course met the needs of her learners, having observed the satisfaction of many of the learners ("A lot of people would come to these courses and think, oh God, I'm finally learning it!"). She made no particular mention of how she deals with individual difference, and made it clear that because her classes were not too ambitious, with only modest aims, it was unlikely that learners would struggle with the pace. She believed her course affirmed her mainly non-Māori learners' identities through her inclusive, Treaty-based approach.

Finally, like all the other teachers, Mere was adamant that facilitation was very much in evidence in her classes.

Yeah, absolutely – no one stands at the head of the classroom and talks at anyone anymore… they sit in their groups and [there is] lots of sort of talking amongst themselves, and they can discuss things that are, you know, perplexing? Someone else might be able to explain it to them better, you know…certainly you're giving information, but what you've got to do is follow that up by exercises that show whether or not they got information.

Analysis

It was clear in the interview that Mere had a warm, caring approach to the learners in her class, and endeavoured to provide lively, enjoyable, culturally informed lessons. She also (as mentioned previously) accommodated different learners' needs for specific vocabulary related to their own lives. However, she clearly did not see it as important to find out about the learners beforehand in actual practice, and saw little merit in her beginner learners having any input into the courses, or having any say in what happened in her classes. Her teaching could be described as learner-friendly (designed to be a pleasant experience for the learner), but certainly not learner-centred.

In terms of the capabilities approach, Mere appears to have flourished as a learner, despite finding her university learning somewhat lacking in spiritual vitality. She also

seems to have achieved quite full human functioning, particularly in situations such as working with parents and children, and in following up deeper aspects of te reo Māori. She does not appear to have been used as a means rather than as an end in herself. Her dignity does not seem to have been affected in her learning, nor does she seem to have any significant differences in her situation that needed to be allowed for. She did not appear to have any significant autonomy within her learning situations, but she did not expect to have any either. Finally, she was happy to learn as much as possible, so the question of choosing how much or little to learn did not apply.

In terms of Māori culture, Mere embraced it wholeheartedly, and did not express any reservations about aspects that she did not like. She appreciated the collective ethos, and the respect for experts in te reo.

7.7 Conclusion

All the learning contexts for adult learning of te reo Māori, from Te Ataarangi to Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and mainstream university courses, have been designed in their own way to meet the needs of learners while advancing the cause of revival of te reo Māori. Each context has its own strengths, such as academic rigour in the university system, and a more gentle, unrushed pace for Te Ataarangi, to give just two examples. Within these various contexts, the teacher participants in this project were all apparently teaching successfully, and all demonstrated considerable awareness of the learners in their classes. All appeared to be responsive in their own way to the expressed needs of their students; all had lively, engaging personalities, and displayed a genuine passion for te reo Māori and for teaching it effectively. From the descriptions the teachers gave, it appears that they had learner-friendly classes, with learning occurring in a generally positive atmosphere. Two of the teachers had gone beyond the demands of the curriculum to improve the students learning, in Irihāpeti's case by making the learning context more relevant, and in Hera's case by providing internet-based vocabulary lists to meet the desire of the learners for better word knowledge. In fact, the interviews presented a heartening picture of the different ways of learning available to adults, at least in the urban centres (there is less choice available in the small towns or rural areas, as Margaret's experience shows).

Despite all these positive aspects, however, none of the teachers actively inquired about the needs, interests and aspirations of the learners with the intention of basing learning on these things (although Katarina used the initial interviews to guide her to some extent). Nor did learners appear to be having any significant say in the content, learning activities or assessment process in any of the courses. It would be fair to say that the courses were generally learner-friendly in their own way without being learner-centred; furthermore, whenever such information is gathered (in Katarina's case, for example) the information is not often used to effect substantial change. What the interviews did show was that there is potentially room for administrators of courses to inquire more directly from students themselves about what they need, are interested in, and aspire to. The interviews also showed that there is room for teachers and educators in general, in a reo Māori context, to use this information to cater more accurately for learners, to give them more input into their learning, and to allow them more control over their learning.

The interviews shed light on the various merits and weaknesses of different learning contexts, but particularly on the university setting, where four of the five teachers did most of their reo Māori learning. While both Irihāpeti and Hēni were generally very positive about their university reo Māori learning, Mere was satisfied but with some reservations, Katarina only moderately satisfied with it, and Hera found it did not provide her with what she wanted. It is reasonable to expect that Irihāpeti and Hēni, as university teachers themselves, would feel some sort of affinity for university learning, although Hēni admitted that she was still shy about speaking when she was pursuing postgraduate studies in te reo Māori, which suggests that the course could have focused more on interpersonal communication and speaking in general. It is also apparent in the interviews with learners that those studying te reo Māori at university also place a high priority on attaining conversational skills, a desire that is not always being fulfilled. It is also disappointing to observe that Hera did not experience her university learning as a positive one for achieving communicative competence. Even though she did find a method that worked for her, and that she embraced wholeheartedly, it seems that she should have been able to achieve communicative aims in the university setting as well. It is reasonable to assume that if universities were made more aware of this desire for

teaching strong interpersonal communicative skills, they would give this aspect more emphasis than they do at present.

Further to the teachers' learning experiences, it is significant that two teachers, Irihāpeti and Hera, both had extended time being taught in a reo Māori immersion environment, and both testify to the considerable benefits of this experience. While immersion in a language is not the whole solution to language learning (several learner interviewees attested to the stress and distress caused by immersion for lecture-length periods without sufficient comprehension), for capable, motivated learners, a substantial amount of time in an immersion environment can provide a sound basis for ongoing language use (see Rātima, 2013, for example). Although most recent writing about bilingualism advocates avoiding the 'two solitudes' approach by actively encouraging interaction between the first and second language (Cummins, 2008), and using the learner's first language to shed light on aspects of the second, there is strong evidence from these interviews that a long period of immersion in the right conditions can make a large difference in language learning.

One of the reasons I inquired about teachers' learning experience in my interviews was to find out if there was a significant level of discontent with their learning process and context; after all, any proposal for change ideally should be able to show that the present system is inadequate in significant regards. In fact, however, for their part the teachers have generally been satisfied with their learning once they found a path that suited them, and it is fair therefore to conclude that these teachers' learning had worked well for them, and that there was no significant lack exposed that learner-centredness might fill. Of course, even if the teachers have had satisfactory learning experiences, this would by no means close the door on new approaches, as it is quite possible that a more learner-centred approach could still have improved their learning if it had been implemented. It is clear that capable, motivated people can learn te reo Māori to high levels of proficiency in the present systems, but a learner-centred approach could still supply a significant element of improvement, by adding another dimension of empowerment and engagement, and tailoring the learning experience more closely to learners' needs, interests and aspirations.

Chapter 8: Responses to learner-centred concepts

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the responses of the interviewees—both learners and teachers—to several key learner-centred concepts. The responses provide the answer to my second research question:

> What is the response of a sample of adult learners of te reo Māori and teachers of adults learning te reo Māori, to the concept of stronger emphasis on learner-centredness in Māori language learning for adults?

After a brief introduction to the principles of learner-centredness that were presented to the interviewees, there is a summary of individual participants' responses. The next section provides more detail on each participant's responses; for both the summary and the more detailed treatments, the learners' responses are presented first. I conclude the chapter with an overview of the participants' responses to learner-centred ideas, before leading into the next chapter, which analyses the interviews in more depth, and integrates this into a broader discussion of the topic.

8.2 The key learner-centred concepts

In the third and final part of the interviews, I provided the following key learner-centred concepts for participants to comment on:

- Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner

- Basing learning on these things

- The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content, learning activities and assessment

- The teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge

- Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)

- An emphasis on active rather than passive learning

In practice, I blended the first two principles together in the interviews, and they are written as one principle in the material that follows.

Coverage of the questions and concepts is uneven, especially in the early interviews. This is partly because at this stage of the interview process, I was tailoring my questioning more specifically to individuals, and some had already made their opinions of the concepts quite clear in earlier sections of the interviews. I was also near the end of the appointed interview time, and although three interviews went longer than 90 minutes, for the most part I was keen to keep the interview within the set time, and was prepared to drop later questions to achieve this. I was also keen to follow up aspects of my interviewees' language learning experience that I had not encountered before (particularly for those who were involved with TWoA), which meant that I spent longer on earlier sections than I would otherwise have done. For the most part, however, I worked quite systematically through the questions in my interview schedule; several later interviewees (Cathy, Amy, and Brian) had a copy of the questions as well as the concepts in front of them, and worked through the questions quite thoroughly.

All participants, whether teachers or learners, commented on the same set of concepts. By the time we had reached this stage of the interview, participants had already been asked whether these concepts had been put into practice in their teaching or learning so far. As a result, most had some idea of what learner-centredness involved by this stage of the interview, although knowledge of the overall concept of learner-centredness was not essential for commenting on the specific aspects laid out in this list.

8.3 Learner responses

8.3.1 Mikaere

Mikaere was definite that the learner-centred model was, if not the accepted best practice, at least well established as good practice. He strongly agreed with the need to know about learners' needs, interests and aspirations, and said that that concept was generally promoted in his secondary teacher training. He said that his students at secondary school were having a role in designing the programme around things that were relevant to them. In terms of autonomy, he had already made it clear that he would like more say in learning activities and ways of assessing, and he took it as a given that a teacher should mainly be a facilitator of learning, although he acknowledged that instruction was necessary too. He was also clearly in favour of active learning.

Mikaere was my first interviewee, and I was less particular when interviewing him about ensuring all the questions were answered than I was later.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner - basing learning on these things*

Mikaere recognised that this first principle had been instilled in him in his teacher training and was guiding his practice as a new high school teacher; however, he had not experienced it at university level.

> Yeah. That's what we're doing now. In high schools for example, we're getting the kids to sort of design the programmes and get them to find things that are relevant to them. But I think at university, it's not that....

He followed up with an example from his own reo Māori teaching that was entertaining, highly active, had an element of competition, and used the students' cell phones.

- *Consultation or active negotiation with learners*

Mikaere was aware of the benefits of learner-centredness, but did not see how the university could integrate the principle of consulting with learners or negotiating with them. It seemed to him that the university did not have the liberty to allow such flexibility over what was taught and how it was taught and assessed.

> …the problem that I see is that … this sort of learner-centred learning is actually *the way* to learn – 'a' way to learn I should say, not the way, but – it is definitely a model – it's fun, you do learn, you're engaged, and if you're looking for the results, if you want results – if you're a lecturer and you do want results then obviously that's a good way to do that. But I don't think a tertiary institution operates like that…

I did not raise the other learner-centred concepts directly with Mikaere.

8.3.2 Amīria

Amīria believed that the principle of basing learning on the needs, interests and aspirations of learners was a well-established principle in education, and that it was consistent with Māori principles of enhancing and nurturing the mana of persons. She felt that learners having a high level of autonomy was less important, as long as the teacher had a good awareness of what the learner needed. She agreed that teaching should be mainly facilitation, and that active learning was important, for her personally as well. She believed a learner-centred approach would make her feel more empowered and less frustrated as a learner.

The interview with Amīria was also one of the earlier ones, when I was adopting a more flexible approach to the questions. I first asked how much Amīria knew about learner-centredness, and she provided a broadly accurate answer to the question.

> I haven't read much about it, I don't really know a lot about it, but it - I mean, just intuitively, it sounds like something that focuses on what the needs of the learner are.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner - basing learning on these things*

Amīria responded that these elements seemed consistent with what she would expect from a learner-centred approach. She went on to affirm the place of these principles: "I think those are fairly well-tested and fundamental principles about education – it's just – they just need to be applied (laughs)". She went on to say that, in her view, the principles were entirely consistent with a Māori approach, and an indigenous approach.

> … as I said before, indigenous principles, and principles of tangata whenuatanga or mātauranga Māori are all about the mana that resides naturally in a person, nurturing that mana, and enabling them to have an experience of their own mana is what it means to be a tohunga, you know.

She linked this to the Latin concept of 'educare' (to lead out, although she described it as drawing out).

> Learners are not empty vessels, learners already have …a set of skills and abilities – the role of a teacher is to facilitate that person to learn, and to learn is to enable them to express in the world those things that are already in them.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*

Amīria responded briefly but positively to this principle.

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

Amīria said this was the element she was least convinced about:

> … so long as the teacher is somebody that understands those… needs and… is somebody that is able to teach that student… so I'm somebody that naturally

learns through hearing, then I should be paired with somebody who understands how to maximise those qualities.

When it comes to assessment or having to control over how you're assessed, I think that's OK if you have a skilled teacher that is receptive …is able to recognise, ah, this student has displayed proficiency in X quality (sic).

She emphasized that teachers "… have to be skilled at observation, they have to have a solid foundation themselves to be able …to draw upon."

- *An emphasis on active rather than passive learning*

Amīria said that when she feels she has more control over her environment, she becomes more active, and that she becomes more activated if she feels motivated.

If you're more engaged, and you feel like the learning program is tailored towards you, the learner might be more – myself, I would be really motivated to engage, so it would be active … I'm passive when I feel like I have little control over my environment, or how I'm being taught, or what I'm being taught.

I asked Amīria what effect she thought it would have on her personal reo Māori learning if the learner-centred principles we had discussed were followed; she replied, "It would accelerate it … it would …help me to feel more empowered … it would help me to feel less resentment over a number of things …"

8.3.3 Amy

Amy was emphatic that teachers need to know the needs, interests and aspirations of learners to teach effectively. However, she did not believe it was important for teachers to actively consult or negotiate with learners on the course, as long as learning was occurring. She also did not see the need for learners to have a high degree of autonomy, as long as the process of teaching and learning was going well. She did believe implementation of learner-centred ideas was feasible, that it could benefit her learning,

and that a learner-centred approach could particularly benefit adult learners, as adult learners had specific positive and negative aspects to the way they learnt.

Before we started discussing the principles, I asked Amy if she felt that her learning had been learner-centred, by whatever definition she chose; she replied that there had been an attempt at making her university course learner-centred, but she did not think that her experience overall had been effectively learner-centred.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*

  - basing learning on these things

Amy's answer was emphatic: "I don't think that you can even start learning to happen unless those two are done." She expanded on the need to know the learners well, and in some detail, beyond the brief details entailed in the mihi; "Who is it that is in front of me, and why are they here?'... That should be what the teacher should ask, and not just the mihi – not just like what tribe you come from ..."

- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content,*

  learning activities and assessment

Amy did not believe this was important, except in circumstances where the teaching and learning was not working, in which case the teacher needed to change their approach.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of*

  knowledge

Amy agreed with this principle, although she said the teacher need to have expertise in their subject area as well.

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

Amy rated this as the least important element, because if the other elements were taken care of properly, the learner should be able to "trust in the process and not need to take control..." Amy observed that in her personal university learning she had had to assume too much control to ensure she passed—by hiring a tutor, for example. She also felt that other younger students were left too much on their own, resulting in failure. She affirmed that even adults need nurturing, and often had responsibilities that meant that they had to attend to crises or family issues.

I asked Amy if she thought learner-centredness should have a bigger role in adult reo Māori learning; Amy agreed that it should, because adults had specific knowledge about the world—both positive ("life learning") and negative ("lack of brain flexibility") that needed to be acknowledged. I then asked her how feasible it would be implement greater learner-centredness, and whether the result be worth the extra effort for the teacher and/or learning institution; she thought it would be "entirely feasible", because ordinary secondary and primary school teachers did it. She also said that "people in the role of teacher or kaiako should have an understanding of this, and things fall down when they don't." She said that teacher training made a difference in the effectiveness of teachers she had encountered: "If you don't really understand how people learn, then I think that can affect how effective your own teaching can be." I then asked her for her final thoughts on the topic of learner-centredness, and she replied, "I'm really pleased that you're doing this research. I think it's necessary, because I think – it can – well, I think you are asking some questions that need to be asked about."

8.3.4 Tīmoti

Tīmoti had not known what learner-centredness was prior to the interview, but clearly understood the concept by this stage. He agreed that finding out about the needs, interests and aspirations of learners was fundamental to a learner-centred model, although it was unclear at this stage of the interview if he agreed that this was an important principle for learning. He was intrigued at the idea of negotiating aspects such as assessment, and was impressed that some organizations allow such negotiation.

He affirmed his appreciation of facilitative teaching, and his valuing of a high level of learner autonomy; his comments indicated that he saw a particularly large role for digital means of learning autonomously. He was strongly in favour of active learning, and agreed that a learner-centred approach could have a positive effect on adults learning te reo Māori. He considered that an approach might have helped his own father, who was relearning te reo Māori after speaking it as a child, and concluded by saying that a learner-centred approach would be worth implementing.

When I asked Tīmoti for his response to learner-centredness as a concept, he said he had never heard of the idea of learner-centredness before the interview: "Obviously now the explanation is more about centring the learning around the student, or at the student, with the student… and how they learn."

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*

  - basing learning on these things

Tīmoti agreed that doing this was important to make learning learner-centred;"Yeah well obviously… you're gonna need to do that… it seems like that's what you want to do – that would be great." He immediately asked if there was a standard format for doing that, and if a questionnaire was used; my response to this led into the next section.

- *Consultation or active negotiation with learners*

The idea was clearly new to Tīmoti: "That's new, this is a new concept this one, being consulted about assessment because normally that's arbitrary, isn't it?" We discussed the idea, and when I mentioned that TWoA allowed some negotiation over different ways to present the assessments, he was clearly interested and impressed.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning*

Tīmoti responded positively to this idea, and had previously said that his teacher had a facilitative approach.

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy*

Tīmoti once again agreed that this idea had potential. He clearly saw this as primarily a computer or internet based type of learning.

> Right, there's all the modules, yeah, boom boom, do it when I want, you know. People will probably crack through learning if they do it like that, because they'll be wanting to learn that.

- *Emphasis on active learning*

Once again Tīmoti responded warmly to this idea.

> I think that's a brilliant way to go… if you go back to how the old people were learning, it's looking and watching and doing, so it is active learning isn't it? Yeah, I think that's very important to have it there.

I asked him if he thought that learner-centredness have a bigger role in adult reo Māori learning; he agreed that it should have a bigger role, and assured me he was not responding positively just to be agreeable. When asked how feasible implementation would be, Tīmoti's initial response was to wonder aloud if the resources were there for such an approach to be tried, and he concluded that they were. He continued to mull over the possible implications.

> It would be almost like a one-on-one in ways, wouldn't it, so that a teacher would be almost one-on-one with 10 or 20 students, wouldn't they, because they would have to know intimately how the student learns…

He also returned to the idea of software or an app that could be used to tailor learning for individual students. He continued by saying that implementing learner-centred ideas was at least worth a try: "I think it's workable, because how do you know otherwise if you don't - if they don't try it?" Tīmoti finished by commenting about his father's

recent efforts to re-learn te reo Māori (he had spoken te reo Māori when he was a child).

> I'm pretty sure if he had the option ... to pick what he learnt, and if …. things were tailored specifically to what he hoped to achieve, he would probably be more interested... you know he was real kakama (enthusiastic) first year, second year was like, getting better and better, and towards the end of it I think he might have failed an assessment or something… this year he hasn't actually been back yet for his third year, and possibly if he was given the option to learn what he wanted to at whatever pace he wanted to, then perhaps he might be more engaged with it.

He was aware that some sort of balance was needed between what learners wanted and what needed to be taught: "Obviously people have their own reasons for learning, so they probably should be given the opportunity to learn what they want to learn – [though] some of the foundational stuff is probably not negotiable." Finally, near the end of the interview, he said:

> I appreciate what you're doing… I think it's really good, in fact I'm going to plagiarise this thing here for my [mau rākau]! …Oh, I think there's some really good concepts in there. Schooling should be done more along these lines.

8.3.5 Brian

It was clear from an early stage in the interview that Brian had a good understanding of what learner-centredness involved. He considered that his learning at TWoA had been partly learner-centred, but could be more so, particularly in terms of learners being able to be taught specific things they wanted. He agreed that learning should be based on the needs, interests and aspirations of the learners, but acknowledged the difficulties this could cause for learning institutions. He was intrigued with the idea of consulting or negotiating with learners, but was unsure how it would work in practice, as learning institutions generally have definite curriculum requirements. He agreed that a facilitative approach was best, though he appreciated simply being instructed at times. He was wary of learning a language too autonomously, as he had done so overseas and

adopted some bad linguistic and cultural habits. Overall, however, he was positive about the concept of learner-centredness, although he was unsure how it could be implemented.

When asked for his response to learner-centredness as a concept, Brian replied, "I guess it would be structuring the teaching around the learner's needs… So, figuring what it is that they are trying to get out of it rather than delivering a structured course, like a curriculum." He initially said that his learning had not been particularly learner-centred, but then he moderated his position.

> I suppose it depends how I personally define learner-centredness. I suppose also, maybe, if you think about learner-centredness, it would be that kind of facilitation approach where you give people some tools and then you say, right now I'll find a way for you to use the tools. And you use it rather than instructing them how to use it… And we do a fair amount of that.

He concluded that what the learning and teaching at TWoA was "a lot more learner-centred, but probably could be more so." He acknowledged the difficulties and tensions associated with the idea, particularly the need to fit a curriculum and assess to it, but he still believed more could be done to cater to the learners' needs and wants.

> I think it's tricky… I think, up until now we've needed a lot of instruction, but yeah, maybe it hasn't been, it could have been more learner-centred in terms of, is there anything that you guys feel you need to know? Is there anything that would help you improve your reo? … to actually put that out there and say, well what is it that you guys are missing? Let's focus on that. [That] would be good.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*

    - basing learning on these things

Brian agreed that this was very important, although he acknowledged the potential difficulties for an institution that needed to follow a curriculum and carry out assessments and thus gain funding.

- *Consultation or active negotiation with learners*

Brian was intrigued by this idea but unsure how it would work in practice:

> Yeah, it's an interesting concept really, I think. It's probably just because I'm stuck in a very, I guess, curriculum oriented model. And I think, I would like to be able to actively negotiate what we learn. At the same time, I do kind of trust that [teacher's name] knows what's best for me… if we could all negotiate the content, I wonder if we'd really learn things in the right order.

He compared the situation with his own experience of teaching English in another country, where he had few ties to a curriculum.

> … I've been able to do that. If people say, I'm confused about this, I want to learn it, I'll say, is everyone else happy to do that? And if they are, then we can do it. But we were never - very rarely was I teaching to a curriculum. I was just teaching whatever I felt like. Every day.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning*

Brian acknowledged that facilitation was the main task of a language teacher, even though as a learner, he found it easier to just be "spoon-fed" at times.

> Even if they have to do some instructing, still their role is to facilitate your learning of the language. Like you can't spoon-feed someone a language. They've got to do it for themselves.

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy*

Brian was rather wary about this principle. He talked about how he had learnt a foreign language autonomously (in the country concerned), but because of lack of correction, he ended up sometimes speaking in a culturally incorrect way (referring to himself as

the wrong gender, and speaking much too informally at times). As a result, he was wary of too much autonomy, and saw the need for instruction from a culturally aware person.

> I think there's got to be a balance. And I think especially with a language like Māori, where… there's a lot of cultural relevance and cultural significance to the way the language is used. Yeah. I think there's got to be a balance of instruction and facilitation.

- *Emphasis on active learning*

Brian acknowledged that active learning was important, and that TWoA had encouraged an active, outgoing approach to learning te reo Māori.

> We have a fair amount of that. Like, we've been told to go away and ask people questions and record it on a dictaphone, which I don't do because I lost the dictaphone… and watch the news and listen for new words, and you know…We've been given ways to go out and try and engage with the language.

- *Overall response to combination of ideas*

Brian's overall response to this set of principles was to call it "a good notion" – with the reservation that too much learner autonomy could mean that learners could miss out on important cultural information. Brian agreed that learner-centredness should have a bigger role in adult reo Māori learning, but said that a course like the one he was attending were "probably starting to meet some of that need."

> They sit you down for an interview and they're like, 'why are you here? What do you want to get out of it? What's this about for you?' And I remember in the first year, like the first couple of classes, a lot of what we talked about was, where are we going with this? What do you want to get out of it by the end? I think she actually made us write a statement of goals at the start of the class this year and told us not to lose it and said, we'll be coming back to that later to see where you've got with it.

Brian was sure that implementation of learner-centredness was feasible, and that is a desirable change.

> I'm sure it's feasible. I think that you need the opportunities. Like, people need to be able to engage in active learning, and teachers kind of facilitate that for them. But outside of the classroom there needs to be the opportunities I guess, to be able to learn and engage with the language further.

In offering his final thoughts on the topic, Brian was similar to many other interviewees, in that he supported the idea, but was not sure how it could be implemented practically.

> I think initially there needs to be a fair amount of guidance before people can have a more learner-centred approach... it's all very well for people to have what they want to get out of speaking Māori but... I guess it's impossible to tailor an approach for every single student. We don't have the resources in the country to have a teacher per student…
>
> Yeah, so, I think it is good to try and tailor things for individual learners and maybe they could run different classes or... I'm not quite sure how to achieve it… If you've got some people and, they say, 'oh, I want native fluency'. Well how do you have a course that's appropriate for them and then some people are like, I just want some business Māori? How do you find a way of delivering that sort of education to people? It's quite tricky.

8.3.6 Margaret

Margaret agreed very emphatically with the value of basing learning on the needs, interests and aspirations of learners, and in fact regarded it as the key to good learning. She acknowledged that it could be difficult to make it possible for learners to be consulted or negotiate about the learning programme, but that it was worth striving to make it happen. She valued facilitative teaching, but said that at times she could have learnt more from someone just talking about an aspect of culture, and that she had been taught by some teachers who struggled to teach in a facilitative way. She believed that

she already had considerable autonomy, and did not aspire to have more. She agreed with the value of active learning, and had experienced a good deal of that type of learning, and in particular, practical learning at the seashore and on the marae.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*

    - basing learning on these things

Margaret responded very positively to this.

I was going to say on a scale, I would give it a 10 (laughs). ...I think it's very important. I think it enables the whole model of learning to be successful if you have the ability to take the time to find that out. I think… that really is the crux of learning...

- *Consultation or active negotiation with learners*

Margaret agreed that this was something we should "strive for in a learning model." She acknowledged that it may not be realistic in every learning situation, and would depend of the class situation and the time and space available, but that if was made to happen, it would be a bonus.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning*

Margaret wondered if a stronger instructional style was more usual, because of the nature of learning another language. She said that in her case, "I've gone there to get them to dispense their knowledge to me and to gain what ever I can from their knowledge more than for them to facilitate a learning model to me." She did also say that at the other end of the spectrum, she would be looking for someone to facilate her knowledge. I shared my own experience of sometimes being in the presence of people with vast knowledge, who were not particularly skilled at facilitative teaching. Margaret agreed that she had encountered something similar:

I've been in situations where the person has tried to facilitate a particular… style of learning, or study of grammar or some kind of thing in te reo, when most probably I would have learned more if the person had just sat there and just talked to me about… a particular thing in their life, or a particular experience they'd had… they didn't have the skills to teach me that house is brown, but they definitely had the knowledge to talk to me about their experience with tangihanga...

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy*

Margaret was not convinced that autonomy within the actual learning setting was necessary, but she believed that learners have "a high level of control over our own learning, because… if we don't have control over it we won't go out and seek it." She shares this belief—that learners have a good deal of control over their own learning—with several of the other learners in these interviews.

- *Emphasis on active learning*

Margaret agreed that active learning had been a key element in her own learning:

I guess the retainment of te reo and my understanding of kaupapa has come when I've done theoretical or classroom learning and then gone out and actually done it in an active situation, so I think for retaining, I think active learning is the best way.

When asked how feasible implementation of learner-centred ideas would be, Margaret's response focused on the difficulty of finding teachers with the skills to achieve these things, which she put down mainly to a lack of funding available. She says that courses are run, but then once they stop, there is often nowhere for a learner to go to progress further. Margaret's response to a request for any final thoughts was to reflect back on her long journey of learning te reo Māori, rather than giving final thoughts on learner-centredness.

I think most probably just talking about it reinforces the journey that I've been on… I know it's been a long one and I know it hasn't ended, but then like I said I think it's come to a realisation that actually I don't know if there is an endpoint for me… I just think that for my aspirations are to be to continue building on what I've got and obviously being able to seek out as many opportunities as I can to reinforce and to keep that living as such – yeah, as an adult learner.

8.3.7 Pita

Pita agreed strongly with the principle that the needs, interests and aspirations of learners should be the basis for learning. He acknowledged that consulting or negotiating with learners fitted within the framework of learner-centredness, but he was not sure that it was practical. He believed that teachers needed to be both facilitators and dispensers of knowledge, with an increasing emphasis on facilitation as learners progressed. He said that the ideas as presented seemed idealistic, but agreed that he would feel more ownership of his learning if these principles were applied, and that applying the principles could result in very worthwhile courses.

Pita's response to learner-centredness overall as a learning concept was to say that he assumed it was the same as student-centred learning, and that it was a sliding scale rather than a binary of teacher-centred and learner-centred learning. He referred to Montessori methods, and said that the most well-known version of it was about "students doing things… as opposed to being a recipient."

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner - basing learning on these things*

Pita's response to the first principle was very positive: "Well, I think that's absolutely essential, cause, you've got – that's what they're there for, it's for their hopes and aims and aspirations, um, so that's my comment to that one." He gave hypothetical examples of people who may have very different aims but may be applying for the same course, and agreed that the course could cater for these different aims if the teacher knew about them.

- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content, learning activities and assessment*

Pita's response made it clear that he saw the significance of this principle within a framework of the idea of learner-centredness: "Yeah, that's a really interesting, interesting one – that 's the big step, isn't it?" He began speculating how that might work in his own personal situation. He agreed that there were a lot of things he would like to be taught specifically, but he said that although it may be ideal for him, it would be very demanding for the teacher. He summed up by saying, "That's a nice idea but pragmatically I'm not sure how that might work."

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*

After a long pause, Pita responded, "I think a teacher needs to be both." He said there were enough resources out there for learning to be facilitated, that being a dispenser of knowledge was not enough to be a good teacher, and that, in his experience, if teachers were doing their job well, eventually they would be facilitating learning, as learners took responsibility for their own learning.

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

Once again, Pita sounded rather dubious about this principle, saying that his pragmatism was developed through experience in teaching as well as being a learner:

> I know a lot of people have intrinsic motivation, but some people, like myself, need extrinsic motivation... so, I think there needs to be boundaries in [learner autonomy] - that's my view on that.

When asked for his overall response to this combination of ideas, Pita described them as "in some ways a utopia, or an idealistic situation" – but that boundaries were needed. He pointed out that he had appreciated having space to talk with other people, and time within the three hours of the TWoA class period. For him, the effect was to feel that he

was following his own interests. Pita said that if the principles were applied to his personal reo Māori learning, they would "probably get me to focus more... because I'm having to commit to whatever it is I want to learn rather than 'This is what you're going to learn' so I'll do this and this." He felt that if a course along learner-centred lines was set up ("We're looking for people about this level, come in, and we'll set you up a programme – what do you want to do?") he would try it.

When asked if he thought learner-centredness should have a bigger role in adult reo Māori learning, Pita replied that it has been embraced to some extent, as evidenced in his experience at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, and that the idea has been embraced in education generally. Pita believed that greater learner-centredness would be feasible if funded properly. He did say that if learners were reasonably informed about what they were getting into, there was an element of learner-centredness in that. Finally, Pita commented on the suitability of a learner-centred approach to an adult reo Māori learning situation by saying "Yeah, I think if someone goes in to create a course looking at these key elements, they could create something really really worthwhile and useable."

8.3.8 Jack

There was a genuine discussion with Jack about these issues rather than a simple question and answer format; he would at times be initially resistant to an idea, then, when it was presented in practical terms rather than as a theoretical concept, he agreed there was possibly merit in it. He agreed that learning should be based on learners' needs, interests and aspirations, but was concerned about pressures on teachers, and the practicalities of achieving genuine learner-centredness. He was particularly concerned about excessive individualization of learning, as he believed considering the needs of the individual rather than the collective had usually been harmful to Māori.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*

   - basing learning on these things

Jack agreed that this was crucial, and readily agreed with basing learning on these things as well.

- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content, learning activities and assessment*

Jack found the concept too assertive for him at first:

> I've looked at the course and made a decision. 'Ok, this is good, so…' I think that's my choice at this point… So, it's kind of complicated but I'm thinking that if I see a course and I'm signing up for that course … that's me exercising my autonomous right to decide. (Interviewer: Yes. And you're going to go with the flow). I'm going to go with the flow because I'm expecting the teacher to know what he or she is doing and how to deliver that.

Jack described how he worked around the issue of fitting in with the class and teaching, yet also acting independently because of knowing how he himself likes to learn; he implied that he would learn independently to supplement or remedy any shortcomings he found in the classroom learning situation.

> ... my level of Māori is the way it is and I'm assuming that my teacher has a far greater knowledge than me and also has an idea of how to teach that. I'm also a teacher and I'm very aware of how I like to learn. And that's almost where I do my informal learning by myself.

However, when it was suggested that some negotiation or consultation prior to learning could diminish possible frustration and make things easier for him as a learner, Jack agreed that "it would be cool to have that chance I suppose - it would be cool to have that chance to have a hui before the thing starts." However, he expressed concern about the amount of pressure that would be exerted on the teacher:

> I mean imagine that there's one teacher and you've got twenty different people in front of you, you know. And you've got to like try and think about negotiating and consult the learner needs of twenty different people?

I responded with details about the AMEP (Australian Migrant Education Programme) model, where learning counsellors talked to learners, found out what they wanted to learn, and provided information to teachers, who endeavoured to build a course around the information they had found out. He responded positively to this idea, and responded with a list of things he wanted to learn—a list that would admittedly test the limits of the best reo Māori teachers:

> That would be awesome. That would be awesome. It would be an ideal situation where I could go, 'Ok, this is what I really want to focus on. I want to focus on, you know improving my everyday te reo Māori. I want to improve my knowledge of karakia and understanding of karakia, I want to…. whaikōrero. I need to work on mōteatea, having a depth of knowledge of mōteatea that relate to my iwi and I want all this contextualised to my marae, hapu, iwi. Yeah, do that.' That would be ideal.

Later he admitted that while this ideal situation did not really seem possible in a normal teaching context, if some version of negotiation was available, he would appreciate it ("If that was possible, it's great.").

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*

Jack was clear that a teacher needed to do both, and he held up his previous teacher in Te Ataarangi as an example:

> He is a facilitator of learning and he is also a dispenser of knowledge. He's both at the same time you know. He's both. And we're all required to participate in the learning environment…. For example, if he's talking about that mōteatea, he's dispensing knowledge… So – I think his role is to do actually whatever's required … just if it fits with the needs of the learners.

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

Jack was quite definite that he had control over his own learning:

> From my experience, I do have control over my learning. It's not a passive process, right? It's not like I sit there and learn. I've got to actively make choices, active choices around my participation … So I think that as a learner I do have a high level of control in the learning.

- *An emphasis on active rather than passive learning*

Jack tied in motivation closely with being active; in his view, the motivation of the learner is the key element of learner-centredness.

> Yeah, I would agree with that. I would say in my time when I've learnt the most is when I've been more active and motivated. So, I think the key here for me with this learner-centredness is about the learner, them already having the motivation to learn.

At a late stage in the interview, when we were discussing Jack's overall response to the combination of learner-centred ideas, I mentioned the frustration I had felt at times in learning te reo Māori as an adult. Jack pressed me for details, then responded with an example of frustration with his own taiaha learning, including always going over the same teaching as new people kept being added to a course. Jack closed off this part of the conversation by saying, "Yeah… I see where you're coming from. And I see how definitely it's useful. It's a dream though. It's a dream."

Jack's first response to a question about the feasibility of implementing greater learner-centredness was to point out that, although none of his previous learning experiences were ideal, people were doing their best, and that the ideas I was proposing were not really feasible. I acknowledged that people were making genuine efforts, but explained again what I was envisaging, using the pre-interviews that Te Wānanga o Aotearoa

holds as a partial example of what could be done to initiate more learner-centred learning. Jack listened, and finally responded more positively.

> Yeah. Given that they are, it's feasible, and it's definitely worthwhile. I like the idea of a hui beforehand and discussing 'what is it going to do?' and having some say over that. Yeah, that's cool.

Jack agreed that learner-centred ideas could fit in a reo Māori learning situation, but he objected quite heatedly to the idea of individualizing learning too much.

> … we just need to think about it and make sure… that this whole, it's not all about individuals thing. It's about us as a people and our language and our rights and it's a very complicated thing. And all those post-modern individual first bullshit, you know, ends us up in trouble.

He did however acknowledge the role of individual learning in a Māori setting.

> … there would have been some individual learning in traditional Māori anyway. Like … this individual is good at this – he's going to be doing that… this individual is quite athletic. He's going to be focusing on doing taiaha, whatever. So it's not like we should abandon the idea or say no, that's stupid. Just that we need to make sure that it fits with our tikanga. And make sure it's not of any detriment to us.

8.3.9 Hine

Hine was generally positive about learner-centred ideas, as she had a strong belief that everyone had a different way of learning. She said that the idea of learner-centredness had been important in her training and practice as a teacher. She was less impressed with the idea of a high degree of learner autonomy, but did believe that teaching of te reo Māori to adults should be made more learner-centred than what she has experienced so far.

Hine was emphatic that her learning had not been learner-centred so far. She believed that "different ways of teaching" were needed, and that "not everybody learns by pen and paper."

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*

  - basing learning on these things

Hine responded positively to these principles: "Yes, I do believe in that - and the reason being that … each person has their own – not skill, but way of learning, and the way they approach learning." She saw the need for a combination of approaches, to create a combination of experiences for learners.

- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content,*

  learning activities and assessment

It took some more detailed discussion with Hine for her to really grasp that this principle involved the learner having genuine input into the course. Her initial response was to express reservations about the difficulty of catering for everyone, but once she realised what was involved, she was very affirming of the approach. Hine clearly approved of the approach from a teacher's point of view, and agreed that in her primary teaching experience such personalised learning occurred, but said she hadn't seen this approach being followed in adult reo Māori learning ("In terms of teaching te reo, I don't think they do, it's a bit too rigid…").

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of*

  knowledge

Hine strongly agreed with this principle ("I would say yes to that, but I go further (laughs)"). She returned to the idea that teachers need to acknowledge different learning styles and to use different teaching styles. She said that in her opinion, a more practical style suited Māori learners ("They're not very theoretical learners") and that for her,

working with others was important ("…that interaction, that involvement and being part of a team factor, that whakawhanaungatanga … really sold me on te reo.").

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

Hine responded negatively to this principle: "That's a hard one … I probably wouldn't support that." She felt that it was too easy to become lazy or side-tracked without pressure from teachers or the solidarity with other learners. She returned to the idea that learners "wouldn't necessarily know" and that they needed to be held accountable, and to be grouped skilfully.

When asked for any final thoughts on learner-centredness, she responded: "I think you're on the right track." She also expected I would "get flak for it too." She said that she personally could grasp it more readily because of her teaching background, then implied that learner-centredness needed to be explained differently to non-teachers ("… it may mean reiterating [the ideas] in a different way").

8.3.10 Cathy

Cathy was interested in learner-centred ideas and believed there was a lot to be gained from being open to different approaches to learning. She did say however that she believed that the teacher was in the best position to make decisions about learning. She has a high respect for teachers and trusts their judgment in meeting the needs of learners, although she does believe that teachers should know about learners' interests and aspirations, to inform the content of classes. From her point of view, learner-centredness involves integrating aspects of everyday life as much as possible, and soliciting learners' opinions on issues.

When asked for her response to learner-centredness overall as a learning concept, Cathy said she believed that learner-centredness occurred "when the relationship between students is cooperative towards a particular goal." For teachers, she felt that learner-centredness involved "being flexible enough as a teacher to be able to respond to what's going on in the world around." She saw this as helping build the learners' grasp of language of everyday life. Cathy also believed that asking opinions is learner-

centred, mainly because people are strongly motivated to express their opinions: "I think learner-centred sometimes is recognising what sort of people you've got in the class and recognising, maybe this subject will get everybody fired up and get them going." Cathy also considered discussions learner-centred, particularly if they were "about things that are close to people's hearts, that are big in the news." She gave the example of a teacher who would expect learners to talk about what happened in the last week: "That got us all warmed up and thinking, and that's very learner-centred."

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner - basing learning on these things*

Cathy's response was that she had never actually been asked these things by a teacher; she agreed it would be useful, and went on to distinguish between finding out about interests and aspirations (which she believed was worthwhile, for informing the content of classes) and finding out about needs, for which she believed the teacher was the best judge: "I think the teachers know what we need …. we should all focus on [remedying] our weaknesses but sometimes that's hard to do when you're learning a language." I gave an example of how a learner-centred approach might work with kura reo, using questionnaires to ask about learners' needs, interests and aspirations, and giving the learners the opportunity to raise specific language issues they wanted to address. However, Cathy was unconvinced that this was necessary:

> I think the thing is that these people [the teachers] are immersed in the Māori world and they can hear where the urgent stuff is. It's the difference between what you'd like to do and what you need to do.

She felt that she was given a certain amount of autonomy to follow her interests in some courses, having been able to select or negotiate her own topics for research, for example.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*

Cathy, like most participants, said that it depended on the circumstances, with group work requiring facilitation, and focus on grammar points requiring specific tuition, for example. However, she described how she pro-actively solicited quick feedback to correct errors as an example of learner- initiated facilitation. She pointed out that learners needed to be quite confident to make it possible for a teacher to be a facilitator of learning.

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

Cathy was dubious about this, stating that "There's as much autonomy as you like outside the classroom." She did however acknowledge that she had appreciated the opportunity to choose topics for assessment activities, which implied a certain amount of control. Generally, she felt the teacher should have most control: "The way I see it, you go to the teacher to learn and you respect that they know how to do this."

- *An emphasis on active learning*

Cathy felt this was really important, paradoxically because "it puts you out of control." For her, this was beneficial because it pointed up areas that she needed to work on more. She gave the example of being sent off to cook using a Māori recipe, and being put on the spot, and having her weaknesses exposed (she said debates also performed this function well).

When asked for any final thoughts on learner-centredness, Cathy said she found the principles interesting, which was why she had volunteered to be interviewed. She felt there was a lot to be gained by being open to different approaches, but she reiterated her belief that the teacher is generally the best person to make decisions about learning: "Learner-centredness assumes that the learner knows what they need, and I don't think that's the case a lot of the time. I suppose it depends what stage they're at, and how honest they are about their own learning." She felt that implementing it would be

feasible with adults, and she envisioned teachers sitting down with learners to find out what sort of things they have feel more comfortable with, or what sort of things have helped them in the past. She said that adult reo Māori classes were usually small enough to manage such actions, though it would depend on whether the teacher got the main idea of learner-centredness, and if he or she was able to adapt to the class.

8.4 Teachers' responses to learner-centred concepts

8.4.1 Katarina

Although Katarina incorporated elements of learner-centredness in her practice—such as being responsive to learners, being aware of their needs, interests and aspirations, and knowing them well—she did not see the concept of learner-centredness as being particular important, and believed that more autonomy for learners could have a negative impact on other learners. She believed that if learner-centred ideas were to be applied, the issue would have to be broached sensitively with teachers, in deference to their 'mana' (standing or status).

The interview with Katarina did not closely follow the questions in the later stages, partly because some of the questions in this section had been answered earlier in the interview.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*

Katarina explained earlier in the interview that she did find out about learners during an interview before they started the course; she asked about their goals and aspirations, and she used this information to a minor extent to tailor the course. She asked about their interests and enthusiasms as well, but this information had a lesser role in influencing the content of the course. She asked learners how they responded to activities such as public speaking, in order to manage them more sensitively when doing such activities or assessments.

- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content, learning activities and assessment*

Once again, Katarina had said earlier in the interview that learners should have some say, but not too much, as excessive individualized learning could cause difficulties in other people's learning.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*

Katarina pointed out that at lower levels she used more direct teaching, though in higher levels she feels freer to use a more facilitative approach.

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

Katarina plans well, but has described elsewhere that she gives learners some flexibility in how they present assessments, for example. However, there did not seem to be much room for learner autonomy in her classes as she described them, and Katarina did not actually say anything positive in favour of the idea.

Katarina did not answer on learner-centred ideas in a global sense, but she stated that in a reo Māori setting, it was important for the teacher to be knowledgeable, in order to have the respect of the learners. She implied that for a more learner-centred approach to be developed, the subject would need to be broached sensitively with teachers, out of respect for them and their knowledge.

8.4.2 Hēni

Hēni also responded positively to the ideas in general, and she actively sought feedback and was responsive to her learners' needs. She felt that learner-centredness would work better once learners were further along their journey of learning te reo Māori than at the beginner level where she was teaching.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*

  - basing learning on these

Hēni gave no specific response to this question, just read it through aloud. At the time, I did not pick up that she had not commented, as she moved quickly to the next principle.

- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content,*

  learning activities and assessment

Hēni said, "I agree with this one." She had also been impressed by a similar if less thorough-going idea she heard about in a tertiary teaching workshop, in which teachers were encouraged to make contracts with their learners.

> …something that really stood out that we wanted to do - but we didn't, just quietly - was the first day, to make a contract with the students. The contract involved what they wanted… what their goals were - goals and aspirations were to get out of the thing, um, and then negotiate with them things that shouldn't happen in the classroom… so… they take responsibility for their classmates...

Apart from this, Hēni responded to the idea of consultation and negotiation by saying that she actively sought feedback.

> I'm *always* asking them how was that assessment? what did you like about it? What didn't you like – I'm like – 'Give me feedback, give me feedback - I'm still learning myself'…

She gave the example of encouraging students to give feedback at an institutional level on a particularly unpopular form of assessment, telling them that without that feedback, nothing would change.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*

Hēni was definite that she thought of herself mainly as a facilitator of learning.

> I've always preferred the word facilitator to teacher… I think that the knowledge thing - there's some knowledge that needs to be passed on, and dispensed, I guess, if we put it that way, [and] there's other stuff that I facilitate ....

> … we often will say to the students right at the beginning - 'We're here to facilitate your learning - what that means for us is that we give you all the tools, give you all the tools that you need to build your whare, or your whare of the reo, and what you do with those tools is up to you. We can't *teach* you the language as such - we can facilitate your *learning* of the language…

Hēni agreed that teaching involved both 'dispensing knowledge' and facilitating learning.

> For example, we can't just throw them on the marae and expect them to know what to do for the pōwhiri - we would explain to them first, dispense that knowledge and then we would take them in, go through the formal processes, we could discuss it later, and anything else they want to learn after that they can find for themselves – they've got the foundation...

When asked whether learner-centredness should have a bigger role in adult reo Māori learning, Hēni replied that she was not convinced that a learner-centred approach would work well at the beginner level; she believed it was more suitable for more advanced learners.

> I think it's depends on the level that they're at and the constraints that you have on you based on where you're learning. For me at this level, I think it's a lot harder… to have a learner-centred classroom. But when you're moving into

immersion and you're moving into those aspects of our culture that, that – we discuss things in the wānanga style, it can become very learner centred.

We also discussed learner-centredness in informal settings, and the main things that would help adult learners. Hēni stated that having a community of speakers was the main thing that enables ongoing use and learning of te reo Māori ("That whakawhanaungatanga is key for continuing learning - the speaking and the learning outside of the classroom"), but she acknowledged the difficulties involved in finding or creating or maintaining such a community. She acknowledges the role of sharing on social media such as Facebook in encouraging learning and use of te reo Māori.

8.4.3 Irihāpeti

Irihāpeti responded positively to the set of ideas as a group, and was tailoring aspects of her course to fit what she believed her students would be interested in. She gave examples of how she was applying the principles in her teaching, or how she had engaged with the ideas on an intellectual level and had approved of them. Irihāpeti also agreed that the ideas could be implemented, but that it was important to acknowledge and respect the mana (standing or status) of the teacher, and that doing this sensitively was key to doing it successfully.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the*

  learner- basing learning on these

Irihāpeti responded positively to the list of items, although she admitted she did not know a lot about learner-centredness.

> He pai ēnei whakaaro ki ahau. Pai ēnei whakaaro ki ahau – ko te mate noa iho, kāore au i te mōhio ki te whānuitanga o ngā kōrero mō ēnei āhuatanga ... Āe, ngā rangahau mō tēnei kaupapa, engari … he rawe ēnei tū momo āhuatanga ki ahau nei –

> I like these ideas. I like them – the only trouble is that I don't have a wide knowledge of what's out there about these things, and the research on this

subject, but, looking at what I'm reading here, it's just fine – I really like these items –

- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content, learning activities and assessment*

Irihāpeti's response was to recall that one of the academics in her university's Teaching Development Centre had talked to her about this aspect of learning. He or she urged her to consider sitting down with her students and together actively work out the criteria for any given assessment.

> … te whakaaro atu i ētahi tauira aromatawai ki a rātou, me te tono i a rātou ki te whakamahi ērā paearu ki te māka i te – i taua mahi. Um ... kia māmā ake ai ina tahuri rātou ki te mahi i a rātou ake mahi, kua - kua tino mōhio rātou me pēwhea te āhua kia tutuki ngā whakaritenga o te aromatawai ... nō reira, he pai ēnei whakaaro ki ahau nei.

> … to give them some examples of assessment to consider, then ask them to use those criteria to mark that piece of work. That would make it easier for them when they turn back to their own work – they would be aware of how to fulfil what's required of them for the assessment - so, I really like these ideas.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*

Irihāpeti said that this very much aligned with her own thinking about teaching, and that she tried to follow a 'communicative language teaching' model that used facilitative methods.

> - ka nui ake ngā hua o te ako mehemea kāore te kaiako e tū noa nei… kei mua i ngā tauira, me te kauwhau… ā tōna wā kia – tērā pea kia tae ki ngā taumata o runga… ka nui ake pea ngā hua o tērā momo mahi, o te kauwhau mō tētahi kaupapa, engari i te wā e ako ana rātou i - i ngā pūtaketanga o te reo… ka nui

ake ngā hua o te… whakatakoto pea…i tētahi kaupapa hei whakamahi i ngā tauira hei whakakōrero i ngā tauira…

You'll get much better results from teaching if the teacher doesn't just stand in front of the class and talk, though there are times, particularly for those who are at a high level… it might be more worthwhile to do that, to just talk about a topic, but when they're just learning at the basic level, it's more worthwhile to set out some topic to get the learners working and talking…

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

I explained that this related to teaching on andragogy, which suggested that adults like to have a say in their learning, so they can choose the things they like, and that their learning is better if that is the case. Irihāpeti agreed that she liked that approach, and gave the example of how her students could have input when the topics for assessment activities are being decided, and then a choice later as well from among the collaboratively agreed topics.

- *Emphasis on active learning*

Irihāpeti made it clear that she approved of this concept, and followed the principle in her own teaching, using questioning to generate activity.

Kāore au e whāngai noa ana i ngā mea katoa ki a rātou, engari ka kimi huarahi kia kaha ake rātou ki te - te whakaaroaro i ngā āhuatanga o te reo, kia kimi hoki rātou i ngā āhuatanga o te reo ka whakaakona ki a rātou... kātahi ka whakarite he mahi hei whakaū i tērā whakatakotoranga o te reo…

I'm not just spoon-feeding them everything, but I'm look for ways to make them better at – really thinking about aspects of the language, to get them finding out things about the language they've been taught… then I arrange activities so that that aspect of the language really stays in their minds…

- *How learner-centredness would fit in a Māori setting – problematic aspects – elements that fit*

I asked this question in terms of the balance of 'mana' and suggested that in this model the mana of the teacher and learner are more equal; I asked Irihāpeti if she thought this model fitted well in the Māori world. She replied that the main thing was how it is put into practice:

> Kei roto pea i te āhua o te whakatinana, i te mea ko tētahi whakaaro hoki ōku, he mana tō ia tangata, he mana tō ia tangata… kāore i te pīrangi kia pēhi, kia whakaiti i te mana o tētahi tangata tino mōhio   - kei te mōhiotia tonutia ko te kaiako te kaiako – ko ia te mea e tino mōhio ana ki te kaupapa, kei te mōhiotia tērā, ā, kei te mōhiotia ko ngā tauira ngā tauira, engari he mana tonu tō ia tangata, he mana tonu tō tēnā, tō tēnā…

> It's how it's put into practice, because what I think is, each person has their own 'mana' (standing, power or rights in a given situation) – it's not good to cramp or diminish the 'mana' of a person who knows so much – there's no arguing with the fact that the teacher is the teacher, he or she is the one who's really knowledgeable about the subject, that's all clear, and it's clear too that the students are the ones who are learning, but each person definitely has his or her own 'mana'…

She went on to explain how she tried to preserve or enhance each student's dignity or standing in the class, through correcting respectfully and being positive in her interactions with them.

8.4.4 Hera

Hera was not warmly disposed to the concept of learner-centredness. She believed that if learners entrust themselves to a good teacher and a good learning process, they will learn te reo Māori. However, she did believe that aspects of her teaching were learner-centred, that her learners had a good level of autonomy within the class setting, that she used a facilitative approach, and that active learning was occurring in her classes. She

believed that learner-centredness leaned too far in accommodating the individual at the expense of the collective. Near the end of the interview, she provided her own informal version of what learner-centredness meant for her, and for learners in Te Ataarangi:

> … because Te Ataarangi and other people work through rūmaki, they're learning it [confidence] right from the beginning… later on, stuck in places talking to people they don't understand exactly what's been said – they can usually feel confident in their own ability to - you know, just trust their intuition… for me that's what learner-centredness is – the learners having faith in their own ability with the language (laughs).

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner - basing learning on these*

It had been clear throughout the interview that Hera disagreed with some of the learner-centred ideas, and this became even clearer with our discussion of the first and most fundamental principle:

> …those who are quite educated and competent in everyday life anyway, want to know what they want to know when they want to know it, and I don't agree with that at all (laughs).

Hera went on to explain that she trusted the process of Te Ataarangi to eventually bring about reo Māori learning, without significant attention being given to learners' needs or wants.

> One of the great things about teaching in an immersion environment is that you're not asked ridiculous questions all the time, because they don't have the vocabulary to be able to do it, but it also means you can teach things and usually, the questions are answered anyway if you just wait for it – wait for it to get there, it'll come.

She elaborated further, explaining that students often inquire about things they can't grasp at that stage.

> I also noticed times where I've had periods where I've explained things in English, or elaborated on something in English, at the end of the class, all these questions about things they want to know come out, and that really is a case of – their reach exceeds their grasp - they are asking about things that are so far beyond a) what they need to know, and b) what they'll find useful, that – yeah - it's just not helpful, it's really not helpful.

For her, a strongly teacher-led model is likely to be most successful.

> I kind of think that – teachers have done this lots of times before, they can see how much students are able to absorb in a period, and just… yeah, I think that's up to the teachers to control.

Hera believes that humility and being prepared to wait are characteristics of the Māori world, and of Te Ataarangi in particular; she acknowledged, however, that there were other ways to learn te reo Māori, and she was happy to refer people on to other courses she believed would suit them better, although she also adheres strongly to Te Ataarangi's clear stance on not turning anyone away.

- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content, learning activities and assessment*

Although Hera had earlier made it clear that this sort of consultation or negotiation was not really a feature of her classes, she was flexible about providing relevant material for a particular group of learners: "Occasionally, you know, you can see that there's a lot of people who are working in particular fields, or they're parents, or you know, and – you do cater to that to a certain degree…" She made it clear that her primary focus was on getting learners involved with the basics of te reo Māori:

You get different groups in every time, you don't know - some of them are really young, and they just want to play games all the time, and others are wanting to do flowery mihi at their work, so there is an element of that, but still we've just got to get through learning structures (laughs) and learning vocab, and being able to make sentences…

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*

Hera said there was a very strong facilitative element in Te Ataarangi classes ("… you leave them, and you leave them to ask each other the questions, and answer the questions themselves"). She gave an example of how a recent class creatively took the 25 words and the few structures they knew and started spontaneously creating sentences.

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

Hera believed that although Te Ataarangi learners had limits on their autonomy ("I guess for me, not too much autonomy, they can't just do whatever they want"), they did have some autonomy within the structure of the class:

I think this is true of all levels… I usually start every lesson with a structure, or a new way of saying a thing and, so long as they're using that, they can create their own story, make anything, so long as they're making use of the thing that they're supposed to be learning...

She believes that Te Ataarangi develops autonomous speakers, because "it has a foundation of Silent Way and that is all about students self-correcting, correcting one another, or you know, helping one another." She believes it develops learners who have "faith in their own ability with the language"; for her, this is what learner-centredness is really about.

- *Emphasis on active learning*

Hera expressed confidence that her Te Ataarangi classes did have a focus on active learning:

> Te Ataarangi fits that aspect, even though in a different way, with a different overall sort of model… I teach a structure, but then everyone's in small groups, and all I have to do is really go around and just listen in, and make sure that they're really on track, checking if anyone's got any questions, but .... they're the ones talking, they're the ones creating their own story.

Hera had not been in favour of many of the learner-centred ideas I had proposed, so I asked her directly if she believed that learner-centredness actually clashed with Māori values:

> Not clash so much as ... probably perhaps overemphasize the individual rather than the collective, you know, and the importance of community, the importance of society that consists of peers, over one's own wants and needs, and wishes and interests and - kind of – to hell with whatever else.

8.4.5 Mere

Mere stated that learner-centredness for her involved knowing what type of learner each person was, knowing their capabilities, and working out how best to teach each learner. She agreed strongly that the teacher should find out the needs, interests and aspirations of the learners. However, she did not agree that the learner was in a position to be consulted with or negotiated with about designing the course. She agreed that facilitation was the primary role of a teacher, and dealt with the issue of learner autonomy by describing how she endeavours to enable motivated learners to learn independently outside the classroom. She had earlier made it clear that she believed that learning should be active, and she finished by emphasizing that learning te reo Māori involved every part of the learner's being.

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*

  - basing learning on these things

Mere agreed strongly: "Well without that information, you might as well be – well, what are you doing?" She reiterated that it involved finding out what type of learner the teacher is dealing with, along with the learner's capabilities.

- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content,*

  learning activities and assessment

Mere was less impressed by this principle ("The thing is that you're the kaiako, you know how things join up…"). She was more concerned that the learner should know exactly what was in the course, and why it was there. When it was suggested that consultation should go on before the course, she was dubious that learners would really know what to ask for, and that individual wants could be accommodated as the classes progressed.

- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of*

  knowledge

Mere agreed strongly: "Yeah, yeah, absolutely - no one stands at the head of the classroom and [talks] at anyone anymore." For her, group work was important for this facilitation: "Certainly you're giving information, but what you've got to do is follow that up by exercises that show whether or not they got information."

- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

On this subject, Mere focused on the high level of motivation she found amongst some learners (particularly young mothers and keen learners who are motivated to create or join groups to converse in Māori), and she affirmed that part of the teacher's role was to assist such people in autonomous learning.

As a responsible teacher, you've got to make sure that people know what's out there, what can be gotten for nothing, and to help guide them through accessing the information as part of their mahi (work), actually because you're actually helping them to just get out there and do it themselves.

- *An emphasis on active rather than passive learning*

Mere strongly agreed with this, and we agreed that her earlier comments throughout the interview showed how strongly she felt that learning should be an active process.

When asked about her overall response to learner-centred ideas, Mere responded without specifically tying her comments into the idea of learner-centredness, talking about the importance of helping people lose any burden of guilt associated with poor reo Māori skills, creating an atmosphere of whanaungatanga, and tying in the learners' own whakapapa and cultural background into their language learning.

8.5 Conclusion

There were a wide variety of responses to the learner-centred concepts presented to the interviewees. The five teachers were more divided than the learners were in how they viewed learner-centred concepts, with one teacher strongly supportive, one quite supportive, one not regarding the concept as particularly important, and one unsupportive of the concepts. The learners were more supportive overall of the first and most fundamental principle, that teachers should find out the needs, interests and aspirations of learners, and should base learning on these things. This first principle received a particularly warm response from the four learners who were also teachers at secondary or primary level, although others also strongly endorsed this concept.

There was more divergence of opinion in the responses to the idea of going the next step, and consulting with learners or negotiating with them about content, learning activities and assessment. One teacher and several learners strongly supported the idea, some were intrigued and attracted by the idea rather than necessarily supporting it strongly, and others did not believe it was important; some liked the idea in theory but

were dubious about whether it could be implemented successfully, or were just dubious about the practicality of it. The issue of teachers at least consulting with learners is fundamental to learner-centredness, so the mixed reception this concept received suggests that this aspect is quite problematic. It was certainly a new concept to several participants, but even interviewees who were aware of it did not always see it as important. Several, however, appeared to believe that if teachers were aware of the needs, interests and aspirations of learners from the start, there was little need for consultation or negotiation. Some also believed that learners were not in a position to be really aware of what they needed to know. In fact, the concept of learners being consulted by teachers or negotiating with teachers is sufficiently new and radical to be difficult to grasp. This applies even to adults of some years standing as learners. On the few occasions when this idea was discussed in more practical terms—of a questionnaire being administered or a hui held prior to the course starting—interviewees agreed that these strategies could prove worthwhile. Several participants agreed that things they wanted to learn or felt that they needed to learn had not been covered well in their reo Māori learning, and they believed that simple strategies like this could positively impact their learning.

Teachers and learners generally agreed that a facilitative approach to teaching was the best, but there was also general agreement that there was a place for instruction, and that teachers talking about what they know well, such as aspects of tikanga, made a substantial contribution to learners' knowledge. Teachers all said that they believed their teaching was mainly facilitation, whether they agreed with learner-centred principles or not, and they could all point to a great deal of active learning in their teaching practice. All interviewees, whether teachers or learners, embraced the concept of active learning.

The concept that received least support was 'a fairly high level of learner autonomy.' A few participants embraced the idea, but others who were enthusiastic about other aspects of learner-centredness did not believe a high level of autonomy was important to them or to other adult learners. Several participants commented that if everything else was going well in their learning, they felt no need to have more autonomy as learners. By contrast, the principle of active rather than passive learning received

almost unanimous support—so much so that it does not really function as an indicator of support for learner-centredness. The principle that learners should be actively engaged in their learning is well accepted, and the dichotomy of active versus passive learning is probably a false one, as it undervalues cognitive activity in learning, compared with behavioural activity.

Finally, it is worth noting that the first principle 'Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner – and basing learning on these things' conflates two significant ideas. One is the desirability of the teacher finding out about 'needs'—which is important in any model of teaching and learning—and the second is the more problematic or contestable principle of the teacher finding out about 'interests' and 'aspirations.' These ideas are often placed together in writing about learner-centredness, but the latter two, 'interests' and 'aspirations', may be receiving more affirmation from following after 'needs' in the sentence containing the principle. In fact, only one interviewee (Cathy) brought up this particular issue, although once the interviewees began to work through the implications of basing learning on learners' interests and aspirations as well as their needs, they began to query the practicality of dealing with the diversity of interests and aspirations that could arise. It would also have been interesting to take the concepts and map out the possible implications in more detail during the interviews; when I did this in discussion with some learners as I did with Pita, Jack, Tīmoti and Brian, they definitely saw potential in the possible outworking of the ideas in practice once they had been presented to them as a possible scenario. Overall, however, the interviews demonstrated a level of positive response to learner-centred concepts, or at least willingness to consider them seriously, that suggests that the idea is worth pursuing in the context of adult learning of te reo Māori.

Ch 9: Discussion

9.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the interview participants' responses to some main learner-centred ideas, and provided an answer to the second research question – what is the response of a sample of adult learners of te reo Māori and teachers of adults learning te reo Māori, to the concept of stronger emphasis on learner-centredness in Māori language learning for adults? This chapter begins by giving an overall analysis of the participants' experience of learning in terms of the capabilities approach and three key elements of tikanga Māori—manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and mana. As stated earlier (2.3, p. 31; 2.10, p. 53), the participants had no say in the analysis using the capabilities approach, because I only adopted this theoretical framework after I had conducted the interviews, and written much of the first draft.

 The chapter then discusses in some detail the more nuanced and complex picture of learner-centredness that emerged from participants' responses. It then clarifies the links with some aspects of learner-centredness as generally proposed (such as minimally guided learning, and the teacher as facilitator rather than direct instructor), and teases out the elements of learner-centredness that are associated with it, but may not be integral to it. It makes the claim that some potentially negative aspects of learner-centredness are of less concern in adult learning of te reo Māori than they may be in other contexts. The chapter then presents a model of learner-centredness that seems appropriate for adults learning te reo Māori.

The remainder of the chapter provides a more specific discussion of the possible benefits and problems of a more learner-centred approach. It does this by combining four key elements of this research project: the focused and contextualised principles from the capabilities approach, along with issues that may arise within the setting of Māori culture; insights from the literature; information (from the interviews or other sources) about how te reo Māori is being taught or has been taught; and the interviewees' responses to learner-centred ideas. The conclusion of this chapter weighs

the potential positives against the potential negatives, and leads into the next chapter, which looks at practical ways that learner-centred ideas could be implemented.

9.2 Insights from learners' and teachers' experiences

Most learners in this project have had long and varied paths, and it has taken considerable effort and some fortuitous circumstances for them to emerge as flourishing reo Māori users. Several learners, especially in university settings, have struggled to deal with an immersive environment that may not have been well facilitated. Furthermore, the presence in higher-level university classes of two groups with significantly different needs (those who arrived with substantial linguistic capital, and those who did not) made life difficult for some second language learners. There is cause for concern that, in the case of Amy, the learner's mana was clearly not enhanced in a university setting, and in the case of Pita, a learner experienced a significant loss of confidence. Three learners made endeavours, however small, to influence the learning setting, but without success. Some commonly used learning activities (particularly in TWoA courses) appear to be an uncomfortable fit for learners with little Māori cultural knowledge, to the extent that some such learners may be put off continuing to learn te reo Māori. Some dissatisfaction was expressed with nearly all learning contexts, but there was little evidence of avenues for learners to express this, nor was there evidence of openness to making changes. TWoA teachers do inquire about goals and aspirations in initial interviews, but there was little evidence of strong follow-up to this, or of the information being used to influence what is taught, or how it is taught. Several men have an occasional need to speak in public in a way that enhances the occasion, but teaching to enable them to meet this need does not seem to have been readily available. Overall, there is little evidence of consultation with learners, or learner agency. This list of negative aspects does not present the full story—there was also evidence of good teaching, good resources and good learning processes—but it does suggest that there is room for a more learner-centred approach in adult learning of te reo Māori.

In terms of the capabilities approach, in a broad sense, it appears that attainment of learner well-being is not easy to achieve; it is difficult for learners to flourish and to achieve full human functioning in te reo Māori. However, it appears from the

interviews that these difficulties may be eased by learners having a grasp of language that is really relevant to their lives. Dignity as learners is sometimes marginal, and there is cause for concern that adult learners as a group are being used as a means to an end—for the health of te reo Māori, or the well-being of the younger generation, rather than for their own personal development. Difference between learners (including age) does not appear to be a particular issue, although it can be undignified being an older learner with younger ones, and reo Māori learners with little cultural knowledge may find themselves in uncomfortable positions. There is a distinct lack of adult agency in evidence within courses or programmes. Finally, within the courses researched, there does not appear to be much option for learners to learn as much or as little as they want.

In terms of tikanga Māori, manaakitanga is generally in evidence, with people being respectfully and generously taught te reo Māori. Whanaungatanga is more in evidence in TWoA and Te Ataarangi than in university settings, for a variety of reasons; the main area that appears to be lacking in all adult learning contexts is learner mana (agency), with adult learners having little agency within courses. All in all, learner experience seems to show there is room for improvement, and for a more learner-centred approach.

9.3 The more complex picture of learner-centredness that emerged

The task of this thesis is not so much to promote or defend learner-centredness as a concept, but to genuinely explore the idea and its associated concepts in the context of adult reo Māori teaching and learning. The interviews provided balance to this exploration of the concept, as discussions with experienced learners and teachers brought about a more complex and nuanced picture of how a more learner-centred approach might work.

Firstly, one concern about a learner-centred approach—that allowing learners to follow their own interests may be at the expense of a deep and wide knowledge—appeared unfounded on the basis of these interviews. Nearly all participants wanted both breadth and depth in their Māori language learning, and aspired to be skilled language users. Even though they wished to prioritise learning things that were relevant to their lives,

they also clearly wanted to gain a holistic knowledge of te reo Māori, were generally eager to explore its heights and depths, and were aware of te reo Māori as a taonga tuku iho (a treasure handed down through the generations). They were conscious of their role in helping ensure the ongoing health of te reo Māori, and all embraced this in their own way.

As mentioned earlier, the concept of minimally guided learning is strongly associated with learner-centredness, and often supported by proponents of learner-centredness. The shortcomings of minimally guided learning have already been discussed in some detail in the introductory chapter (1.1) and the literature review (4.2.1), and it appears that the link between minimally guided instruction and learner-centredness is by association rather than deeply inherent in a learner-centred approach. Direct instruction can achieve learner-centred ends, if teachers are well informed about what learners need and want. The contribution that the interviews made to this issue was to show that learners and teachers all saw a place for direct instruction, where teachers could pass on their expertise. They endorsed the idea that teachers were facilitators of learning, but also endorsed a role for direct instruction to ensure that learning occurred. It is probably more of an issue that participants appear to have had little opportunity to decide the extent to which direct instruction would be balanced with a less directed approach. A more learner-centred approach would allow for direct instruction (informed by good knowledge about the learners) as a key element, while also opening the door for learners to exercise more agency in minimally guided learning, particularly for more expert learners.

Participants also provided balance on the importance of teachers. Promoters of learner-centredness position the teacher as primarily a facilitator of learning—the interview questions concurred with this approach—and certainly some minimise the importance of a didactic role for teachers, or disparage a more didactic style of teaching. However, interview participants affirmed the importance of the teacher, the value of direct instruction, and the importance of teacher expertise. They avoided any false dichotomy between a learner-centred or teacher-centred approach, and affirmed that teachers should be able to maintain their mana (standing) as educators in learner-centred contexts, even where there is openness to learners exercising some degree of agency.

The interviews showed only modest support for a role for ongoing learner agency in determining content, learning activities and assessment, with several participants concerned that it would become unwieldy, and several simply regarding it as unimportant. This raises the question of how important such ongoing agency is in a learner- centred approach. Firstly, such learner agency is generally considered to be a matter of degree; a learner-centred approach calls for consultation and negotiation rather than the teacher being at the beck and call of the learners. Learner agency is certainly valued highly and even expected in most theories of adult learning, and in one stream of second language learning (with Nunan, and Nation and Macalister). However, to balance this, Illeris (2010) observes that adults will take as much autonomy as they wish to, rather than always wanting to take responsibility for all aspects of their learning, and ongoing learner agency received only limited support from participants in this project. If teachers address learners' needs, interests and aspirations, it would be valid to say that the learning is genuinely centred on the learners. Ideally, though, in a learner-centred situation there would be a substantial shift in the balance of mana in favour of learners—even if the teacher takes responsibility for addressing the needs and wants of learners, rather than learners following through by having input into content, learning activities and so on. Ideally, ongoing learner agency would be supported as well, on the grounds that it is appropriate for adults to have agency in all significant areas of their lives.

Further to this, it appears that proponents of learner-centredness—especially for adults—do not seem to have a strong empirical justification for arguments that a learner-centred approach is most appropriate for adults. Nunan in particular (and possibly Nation and MacAlister) appear to accept a learner-centred approach uncritically from earlier writers on adult education such as Brundage and MacKeracher, and Knowles. However, the strong preponderance of learner-centredness in adult learning theory shows at least that a wide range of writers have considered learner-centredness and learner agency important. This thesis has examined learner-centredness in the light of the capabilities approach and found that adult agency is an important aspect of this approach; the thesis has also found that the exercise of mana is important in tikanga Māori. This provides strong theoretical and principled support for asserting that a learner-centred approach has something to offer adult learners.

The question may also arise as to whether the term 'student-centred' fits better with the model of learning being proposed here—particularly if expectations of learner agency are lessened in this model. However, the term 'learner' seems more apposite than 'student' to how adult learners are engaging with te reo Māori. Adults may well take part in formal education, but they also learn informally, and their learning is strongly embedded in their lives. The word 'learner' also relates more to everyday life; it positions the learner as a person, and as an individual. Ultimately, the term learner-centred appears to be the best fit, even if the model of learner-centredness proposed in this thesis may not fit the more usual interpretation of the term.

A final element that deserves consideration as part of a learner-centred approach is the adoption of a bilingual approach, where possible. In the adult reo Māori teaching and learning context, the efficacy of rūmaki (immersion in the target language) is probably rated more highly than it should be; its use does not appear to be questioned, either by teachers or learners, despite a substantial movement amongst educational theorists in favour of a more bilingual approach (May, 2013). Much of the literature on this, discussed in some detail in the literature review (4.4.3), affirms the integrated nature of language in a learner's mind, and the inadvisability of rigidly separating the first language and the target language in the teaching and learning process. Several participants have spoken about the difficulties they encountered in rūmaki environments where facilitation was inadequate, and one (Amy) provided an anecdote that powerfully illustrated how the two languages can work together to support learning in te reo Māori. The learner-centred element lies in building from what is known to what is unknown, in acknowledging and valuing the learner's first language, and in making meaningful links between the two languages.

9.4 A contextualised model of learner-centredness

Now that the more problematic aspects of learner-centredness as an overall concept have been considered, a workable model can be articulated.

Adapted model of learner-centredness for adults learning te reo Māori

The model of learner-centredness for adults learning te reo Māori that is being proposed in this thesis:

- is primarily based on learners' needs, interests and aspirations.

- can accommodate a strongly didactic role for the teacher, but also expects the teacher to have a strongly facilitative role, and allows for learning with minimal guidance for learners with higher expertise.

- affirms the vital role of the teacher as expert and educational professional, but encourages a high level of learner mana (agency, status); a dynamic, shifting relationship should be expected.

- asserts the validity of learner-centredness as a philosophical or normative stance rather than as an empirically proven pedagogical position.

- asserts the importance of learner agency (consultation and negotiation), but recognises that learning can still be learner-centred if learners' needs, interests and aspirations are acted upon.

- accommodates individual needs, interests and aspirations while recognising the commonality of most learners' needs and ways of learning.

- affirms a bilingual approach, utilising the learners' first language (in most cases, English) to scaffold learning in te reo Māori.

Table 12: Adapted model of learner-centredness for adults learning te reo Māori

The sections of the chapter that follow present the benefits that could be expected from a more learner-centred approach that matches the model presented above.

9.5 Benefits that could be expected

9.5.1 Increased relevance of learning

The principal benefit of a learner-centred approach for adult reo Māori learners (either individually and/or as a group) is the increased relevance of learning. This matches very well with the capabilities approach, and can be expected to increase the well-being

of the learner, promote flourishing, and help enable fully human functioning. Increased relevance acknowledges the dignity of the learner by taking their needs and wants seriously, and fits the aim of treating learners as an end rather than as a means. Increased relevance to particular learners also clearly links to acknowledgement of learner differences, enabling them to have more adult agency in their language learning, and eventually in their use of the language. It also clearly fits the final capabilities principle that learners should be able to choose how much or how little they wish to learn. The issue of relevance strongly points to the need for learners to be consulted about their needs, interests and aspirations; if information about the specific learners themselves were to be used as the basis of learning, one would expect there to be a closer match with the learners' lives, and with things that matter to any individual or group who are learning te reo Māori. One could reasonably expect a positive feedback loop from increased relevance, leading to higher motivation, more use of the language because of better integration into learners' lives, and increased desire to return for more learning.

In terms of Māori principles, increased relevance of learning would enhance learners' mana, through enabling them to be more competent language users in their own environment. Manaakitanga is also expressed in addressing learners' specific needs or desires for relevant language.

The literature also prioritises relevance. To take one example, Nunan's espousal of learner-centredness arose from a perceived need to cater in a specific way to the varied needs of immigrants to Australia (Nunan, 1988, 2012). Student-centred approaches to tertiary learning focus on passing on knowledge of disciplines, but still assert the importance of relevance (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003). Even in such subjects as physics, relevance to learners is seen as a key element of learner engagement (Wieman, 2011).

In the interviews, most learners and teachers raised relevance as an issue, although the desire for it was expressed in different ways. Amy stated directly that she wanted to talk about her own life; Cathy and Brian wanted to talk about contemporary topics, or what was happening in their own lives; Margaret wanted to learn language that will

make her life more comfortable with her native-speaker Māori relatives; Jack expressed a desire to learn material that was directly relatable to his own whānau, hapū and iwi; and Pita wanted to understand what was being said in everyday conversation. Katarina also expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that university learning seemed separated from real life, while Irihāpeti acknowledged the importance of relevance by introducing a contemporary context into her teaching.

The interview participants' comments suggested that different institutions appeared to have varying success in keeping the learning relevant, with TWoA having perhaps the most relevance by focussing more on everyday life than on building an academic framework of reo Māori knowledge. The university programmes based on *Te Whanake* appeared to present a mix of more and less relevant material, especially from *Te Pihinga* on.

It is important, however, to observe that the interviewees' desire for relevance did not just mean a focus on everyday language, or on language about the mundane things in life. Nearly all participants stated that they wanted cultural depth in their reo, and to be able to access the cultural storehouses of things like whakataukī, kōrero tawhito, pakiwaitara, karakia and mōteatea. These were all clearly relevant in terms of their 'fully human functioning," in that they are part of using the language with depth and maturity, and Tīmoti, Mikaere, Jack, Cathy, Amy and Pita all made it clear that such learning mattered to them. Amīria also indicated that it was relevant to her to explore how 'whakaaro Māori' (Māori ways of thinking) could be incorporated into her language use; other participants also expressed an interest in this issue. As it is, all reo Māori learning institutions include cultural elements of te reo Māori such as waiata, whakataukī and kīwaha, to some extent at least; the difference a learner-centred approach would bring would be ensuring that such things would be more tailored to specific learners' needs, interests and aspirations.

To sum up, increased relevance to learners' lives, with possible attendant lift in motivation and higher usage of the language, is the principal benefit likely to result from a more learner-centred approach to teaching and learning te reo Māori. This increased relevance would be best achieved by institutions putting more focus on the

learners' actual lives, and adopting an increasingly conversational or communicative approach, along with continued integration of culturally relevant language items such as whakataukī, applied in a tailored fashion to particular individuals or groups. This focus on increased relevance does not imply that teaching as provided now has not been relevant; in fact, several participants (Hēni, Hera and Tīmoti in particular) have stated that their learning has indeed been relevant. Learners in TWoA are particularly affirming of the relevance of their learning, and though opinions were more uneven with regard to university teaching, the degree of relevance varies from course to course and year to year (Amy's experience provides a good example of this, with learning content in some years being more relevant than in others). The main improvement that a learner-centred approach would make would be to enable learning that fits the learners more consistently, through finding out the needs, interests and aspirations of particular learners and groups of learners. This should ensure that learning is more relevant from the outset, and active monitoring, along with increased involvement of learners in ongoing course construction, is likely to ensure that the learning process would continue to be relevant.

9.5.2 Adoption of a more conversational/communicative model

The desire for relevance can be further narrowed down to the strong desire among participants to learn to converse confidently and competently. If learners are particularly interested in conversation, it follows that they require both the necessary skills and vocabulary to enable these conversations. Learners and teachers in this study emphasized how important the ability to communicate freely was to them, and if their needs, wants, interests and aspirations were specifically inquired into, it is likely that a stronger emphasis on conversational skills would result.

The capability principles most relevant here are the fundamental dignity of the person; this implies being able to participate in normal interaction in the language, and not be an ignorant and thus baffled and silenced bystander. This clearly also extends to the more specific principle of adults having agency; without some conversational proficiency, learners cannot play an active part in using the language. Similarly, in terms of tikanga principles, whakawhanaungatanga is enhanced by enabling confident conversation, while mana is also enhanced by taking part in conversation—and

conversely, being afraid to take part because of whakamā diminishes mana, as Pita and Mikaere attested.

The theme of being able to cope with spoken conversation comes through strongly in the literature on learner-centredness. Nunan (1988) adopted a learner-centred approach in response to the communicative needs of immigrants to Australia who needed to function in a new country. He advised focusing on what they required, rather than broader knowledge of English. Several of the adult learners of te reo Māori interviewed by Chrisp (2005) pointed to their desire to be able to converse, and to the diminishing of their mana if they were unable to maintain conversations (Chrisp, 2005). The less proficient or confident learners, such as Mikaere, Brian, Pita and Amy, all made it plain that they wanted to be able to converse comfortably; as far as learners with higher levels of proficiency go, Margaret wanted to be able to talk with her husband's family, and Mere wanted to interact in iwi, kōhanga and eventually kura reo settings. Jack and Hine prioritised speaking Māori with their family, while Amīria wanted to be able to converse spontaneously, and be on an equal footing with her partner in reo Māori settings. Of the teachers, Irihāpeti, Hēni and Katarina did not specifically mention conversational skills as an aim for their learning, probably because they were already proficient conversationalists, whereas Hera made it very plain that her primary aim from the very beginning of her learning was to be able to converse confidently. Furthermore, Hēni, Katarina, Irihāpeti and Cathy expressed their pleasure in engaging in conversation at comparatively high level in TWoA courses and at kura reo.

From the information available from the interviewees and the overview of the university settings in Chapter 3, it appears that the university setting has not been particularly strong in facilitating conversation, whereas some interviewees (Cathy, Margaret, Pita and Hera) attest that Te Ataarangi and TWoA do better at enabling oral language skills. Universities may need to pay more heed to the desire for conversational competency, although the shorter time periods available, competing academic distractions, and greater academic pressure in universities may work against this. That aside, if learners were given the opportunity to state what they wanted to learn, it appears from this modest sample that conversational competence is a major aim of

adult learners; if this desire were to be heeded, courses for adults may well be structured differently to better meet this need.

9.5.3 Better match of learning activities with learners

The third potential benefit of a more learner-centred approach would be that learning activities would likely be better matched to the learners. As for the previous two potential benefits of a learner-centred approach, the benefit would be contingent on learners being questioned on learning activities they prefer. Of course, teachers would still need to have strong input here; Kirschner and van Merriënboer (2013) have shown that learners do not always want the activities that are most effective at enabling learning. A better match of learning activities with learners would be achieved initially by finding out which learning activities appeared to work best for learners, possibly through a questionnaire, an interview, or working through a checklist of different learning activities. One would hope or expect that the learning activities in a course would effectively advance the learning of the students, while being a reasonably comfortable fit for as many of the learners as possible; if a particular learning activity appeared to cause discomfort for certain learners, one would expect that appropriate action would be taken.

The most relevant capabilities principles here are that learning activities should allow learners to flourish, that learners should have their dignity respected, that they should have age related differences acknowledged, and, more broadly, that learner differences should be acknowledged and acted on. In terms of tikanga Māori, the concept of manaakitanga implies looking after people appropriately to their needs. The notion of mana (status) is important here too; if learners feel embarrassed or belittled by doing a learning activity they are not comfortable with (writing a song, or writing and performing a haka, for example), they may feel their mana is diminished, and their learning is likely to suffer.

The literature provides numerous examples of adult learners struggling and embarrassed in learning activities, particularly in monolingual, communicative language teaching (CLT). Brooks-Lewis (2009, p. 217) describes learning Spanish as an adult, and being expected to take part in partner or group activities with equally

bewildered peers; she describes some games and activities as both embarrassing and useless. O'Neill (1991, p. 293-295) describes a lesson (admittedly ineptly run) where Japanese businessmen stumble awkwardly through activities ill-suited to them. In each of these cases, the activities would be more of a hindrance than a help to learning.

The interviews revealed a certain level of dissatisfaction with learning activities in most settings, even in TWoA, which is generally considered a more learner-friendly environment. Interview participants also observed others being uncomfortable with particular activities. The most commonly expressed dissatisfactions were about university learning, with a wide range of activities mentioned. Several participants were not happy spending so much time at university with "their head in a book", as Cathy expressed it (Hine and other university learners agreed to varying degrees), although this discontent is related more to the balance of activities rather than to a specific activity. Amy sometimes felt uncomfortable with fellow students in small group work, and found that a predominantly aural style of learning presented substantial difficulties for her. In comparison, TWoA activities were generally described more favourably, although Brian was put off by activities that expected too much singing, or that assumed too much cultural knowledge. Brian also observed that some boisterous activities made other learners uncomfortable, and he observed that this discomfort appeared to have deterred some participants from returning to further study after a TWoA weekend wānanga. On the other hand, Mikaere was dissatisfied with some learning activities in kura reo that were not active or entertaining enough for him. Activities at Te Ataarangi did not suit everyone either. Margaret admitted that she initially found Te Ataarangi very difficult, although she eventually became a convert; she also observed other older learners really struggling initially with the method. Cathy had sampled a similar aurally-based learning style to the Te Ataarangi method, and was adamant that it did not work for her, and that she needed to see the words as well. For her part, Amīria expressed frustration at women's lack of participation in the elaborate greetings procedure at a weekend iwi language wānanga, when women learners had no part as speakers on the first evening. One teacher, Irihāpeti, admitted that she did not do well in taking part in 'creative' activities.

On the positive side, it was encouraging to hear from the interviews that the teacher participants were actively endeavouring to ensure their activities were appropriate for their learners. Hēni actively solicited feedback on learning activities; Katarina also solicited feedback from friends who were engaged as students in her classes; and Irihāpeti clearly was conscious of the differing ways people preferred to learn (singly, in pairs or in groups) and accommodated these preferences where she could. Hera did not make particular mention of monitoring her activities, but she was clearly confident that her activities were working well; I observed one third-year evening class, and the learners appeared to be enjoying the activities, were purposefully engaged, and using language patterns in interesting and creative ways. However, it was interesting to observe that although Katarina was confident that her learning activities were culturally appropriate, and that they suited the learners and provided an entertaining way to learn, Brian reported that very similar activities (such as writing and performing a haka, and doing a lot of singing) made him feel uncomfortable and inadequate.

The main problem with certain off-putting activities was the lack of clear ways for learners to express their discontent or discomfort after they occurred, or to avoid such experiences by being consulted in the stage prior to a course beginning. A learner-centred approach would ensure that learners were at least consulted about learning activities that suited them. One would expect the teacher (or groups of teachers, or a learning institution) to have already worked out a range of activities likely to advance the students' learning, so that the learning activities may only need to be fine-tuned rather than altered drastically at the beginning of a course. The key element for a learner-centred approach would be that there would be a mechanism in place to consistently find out the way particular learners learn best (according to them), or want to learn, or feel comfortable learning, and having found these things out, to ensure that learner-friendly activities continue to be used throughout a course.

It should also be noted that if learning providers instituted a more conversational/communicative approach (as discussed above), one could expect a strong tendency to more interactive activities between peers. The extent to which this matched any individual learner's preferences would no doubt vary, but interactive activities between peers would at least fit with an overall desire for more communication. However, in the

broader picture, it is generally beneficial for learners to have access to a wide range of activities, with the proviso that these activities should be ones that the teacher is competent to facilitate.

9.5.4 Stronger engagement through higher level of mana for learners

If adult learners of te reo Māori had more say in their learning process, one could reasonably expect they would feel a greater level of engagement—yet this was the aspect in which the interviewees diverged most significantly from learner-centred concepts. Learner participants in this study generally embraced the concept of having their needs, interests and aspirations known by their teachers, and considered this a desirable change. But despite this, the responses to the learner-centred principles indicated that most learners were not particularly eager to be consulted or negotiated with on content, learning activities and assessment. This is despite the expressed wish of several earlier in the interviews (especially Amy, Amīria, Margaret and Brian) to have more say in their reo Māori learning. Once the teacher or learning institution had obtained this information, students were mostly content to trust learning institutions to use the information to improve the learning experience. Most did not appear to aspire to being consulted with or negotiated with about the content, learning activities and assessment. It seemed that they were prepared to hand their agency over to the teacher, and to feel that their dignity as an individual was still maintained.

There were exceptions to this; Mikaere embraced virtually all aspects of learner-centredness, and Tīmoti shared that enthusiasm, partly as he thought it might benefit his father's learning as he returned to te reo Māori later in his life. To some extent Amīria, Hine, and to a lesser extent, Amy, were also positive about learner-centred ideas. However, some learners whom I had expected to desire some control or autonomy in the classroom were quite prepared to devolve responsibility for their learning to the teacher. Cathy was the most emphatic about this; she was a strong articulate woman who was shaping her life around mastering te reo Māori at the time of the interview, but she very much deferred to teachers, and was prepared to consider that they knew best, and to put up with any imperfections in the teaching and learning that eventuated. Amīria's position was a little less clear; she was a very strong proponent of learner mana, but demurred when the term autonomy was used. Overall, however, she clearly

wanted more input into the learning process, and was frustrated that this seemed so difficult to achieve.

It is also important to point out that learners in particular were quite adamant that they had either complete or a high level of control of their learning outside of classroom situations (Amy, Jack, and Cathy, for example). Discussion with learners showed that they interpreted 'control of their learning' as taking up their responsibility to learn the language, rather than having a degree of control of aspects such as content, learning activities and assessment. The learners clearly felt that learning te reo Māori was their responsibility, even though Amīria expressed exasperation at having to go to so much trouble to learn the language that should have been her birthright.

Paradoxically, some learners were still very conscious of their lack of mana in the learning situation. For example, Hine lamented the disempowering effect of kura reo, and Brian expressed a desire for more empowerment in his learning. Margaret clearly wanted to have more control; Amy wanted her learning situation to improve (by being more suited to her capabilities, her everyday life, and her way of learning), and was happy when it did improve, but still said that she did not really want 'autonomy'. There are several possible reasons why learners were prepared to surrender their agency to the teacher. In terms of the capabilities approach, learners could be said to have 'adaptive preference'; after all, they have traditionally been used to having minimal agency within reo Māori learning contexts, so they are strongly acculturated to having little input in the learning process. It may be best to acknowledge learners' comments as a 'witness,' and to still work towards a better model, with more active input from learners.

Another possible reason for not claiming mana (agency) in terms of learning te reo Māori may be respect from learners for the taonga status of te reo Māori (see Higgins and Rewi, 2015), and a consequent respect for teachers of the language. Cathy, Amy, Pita and Jack all clearly articulated this respect. It also became apparent that many learners did not believe they were qualified enough, or knew enough, to make meaningful decisions about what they should be learning, how they should be learning, and how they should be assessed. This attitude seems to persist even for advanced

learners, sometimes even in the face of many instances of disappointed expectations in their learning experience (Cathy, for example, and Amy to some extent). This suggests that the most prominent discourse about te reo Māori encourages a more passive approach to the learning process than would be likely for other languages. A combination of respect for teachers, willingness to consider the good of the group rather than the individual, and unfamiliarity with having agency in this particular context appear to bring about a less assertive stance.

When applying the concept of mana to adults learning te reo Māori, learners should have the possibility of asserting more ownership of the learning process, both as language users and language learners, and learning institutions should also be encouraging learners to do the same—despite any inconvenience it may cause them. Nunan (2015) and Nation and Macalister (2010) give examples of how to do this. No doubt there would be a sliding scale of how much mana/control a learner could reasonably expect in their learning. Beginners may genuinely have little idea of what they need to learn, or what they even want to learn, though they should still have a degree of mana. As learners become progressively more advanced, there should increasingly be consultation at the very least, then negotiation with more advanced learners. There need to be practical pathways available to achieve this sort of consultation and negotiation while still preserving the structure of courses and continuing to meet institutional needs for stability and accountability. I deal with these issues more in the next chapter.

9.5.5 More openness to clarification or questions in class

The need for clarification is most pertinent in an immersion environment, where speaking in English may be frowned upon. Learners may lack the language skills to put their questions in Māori, or feel that asking is going to be such a cumbersome process that it will not be worth risking embarrassment through undertaking it. The effort required to put the question may deter learners from asking questions, when a quick question and answer is all that is needed to keep a learner on track.

The potential benefit of openness to clarification may seem too finely focused, compared with the broad-strokes emphasis of the previous potential benefits. However,

this benefit addresses an expressed need of several learners (Mikaere, Pita and Amy, and to some extent Brian). Others reported significant levels of misunderstanding in classes (Mikaere, Pita and Cathy, though she is willing to prioritise the needs of the group), which implied that is important to offer opportunities for clarification. Quick access to clarification enables learners to continue to understand and participate, as conversationalists or as readers or listeners, and is a characteristic of a genuinely communicative or conversational approach. After all, one rarely allows a conversation between equals to progress for long while significant confusion exists in one party's mind. Addressing this issue prioritises the needs of the learner as against the flow of the lesson, or, if English is used for clarification, the principle of maintaining immersion.

It is important to establish that openness to clarification is a genuine learner-centred issue. If the learner needs sufficient clarity to continue, and is regularly struggling to achieve this, it is reasonable to expect that the learning situation should be adapted to allow for this. The situation raised most prominently in the interviews was the transition at university from the first year in the *Te Whanake* series to the second year. In each case (Amy, Mikaere and Pita) the learners were intelligent adults working in a course designed for second language learners, but the assumption of their teachers appeared to be that they were capable of coping with a higher level of immersion than they could in fact deal with. Of course, this situation could be viewed as the teachers extending the learners, but there appears to have been little effort to ascertain if confusion was occurring. Assuming silence means consent may be convenient in many ways, but maintaining a working level of clarity for learners should be a key principle, whatever the means used to achieve it. The situation was complicated by the presence of other, younger learners who had higher competency in te reo Māori; however, a truly learner-centred approach would more actively manage this disparity in skill levels. Furthermore, a truly learner-centred approach should ensure that people who need more support in a class get it, as far as it is practical to do so.

The issue of more openness to clarification or questions in class also requires addressing the role of English for second-language reo Māori learners. English is the first language of virtually all adult learners, and there is a good learner-centred case for acknowledging and using the learners' first language to some extent (Turnbull &

Dailey-O'Cain, 2009). This requires acknowledging that the two languages exist and interact together in the learner; it also means discarding a more ideologically founded stance that strongly favours the use of one language only. It would be regrettable if continued notions of maintaining the wairua (ethos) of te reo Māori were to block the use of the learners' first language to the detriment of their learning. Amy provided one of the most powerful examples of the two languages working in unison to build learners' knowledge and to ensure clarity, when she described her experience of sitting in on a class where the teacher and the students were switching freely from te reo Māori to English; not only was there clear communication, but a relaxed, unstrained and unselfconscious feeling about the interchanges she observed. The benefit of this approach was clear to her, and provided her with a model to aspire to.

These five potential benefits appear to me to be the most pertinent ways a more learner-centred approach could benefit adult learners. The next section examines problems that could be expected from implementing greater learner-centredness for adults learning te reo Māori.

9.6 Problems that could be expected

9.6.1 Impractical or difficult to implement

The perception exists that a more learner-centred would be difficult to introduce; several learners were wary of the concept because they thought it was impractical (Jack and Pita in particular, and also Cathy to some extent). Several believed it was desirable, but would be difficult to implement (Brian and Margaret), whereas other participants did not make specific comments about the practicality or otherwise of implementing learner-centred practice (Amy, Amīria, Hine, Hēni and Mere), whether they agreed with the key ideas or not. Other participants (Irihāpeti, Katarina) did not comment on possible difficulties of implementation of the idea, but said that any change to such an approach would need to be done with sensitivity and consideration, especially considering the high status accorded to teachers of te reo Māori.

Before considering how difficult it would be to implement, it is helpful to establish what sort of learner-centredness is being proposed. I have proposed some changes to a learner-centred model that may well make it more practical: firstly, acknowledging the importance of well-designed instructional material, used for direct instruction, means that some of the burden of expectation to cater for variation in multiple learners is lifted from the teacher. Learning materials based on good principles should allow learners to use them as independently as possible, so they do not need a great deal of procedural guidance. Furthermore, rejecting the 'learning styles' model lessens the need to cater for substantial differences between learners (Kirschner & van Merriënboer, 2013, pp. 85, 86). While still acknowledging that the teacher is there to facilitate learning, this amended model also expects there will be a certain amount of common learning and direct instruction, which once again lessens the requirement for the teacher to cater for a really wide range of learners. Once a learner-centred approach had been at least partially adopted, it is likely that progressive iterations may be less burdensome for teachers, and more practical to implement as a result.

The capabilities approach in this case focuses on both the learners and the teachers; learners should have their range of capabilities enabled as much as possible, but teachers also deserve to have their dignity respected, their differences in ability to cope with this sort of approach respected, and their agency as educators acknowledged. In tikanga Māori terms, manaakitanga (care or consideration) needs to be shown to the teacher, and the teacher's mana (status, agency) as an educator needs to be handled sensitively. The ideal solution would ensure that both parties (learners and teachers) are treated appropriately, while still moving towards a learner-centred approach.

In the literature, Nunan (2012, 2015) promotes learner-centredness and writes about it as if it is regularly occurring, without necessarily providing extensive examples of it being put into practice, or treating it as problematic. Likewise, Nation and Macalister (2010) write about a learner-centred approach as if it is an accepted part of language teaching, and Nation (2014) promotes it as a practical possibility. All these writers advocate a flexible and often gradual approach to implementing learner-centredness. Practical resources exist to assist with implementing learner-centredness, and for finding out more about learners. Knowles (1980) and his recent editors have set out

templates for building learner-centred education processes, and Tudor (1992, 1993) has written lists of criteria to ascertain the readiness of learners to adapt a more learner-centred approach. The CELTA handbook for teachers (Thornbury & Watkins, 2007) provides sample questionnaires to find out learner's needs, interests and aspirations. Possible strategies for implementing learner-centredness include contacting learners prior to a course, giving an outline of the proposed course, and informing the learners that they can have some say in the course. A questionnaire could be used find out about their needs as they perceive them, their interests and aspirations, the type of thing they want to learn, the sort of learning activities they like or dislike, and their ideas about how they would like to be assessed. Teachers or teaching counsellors (as occurs in the Australian Migrant Education Programme), could interview the learners to fine-tune the process further, giving teachers an opportunity to present their point of view about what they believe the learners need, or what they believe should be taught. A hui (meeting) between learners and teacher/s could negotiate a final outline of the course, ensuring that it is workable for teachers. Finally, regular monitoring of the course through a questionnaire or hui could ensure that the course was in fact achieving the goal of being learner-centred. This is quite a process, but if the will to do it was present, and learners were encouraged to be realistic about what to expect, one could expect that the learning situation might match reasonably closely with what learners desire. The key point is that this approach is possible, and not just an idealistic dream. In fact, when Pita and Jack initially said learner-centredness appeared impractical, and I responded by giving a specific example of how a hui could be held prior to conducting a course, both agreed that they could see value in that proposal, and that the example made it appear more practical; what is more, they responded enthusiastically to the idea of being consulted about what they wanted and what suited them.

9.6.2 Fragmentation and lack of continuity

Fragmentation and a lack of continuity was acknowledged as a problem when a learner-centred approach was introduced into migrant English language learning in the 1980s in Australia (Nunan, 1988). At the time, AMEP responded by adopting a more structured approach that made the learning pathway clearer for learners, while still preserving a learner-centred ethos—an approach that Burns & De Silva Joyce (2007) asserted was still in evidence in AMEP at the time they wrote. A number of interview participants

expressed concern about excessive fragmentation and individualization if a learner-centred approach were to be adopted. Jack was particularly heated in his rejection of too much emphasis on individualism, as he believed that such an approach had often caused harm to Māori collectively. Katarina was concerned that following one person's interests could have negative effect on others' learning, and Pita foresaw problems with instituting a more learner-centred approach for similar reasons. Cathy saw the need for a group to express whanaungatanga by moving together rather than as a collection of individuals. It is clearly important to establish and maintain a sense of structure and continuity in educational institutional settings, both for learners and for teachers alike.

Finally, it is important to once again assert that, according to my adaptation of the capabilities approach, learner differences should be acknowledged and acted on, that learners should be able to choose how much or little they wish to learn, and that they are ends in themselves. This will inevitably require some individual attention. Tikanga Māori also invokes principles of manaakitanga (care) and whanaungatanga (acknowledging difference within the 'whānau' in this case) as well as respecting the mana (agency, dignity) of individuals as well. The benefit of the collective must be maintained, but individuals and their differences still matter, and need to be dealt with appropriately.

9.6.3 Potential burdensomeness for teachers

The concern that teachers may become burdened has to some extent been dealt with in the material above on the practicality of a learner-centred approach. Interviewees who particularly addressed this were Pita and Jack, both teachers themselves. I also encountered a degree of suspicion about the idea in informal discussions with several teachers of adult learners, who believed it would be difficult and onerous to adapt teaching to disparate needs or desires. Learner-centredness certainly introduces another significant level of complication in what can already be a difficult job. It also requires a way of viewing learner autonomy or mana that does not appear to be very familiar either to most adult learners or to teachers of te reo Māori. To complicate matters further, the experience of some teachers (Hēni and Katarina) and several learners' comments (Amy, Jack and Margaret) indicate that teachers of te reo Māori are sometimes not specifically trained as teachers, at university level and in other contexts

as well. These people may find it more difficult to implement a way of teaching that they are not familiar with. Organizing and running learner-centred classes requires a skill set that many teachers may not currently have. However, learner-centred teaching starts with a genuinely informed view of the learners, and is founded in a realistic view of what is important to learners. Teaching should begin with this sound foundation, rather than operating from a minimal knowledge about the learners; it seems at least plausible that teaching will be more effective if something is known about the learners. Allowing for the exercise of further input or control by learners in the learning process may well in fact lift some of the burden from the teacher, as well as making it more likely that the content and learning activities are as appropriate as possible for the learners.

The current default position for teaching te reo Māori is to place almost total control in the hands of the teacher or learning institution; this suggests that shifting the level of mana in favour of learners would need to be done with care and consideration. A clear, considered and transparent process of implementation of learner-centredness could also allay teachers' concerns. A gradual approach may be more suitable in some situations; a weaker version of learner-centredness could be introduced in the initial stages by finding out learners' needs, interests and aspirations, and committing to at least consider these things in instituting courses and continuing courses. At a later stage, consultation over content and learning activities could be introduced, then active negotiation at a still later stage. The aspect of learner-centredness most readily agreed to by most interviewees was that teachers should base learning on the needs, interests and aspirations of the learners. This is at least one of the key elements of learner-centredness, and would set a strong foundation for any further venturing into more learner input or exercise of mana.

9.6.4 Possible clash with Māori values in connection with elders and reo Māori teachers

In the New Zealand setting, the expertise of reo Māori teachers is clearly highly valued. Native speakers in particular, and those with particularly high linguistic prowess are valued even more highly; at the highest level, it is fair to say that the teachers are respected, at times venerated, despite disagreement that may be expressed about their

methods or approaches. All participants articulated this respect, and named teachers who had a powerful impact on their learning, or whom they greatly admired. Māori culture possesses a strong element of respect for kaumātua, and a stronger expectation that they will not necessarily be questioned than exists in Pākehā culture, for example. It is important to note that there was strong affirmation among the interviewees of the mana of teachers, and no evidence of a desire among the learners to assert their mana at the expense of teachers. All this suggests that if proposals for a more learner-centred approach were to be instituted, a sensitive and respectful approach would be needed (a matter raised by Irihāpeti and Katarina in particular), but also that learners would support a respectful approach.

However, it may well be wrong to assume that leading teachers are not amenable to new ideas, or that they are unwilling to consider the needs of learners. It does appear that their primary allegiance is to te reo Māori itself, particularly as it is the means of expression and transmission of knowledge of their ancestors, and because of the sense of responsibility they may feel for handing on the reo in a state of vitality and strength to generations to come. Teachers with these beliefs may well be prepared to implement learner-centredness as a means to an end if they believe it is likely to improve uptake of te reo Māori and the learning experience of learners. I believe that the responses of my interviewees provide heartening evidence that the adult learners I have interviewed do not just want a shallow, utilitarian knowledge of te reo Māori, but want to have deeper awareness of older forms of language, to incorporate these aspects into their lives, and to speak and use Māori in a genuine Māori way. They want to be aware of whakaaro Māori (see Amīria in particular), and they have a genuine concern for quality of their language, even though (as in Hine's case) they may at times resent what seems like unending pressure to improve the quality of their language. Given that adult learners appear to have high aspirations for the quality of the reo they wish to speak, the teachers at higher levels may be prepared to accommodate a higher level of learner mana (agency), or to entertain the idea of higher learner input into the learning process. The only way to find out is to broach the subject with teachers, and see what eventuates.

9.6.5 Could be viewed with suspicion as a Pākehā concept

It seems likely that learner-centredness, with its emphasis on the importance of the individual, could be seen as the antithesis of 'whakaaro Māori', which emphasizes kotahitanga (unity) and whanaungatanga. As mentioned earlier, Jack reacted quite negatively to the idea of further individualism creeping into Māori society, while other participants were wary of the concept (Katarina, Cathy) or dismissive of it (Hera). As an outside concept, or 'whakaaro Pākehā', it could be viewed as lacking relevance to te reo Māori or to a tikanga Māori setting. Schweisfurth (2013, 2015) particularly warns against trying to introduce learner-centredness without ensuring it is a comfortable cultural fit, or at least relates to elements within the culture. It is worth noting that the idea is to some extent unfamiliar even in a mainstream or Pākehā setting, as I have found in informal discussion with almost all my acquaintances, including those who are working in education. Most of my interviewees needed to have the concepts explained to some degree, and even Irihāpeti and Hēni, the two university teachers, admitted that they did not know much about it. The idea may have an even higher hurdle of unfamiliarity to get over for Māori.

However, as Amīria so ably articulated in her interview, the concept of the learner having agency resonates strongly (at least in her view) with the Māori concept of mana; in her view, each person has his or her own mana, and learning should allow expression of each individual's own unique abilities. In the end, the only way to find out the level of acceptance that learner-centredness will be accorded is to lay the concept out in the gaze of teachers and learners in the Māori world, to have it discussed, argued about, possibly couched in authentically Māori terms, and then evaluated on its merits.

9.7 Conclusion

This chapter began by discussing the learning experience of the interview participants in the light of the capabilities theory and key concepts from tikanga Māori, concluding that a learner-centred approach had something to offer to improve adult learning of te reo Māori. The chapter then presented the more complex picture of learner-centredness that emerged from discussion of key concepts in the interviews, and moved on to

propose a working model of learner-centredness that appears to fit this particular context.

The chapter then laid out the primary benefits and problems that could be expected from implementing a more learner-centred approach to adult learning of te reo Māori. The first two potential benefits (increased relevance, and a more communicative approach to learning) were strongly related. The third potential benefit (better match of learning activities to learners) emerged to some extent in the comments of interviewees about their learning experience. The fourth potential benefit (stronger engagement through a higher level of mana for learners) features strongly in the literature, but less prominently in the interviews than I had expected; many participants like the idea of learning being based on their needs, interests and aspirations, but they did not generally expect a strong level of say in the creation or conducting of the course, even in an imagined ideal situation. The final potential benefit (more openness to clarification in class) was deduced from hearing reports that significant negative effects were being experienced from failure to address this need; this benefit also implies a questioning of the prominent discourse, in which immersion in te reo Māori is almost overwhelmingly favoured, and English (te reo Pākehā) is kept at arm's length, especially at the later stages of learning.

The first three potential problems for implementing a more learner-centred approach revolve around the issue of practicality or difficulty, and although it appears to me that the implementation of learner-centredness is practicable, there are certainly difficulties involved, and it would wrong to suggest otherwise. However, the potential problems of fragmentation and lack of continuity, and excessive burdening of teachers could be addressed with a well-planned and well-managed approach. The possible conflict of learner-centredness with Māori values may also be less of a concern than it would appear, given that participants in these interviews participants had a wide range of responses to the concept, from very positive to quite negative. Moreover, those who affirmed the idea could articulate ways it fitted in with Māori concepts and tikanga.

Having established that learner-centredness appears to have some merit, some potential benefits for adult reo Māori learners, and some acceptance amongst a sample of these

learners, the task that remains is to give some indication of how learner-centred reo Māori learning for adults could be introduced and maintained. Once again, these proposals are guided by the literature and the interviewees' experiences, either as teachers and learners. In particular, these proposals endeavour to present learner-centredness as a practical means of achieving the potential benefits laid out in this chapter: increasing relevance, making learning more communicative, improving the match of learner activities with learners, engaging more with learners, and achieving more openness to clarification in adult reo Māori learning.

Chapter 10: Proposals and conclusion

10.1 Introduction

The previous chapter started with a brief analysis of the interviews through the two lenses of the capabilities approach and tikanga Māori; it found a significant shortfall from an ideal situation, indicating that change is well worth considering. The chapter then discussed several aspects of learner-centredness that appeared to not be well supported in the literature; the conclusion drawn from this was that, while some concerns about learner-centredness were valid, most were less applicable in the context of adults learning te reo Māori. The chapter then presented an amended model of learner-centredness that fits the context of adults learning te reo Māori. The rest of the chapter presented potential benefits that could be gained from using a more learner-centred approach to adult reo Māori learning, along with potential problems that could arise through attempting to implement such an approach. Proposals for implementation of learner-centredness have been deliberately left out of the discussion chapter to allow space for thorough analysis of the merits or otherwise of learner-centredness in this context.

This final chapter works from the premise that most of the interview participants had a reasonably positive attitude to at least some key learner-centred ideas, and takes the next step to making proposals about how an amended, contextualised model of learner-centredness could be implemented. The proposals prioritise finding out about the learners' 'needs, interests and aspirations'—the element of learner-centredness that most learners and teachers agreed with—while also moving towards some empowerment of learners (the element that found only limited support). I prefer a transparent approach that lets learners know what is intended, but acknowledge that a more indirect approach may well fit better in some circumstances.

The chapter proceeds with placing the idea of learner-centredness within the framework of language curriculum development proposed by Nation and Macalister (2009); their treatment of language curriculum development already contains a strong emphasis on the importance of knowing about the learners, being flexible enough to adapt to learner

needs, wants and learning styles, and negotiating various elements within a language course. The chapter then refers back to the informal ways Nunan (2015) and Nation (2014) suggest for partial implementation, and explores further how these methods could be applied. The next step for dealing with implementation is to outline how learner-centredness could potentially be implemented in three specific contexts; university, Kura Reo, and informal learning. This section will be as practical as possible, and is based on the higher level of personal familiarity I have with the university and Kura Reo contexts. The chapter finishes with exploration of other avenues for possible future research on learner-centredness for adult reo Māori learning, and with general conclusions for the thesis.

10.2 Learner-centredness in the framework of language curriculum development

Implementation of learner-centredness for adults learning te reo Māori fits within the broader framework of language curriculum development, and in the section that follows, I use the model proposed by Nation and Macalister (2009), focusing on the stages that are most relevant for learner-centredness. Their model of curriculum development covers examining the (language) environment, assessing needs, deciding on principles, setting goals and choosing and sequencing content, designing lesson formats, working out assessment procedures, and finally evaluating the course (Nation and Macalister, 2009, p. 11).

The most immediately relevant stage is assessing needs, and this could well be extended to finding out interests and aspirations. Nation and Macalister do not profess to be promoting a learner-centred approach, but they point out that a course can also be based on what the learners request (p. 5), although one would normally expect that this would be balanced to some extent with what the teacher regards as important, or is capable of teaching. The next relevant stage is deciding on principles, and Nation and Macalister provide four clearly learner-centred principles; focus on encouraging learners to become independent, ensuring that learners are interested and excited by their learning, ensuring that the learning suits the different students' learning styles, and ensuring that the course should be based on (among other things) 'a continuing careful consideration of the learners and their needs.' For each of the following three stages— setting goals and choosing and sequencing content, designing lesson formats, and

working out assessment procedures—learners should ideally have some say in each part of the process. It may be more practical to attempt only partial implementation, choosing only one or two of the stages, but later iterations of the course may include extra stages if all goes well.

10.3 Four approaches to implementation

In 4.4.6, I described various approaches Nunan (2015) and Nation (2014) have suggested to implement learner-centredness; each has its merits, and may fit with different learning situations. These approaches can be summarised as follows:

1) Delayed implementation

2) Immediate informal introduction

3) Communication with learners prior to course

4) Encouragement of independence initially, then gradual introduction of learner-centredness.

1) **Delayed implementation**:

In this approach, some choice or negotiation is introduced after several weeks of teaching, once the teacher is established and students are settled into a routine. The teacher could then offer to allow some negotiated lesson content and activities (Nation, 2014, p. 46). Alternatively, learners could initiate a request for the same negotiation process after some weeks in class have passed. Nation suggests that, if the teacher initiates the introduction of choice and negotiation, the process is made more manageable if the teacher recalls the types of activities done so far, and lists them on the whiteboard, along with a blank timetable. Learners can then put forward their ideas, learners and teachers discuss the possible options, after which some suggestions are put into practice, with the process being repeated a few weeks later.

2) **Immediate introduction in informal manner and discussion format:**

Nunan provides a 'vignette' to demonstrate how a learner centred approach might be immediately introduced. In the first lesson the teacher surveys new students about what they want to learn, how they want to learn, and how they want to be assessed (Nunan, 2015, p. 22). The surveys are discussed in groups, and the information gained is used by the teacher at a later stage in the course to influence what is taught and how it is taught. In this approach, the students learn at the very beginning that they will be actively involved in making decisions about their learning, and that there will be negotiation amongst learners and teachers about what happens in the classroom (p. 23). The approach requires a confident and committed teacher, who has—or is permitted—the flexibility to implement a variety of topics or learning activities. The actual implementation could be done with various degrees of commitment to fulfilling learners' wishes. This approach may be quite challenging for some learners, and some students may be reluctant to divulge what they need or want at the beginning of their time with each other. This approach could also lead to majority rule in deciding what happens in class, at the expense of outlying individual requests or needs.

3) **Communication with learners prior to course starting**:

In this approach, learners are contacted prior to the course and given a questionnaire (ideally in English and in Māori). The questionnaire should explain that the teacher/department intends for the course to be learner-centred (to whatever extent), and should go on to enquire about the learners' needs (as they see them), along with their wants, interests, aspirations, and preferred learning activities. A supplementary interview may be manageable for small classes. The teacher could use the material in varying ways to organize prior to the course; once the course starts, the teacher could discuss questionnaire results with the class, with learners opening up as they see fit about what they have expressed in the questionnaire. This approach may well be the best fit for a university setting, where a planned, considered approach is required.

4) **Work on encouraging learners to be independent, introduce learner-centredness gradually**:

Nunan suggests that for learners who have very different cultural expectations, it is better to gradually encourage them to be more independent before broaching any learner-centred activities. He endeavours to 'sensitize' them to the role they must play in their own learning process, and as time goes on, introduces opportunity for choices. As learners become increasingly aware of their individual learning processes, they can increasingly choose approaches to their learning that suit them (p. 24). This approach still requires a teacher to have a long-term goal of learner-centred teaching, but makes allowance for people who have always been taught in very traditional classrooms, where the teacher makes all the decisions. This approach has the disadvantage of not finding out a lot about learners from learners themselves at the beginning, so the teacher is not in a good position to really know what is going on in learners' minds.

All four approaches have their merits, although only the second (immediate introduction) and third (prior consultation) involve consciously finding out about the learner at the initial stages. The third approach appears to be the most transparent, thorough model. It provides the teacher with some knowledge at least about the learners, and enables learners to communicate with teachers privately before expressing their needs and wants in front of a class. The teacher is also committed to making a genuine effort to accommodate the wishes and needs of the learners, although the degree to which this is done is to some extent under the teacher's control. This approach has the advantage of being a thought-through, considered position, and treats learner-centredness seriously. However, there is potential for some fragmentation of the class, as the teacher (and learners) may need to take a thoughtful approach to maintaining a degree of class unity, and working out how to work together for the benefit of all. Nation says that the first approach (delayed implementation) is the most commonly adopted, and it certainly has the advantage of allowing learners to work in a fashion they may be more used to before an element of choice is introduced in the learning.

10.4 Implementing learner-centredness in three settings

The next section looks at possible ways to implement learner-centredness at one university course (*Te Pihinga*) that is described in some detail in Chapter 3. The second setting is Kura Reo, and the third is informal learning. There is inevitably some repetition in the treatment of the first two settings, but it seems important to me to be quite specific about how the ideas could be applied in different situations.

10.4.1 A university reo Māori course: Te Pihinga, at the University of Otago

As mentioned earlier, I present first a more comprehensive approach to implementing learner-centredness, then proposals for more partial implementation. Because of the large numbers of constraints in the university system, the more comprehensive approach may not be possible. For example, the University of Otago requires university teachers to provide a detailed outline of the course within the first week. The regulations also state that "Such information will be changed only in exceptional circumstances, in which case students shall be informed of the justification for the change and will be consulted unless this is clearly not practicable." Furthermore, the regulations specify that "if there is provision for some negotiation of assessment tasks, the procedures for this negotiation will be clearly stated" (University of Otago, Provision of Course and Study Information to Enrolled Students Policy). This is as it should be, for the protection of students and for assurance that teaching is of good quality. TWoA is also subject to monitoring by the Tertiary Education Commission, as part of the conditions of its funding by the government (Tertiary Education Commission, 2018), so would have restrictions on how freely teachers could adapt courses (unlike Te Ataarangi, which is run independently of the Government). None of this precludes negotiation, but it is clear that negotiation does have to occur within quite a tight framework in any institution. It may well be only possible to achieve small changes initially, and to make incremental changes thereafter.

10.4.1.1 Comprehensive implementation

This would follow the third approach, in which contact is made with learners prior to the course, learners are informed about what learner-centredness is, and learners are

informed about the organizers' intention to make the course learner-centred to at least some degree.

Comprehensive implementation of learner-centred approach: university setting:
a) Discuss / decide at department level *Discuss the concept, potential benefits/problems. Work out level of implementation. Most suitable for higher levels.*
b) Find out about the learners *Questionnaire or interview, ideally before course starts.*
c) Give learners information about learner-centredness *Explain concepts, potential benefits. Set parameters.*

d) First class – discuss the broad findings from questionnaires/interviews.
Next step could be:
   i. Teacher continues on basis of discussion of questionnaires/interviews
   Questionnaire/interview and discussion constitutes consultation. Teacher proceeds on information available (many learners may be happy with this).
   ii. Negotiation
   Teacher and class could negotiate further, within set parameters. See f) below.

e) Option for use of questionnaire – to be done in the first class *Teacher gives out simplified questionnaire. Discuss results, rank items for importance. Teacher continues on basis of questionnaires/discussion, or with further negotiation.*
f) Teacher negotiates with learners on content, learning activities and/or assessment activities *Follows on from d) ii). Best done with a menu of possibilities.*
g) Adapting the textbook/negotiating the textbook content *Teacher and class discuss outline of upcoming book section, work out most necessary/relevant sections.*
h) Evaluate activities, adapt as necessary

Table 13: Comprehensive implementation of learner-centred approach: university setting

a) **Discuss / decide at department level**: Ideally, discussion should take place at department level about what learner-centredness is, the potential benefits, and the potential problems in implementing it. Once some agreement is reached, the department should look at manageable ways to introduce it, in ways that each teacher is comfortable with. The degree of implementation could vary from

course to course, with higher courses perhaps having a higher level of learner input.

b) **Find out about the learners**: The most comprehensive approach is to issue a questionnaire prior to the course starting, either by mail or email; staff are then ready to discuss or negotiate with learners from the first lesson. The questionnaire could ask about the learners' reo Māori learning experience, things the learners believe they need, things they want to learn, their interests, their aspirations for learning te reo Māori, ways they like to learn, and ways they do not like to learn. The questionnaire could also inquire about the situations in which the learner expects to be using te reo Māori (this is probably a key factor in a learner-centred approach). Alternatively (or additionally), an interview could be manageable for smaller classes. It may be best to make it clear that this is for staff information only. Ideally the questionnaire should allow for responses in te reo Māori and in English.

c) **Give learners information about learner-centredness:** This should explain what is involved in learner-centredness, and benefits that could follow from implementation. It should also make it clear that the staff desire to implement it, to some degree at least. The handout should perhaps set some parameters of what is possible, to avoid unrealistic expectations. This handout should accompany the questionnaire. Ideally the handout would be in both English and te reo Māori.

First class – discuss the broad findings from questionnaires/interviews: The teacher may go over the anonymized responses to the questionnaire, inviting further comment, elaboration, or questions from learners. From there on, the teacher could go two ways.

i) **Teacher continues on basis of discussion of questionnaires / interviews:** The teacher could explain the next step he or she expects to take to put at least some elements into practice. My interviews indicated that many learners would be happy to have this level of consultation

without the teacher going on to give them more input, or negotiating with them.

ii) **Negotiation:** The teacher could negotiate with learners about possible changes. The teacher would need to clarify that there are some tight parameters within which negotiation is possible in the university system (e.g. that there are set learning objectives and assessments), but that there is room for some flexibility within these constraints.

d) **Option for use of questionnaire – to be done in the first class**; This is based on Model 2; the teacher could give out a simplified questionnaire (see example in Appendix 2, from Nunan, 2015, pp. 20-23). The students complete the questionnaire, discuss it, then rank items for importance, first individually, then in pairs, then in groups. The teacher could continue with either deciding on activities and content on the basis of the questionnaire and ensuing discussion (having consulted with the learners), or may continue with further negotiation.

Teacher negotiates with learners on content, learning activities and/or assessment activities: May be done best with a menu of possibilities (i.e. a list of possible content areas, learning activities, or ways of assessing) so that learners have something definite to work with, and do not have to think of things they would like.

Adapting the textbook / negotiating the textbook content: Learners could be given an outline of a section of the book (including the topics and learning activities) some time before the next section of the course begins. Learners could suggest/choose sections that are of most interest, or are most relevant, and sections that appear to them to be least relevant; the teacher could discuss his or her preferences with learners, in the light of the set learning objectives and assessment activities.

i) **Evaluate activities, adapt as necessary:** Once several learner-centred activities are completed, learners and teachers should evaluate the success or otherwise of the activities, and adjust the programme accordingly.

10.4.1.2 Partial implementation (within a department, and in a specific course)

a) **Allow one or some teachers to implement**: Some teachers may not agree with the concept; allow those who do to implement in varying degrees.

b) **Several weeks teaching, then negotiated activities offered:** (Based on the first approach); the teacher conducts the class as normal, then offers time for negotiated activities. The teacher could recall the types of activities already covered, and list them on the whiteboard, along with a blank timetable. Learners put forward ideas, learners and teachers discuss the ideas, some suggestions are put into practice, and the process is repeated in a few weeks.

c) **Options offered within a lesson:** Learners could be offered options about how to conduct any given part of a lesson (choosing content or choosing or adapting learning activities).

10.4.2 A Kura Reo context

The following section follows the above example. Once again, my suggested implementation begins with a more comprehensive approach that focuses on teachers knowing the learners' needs, wants and aspirations, but I also propose ways to implement learner-centredness in a more indirect fashion. The proposals are tailored quite closely to the Kura Reo setting.

10.4.2.1 Comprehensive implementation

a) **Discuss / decide at collective teacher level:** In an ideal situation (from the perspective of this thesis), if Kura Reo teachers were informed about learner-centredness, and if they saw it having a place in te ao Māori and reo Māori learning for adults, then the idea would be discussed, both in general, and in terms of specific principles of the idea. Such teachers would be well positioned to determine from their viewpoint, how learner-centredness could best be framed in the Māori world and in the context of adult reo Māori teaching and learning. Discussion should include the potential benefits, and the potential problems in implementing it. Once some measure of agreement is reached, the

teachers could look at manageable ways to introduce it, in a way that each teacher is comfortable with. The degree of implementation could vary from class to class.

b) **Find out about the learners:** The most comprehensive approach (just as it is for the university setting) is to issue a questionnaire prior to the kura reo starting. The questionnaire should include a brief outline of what learner-centredness is all about, so that learners get a clearer idea of the purpose of the questionnaire. Participants should be encouraged to register early, so they have time to complete the questionnaire and return it. Teaching staff would read these, collate and analyse them, and be ready to discuss them or to negotiate with learners from the first lesson. A summary of a responses for each participant in a particular group should be given to the teacher prior to each of the classes.

NB: The sections that follow closely follow the example for a university course.

c) **Questionnaire:** The questionnaire could ask about the learners' reo Māori learning experience, things the learners believe they need, things they want to learn, their interests, their aspirations for learning te reo Māori, ways they like to learn, and ways they do not like to learn. It may be best to make it clear that this is for the teachers' information only. The learner should ideally be free to respond in English or Māori, or a mixture of both, to ensure the learner can express him/herself as completely as possible. This would constitute a substantial departure from usual practice in kura reo, which are generally conducted only in te reo Māori.

d) **Handout for learners about learner-centredness:** This should explain what is involved in learner-centredness, and benefits that could follow from implementation. It should also make it clear that the staff desire to implement it, to some degree at least. The handout should perhaps set some parameters of what is possible, to avoid unrealistic expectations.

This handout should accompany the questionnaire. Ideally this questionnaire should also be in te reo Māori and English.

e) **The evening prior to commencement of classes – discuss broad findings from questionnaire:** A certain amount of prior grouping could take place, based on teachers' prior knowledge of the learners and the learners' responses to the questionnaire. Learners whose responses were more problematic could be briefly interviewed prior to their being grouped. Selected teachers could go over the collated responses to the questionnaire, pointing out broad trends in the responses, and inviting further comment, questions or elaboration from learners on what a learner-centred approach is all about. The selected teachers could explain that different teachers would apply the learner- centred ideas as they saw fit. A summary of the responses for each participant in a particular group should go to the teacher of each group prior to each class.

In class, each teacher could take the approach that suits him or her best. Some already provide a good degree of choice within a class content, others less. The two main options are:

i. **Teacher proceeds on the basis of consultation so far:** The teacher could explain the next step he or she expects to take to put at least some elements into practice. My interviews indicated that many learners would be happy to have this level of consultation without the teacher going on to give them more input.

ii. **Negotiation:** The teacher could negotiate with learners about possible changes. The teacher would need to clarify that there are some parameters that he or she feels comfortable with, but that there is room for some flexibility within these constraints.

f) **Option for first class - questionnaire for first evening of Kura Reo**; The teachers group the learners based on what they already know of the

learners, then give out a simplified questionnaire; each group could discuss the questionnaire, rank items for importance individually, then in groups of three, then in the whole group. The group feedback could circulate with the groups from teacher to teacher, and be available to teachers prior to the class.

g) **In-class negotiation:** Teacher could set aside first thirty minutes for brief mihimihi and for negotiation about how the class will be conducted. **Possible ways to do this**: Teacher gives a proposed outline of the class. Class discuss it, give feedback, class and teacher discuss the feedback, teacher amends as he or she sees fit, or class and teacher negotiate the class.

h) **Negotiating the content/ written material provided:** Learners look over the material that will be dealt with (in class, or prior to the class), give feedback about the level of difficulty, perhaps form small groups within the larger group for dealing with written material, perhaps select parts of the written material to deal with.

i) **Learning activities:** Teachers could check if some learners have specific issues about some learning activities, and modify activities accordingly, even for one or two learners.

10.4.2.2 Partial implementation

It is important to note that Kura Reo teachers are often quite flexible in how they approach classes, and many will already allow some element of choice or negotiation within a class.

a) **Allow one or some teachers to implement**: Some teachers may not agree with the concept; allow those who do to implement in varying degrees, through in-class negotiation about content, deciding how much or how little written material to deal with, or what learning activities should be used (ideally choosing from a list/menu of activities).

b) **Negotiated activities offered in the last hour of class:** Negotiated activities could be confined to a specific time. It would be better near the end.

c) **One aspect only could be open for negotiation:** Learners in a class could be offered options about one aspect of a lesson (choosing content or learning activities, or format for presenting learning).

10.4.3 Informal learning

This section deals with an important but very large topic, informal learning, which is not the primary concern of this thesis. It can therefore only be dealt with briefly here. This form of learning nevertheless offers enormous potential for developing learners' language proficiency.

Informal learning covers access to media, ranging from radio, TV, written media such as newspapers, magazines, collections of short stories, novels and collections of poems; 'teach-yourself-Māori' books and the like could also be considered as informal resources. However, if one were to assemble a list of informal written material available to reo Māori learners that does not have a specific instructional purpose, it would point up the scarcity of such resources (see previous comment on p. 20, Chapter 1, from Benton and Benton, 2001). Only a few adult novels, by Māori writers on Māori themes, have been translated from English into te reo Māori, such as *Muriwhenua* and *Tū* by Patricia Grace and *Te Kaieke Tohorā* (Whale rider) by Witi Ihimaera. One example of a significant non-fiction work, *Toku reo, tōku ohooho* by Chris Winitana, is available in English and te reo Māori, but the Māori version is so difficult that most learners would require some notes or facilitation to make reading it a worthwhile experience. Some novels written specifically for young people are available; one example is *Kāhaki,* by Charisma Rangipunga (Rangipunga, 2012). However, there are very few collections of poetry, and the collections of short stories (such as the 'Huia' selections) are of very uneven literary quality. In fact, reo Māori creative writing courses at university level may focus more on writing waiata or haka than on short stories, novels or poetry, in the belief that these are the most authentically Māori forms of creative language use.

More traditional materials such as mōteatea, pātere, and waiata tawhito continue to exert a strong pull on learners of te reo Māori (this was clearly evident in my research). However there is little material available to facilitate learners' use of these literary works, although one book is available (*Ngā mōteatea : He Kupu Arataki*), which introduces the mōteatea in English and in te reo Māori (McRae & Jacob, 2011). Many contemporary haka and waiata are written, particularly for competitions such as Te Matatini (the national biennial kapa haka competition), and in 20017, the English version of these has been made available; as far as I am aware, however, there is little facilitation available for to help learners come to grips with the reo Māori versions. There is also a significant lack in what are commonly known as 'readers' for adults; these small books or booklets with controlled vocabulary dealing with high interest topics are available for children and young adults, but not for adults. These play a significant role in SLA setting in other languages, but little or no material like this exists for adult learners of te reo Māori. There are a number of items available for children and young people to read, but very little geared to adults and their concerns. In fact, a fairly clear picture emerges that general-interest written material for adults in te reo Māori does not currently seem to be considered important enough to prioritize. Implementation of a genuine learner-centred approach would require addressing this lack of reading material.

Suggestions for implementation

- Find out what adult learners want to have access to in order to encourage their use of te reo Māori; prioritize things that learners say they will use.

- Make facilitation available for media resources that are already readily available. For example, word lists could be provided for TV news programmes such as *Te Kaea*, *Te Karere* and radio programmes such as *Manako*, to help with vocabulary that is likely to be unfamiliar to viewers or listeners, or grammatical constructions that may be new to many.

- Implement a system similar to the system used by Deutsche Welle for German TV and radio media: for example, the news read slowly, along

with a short summary of news items, vocabulary lists, and accompanying questions.

- Provide notes and vocabulary assistance for adult novels that have been translated into te reo Māori. Provide spoken versions of these books that adults can listen to, ideally with vocabulary lists and notes available as well.

- Promote discussion groups/coffee groups/book groups/special interest groups among reo Māori speakers.

- Develop genuinely adult-centred illustrated readers, on issues that affect adults. These could include topics such as politics (Māori, national and international), adult relationships, budgeting, sports or any other aspect that interests adult learners. These could be made available online.

- Actively encourage creative writing; competent practitioners could be contracted to write such material in te reo Māori (with extra facilitative material provided, as far as is possible). Creative writing (particularly in short stories and novels) allows for adults to encounter the sorts of situations they may experience in their own life, while also letting them encounter language that relates in a very direct way to what they may think or say in such situations. Creative writing, particularly with authentic dialogue and authentic situations, allows readers to live vicariously in those situations. Translated material can work very well for this too.

- Encourage schools to allow access for adults to the many resources they may possess and possibly be underutilizing. Many school have a really good supply of attractive illustrated readers available to encourage learners that adults who are learning te reo Māori could possibly access.

- Develop more short courses /resources for special requirements, if requested; for example, many men are required to greet groups in formal situations, and wish to do so in a way that dignifies the occasion, without

trying to pretend to be expert speakers. Courses could be developed, or resources written that address such issues.

- Recruit community leads to organize groups, start Facebook groups, or support learners in their community and in their location.

- Create indexes for such resources as 'Tōku Reo', to enable learners to access the material that suits them best and fits their situation.

- Actively encourage blogging, posting on Facebook and other social media sites.

The key element for learner-centredness is to provide materials that learners want and are genuinely interested in; finding this out would ensure that money spent on developing materials would be used well. These proposals for implementation of a learner-centred approach are wide-ranging, and would require substantial funding. A useful starting point would be to make the most of media that do exist (such as Māori television and iwi radio) through improved facilitation, or through arranging access to resources that mainly sit unused in schools.

10.5 Change could be initiated by learners or teachers

It is also worth pointing out that there is an inherent democratization and empowerment in the idea of learner-centredness, and change in the direction of learner-centredness may well be generated by learners rather than by teachers, or by learners as well as teachers. Nation (2013) encourages learners to be aware of the role they can play in improving their own learning, and requesting some input into the process is one way he suggests (p. 46). Learner-centredness involves a shift or adjustment in mana (power or agency) in favour of the learner, and this shift may well need to be initiated by the learner rather than the teacher. Needless to say, it would ideally be handled with some sensitivity, and awareness that issues of mana need careful handling (Mead, 2003, p. 29) Despite the fact in my interviews that there did not seem to be a substantial groundswell of dissatisfaction with the contexts of reo Māori teaching and learning for adults (although there was certainly some dissatisfaction expressed, particularly with

the university context), a change to a more learner-centred approach may well achieve more traction with learners than teachers. It was also evident during the research project that only those participants—either learners or teachers—who had some involvement as teachers in New Zealand's mainstream education context had any real awareness initially of what learner-centredness involved, so associated ideas may need to be promoted in an accessible way before there is any hope of gaining traction in the context of adults learning te reo Māori.

The unfamiliarity of the concept may also mean that it could require several iterations before a learner-centred approach is instituted successfully in an adult reo-Māori learning context. There are a number of reasons for this. The first is that the concept is unfamiliar to most adult reo Māori learners, who are much more used to deferring to their teachers as the ones who provide what they need. It is also unfamiliar to teachers, who may be suspicious of it or unconvinced of its worth. They may also believe that it would be difficult to implement in an integrated multi-level course, such as university, where the 200-level teacher expects certain areas to be covered at 100 level. Initial attempts to try for a negotiated syllabus, or even to solicit what learners actually want, may well be awkward or uncomfortable at first. Deferential learners may provide minimal information, or it may well prove difficult to work out how to balance different requests for content or learning activities; given the potential difficulties that could arise, it may well take time before the full benefits of a learner-centred approach become evident. Learners also need to be reassured that when teachers ask them what they want to learn or how they want to learn it, this information is really going to put to use and acted upon.

10.6 Suggestions for further research

Since 'finding out about learners' needs, interests and aspirations' and 'basing learning on these things' were so widely affirmed in these interviews, these may well be the ideal place to start for further research on learner-centredness. Firstly, learners' needs, interests and aspirations could be discovered through surveys, focus groups, or interviews, or a combination of these methods; information gained could be compared with whatever the particular learner's current course has to offer. Such investigation on a larger scale could lead to wider changes in how adult reo Māori courses are run,

particularly in terms of content covered. Secondly, small-scale projects could attempt to base learning (to whatever degree was workable) on the expressed wishes of a group of learners, to determine the effect of doing so.

It would also be worthwhile to engage groups of teachers of adult learners of te reo Māori in focus groups, to engage with the concept of learner-centredness, and to explore the extent to which it does or does not fit with tikanga Māori. If a group of such teachers found merit in the ideas, it could lead to efforts to incorporate the ideas in various settings. A similar process could be taken with adult learners whereby they could explore ways to have learner-centred ideas incorporated in their learning.

There is considerable potential for finding out about what learners need and want in terms of informal learning—for example, facilitation of media such as *Te Kāea* or *Te Karere*, or written media. Boosting the availability of such resources may provide significant benefits for adult learners of te reo Māori, but it is important that such resources are wanted and fit in with adult learners lives, or they will remain unused.

Finally, this thesis has promoted a bilingual approach as a learner-centred one, based on the fact that learners' first language is an integral part of them, and is the foundation for any further language learning. The whole area of adopting more bilingual approaches deserves wider consideration and active research; at present, such approaches appear to be rejected beyond the basic levels, and it may prove fruitful to revisit bilingual approaches and explore how they can be incorporated in a way that fits with tikanga Māori, and the prevalent desire to move away from use of English to increased or exclusive use of te reo Māori.

10.7 Conclusion

This thesis has built a provisional case for a more learner-centred approach to adult learning and teaching of te reo Māori; it has done so initially by adopting the rights-based capabilities approach, which focuses on people as individuals and then groups, affirming the importance of individual and collective well-being, the importance of flourishing, and of attaining fully human functioning—insofar as it is desired by the individual. The approach begins unabashedly with the individual, in that it expects

individuals to be treated as an end rather than as a means to the ends of the wider society or culture. It also affirms the dignity of the person. This thesis focuses on this aspect because, at present, it appears that adult second-language learners of te reo Māori appear to be thought of primarily as a means to an end—to make the future generations strong in te reo Māori, or to ensure the survival and health of te reo Māori itself. This thesis asserts instead that treating adults as important is the morally right thing to do, quite apart from the benefits that may eventuate—but also because having adults experience well-being, flourishing, and full functioning in te reo Māori makes the survival and health of te reo Māori more likely to occur.

The thesis has adopted, then adapted, key normative principles of the capabilities approach, as presented by Nussbaum, extrapolating from the relevant principles to fit an educational setting, and the specific setting of adult learning of te reo Māori. In tandem with these adapted principles, the thesis presents key relevant principles of tikanga Māori that need to be complied with to ensure that the analysis proposes changes that are a good fit in a Māori setting—in keeping with Sayer's principle that change in a society should be based on 'immanent' elements rather than on principles based outside the culture.

The literature presents support for several key elements of learner-centredness, but provides only qualified support for other ideas often associated with learner-centredness, such as minimally guided learning, catering to different learning styles, and learners choosing learning activities that work well for them. Despite this, much of the literature on adult education and second-language learning supports a learner-centred approach, while at the same time affirming the importance of the teacher as an instructor, not just as a facilitator of learning.

Once the literature focuses more closely on the situation of adult learners of te reo Māori, it becomes apparent that such learners face substantial issues—identity issues, embarrassment and shyness about using the language, the need for learners to assert agency in their learning situations to overcome belittlement and disempowerment, and the need for a language community to support learners in their journey. Each of these issues is amenable to a learner-centred approach, and to taking learners' needs, wants and interests seriously, and acting on them.

The interviews presented in this thesis have demonstrated that, within this small sample at least, there is considerable support for some aspects of learner-centredness, particularly the idea of finding out about learners' needs, wants, interests and aspirations, and basing learning on these things. Interview participants took a more wary approach to going beyond consultation into negotiation between teacher and learners, and to the idea of more autonomy for learners. On the positive side (as far as agreement with learner-centred ideas goes), the interviews demonstrated that most learners did not see any significant cultural clash between learner-centred ideas and Māori concepts, with several people stating that in fact they believed that learner-centredness fitted particularly well with the idea of the mana of the learner.

The intention of this thesis was to explore learner-centredness in the context of adult learning of te reo Māori. It has done so not only by eliciting learner and teacher responses to learner-centred concepts, but by examining learners' and teachers' experiences in the contexts in which adults learn te reo Māori; readers can thus see for themselves what the strengths and weaknesses of different teaching and learning situations may be, and can evaluate how a learner-centred approach could potentially improve the learning situations. The interviews also showed the minimal extent to which learner-centred ideas were already implemented in adult reo Māori teaching and learning.

The second research question (possible benefits and problems for a more learner-centred approach) attempted to draw together literature on learner-centredness and to reach tentative conclusions on the potential benefits and potential problems that could result from implementing learner-centredness in this context. The first two potential benefits I concluded would eventuate were increased relevance, and a more communicative approach to learning; these are well supported in the interviews and in the literature, and are strongly related. The third potential benefit—a better match of learning activities to learners—emerged to some extent in the comments of interviewees about their learning experience, which showed that ill-suited activities can have a negative effect on learners, and put them off continuing to learn. The fourth potential benefit (stronger engagement through a higher level of mana for learners) features strongly in the literature on adult learning, but less prominently in the interviews. Many participants clearly like the idea of learning being based on their

needs, interests and aspirations, but they did not generally expect a strong level of say in the creation or conduct of courses; only a few participants embraced this idea with enthusiasm. The final potential benefit (more openness to clarification in class) was derived from reports from the interviews that significant negative effects were being experienced from failure to address this need. This potential benefit brings into question the value of the fairly staunch adherence to speaking only te reo Māori in intermediate level classes and beyond; instead, this thesis proposes an approach that acknowledges bilingualism more readily.

There were a number of potential problems that emerged in both the literature and the interviews. There was some concern expressed in the interviews that a learner-centred approach would be impractical or difficult to implement, that individualising programmes could cause fragmentation and lack of continuity, and that implementing learner-centredness could be burdensome for teachers. These potential difficulties are considerable, and are certainly taken seriously in the literature; however, they can be alleviated to some extent by limited or judicious implementation, along with retaining major syllabus elements and texts. This can be done while ensuring that learners can have some influence in making sure the learning is as relevant and appropriate for them as possible. The potential cultural issues—that learner-centredness could conflict with Māori values, and be seen as a non-Māori idea—did not appear to cause particular concern for most of the interviewees. Many of them saw strong elements of learner mana in learner-centred concepts, although most were also concerned to ensure that the mana of teachers was affirmed and maintained as well.

The final chapter shows how learner-centredness could possibly be implemented in three settings: university, Kura Reo, and informal learning. Proposals for the first two settings draw on work in language curriculum design, and particularly work on negotiated curriculum. The suggestions for implementation offer a range of ways to implement learner-centredness to some degree at least, but favour a more principled implementation that involves finding out about learners' needs, wants, interests and aspirations from the learners themselves—through a questionnaire or interview or both—and making a serious attempt to base the learning and teaching activities on what emerges from the learner responses. However, partial implementation may well be the

most workable way to introduce increasingly stronger elements of learner-centredness into adult learning of te reo Māori.

In this final section of the thesis, I return to where I began—with the learners mentioned in the preface. Margaret has briefly experienced a learner-centred approach and appreciated it, and experienced help and support from a range of teaching, especially in Te Ataarangi. Pita found the best place for him to learn at TWoA, where he could take the time to grow as a reo Māori learner. He was sceptical about how practical learner-centredness would be, but acknowledged that basing learning on what learners needed, wanted, and were interested in had potential, and that he would be interested in participating if such a situation was available. Jack too was sceptical about learner-centredness, and strongly resistant to excessive individualising of reo Māori learning; however, he too saw that the ideas had at least some merit, even though he intended to extend his own learning in a more informal manner. The final learner mentioned was myself; I have been exposed to many aspects of learner-centredness in the course of this research, have emerged well aware that it is not a panacea for all the problems of adult learning of te reo Māori, but still convinced that principles I presented to participants in the interviews—finding out about what the learners need, want, are interested in and aspire to, and basing learning on these things—offer a sound and practical, if not always easy, way to increase adult learners' engagement, and to allow them to achieve greater well-being as users of te reo Māori, and to flourish, and function more in a more fully human way as reo Māori speakers.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview questions for learners

Exploring learner-centredness for adults learning te reo Māori

Interview with learners – outline of questions

These questions would form the basis of a semi-structured interview.

Interviewees: adults over 20 who identify as learners of te reo Māori (in either formal or informal settings)

Expected length: 60 – 90 minutes

Introductions (mihimihi)

- Opportunity for two participants to say where they are from and talk about their personal backgrounds

Experience of learning te reo Māori

- Tell me about how you have been learning te reo Māori. How long have you been learning for? What are you currently doing to keep on learning te reo Māori?
- What courses have you taken? When did you do them?
- How much active learning did you do outside class when you were doing a course (hours per week)?
- What did you do to strengthen your learning (for example, watched Māori TV, learned new words, practised with other people)?
- What did you do to learn Māori when you weren't actively involved in a course?
- Did you feel motivated to continue learning te reo Māori when you weren't on a course?
- How important to you is your informal learning (for example, watching Māori TV) compared to your formal, in-class learning?
- How would you rate your ability to speak Māori in everyday situations? (will provide NZ census 2013 scale)

The interviewee's aspirations for learning te reo Māori

- What specific things do you want to learn? Do you feel you have had an opportunity to learn these things? If not, what would have helped you to learn those things?
- How would you rate your motivation to learn te reo Māori (using scale provided)?
- How good are you aiming to get at speaking te reo Māori? What level of proficiency are you aiming for (using scale provided)?

- What things could hold you back in your learning? Which of these things do you have control over, and which do you not have control over? How could you get more control over these things?

The interviewee's level of satisfaction with his/her learning experience in different settings

- How satisfied have you been overall with your reo Māori learning? What aspects did you find most satisfying in your learning experience overall? What aspects did you find least satisfying?
- How satisfied were you with your out-of-class, or informal learning? Which aspects satisfied you the most? Which did you find least satisfying?
- What did you think you needed to learn as a reo Māori learner? How well has your learning met your needs? What aspects best met your needs? What aspects met your needs least well?
- What are the things you are most interested in learning or enthusiastic about learning? How well do you think has your learning so far engaged with your interests and enthusiasms? What changes could be made to your learning to better engage with your interests and enthusiasms?

The extent to which interviewees felt they had autonomy as learners

- To what extent do you feel you have had control over your own learning?

Content

- Have you ever been given a choice about what you would learn (content)? If so, how did that experience work out for you?
- If you were given a choice of the learning content you would like, what would you ask for? How big a gap is there between what you have experienced and what you would really like?

Learning activities

- Have you ever been given a choice about the sort of learning activities you would do? If so, how did that choice work out for you?
- If you were given a choice of the sort of activities you would like, what would you ask for? How big a gap is there between what you have experienced and what you would really like?

Assessment

- Have you ever been given a choice about how you will be assessed? If so, how did that choice work out for you? If you were given a choice of assessment methods, what would you ask for? How big a gap is there between what you have experienced and what you would really like?
- How big a gap is there between what you have experienced in your learning and what you would really like?

Further questions on learner autonomy

- What would constitute an ideal situation for you in terms of autonomy or control over your own learning?
- If you as an adult learner were to have more control or autonomy in classroom learning situation, how well do you think that would fit with Māori values? Would it be disrespectful to the teacher, or inappropriate, or not?

How well the classes suited the learner as an individual

- How relevant was the language you have learned to your everyday life? How relevant to your life were the courses you have taken? What were the most relevant parts? What were the least relevant parts? What could have made the classes more relevant?
- How well did the pace of the class/classes suit you (as an individual)? Was there allowance for different people working at different speeds?
- How well did the learning activities suit you (as an individual)? Did you feel comfortable doing them? Which learning activities did you like? Which learning activities did you not like? Was there any opportunity for you to express how you felt about the learning activities?
- How were you assessed in your formal learning (in class or coursework)? How did you feel about the type of assessment you did? Did the assessment activities suit you? Was there any opportunity to make your feelings about assessment activities known?

Whether or not the learner's identity as an individual was affirmed

- Did you feel that your identity as an individual was affirmed? Did you feel accepted for who and what you are? If not, what was your experience?

Facilitator or instructor – the role of the teacher

- If you had to put your teacher on a scale of a facilitator of learning at one end, and an instructor or deliverer of content at the other, where would you put them? Which style of teaching do you prefer? What is the reason for your preference?
- If it was suggested that the language teacher should mainly be a facilitator of learning rather than an instructor, would that seem disrespectful or inappropriate to you? Do you think it is culturally "tika" (right, or proper) to expect a teacher to be facilitator of learning?

Things that would help informal learning (learning outside a class or course)

- What would help you to learn better in your informal learning?
- What resources would be most useful to you as an individual?
- What print media resources would help you most in your informal learning?
- What digital media (audio/video/games) would help you most in your informal learning?

Response to learner-centredness overall as a learning concept

- Have you heard of learner-centredness?   What does the term mean to you? Do you feel your learning has been learner-centred (by whatever definition you choose)? In what way has your learning been learner-centred?

Here are some key elements in a learner-centred model of learning:

(will be placed on a card for the participant to look at)

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*
- *Basing learning on these things*
- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content, learning activities and assessment*
- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*
- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

- What is your overall response to this combination of ideas?
- What effect do you think these principles would have on your personal reo Māori learning?
- Do you think that learner-centredness should have a bigger role in adult reo Māori learning? Do you think this would be a desirable change?
- How feasible would it be implement greater learner-centredness (e.g. finding out more about what learners want and need, their preferred learning activities, etc.)? Would the result be worth the extra effort for the teacher and/or learning institution?
- Do you feel that your learning has been influenced by any of these elements?

Wrapping up

- Do you have any final thoughts on this topic? How would you sum up your thoughts on the idea of learner-centredness? How would you sum up your thoughts on how it might or might not be suitable for a reo Māori learning situation?

Final mihi (greetings and acknowledgments)

Appendix B: Interview questions for teachers

Exploring learner-centredness for adults learning te reo Māori

Interview with teachers of adults learning te reo Māori

These questions would form the basis of a semi-structured interview.

Expected length: 60 – 90 minutes

Introductions (mihimihi)

- Opportunity for two participants to say where they are from and talk about their backgrounds

The teacher's experience of learning te reo Māori

- Tell me about your own experience of learning te reo Māori. How did you learn? How long have you been learning?
- How do you maintain or improve your reo? In what contexts do you use te reo Māori? How would you rate your ability to speak Māori in everyday conversation? (provide scale from 2013 census)
- How important has formal learning been in your learning of te reo Māori? How important has out-of-class (informal) learning been?
- How satisfied were you with your own learning experience in different settings (specify these)? How well has your learning met your needs? How well has your learning engaged with your interests and enthusiasms? How well has it met your expectations?

The teacher's experience as a teacher

- Tell me about your experience as a teacher. Where have you taught? What training did you receive? What professional development have you received? What are the main influences on the way you teach? What resources do you use? What technology do you use?
- How much do you generally know about your students before you start a course? Are you satisfied that you know enough about students before you start a course, or would you prefer to know more?
- What do you think about the principle that learning should be based on the "needs, aspirations, interests and enthusiasms" of the learners? Do you think it is necessary to actually find these out, or do you believe that an assumption that most learners' needs will be similar is more practical?

-
Giving choices in teaching situations

General

- Have you ever consulted with learners or negotiated with learners in your teaching about aspects such as content, learning activities, and assessment? Can you give examples of this sort of consultation or negotiation?

Content

- Have you ever given learners in your course/courses any choices about content they will learn? If so, how did it work in practice?
- What do you think about the principle that learners should have more say in what they learn? What are the positives and negatives that you can see in this idea? Do you think it could work in practice?

Learning activities

- Have you ever given them choices about the learning activities you will use? If so, how did it work in practice?
- What do you think about the learner-centred principle that learners should have more say in the learning activities that are used? What are the positives and negatives that you can see in this idea? Do you think it could work in practice?

Assessment

- Have you (or your organisation) ever given them choices about how they will be assessed? If so, how did it work in practice?
- What do you think about the learner-centred principle that learners should have more say in how they are assessed? What are the positives and negatives that you can see in this idea? Do you think it could work in practice?

The extent to which the course/courses fit the learners

- How relevant do you think your course was to the learners' lives? Which elements of the course seemed most relevant? Which seemed least relevant?
- How well do you think the course suited the learners as individuals?
- How well did your course provide a context where learners could work at their own pace?
- How well do you think your course affirmed the learners' identities as individuals? Do you think this is an important aspect, or do you think it is more important that they fit in with the class culture, and Māori culture in general?

Facilitator role of the teacher

- If you think about your own teaching along a scale with "facilitator of learning" at one end and "dispenser of knowledge" at the other, where would you fit along this scale?
- Do you find yourself shifting along this scale in your teaching? Why do you think you are where you are on this scale? What factors have led to this?

- What do you think of the learner-centred principle that a teacher should be mainly a facilitator of learning? What are the possible problems with this principle in your teaching situation?

Here are some key elements in a learner-centred model of learning:

(will be placed on a card for the participant to look at)

- *Finding out the needs, interests and aspirations (hopes and aims) of the learner*
- *Basing learning on these things*
- *The teacher consults or actively negotiates with learners on course content, learning activities and assessment*
- *Teacher's main role is facilitator of learning rather than dispenser of knowledge*
- *Fairly high level of learner autonomy (control over their own learning)*

- What is your overall response to this combination of ideas?
- Do you think that learner-centredness should have a bigger role in adult reo Māori learning? Do you think this would be a desirable change?
- How feasible would it be to implement greater learner-centredness (e.g. finding out more about what learners want and need, their preferred learning activities, etc.)? Would the result be worth the extra effort?

How learner-centredness would fit in a Māori setting

- How well does learner-centredness (as you understand it) fit culturally in a Māori setting? Which aspects would be problematic? Which aspects could possibly fit?

Learner-centredness in informal setting

- What do you think are the main things that would help learners in an informal setting (outside the classroom)?
- How can these things best be made available for learners?

Wrapping up

- Do you have any final thoughts on this topic? How would you sum up your thoughts on the idea of learner-centredness? How would you sum up your thoughts on how it might or might not be suitable for a reo Māori learning situation?

Final mihi (greetings and acknowledgments)

Appendix C: Advertisement for research project

UNIVERSITY
of
OTAGO

Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo
NEW ZEALAND

Exploring learner-centredness for adults learning te reo Māori

A research study for a PhD project at The University of Otago

I am exploring how a concept called **learner-centredness** can be applied in the context of adult learning of te reo Māori. **Learner-centredness involves focusing on the learners' needs, capabilities and interests, and shaping the learning experience to fit these things**. I want to explore this concept with a number of adult reo Māori learners and teachers, to understand how a stronger degree of learner-centredness could be introduced to adult Māori language learning in a culturally appropriate way.

I would like to interview **adults over 20 who consider themselves to be learning te reo Māori**. They do not need to be currently involved in a Māori language course, but they do need to have done some formal reo Māori learning as an adult. I want to find out about their language learning experience, and their response to some learner-centred ideas. They do not need to know anything about learner-centredness to be interviewed.

I would also like to interview **teachers of adults who are learning te reo Māori** to find out about their teaching and learning experience, and their response to learner-centred ideas. They do not need to know anything about learner-centredness to be interviewed.

 Each interview will take 60-90 minutes, whether in a group or individual setting.

For more details, contact:
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[This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics

Committee. Reference: 14/213]

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