

Relational and Culturally Responsive approaches to learning and literacy



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Overview

- Focus is on Māori, as Māori
- Learnings from my mokopuna
- Some questions to consider about knowledge and pedagogy
- *Whānau-type* relationships, a platform for one's learning trajectory and identity as a learner
- Ako: When things go right
- Relational and culturally responsive approaches
- Ako: When the *magic* doesn't happen
- Links to research
- Consider implications as a framework for learning and literacy in your own settings
- Conclusion

Education is the opening of identities

1. The deficit resides within the child and their families

2. The importance of the relationships and interactions between students and teachers

What are the implications for literacy learning?

Cultural toolkit Bruner 1996

- How do whānau-type relationships influence learning?
- How do we understand culture / knowledge?
- How do we understand pedagogy?
- Is literacy learning top down or bottom up?
- Or is it and, and?



What are the implications for literacy learning?

(hooks, 1994) Power must be collectively directed in different ways in order to expand the possibilities of how students and teachers come to know and work in their worlds when teachers invite/listen/learn from their students and students take responsibility to be “equally committed to creating a learning context” (p. 153).

**Ako: creating
relational,
responsive, dialogic
teaching and
learning spaces**



And when does this begin to happen...

“assat?”

“Listen nani she hasn’t got all the words yet but she’s got the tune.”

**Ako: creating
relational,
responsive,
dialogic teaching
and learning
spaces**



Start young, talk, enjoy the magic of words in many forms and languages



Model what you want and make it accessible



Make it an everyday event, a little bit often...



**...and soon meaningful reading begins
to emerge**





**those
little
marks
will be
under-
stood as
stories
to be
told...**

**While relationships are central to learning,
learning does not happen in a vacuum.**



Relational and culturally responsive pedagogy

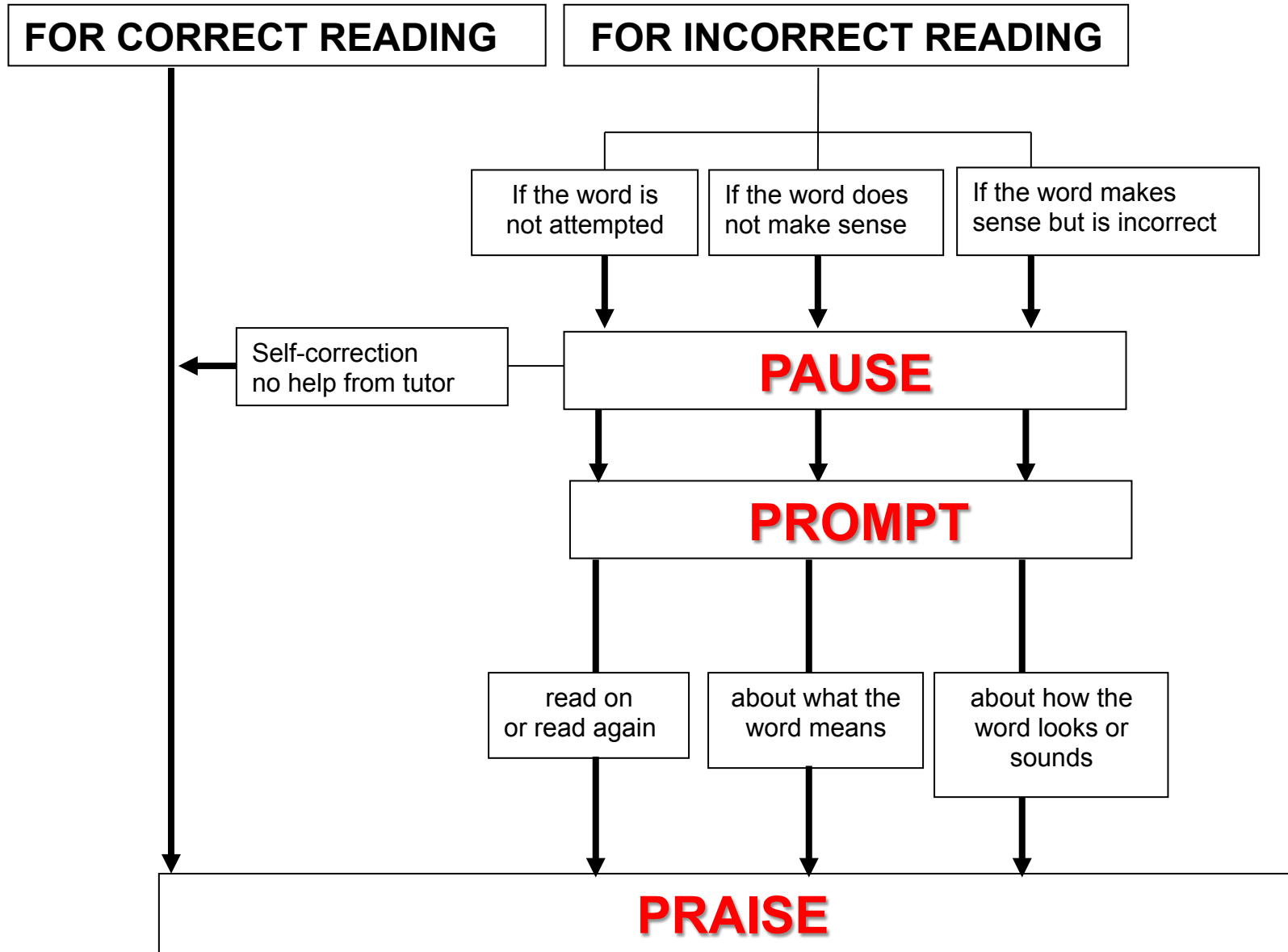
This is accomplished when:

- people are *relationally connected*;
- there is a common vision of what constitutes educational excellence;
- learners can be more self determining in their learning;
- pedagogy is interactive and dialogic;
- knowledge can be actively co-constructed; and
- the cultural experiences of all participants have validity.

But sometimes the magic doesn't happen, so what then?



Pause Prompt Praise



Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi



Research whānau of interest



Te Ao Pākehā

Personal relationships of trust and respect

- manaakitanga
- mana motuhake

school whānau

child

Whanaungatanga

Researchers seek to develop relationships with the school whānau and community in ways that are culturally appropriate and culturally responsive.

research whānau

Te Ao Māori



Learning from cultural contexts

Whānau-like, Whanaungatanga

“You know that something’s gone wrong in that term when you go to a hui and you find that perhaps two hours goes and they’re still doing whakawhanaungatanga, they’re still going round. And you know that there’s been a big change in yourself when you think yeah, that’s okay...in that last half hour it all comes together ... But I can still see colleagues of mine getting more and more anxious ... we’re still telling stories...when are we going to start? ...and you realise of course, it has already started.”

Ted Glynn cited in *Module 8:Connecting with Māori whānau and communities*. p. 13 - 14

Whanaungatanga is the intervention

“I remember a woman saying once, whanaungatanga, that making connections, whanaungatanga is the intervention. If you do that right everything else will follow on and I still believe that. You build a relationship of trust with the community. If they are able to determine, from their own perspective, I would never go into a Māori community or a school for that matter and say this is what I want you to do. What I would try to do... is say this is who I am... and sometimes I get frustrated because this is who I am, that conversation takes a long time. It takes time over days. This is who I am. This is what I have to offer. How can we work together? So it is absolutely about letting schools and communities determine how they will participate and not trying to dictate to schools, dictate to communities how you want them to participate.”

How do you begin the relationship?

Identify who you are not what you are

“Māori communities want to know who I am, not what I am. They want to know what is my iwi? What do I bring to the whānau context? Am I a parent, am I a grandparent **or am I a cussie-sister?** They want to connect at a personal level so that they can start building some trust with me.”

Ministry of Education. (2010). High-Impact R&D BES Spotlights. Michael Deaker chats with Dr Mere Berryman. Iterative BEST Evidence Synthesis (BES) Programme. University of Otago (Available in the e-community)

Within a western paradigm the professional and personal are generally kept separate.

What kind of interactions make a difference?

Listen to communities

“ You learn more by being silent and listening than you do by speaking and the irony is that if you listen hard you find you can speak more. So many pākehā I know ... rather than listening they’re expecting to speak because of who they are or because of their job or status.”

Ted Glynn cited in *Module 8: Connecting with Māori whānau and communities*. p. 14

To what extent is ‘listening’ currently a feature of your relationships with Māori? What implications does this suggest?

Returning to culturally responsive Pedagogy of relations for some critical considerations

- People are *connected* through whānau-like relationships of respect and trust
- There is a common vision of what excellence is and how we can and will contribute.
- Power is shared so that learners feel able to be and can be more self determining.
- Pedagogy is often interactive and dialogic and knowledge is actively co-constructed.
- The cultural experiences of all have validity.

Consider how these principles play out in your current relationships and interactions when engaging with Māori.

How is power shared between self-determining individuals within non-dominating relations of interdependence?

In your work, how do you demonstrate to Māori whose cultural toolkit counts?

In what ways is learning (between yourself and Māori whānau and community) interactive, dialogic and spiralling?

How do people feel (e.g. schools and Māori whānau and community) connected to one another?

What is the common vision for what constitutes educational excellence?

**Some
Critical
Consider-
ations**

Working together can make a significant difference

This can occur:

- When schools support parents (or not) to support their child's learning through programmes that are designed to develop specific skills (for example, the skills that promote reading and language development).
- Professionals, family, whānau and community members are taught to use smart tools, are monitored, and given feedback. Evaluations like this help the researchers refine the tools and ensure that the accompanying processes support effective, independent use of the tools at home and at school.

What we have learned from research with schools?

Māori parents engage in schools in settings where their children are successful (kapahaka and sport). Therefore, schools need to ensure classrooms reflect successful contexts for Māori children as this will encourage parental engagement.

To maximise the relationship between schools and Māori families, Māori families need to be part of determining the relationship, part of the power-base. Changing the fabric of society is hard.

Historically mainstream schools have defined how Māori parents and whanāu can and will participate and the whanāu themselves have not been allowed to determine *on their own terms* how they can and will contribute within schools.

Schools need to provide spaces (metaphorical and physical) that allow whānau and the school to talk together and work together for the benefit of Māori students.

The creation of such spaces can be mutually beneficial. School leaders and teachers can be informed about the community in which they serve and they can also have access to a body of knowledge within the Māori community that has been traditionally 'untapped'.

The spaces also present an opportunity for the school to build the capacity of the Māori community to contribute to learning and the capacity of schools to learn from the Māori community.

The spaces need to reflect a context that say to whānau – “you belong here, we want you here, we have some knowledge, we recognise that you have knowledge too and by working together we can be much more powerful”.

To conclude

It is important to understand and respect the practices, images and metaphors of our learners.

It is from this position that relationships and outcomes can be more holistic and focused on power sharing, agency, collaboration and well being.

By seeking to participate within the cultural experiences and sense making of our learners we can all have more meaningful experiences, valid questions and more legitimate concerns.

**We all have a part to play, together
we can make it happen**

