

# **Review of the Literature on Speaking and Listening Skills**

Report to the Ministry of Education

(Aotearoa New Zealand)

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Aotearoa New Zealand's changing ākonga population**

- Aotearoa New Zealand has experienced a changing ākonga population, including growth in Asian and Pacific ākonga and a decrease in Pākehā ākonga in English-medium education.
- Most Māori ākonga attend English-medium schools and this number has increased over the past 10 years.
- Aotearoa New Zealand has a high quality but low equity education system, which means that educational disparities exist, especially for Māori and Pacific ākonga. Data indicates that these disparities are pervasive, which means changes within our education system are required.
- Policies and strategies aimed to address educational disparities for Māori are not effective because they are implemented within colonial practices, which ignores the role of culture, language and identity in teaching and learning; thus, they are not equitable, nor inclusive.
- Policies aimed to address educational disparities for Pacific ākonga need to acknowledge the role of L1 in the development of English.
- Success for Māori as Māori requires transforming current approaches to teaching and learning to explicitly include identity, culture, and language.

### **The importance of listening and speaking**

- Listening and speaking skills are fundamental to engaging within and across the New Zealand Curriculum, including the development of key competencies and the reciprocal use of these competencies to foster learning.
- The development of oral language skills that includes listening and speaking skills, holds a reciprocal relationship with literacy development and academic achievement; however, these effects are variable and can be influenced by:
  - Listening and speaking experiences within early childhood, including the use of verbal and non-verbal behaviours and the influence of cultural practices and norms.
  - SES and family, social, and environmental risk factors.
- These factors, among others, are why tamariki have been identified as entering formal schooling with lower oral language skills; however, less than 40% of teachers appear to measure oral language or listening and speaking skills at school entry.
- Developing listening and speaking skills within English-medium educational contexts is influenced by teacher factors and ākonga factors, including:

- Teacher beliefs around the development of listening and speaking skills in ākonga.
  - Teacher perceptions of ākonga and their language proficiency.
  - Teacher understandings of the development of listening and speaking skills.
  - The ability of teachers to be linguistically responsive to ākonga and to provide high quality interactions through explicit teaching approaches and pedagogical practices that provide opportunities for ākonga to foster listening and speaking skills.
  - Ākonga confidence in developing listening and speaking skills in ākonga, understanding of learning content, interest levels, and responsive pedagogies that reflect culture, language, and identity.
- Current worldwide circumstances (Covid-19) appear to be exacerbating OL differences in ākonga, although there is little research in Aotearoa New Zealand that explicitly addresses this. The reasons are complex, but lockdown has differential effects for ākonga.
  - While listening and speaking skills are fundamental to literacy development across the learning pathway, they receive little recognition within Ministry of Education texts used by teachers.

### **Indigenous knowledge systems, language, and literacy**

- Indigenous knowledge systems, including those of Māori and Pacific peoples, are embedded in oral and narrative structures that are tangible and intangible.
- Indigenous knowledge systems develop through experience within social and intergenerational contexts, are multimodal in form, and are inextricably linked with whenua.
- Oral language and literacy are fundamental to the success of Māori, but colonial practices within English-medium classrooms are often monolingual, focus on narrow curriculum areas, and fail to recognise the repositories of Māori knowledge and other Indigenous knowledges, including Pacific that could be used to develop listening and speaking skills in ākonga.
- Pacific ākonga also experience a gap between school and home language gap, with little authentic recognition of bilingualism and L1 in English-medium classrooms.
- Cultural relationships and the understanding of these relationships are fundamental to developing responsive pedagogies for Māori and Pacific ākonga and should include multimodal forms of learning.

- It is imperative to understand the influence of teaching approaches and pedagogical tools on the development of listening and speaking skills in Māori and Pacific ākonga and to identify the conditions that foster learning for these ākonga.

### **The importance of speaking and listening skills**

- Key reasons to focus on the development of listening and speaking skills include:
  - Listening skills are the foundation of speaking skills and literacy development; however, educational contexts tend to place little emphasis on listening skills, instead emphasising speaking skills in both teaching and assessment.
  - Proficient listening skills foster the development of speaking skills. Listening skills require ākonga to demonstrate inhibitory control, theory of mind, and comprehension monitoring. Some ākonga will require additional support to develop listening skills.
  - Proficient listening and speaking skills have far transfer effects beyond academic achievement for ākonga, including the development of key competencies, psychosocial development, and wellbeing across the lifespan.
  - Listening and speaking skills foster ākonga ability to resolve conflict, negotiate, and relate to others. This is fundamental given that developing wellbeing in our young is a national strategy and a central tenet within schools.
- Listening and speaking skills develop in complexity, which means they should be explicitly into teaching and learning programmes across the learning pathway.
- Listening and speaking skills are not homogeneous but include diverse types that are used for varying purposes, including informative, interpretive, practical/procedural, relational, and critical.
- The development of typologies of listening skills supports the development of diverse types of speaking skills, which can be applied to developing literacy skills.
- Developing listening and speaking skills requires teachers and ākonga to understand the actions of the sender and receiver, which include verbal and non-verbal behaviours.
- The development of listening and speaking skills is influenced by the dialogue that occurs within schooling contexts. While monologic and dialogic discourses are both important within education, it is the abilities of teachers to respond to ākonga utterances that is fundamental to establishing extended interactions within dialogue within the classroom setting.
- Dialogue and conversations are not synonymous. Dialogue is goal oriented and purposeful.

- Dialogue is often viewed as a key teaching tool in education but not all patterns of communication are equally effective.
- There is a need to identify teaching approaches and pedagogical tools to develop dialogue within educational settings that fosters the development of listening and speaking skills in ākonga.

### **Effective features of teaching approaches**

- There is scant literature available that directly outlined how to develop listening and speaking skills within teaching approaches. The most effective teaching approaches in developing listening and speaking skills are those underpinned by dialogue and dialogic talk.
- Research suggests that highly structured programmes are unlikely to foster listening and speaking skills in ākonga, even if teacher-ākonga interactions increase. Highly structured programmes in one learning area can also have negative effects on listening and speaking skills in other learning areas.
- Digital technology has expanded how dialogue is conceptualised. Digital technology fosters listening and speaking skills through joint attention and multiple modalities; however, access to digital technology is influenced by availability and teacher and ākonga ability.
- Digital technology enables multimodal learning including visual, auditory, and text-based functions that provides conditions for developing listening and speaking skills, when used within interactive spaces. Digital technology support inclusive practices for diverse groups of ākonga.
- Dialogue is underpinned by turn taking skills. It is fundamental that ākonga can effectively use turn taking skills to engage in interactions. Turn taking includes verbal and non-verbal behaviours such as grammar, pragmatics, and prosody. Turn taking requires that ākonga can comprehend the speaker's message, which suggests that thinking time is important. The development of turn taking skills requires explicit support from teachers to develop extended interactions that foster listening and speaking skills.
- Dialogic talk is supported by topics or areas of inquiry that promote joint attention and the bridging of background knowledge with new understandings or knowledge.
- Ensuring ākonga hold background knowledge is fundamental to ākonga engaging in listening and speaking interactions.
- Developing extended interactions can be supported by talking frames, and local ground rules; however, these need to be responsive to the backgrounds of the diverse population of ākonga within a classroom.
- Teachers require knowledge of effective teaching approaches to foster the development of proficient listening and speaking skills, which enable the transformation of strategies into tools for their own teaching and learning contexts. This must acknowledge the backgrounds of teachers and ākonga including culture, identity, and language.

- Teachers require the ability to plan, model, and provide feedback to ākonga. This is best supported within authentic teaching and learning contexts.
- On-going professional development that includes coaching is likely to be the most effective approach in fostering teachers' skills, abilities, and knowledge, in relation to developing listening and speaking skills. Theoretical understandings may be developed within initial teacher education courses, depending upon existing constraints.



## **Aotearoa New Zealand's changing ākonga population in education**

Over the past 10 years, Aotearoa New Zealand's education system has experienced changes in ākonga population. Enrolment data, collected by the Ministry of Education (2021a), indicates that the number of ākonga within our education system has increased, from slightly over 760 000 to over 820 000. In addition to increasing numbers of ākonga, there is evidence of growing cultural and linguistic diversity. In 2011, there were around 72 000 ākonga who identified as Asian; in 2020 there were around 116 000. Numbers of Pacific ākonga have also increased over this period, albeit at a slower rate, from just under 75 000 to around 80 000. Māori ākonga have increased significantly from around 171 000 to over 200 000, while enrolments of European/Pākehā ākonga have decreased from around 415 000 to slightly under 390 000 ākonga. The majority of ākonga in New Zealand attend English-medium education. Few European/Pākehā ākonga are recorded as attending kura kaupapa Māori, although this number has doubled in the past 10 years. The number of Māori ākonga attending designated character schools has nearly tripled over the last 10 years, and numbers of Māori ākonga attending kura kaupapa Māori have steadily increased, from around 6100 in 2010 to 8200 in 2020. However, most Māori ākonga attend English-medium educational contexts and this number is steadily increasing from around 163 000 in 2010 to around 185 000 in 2020.

It is fundamental that educators can meet the needs of our changing population of ākonga. The New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2015) is inclusive of *all* ākonga within English-medium state schools. As such, educational environments and teaching and learning programmes within these environments must be inclusive to ensure equity outcomes for all (Ayala et al., 2012). However, equity is a complex and contentious issue in Aotearoa New Zealand. Aotearoa New Zealand is noted to have a high quality but low equity education system, which has resulted in groups of ākonga who are consistently being underserved (Berryman et al., 2017). Educational disparities between groups of ākonga within English-medium education have been evident over time, and continue today (Berryman et al., 2017).

One group of underserved ākonga are Māori, our indigenous peoples. Data demonstrates the disparities between Māori and Pākehā learners. Ministry of Education data from 2019 indicates that Māori males experience stand-downs at around twice the rate of Pākehā males (65 versus 37.7 per 1000 cases), while Māori females experience stand-downs at nearly three times the rate of Pākehā females (31.5 to 10.6 per 1000 cases) (Ministry of Education, 2021b). Data is similar for another group of underserved learners, Pacific ākonga. Pacific males are stood down more frequently than Pākehā males (48.1 versus 37.7 per 1000 cases), while Pacific females experience stand-down rates nearly double of Pākehā females (20.2 versus 10.6 per 1000 cases). Disparities are also evident in educational achievement data for school leavers with NCEA Level 3 or UE standards (Ministry of Education, 2021c). Data from 2020 identified that 40.3% of Māori ākonga left school with Level 3 or UE standards, in comparison to 55.8% Pacific ākonga, 60.4% European/Pākehā, and 81.3% of Asian ākonga. While rates have increased over the 2010-2020 period (29.4% for Pacific ākonga and 18.9% for Māori ākonga), there remains a significant achievement gap for Māori ākonga (Ministry of Education, 2021c), which can have negative effects on future pathways (Berryman et al., 2017).

Although policies, such as Ka Hikitia and Te Hurihanganui, have been developed to address educational disparities for Māori ākonga, and although the New Zealand Curriculum outlines success for all ākonga, little progress has been made in this area. What has precluded advances from being made is that issues around disparities often continue to be made within a framework of colonial practices that place authority and power within those who are privileged over less privileged groups (Berryman et al., 2017; Bishop et al., 2014). Bishop et al. (2014) and Skerrett (2020) argue that policies also fail to ignore on-going issues of systemic racism, while failing to account for rangatiratanga of Māori. Therefore, systemic change in terms of whole school reforms has been advocated, which includes school culture and leadership, as well as classroom pedagogy (Berryman & Eley, 2017; Berryman et al., 2017). For many Māori ākonga their success is being measured through assimilation into English-medium contexts. However, this overlooks Indigenous knowledge systems and how they can positively contribute to schooling practices (Hare, 2011). Success for Māori requires transforming current approaches to teaching and learning to account for Māori knowledge systems and their identity, culture, and language (Berryman et al., 2017; Skerrett, 2020), which is influential to engagement (Bishop et al., 2007), wellbeing (Skerrett, 2020), and identity development (Hare, 2011). Interestingly, these aspects are key objectives underpinning the Ka Hikitia 30-year vision for Māori enjoying and experiencing academic success in New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2021d). However, success requires Māori to have rangatiratanga (self-determination) in the education of their tamariki. Notably, this requires a shift from kāwanatanga (representing Crown governance) being dominant to a liminal space where guidance over the shared concern includes rangatiratanga and kāwanatanga, thus adhering to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (Charters et al., 2019), of which Aotearoa New Zealand became a signatory in 2010.

### **A Background to Listening and Speaking**

The centrality of language to learning with the New Zealand Curriculum, means that the development of skills within the English learning area is essential for tamariki to experience success within and across the curriculum. The Ministry of Education (2015, p.18) states that “by engaging with text-based activities, students become increasingly skilled and sophisticated speakers and listeners.” Thus, speaking and listening skills are fundamental to engagement and success not only within the English learning area but in all learning areas, across the learning pathway. These skills are also crucial to tamariki participating within the wider educational system and contributing to and participating in Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond.

Speaking and listening are contained within the English learning area within two interrelated strands. The strands include oral, written, and visual forms of language and are related to making or creating meaning, which increases in depth and sophistication across the learning pathway through the continued development of skills. Achievement objectives outline learning processes, knowledge, and skills that are aligned to ensure that the learning needs of tamariki are met; however, beyond reference to the connections between oral, visual, and written language and the use of oral language for effect and later to sustain interest (Ministry of Education, 2015), there is little explicit reference to how speaking and listening

develops. This may reflect the notion that texts are synonymous with written language, which is highly valued within Western culture (Ritchie & Rau, 2008). Listening and speaking have a clear role across all learning areas within curriculum with each learning containing their own language or languages, which requires teachers to support the development of listening and speaking skills. Some groups are noted as requiring additional support in their learning, including English Language Learners (ELL) and tamariki new to English-medium contexts. This support is fundamental to ensuring that the vision for our tamariki as lifelong learners, who are confident, connected, and actively involved is met (Ministry of Education, 2015).

Speaking and listening are also inherent within the key competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum and are viewed as fundamental to all learning. The key competencies include thinking, using language, symbols, and texts, managing self, relating to others, and participating and contributing (Ministry of Education, 2015, p.12). The development of key competencies is reciprocal in nature. Successful learners develop and use competencies along with other resources, within the social domain, which over time, contributes to the continued fostering of competencies alongside other goals (Ministry of Education, 2015). Thus, proficiency in listening and speaking skills is fundamental to tamariki not only developing key competencies, such as thinking, managing self, and relating to others, but also to tamariki using these key competencies to accomplish other learning goals.

### **Oral Language and Literacy Development**

The development of oral language (OL) that includes listening and speaking skills is well recognised as fundamental to the success of children within the educational system, as well as across the lifespan (Dobinson & Dockrell, 2021). The differential influence of OL skills on outcomes for tamariki is clear within literature. Tamariki who experience difficulties in the development of OL skills are likely to demonstrate lower levels of academic achievement at school (Jalonga, 2008); whereas proficient OL skills are positively associated with academic achievement (Snow, 2016). The association between academic achievement and OL is due to the critical association between OL and the development of literacy skills, including reading and writing. Lonigan and Shanahan (2013) reported a strong predictive association between OL and early decoding skills and later reading comprehension. Justice et al., (2013) found that tamariki at Grade 5 (Year 6) identified as poor comprehenders demonstrated poorer language comprehension and production skills across early childhood, in comparison to tamariki with typically developing reading comprehension skills or poor decoders. OL skills influence the ability of tamariki to decode and make meaning of texts, which increase in complexity over the learning pathway (Shanahan & Lonigan, 2020). The development of OL skills is fundamental to ākonga experiencing success within and across the curriculum due to its association with reading and writing skills. According to Carter and Hopkins (2020, p.4) this means “educators must understand oral language and know how to support and promote the acquisition of oral language skills for all students.”

The link between OL and literacy development is recognised within national literacy documents. However, these texts contain a clear emphasis on the development of reading and writing skills over OL. Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4 focuses on teaching ākonga

reading and writing skills and although they draw attention to the role of OL in underpinning written language skills, there is an obvious lack of how to develop listening and speaking skills in ākonga beyond practising OL across the school, home, and community contexts (Ministry of Education, 2003). The Ministry of Education (2003) explicitly states that educators should not delay reading and writing instruction until strong OL has developed. However, this is debatable given the link between OL skills and literacy development. Such statements may have also contributed to misconceptions that listening and speaking skills are of little importance to literacy development and that there was no need to incorporate explicit instruction of these skills within teaching and learning programmes. This viewpoint directly contrasts the importance of listening and speaking in the development of te reo Māori within English-medium classrooms, where initially reading and writing skills are not an explicit focus (Ministry of Education, 2011). The importance of OL skills is inferred within Effective Literacy Strategies in Years 9 to 13, with the Ministry of Education (2004) stating that “literacy teaching is just as important for academic success in year 13 as it is in year 9” (p. 7). However, within this text, OL appears to be primarily viewed as an outcome of reading and writing skills, “so they can translate written language into spoken language and vice versa” (Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 53) or a means to introduce ākonga to types of new types of texts, text structures, and content vocabulary, rather than a set of skills that requires explicit instruction within the secondary years.

The effects of OL on the development of literacy skills is variable. International research indicates variation in the incidence of language difficulties in tamariki. In the United Kingdom (UK) incidence rates range from 7.56 per cent of tamariki demonstrating language difficulties of an unknown origin (Norbury et al., 2016), to 40 per cent (Law et al., 2009). Language difficulties in childhood has been identified as a significant risk of literacy difficulties in adulthood (Law et al., 2009), although this appears to be influenced by multiple factors. Tamariki who have developed OL prior to school entry, have been found to hold a working vocabulary over 50% greater than tamariki with lower developed OL skills (Van Hees, 2011). Outcomes are worse for some tamariki, including those from areas of low socio-economic status (SES) (Hoff, 2006) and high deprivation (Dobinson & Dockrell, 2021), who are likely to experience additional challenges to OL development and learning due to poverty (Wamba, 2010), family and social risk factors (Foster et al., 2005), or environmental effects, such as earthquakes (Gomez & Yoshikawa, 2017).

The influence of SES (socio-economic status) on oral language development is well documented within literature. Seminal research by Hart and Risley (1995) found that tamariki of lower SES parents were exposed to significantly fewer words than tamariki of high SES parents, resulting in significant differences in cumulative vocabulary sizes by three years of age. There was also noted variation in the type of language heard between high and low SES tamariki, which illustrated differential interaction types. However, variation in the type of language experiences provided by mothers has also been identified in research examining interaction types between high SES mothers, due to the influence of contextual factors (Hoff-Ginsberg, 1991, 1998). Interestingly, non-verbal behaviours have also been identified in research as influential to oral language development. Rowe & Goldin-Meadow, 2009a found

that the use of gesture within early childhood within different SES groups that either increased or decreased meaning within communicative interactions, was influential to later linguistic development, including vocabulary development. They also found that gestures used within early childhood that carried different meanings, known as gesture vocabulary, was predictive of later verbal vocabulary size (Rowe & Goldin-Meadow, 2009b). These findings highlight the role of non-verbal behaviours in the development of language and communication, while also highlighting the complexity of language development that is influenced by multiple factors that includes culture, context, and setting.

Data from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS, 2016), which measures trends in reading achievement in ākonga across five yearly cycles over approximately 50 countries, has identified that literacy skills at school entry vary; however, the influence of education systems makes between-country comparisons difficult (Chamberlain, 2019). Data gathered from school principals in Aotearoa New Zealand reported that 44% of schools had less than 25% of tamariki enter formal education with early literacy skills, while only 5% of schools had more than 75 % of tamariki enter with early literacy skills (Chamberlain, 2019). Levels of early literacy skills in Aotearoa New Zealand were well below the data reported from other countries, except for Australia (Chamberlain, 2019). Low levels of literacy at school entry may be partially accounted for by low levels of OL, as identified in recent research by Gillon and colleagues (2019). They reported that in a sample of 247 tamariki from seven primary schools in Christchurch, 61.5 percent ( $n = 152$ ) of ākonga held low OL skills. Although caution is required in generalising this research, due to environmental effects that include the on-going effects of the Canterbury earthquake sequence, the data suggests that a high percentage of ākonga may be experiencing difficulties in their literacy development, due to low OL skills. This aligns with other reports, such as Van Hees (2011), who noted increasing numbers of young ākonga (5 and 6 years of age) experiencing difficulties in expressing ideas, which impacts their ability to engage with the curriculum and develop literacy skills. Understanding OL within early education is made more complex by the high variability around OL assessment within the first year of school. In a nationwide survey carried out by Cameron and colleagues (2019) across Aotearoa New Zealand schools found that only 38% of respondents assessed oral language in ākonga, through the Tell me subscale of the School Entry Assessment (SEA). While 48% of respondents used the Junior Oral Language Screening Tool (JOST), this was more often used (71%) with ākonga of concern. Most notably, Cameron et al. (2019) reported that only 14% assessed expressive or receptive language skills. Interestingly, there appears to be little assessment of listening and speaking skills within authentic contexts. The high percentage of respondents using the JOST, Cameron et al. (2019) suggested reflected the high concern that exists regarding OL skills in ākonga and their association with the development of literacy skills.

Given the association between OL and literacy development, the longitudinal effects of low OL is reflected in PIRLS data, which has long indicated that we should hold concern around the development of literacy skills in tamariki in Aotearoa New Zealand, due to the persistent gap between high and low performing ākonga (Tunmer et al., 2013). PIRLS data

from 2011 indicated a decrease in reading performance in Year 5 ākonga from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> (Chamberlain, 2019), while PIRLS data from 2016 found that while 41% of ākonga demonstrated the ability to engage with more complex texts, there was a significant decrease in the mean reading score, which was evidenced across the board in ākonga (Ministry of Education, 2017), including for Māori and Pacific ākonga. Together, these data suggests that many of our ākonga are likely to experience barriers to accessing the curriculum to their full potential, due to literacy difficulties that are related to low OL skills. Such data supports the call by the Education Review Office (ERO) (2017) for the Ministry of Education to focus on OL across the learning pathway from Years 0 to 8, including the development of clear curriculum expectations, assessment tools, and resources for learning.

Present worldwide circumstances may be exacerbating existing differences in OL ability. While data outlining the effects of Covid-19 on educational outcomes in Aotearoa New Zealand are still emerging, in a review of studies, Mutch (2021) reported that lockdowns during the Covid-19 pandemic have exacerbated inequalities within education for disparate groups, including Māori and Pacific ākonga. Mutch (2021) identified that these groups had less access to on-line modes of education delivery, less access to digital devices, and were less likely to have less conducive study environments. Other common experiences included decreased social interaction among ākonga and enjoyment in learning, which are important to developing OL skills. Hood (2020) noted that the change in interactions from in-person to online, meant a loss in non-verbal cues that are important to in-person interactions and conversational turn-taking, as well as a loss of sustained conversations that can emerge from teachable moments. However, online interactions, appeared to support some ākonga to speak and contribute more than during in-person interactions. This suggests that online interactions may provide opportunities for more reluctant speakers to engage within classroom interactions, although teachers may find this challenging to develop.

Variation in experiences during lockdown was clear. According to Hood (2020) variation was evident within and between schools. Variation was also reported in terms of ākonga engagement between classes, across the lockdown period, as well as, within each day (Hood, 2020). Overall, lockdown produced a range of experiences for ākonga. Data from the UK provides insight as to the effect of Covid-19 on developing OL skills. The Oracy All-Party Parliamentary Group in the United Kingdom [APPG] (2021) reported that differences in OL abilities are likely to be increasing due to the long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and its on-going impacts on schools, including closures and on-line learning, however, the increasing gap is due to multiple factors that extend beyond Covid-19.

Research cited within the APPG report found that 70 % of teachers found it difficult to develop oracy skills via online schooling due to lower levels of interaction. Less than 50 % of teachers were confident on curriculum requirements for oracy, which is why only 32 % of students reported a focus on oracy within their schools. These data align with Dobinson and Dockrell (2021) who outline several aspects that influence the ability of teachers to engage in developing speaking and listening skills in tamariki. Some teachers perceived that speaking and listening skills develop in tamariki implicitly, meaning they do not engage in explicit skill

teaching. Speaking and listening has also been viewed by some teachers as comprising separate skills. This means that the interconnected nature of these skills and their bidirectional relationship with reading and writing development and the need for developing proficiency in these skills is not recognised (Dobinson & Dockrell, 2021). Latham (2005) also noted that listening and speaking are viewed with less importance than other learning areas, such as reading and writing, leading to fewer learning experiences. However, this lack of importance may derive from misconceptions that derive from existing frameworks. Latham (2005) reported that in the UK, teachers wrongly assumed that listening and speaking skills developed within the Literacy Hour, and thus, resulting in a lack of any explicit focus.

The key recommendation of APPG (2021) for the Department of Education (UK) was for the development of guidance materials for oracy, which included effective approaches, clear learning progressions for the development oracy including within diverse learners, provision of resources that support classroom teaching, as well as, fostering oracy development in disadvantaged groups. This suggests that in general there is a lack of understanding in education, as to how to effectively develop listening and speaking skills in ākongā, and what these skills are across the learning pathway.

### **Culture, Indigenous knowledge systems, and language and literacy**

Traditionally, for Indigenous cultures oracy provided the basis by which Indigenous knowledge was transmitted and learned (Hare, 2011). For numerous Indigenous cultures, oracy carries traditions and histories inextricably tied to the past, present, and future lives of their people, as individuals and as a collective (Mahuika, 2012). During language acquisition, under varying social circumstances tamariki acquire an implicit sign system, as well as internalising cultural perspectives around meaning making (O'Connor & Michaels, 2007). Thus, language acquisition in tamariki extends beyond language to include identity development that is formed through cultural ideologies and power relations that differs across generations (Anchimbe, 2007; Martin, 2017). Linguistic identity considers the interaction between language and culture, which reflects the linguistic reality of the social world of tamariki (Martin, 2017). Cultural variation is influential to early language development in tamariki, including differences in vocabulary development (see Hoff, 2006 for a detailed explanation of cultural variation). Culture influences the degree to which tamariki are spoken to, the number of communicative interactions that tamariki are exposed to, and how they are exposed to these interactions (Hoff, 2006). During these interactions, tamariki are developing their sense of self as they negotiate and renegotiate relationships within their social world (Atkinson, 2011). These interactions and the development of a sense of self are influential to the language and the language-based experiences that ākongā enter early childhood education or formal schooling with that vary widely. Indigenous daily practices have been found to contrast significantly with school-based language practices (James, 2014). This sets Indigenous ākongā up to fail because the contrasting practices negatively affect engagement and interest in formal schooling (Hare, 2011; James, 2014). This compounds because oral language and literacy instruction and assessment are underpinned by Standard forms of English, which ignore cultural forms of vernacular (James, 2014). Bridging contrasting

practices requires creating a space for Indigenous knowledges to be incorporated into the schooling context that includes whānau and community, as well as culture, language, and identity (Hare, 2011),

Cultural norms are influential to how ākonga engage in listening and speaking within the schooling context. Ākonga from Asian ethnicities have been found to be more likely to favour listening and note taking over speaking, for reasons that relate to conflict, power, and social status (Shi & Tan, 2020). Female ākonga from some Asian ethnicities are more likely to be silent participators due to norms around the female voice and public arenas (see Shi & Tan, 2020). Torres and colleagues (2018) in Year 4 (8-9 years of age), in their cross-cultural research of classrooms in the UK and Chile, found that teachers demonstrated similar levels of teacher regulatory talk that included directive (directed student thinking), guided/scaffolded (scaffolding to support ākonga regulation), and autonomy/supportive (self-regulation by ākonga). However, in Chilean ākonga directive talk was negatively associated with guided and autonomy talk, but this was not the case for English students. This suggests that for diverse cultures the same type of talk can have distinct functions (Torres et al., 2018), including fostering diverse types of talk in ākonga. Cultural influences means that notions around listening and speaking skills cannot be easily transferred between contexts.

Culture has been identified as an influential factor in the types of listening and speaking skills that influence the development of self-regulation in ākonga. Torres et al., (2018) identified differential outcomes for self-regulation related to the patterned use of specific types of talk. Guided talk fostered self-regulatory (metacognitive monitoring and control) behaviours in both Chilean and UK ākonga. In the UK sample, however, directive talk was negatively associated with the development of self-regulation in ākonga. This was not the case for Chilean ākonga, which Torres et al. (2018) suggested may reflect societal practices of collectivism and directive parenting. Autonomy talk was positively related to the development of self-regulation in Chilean ākonga but had a negative effect for UK ākonga. Interestingly, they also noted differential effects between Chilean and UK teacher regulatory talk on the development of other aspects, including self-efficacy. Torres and colleagues (2018) suggested that different communicative practices may hold different connotations for groups of ākonga. This suggests that teachers need to have an awareness of how communicative acts that are culturally developed contribute to the development of behaviours and skills in ākonga.

### **Māori, Indigenous knowledge systems, language, and literacy**

Indigenous knowledge systems are well recognised as including oral and narrative structures that develop within social and intergenerational contexts, through experience (Hare, 2011). For Māori, knowledge systems are part of one's cultural identity, which is holistic and embodied within place and environment (Hindle & Matthewman, 2017). In te ao Māori, developing a sense of self would include linguistic connections to the past via whakapapa (ancestral origin and genealogy) (Martin, 2017). The deliberate subjugation of Māori language due to colonisation practices influenced how one negotiated a sense of self within their identity development, which continues across generations (Martin, 2017). Te reo



Māori enables Māori to live as Māori. Te ao Māori is reflected when literacy is represented through culture and connections to the natural world (Hindle & Matthewman, 2017). How literacy, place, and environment are represented vary, including through tangible (knowledge and skillset required to complete a task) and intangible (quality) forms (Hindle & Matthewman, 2017). Both aspects are fundamental to identity and place and can lead to differences in how knowledge is presented and its impact (Hindle & Matthewman, 2017). The intangible aspect of representation, which Hindle and Matthewman (2017) conceptualise as *being* is a challenge within Eurocentric forms of literacy practice because they are not easily described. However, intangible representations are integral to supporting other types of literacy practices, including written and multimodal forms. Multimodal forms of literacy are deeply embedded in oral traditions, such as the use of of *kōwhaiwhai* (patterns) to learn about *whakapapa* (Hindle & Matthewman, 2017). Francis and Reyhner, as cited in Hare (2011) argue that oral narrative skills are an important cultural resource, which have been missed by educators. They argue that oral narratives are of high quality, thus promoting oral language skills, including language comprehension, and listening skills, as well as introducing *tamariki* to various text structures and language features. This overlooking may be attributed to colonising practices and the increasing prominence of written language, which Hindle and Matthewman (2017) argue should be part of wider communicative practices that include oracy and symbolism.

Proficiency in literacy and language, which includes listening and speaking skills, is fundamental to Māori ākonga succeeding as Māori (Berryman & Eley, 2017). To foster literacy in a way that is representative of culture, language, and identity in an authentic manner, literacy activities need to make clear connections to place, environment, identity, and *wairua* using *tohu* (symbols) from within the Māori world, and connections to local *hapū* and *iwi* (sub-tribes and tribes) (Hindle & Matthewman, 2017). These include *pōwhiri* (rituals of encounter), *whakataukī* (proverbs), *waiata* (song), and local cultural narratives such as *pūrākau* (Hindle & Matthewman, 2017), which are repositories for Indigenous knowledges. To understand how Māori culture is embodied within the natural world and place, Skerrett (2020) argues that this requires teachers to hold *mātauranga Māori*, as well as, cultural understandings, including *te reo Māori*. Translanguaging (while contentious in some circles) can support ākonga of minority languages (Seals & Olsen-Reeder, 2020) because it provides ākonga with the ability to create spaces where metalinguistic identities, including *te ao Māori*, can be applied to programme activities and resources founded in Eurocentric ideologies (May et al., 2006; Seals & Olsen-Reeder, 2020). Children view the boundaries between languages, such as *te reo Māori* and English, as fluid (Gutiérrez et al., 2017) which Anchimbe (2007) terms *linguabridity*.

Pedagogical actions are fundamental to ensuring the effective engagement of Māori ākonga in learning and creating equitable conditions for the development of listening and speaking skills. In *Te Kōtahitanga*, which examined how to improve Māori achievement in secondary school, Bishop, and colleagues (2007) found that classroom interactions that were dominated by transmission types of interactions were prevalent but had minor impact of learning for Māori ākonga. In fact, classrooms where these interactions were prominent,

focused on controlling ākonga behaviour, which compounded negative effects for Māori ākonga. These interactions continued to reinforce dominant Eurocentric notions, leaving little avenue for creating relationships that underpinned responsive pedagogies. Speaking in whole class interactions caused Māori ākonga whakamā, which Bishop et al. (2007) suggested may be related to differences in cultural identity (collective vs individual), thus, resulting in higher levels of silent participation in ākonga. Māori ākonga reported feeling more comfortable in interactions that included talk, discussion, and debate. These interactions or spaces provide opportunities, according to Berryman et al., (2015) for the sharing of aspects such as knowledge, identities, and connections, as well as providing ākonga with rangatiratanga, in terms of decision-making around engaging in dialogue.

In Te Kōtahitanga, Māori ākonga reported that learning was more meaningful in smaller groups or when there were shared opportunities for ākonga to interact individually conversationally, rather than whole class interactions (Bishop et al., 2007). Notably, changes in interactions also resulted in positive changes to teacher-ākonga relationships. Ākonga felt more comfortable to ask questions of teachers, thus, fostering speaking and listening skills, which created opportunities for positive interactions between ākonga and teachers. This suggests that contexts for learning are influential to developing listening and speaking skills in Māori ākonga and that as Berryman et al. (2018) noted, the actions of teachers and how they relate to ākonga are fundamental to engagement in learning. Interestingly, Bishop et al. (2007) reported that professional development outside of the classroom was much less effective in developing discursive practices in teachers, in comparison to co-construction meetings and shadow-coaching. This suggests that professional development aimed at engagement of Māori ākonga in learning is more likely to be effective when carried out within the classroom context, which may be related to teachers being able to focus upon the nature of their cultural relationships with ākonga (Berryman et al., 2018), rather than simply aiming to be culturally responsive. While Te Kōtahitanga was situated in secondary schools, the implications are applicable within and across the learning pathway, because they foster success for Māori, as Māori (Berryman & Eley, 2017). This is supported by data from Bishop et al. (2007) that found cultural relationships and responsive pedagogies within literacy had positive effects for ākonga in Maths, especially for Māori ākonga.

### **Pacific, Indigenous knowledge systems, and language and literacy**

The Pacific Islands, which include the nations of Samoa, Fiji, Cook Island, Nuie, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Tokelau represent a diverse population of ākonga in Aotearoa New Zealand. Often termed Pacific or Pasifika, this umbrella term has led to misconceptions of homogeneity within a group of peoples whose cultures differ (Flavell, 2017; May, 2020; Reynolds, 2017). As aforementioned, clear educational disparities exist for Pacific ākonga. This can be attributed to the home-language gap, which is the gap between the correspondence between home and school language and academic achievement (May, 2020). It is exacerbated by longstanding colonial practices relating to monolingual education where ākonga are submersed in English-medium education, which has resulted in Pacific ākonga being overrepresented in our longstanding literacy tail of achievement (May, 2020).

However, for Pacific peoples this is complex because while te reo Māori is clearly acknowledged as an official language within the New Zealand Curriculum, bilingualism is clearly not (May, 2020). Some (aforementioned) data from the Ministry of Education (2021c) suggests that over the past ten years, this overrepresentation is changing slightly, however, educational disparities remain of concern.

Although Pacific peoples are diverse, their cultures are underpinned by collectivism and core values, such as reciprocity and respect, family and relationships, spirituality, and service (including to the church), love and belonging (Anae, as cited in Civil & Hunter, 2015). These core values shape the lived realities of Pacific peoples, even if generational differences exist (Reynolds, 2017) and have been identified as important to Pacific ākonga experiencing success in education (Fletcher et al., 2005). There is a clear link between Pacific languages and identity development. According to Davis et al. (cited in May, 2020), language identifies one's belonging within specific Pacific communities. The role of Pacific languages and culture in schools has also been identified as influential to the confidence and self-esteem of Pacific ākonga (Fletcher et al., 2009). Within the Samoan culture, language and oral cultural narratives are closely tied to psychosocial development (self-esteem and confidence) and cultural identity (Kruse Va'ai, 2015; May, 2020). Like for Māori ākonga, policies and plans have identified that language, culture, and identity are fundamental to Pacific ākonga experiencing success in their learning. Therefore, while Pacific languages are inextricably linked to identity and culture, weaving threads of genealogy, through rich figurative language of nuance, metaphor, and intonation (Kruse Va'ai, 2015) the exclusivity and dominance of English, as the language of schooling in education, often subjugates and devalues formal and informal Pacific language use. This devaluing of Indigenous languages is reinforced by school practices. May (2020) notes that ELL ākonga are primarily withdrawn from their primary learning context to receive English language support, which does not often acknowledge the role of L1 in bilingual language development. May (2020) raises fundamental questions around how our education system can reduce persistent educational disparities when the system itself fails to recognise the interdependence of languages for bilingual, including Pacific, ākonga.

In terms of listening and speaking, the daily practices of Pacific ākonga are highly likely to contrast practices encountered within English-medium educational contexts. This means that ākonga are unable to use their L1 language comprehension, which includes prior knowledge and inferencing skills, to bridge the gap between their existing knowledge and their knowledge yet to be developed within the English-medium context (May, 2020). This compounds when academic performance and achievement is measured using Standard forms of English (including in instructional reading texts). Fletcher et al. (2009) found that English language concepts within texts were unfamiliar to Pacific ākonga, or were less or not translatable to L1 languages, which influenced the development of reading comprehension. Interestingly, teachers within this study highlighted the importance of oral language skills to reading development in Pacific ākonga, noting the influence of rich discussions within the home, through an ako context, to successful reading development.

The role of cultural values is influential to listening and speaking skills in Pacific ākonga. They are more likely to engage in listening, especially with teachers because it marks a sign of respect, rather than engaging in questioning (Fletcher et al., 2009). However, a preference for listening may also relate to reluctance in risk taking. Fletcher et al. (2009) found that Pacific ākonga were less likely to take risks in learning or to expose low levels of knowledge, especially if presented concepts do not align with ākonga experiences. This can lead to misconceptions around ākonga engagement and subsequent achievement. Challenging misconceptions is fundamental. Research has found that misconceptions have resulted in teachers holding deficit beliefs around Pacific (and Māori) ākonga, including low expectations around achievement (Turner et al., 2005). These deficit beliefs also extended to whānau, with teachers viewing whānau as uneducated and therefore unable to provide their tamariki appropriate support (Turner et al., 2015), even though this was highly valued by whānau. Flavell (2017) noted that whānau engaged in listening as a sign of respect with teachers and that the lack of understanding around Pacific cultures, resulted in misconceptions around parental engagement in the education of their ākonga. In her research with whānau from a variety of Pacific cultures, Flavell (2017) identified that communication with both ākonga and whānau was negatively influenced by not holding understandings and knowledge of whānau perspectives that are underpinned by culture, language, and identity. Flavell (2017) argued that actively listening to whānau and engaging in communicative acts was fundamental to developing reciprocal relationships, which she noted fostered inclusion for both ākonga and whānau. Flavell's (2017) research is indicative of the importance of bridging the cultural disconnect between Pacific cultures and the English-medium education context. It also suggests that teachers need to develop their understandings and knowledge of Pacific ākonga and their differing cultures, which would enable teachers to understand the values of Pacific ākonga, whānau, and their communities (Spiller, 2012). The development of relationships between teachers and Pacific ākonga is fundamental, and student voice is important to enacting these relationships (Reynolds, 2017). This would contribute to reconstructing the lens that some teachers use to construct understandings of Pacific ākonga within our current education system (Reynolds, 2017).

### **The Importance of Speaking and Listening Skills**

The importance of speaking and listening is recognised within education, both nationally within the New Zealand Curriculum, and internationally, for example within the Common Core State Standards (US) and the National Curriculum of England. Holding quality listening and speaking skills is often viewed as fundamental to education (APPG, 2021) and teachers' roles in developing these skills are viewed as crucial (Jones, 2007). This is supported by international research (Justice et al., 2018; Piasta et al., 2012) that found teachers who were linguistically responsive and who used explicit strategies to foster the participation of tamariki within conversations was associated with positive gains in productivity and complexity of language in tamariki. Research by Justice et al., (2014) also highlights the significant role that peers play in OL development within the early years of schooling. In a sample of nearly 700 US pre-school ākonga, Justice and colleagues found that peers were influential to fostering pragmatic language abilities (social aspects of language) in other

peers. Tamariki who held low OL skills made greater gains when exposed to tamariki with stronger OL skills, especially if they held an Individual Education Plan, signalling the presence of a disability. These studies suggest that professional development is integral to developing teachers' ability to implement strategies that supports the inclusive development of OL in tamariki (Dockrell et al., 2017). However, it also suggests that educators in leadership positions engaged in classroom composition and programme development require awareness of the role of peers in OL development to ensure conditions for fostering such skills are considered (Justice et al., 2014). This is especially important given that often tamariki with difficulties do not qualify for specialist support (Gillon et al., 2019) and that needs often outstrip capacity to support these learners in developing OL skills.

Tamariki are expected to use speaking and listening skills within their learning, across a wide range of learning contexts. Speaking and verbal interactions have been identified as a commonly used tool for learning (Alexander, 2013) and is becoming increasingly considered best practice for demonstrating knowledge and reasoning (Remedios et al., 2008), and engagement in learning (Shi & Tan, 2020) meaning that teachers often use speaking as a tool for assessment practices (Peterson et al., 2010). However, the heavy focus on speaking fails to account for other ways that ākonga engage in learning activities through behaviour, cognition, and affect (Shi & Tan, 2020) and how the role of culture, language, identity, as well as place can influence ākonga participation in speaking activities (Remedios et al., 2008). Individual factors are also influential, such as low interest, lack of confidence, and low understanding of learning material (Remedios et al., 2008). Environmental factors are influential to developing listening and speaking skills where sources of a language model and opportunities for communication are absent for ākonga (Hoff, 2006), such as for tamariki who are deaf, blind, or experience processing difficulties.

A focus on speaking skills has been argued as fundamental within early education, which includes capturing profiles of tamariki and their strengths and weaknesses within a Tier 1 context (Dobinson & Dockrell, 2021). This focus may reflect the association between the quality of language provision and speaking skills in tamariki, and research findings regarding the close association between speaking skills and literacy. However, caution must be extended when interpreting research results to account for differing methodological frameworks and reporting of data from measures. A primary focus on speaking skills is arguable given that listening is the foundation of language development and is from where speaking, reading, and writing develop (Jalongo, 2008). Listening enables individuals to function between what is known and unknown and that typically a willingness to use speaking skills emerges when there is an accumulation of comprehensible input (Jalongo, 2008). According to Haroutunian-Gordon (2015) listening is fundamental to carrying out dialogue, which in turn further fosters listening skills, thus, the development of listening and speaking skills is reciprocal in nature. Thus, the development of listening skills also has multiple spinoff effects because of its basis in cognition and emotion.

Literature is clear that for some learners, listening during learning is preferred, or learning within smaller groups (Khoo, 2003). ELL can be challenged by the existing language

of the classroom, which includes idiomatic English and content related vocabulary, as well as by socio-cultural forces that include norms around power structures and body language (Remedios, et al., 2008). Because speaking develops from listening, ELL learners may initially rely heavily on listening within their environments. Listening enables them to develop communicative competence (socially and academically) in language/s other than their mother tongue, as well as, developing linguistic repertoires in the acquired language (Boyd & Rubin, 2006). While personal and socio-cultural differences exist that influence the development of speaking skills, these skills are influential to the perceptions that teachers hold around ākongā. Vega and colleagues (2018) found that teacher perceptions of tamariki and their overall development were strongly correlated to speaking skills. These perceptions have also been identified as influencing the quality of language interactions tamariki experience. Justice and colleagues (2013) identified a bi-directional association between the use of syntactic forms between teachers and tamariki, with teacher's utterances adjusting to mimic the syntactic levels of tamariki. This suggests tamariki with lower speaking skills may be recipients of lower quality verbal interactions with teachers, creating barriers that further affect their ability to develop crucial speaking and listening skills and achieve academically.

Tamariki with OL difficulties can experience other barriers to learning that extend academic achievement (Jalongo, 2008). Tamariki who experience OL difficulties are significantly more likely to demonstrate difficulties in components of wellbeing (Miller et al., 2013), including socio-emotional and behavioural difficulties (Norbury et al., 2016). In contrast, proficient OL skills have been positively associated with socio-emotional development and mental health across the lifespan (Schoon, 2010), as well as self-esteem (APPG, 2021). Fostering socio-emotional wellbeing in tamariki has positive effects on academic achievement (Corcoran et al., 2018) and academic achievement is associated with aspects of psychosocial development, including self-efficacy (Amitay & Gumpel, 2015); Lee & Jonson-Reid, 2016; Liew et al., 2008). Dialogue has been identified as one factor influencing the development of SEW. Trickey and Topping (2006) note that dialogue can foster ākongā to develop conflict resolution skills, negotiation skills, and collaborative skills, thus contributing to the development of emotional resilience. Recent research data from Fickel and colleagues (Denston et al., 2021, in review) provides some insight as to why OL may influence wellbeing in ākongā in Aotearoa New Zealand. Data from four cohorts of ākongā across 2019 and 2020 from a primary school and a secondary school identified elevated levels of peer difficulties in ākongā, along with concerning low levels of prosocial skills. Teacher data from the same study identified that the ability of ākongā and teachers to communicate proficiently using listening and speaking skills underpinned the ability of ākongā to develop relationships (Denston et al., 2021 in review). Without these skills, ākongā experienced difficulties in resolving peer difficulties or enacting prosocial behaviours. Fostering communicative skills resulted in decreasing peer difficulties and elevated levels of prosocial skills in some ākongā. These findings support the role, and importance of developing listening and speaking skills for social interactions and of relationship development in ākongā (Education Review Office, 2017).

The association between socio-emotional and cognitive development, including oral language skills (Corcoran et al., 2018; Schoon, 2010; Taylor et al., 2017), means that schools and teachers have been identified as a central tenet in the development of wellbeing in ākongā. Thus, a focus on developing speaking and listening skills within teaching and learning programmes, is beneficial to ākongā. This notion increases in importance when placed within wider findings related to wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand. Data clearly indicates that the wellbeing of our young is decreasing, which is of considerable concern. UNICEF (2020) ranked Aotearoa New Zealand 35<sup>th</sup> out of 41 OECD nations on child and adolescent wellbeing outcomes, a decrease in standing from 34<sup>th</sup> in 2017. Furthermore, Aotearoa New Zealand carries the highest suicide rate in youth in the world (Mental Health Foundation, 2021). Data has found high variability in the ability of schools to respond to and promote wellbeing (see Education Review Office, 2015a, 2015b). National responses, including the 2019 Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2019) that outlines government aspirations for wellbeing across multiple aspects, reflects the central focus of wellbeing in tamariki within Aotearoa New Zealand.

### **The development of listening skills in ākongā**

The development of listening skills requires that teachers understand the listening process, knowledge, and best practice pedagogies, as well as how the environment in which listening is being developed can act to foster the development of skills or act as a barrier. This means, for teachers to be able to develop listening (and speaking) skills in ākongā, they require in-depth knowledge of the skills that contribute to the development of listening that includes three aspects. Firstly, the development of listening skills requires individuals to demonstrate inhibitory control, which requires the listener to maintain attention to the speaker, while filtering out distractions (Jalongo, 2008; Kim & Phillips, 2014), which may include classroom noise (Fisher & Frey, 2019). Secondly, the listener must apply theory of mind that this enables them to think about their own mental states and that of others (Fisher & Frey, 2019). Thirdly, the listener must monitor comprehension that enables them to reflect on meaning and construct understandings (Fisher & Frey, 2019). The complexity of these skills, which increase along the learning pathway, means that some tamariki may require additional support to develop these skills (Whitehurst, 2006).

Listening skills are developed in the context required for their use, meaning that listening and speaking skills develop for different purposes and goals that must be considered. Waks (2015) outlines multiple types of listening, that include informative (information), interpretive, practical (procedural), relational, and critical, while Jones (2007) identified four areas including social, communicative, cultural, and cognitive. Developing diverse types of listening skills in ākongā is likely to support the development of reading and writing skills, due to the alignment between different listening and literacy types. For listening skills to be developed, teachers need to hold a clear understanding of the actions of the speaker and the listener within each typology of listening, as well as the strategies that support the development of the listening skill. The development of listening skills is argued to increase when individuals apply their interpretation or comprehension of messages in a meaningful

way, thus becoming active listeners (Jalongo, 2008). This suggests that listening and speaking skills develop across the learning pathway. It appears that the most fundamental type of listening is effective listening (Jalongo, 2008), whereby verbal and non-verbal messages are received by the listener that must be attended to. This requires both effort and engagement for meaning to be assigned through the interpretation or comprehension of messages (Jalongo, 2008). According to Shi and Tan (2020), ākongā engagement includes three dimensions; behavioural, emotional, and cognitive. Engagement is contextually situated, therefore, levels of engagement are likely to differ depending upon the learning activities and ākongā characteristics are in the activity (McWilliam et al., as cited in Shi & Tan, 2020), which also influences the development of listening and speaking skills.

The importance of non-verbal behaviours to developing speaking and listening skills may increase for tamariki with lesser developed speaking skills or who are silent participants. Rowe and Goldin-Meadow (2009b) and Blincoe and Harris (2013) noted the importance of gesture as supporting spoken communication through meaning because it provides an avenue for communication when one is unable to express meaning via speech, thus supporting vocabulary and syntax development. As such, teachers who are more receptive and knowledgeable around non-verbal behaviours may positively influence the development of language in their learners. The joint attention that emerges from a focus on the verbal and non-verbal behaviours of tamariki is influential to language development (Rowe & Goldin-Meadow, 2009b). According to Knapp (as cited in Gordon & Druckman, 2018) seven dimensions exist that are fundamental to communication through non-verbal behaviours. These dimensions differ in terms of whether they provide meaning via expression or information. Non-verbal behaviours that provide meaning through expression include kinesics or body language, paralanguage, physical contact via touch, proxemics including interpersonal space, while non-verbal behaviours that provide information include physical characteristics, artefacts, and environmental factors including physical settings. Non-verbal behaviours, which include intentional and unintentional acts, must be considered within the context that they occur, as they are encoded by the sender and decoded by the receiver, who are influenced by socio-cultural factors (Gordon & Druckman, 2018). Roles may change frequently as turn taking occurs within dialogic exchanges (Gordon & Druckman, 2018). While fundamental to the communicative act, the role of non-verbal behaviours appears to be receiving less focus within research and has received even less focus within education. However, Blincoe and Harris (2013), in their review of nonverbal behaviours in education, highlighted the effect of teacher nonverbal behaviours on student attitudes towards teachers, class, and learning content. McCroskey and colleagues (2006) outlined the association between nonverbal behaviours of teachers and their effectiveness within multi-cultural classrooms. This suggests that the role of nonverbal behaviours in communicative acts is important to the development of effective listening and speaking skills in diverse groups of ākongā.

The importance of verbal behaviours to developing listening skills is also clear. One barrier to developing listening skills occurs when didactic methods become talk that is teacher dominated with little engagement by ākongā (Waks, 2015). This barrier may be reflective of



the perceptions that teachers and schools hold regarding the role of speaking (and thus listening) within the classroom context. Alexander (2008) identified five typologies that reflect the relationship between teaching, culture, knowledge, and learning. Three of the five typologies relate to rote, recitation, or instructional learning. While Alexander (2008) notes that these typologies have a place within the classroom, these typologies are less likely to support the development of listening skills or the development of higher order cognitive skills in ākonga. These typologies are used by teachers with the aim of controlling student behaviour and primarily involve informative listening in silence where success is based on the recall of information and understanding (Waks, 2015), or the ability to follow instructions (Alexander, 2008; 2010). Teachers who listen evaluatively (for the correct answer) tend to ask questions differently than when listening interpretively (to what ākonga are thinking) (Wiliam & Leahy, 2015).

Historically, while didactic methods prepared ākonga for future roles with society that were often largely repetitive and heavily supervised, within the current contemporary society, the focus on the production of information and services, requires intellectual capabilities (Waks, 2015). Thus, the development of teaching approaches and pedagogies that disrupt existing and persistent didactic patterns of restrictive typologies of listening, is fundamental to “establish patterns of listening and speaking more conducive of thinking and learning” that consider the needs and concerns of our learners (Waks, 2015, p. 4). Fundamental to the development of approaches and pedagogies, according to Waks (2015) is the ability of teachers to translate strategies into tools for their own teaching and learning contexts. However, because listening and speaking skills do not equate with learning (Fisher, 2007) it is fundamental that teachers have a clear understanding of the conditions required to develop listening and speaking skills in students, the ability to plan for developing listening and speaking skills, how to emphasise these skills within instructional strategies (Fisher, 2007), and the subject knowledge within which the skills are being developed (Alexander, 2010), as well as the ability to attend to ākonga and the patterns of listening and speaking within interactions (Wiliam & Leady, 2015).

According to Jalongo (2008) the development of listening skills requires teachers to make listening skills the emphasis of learning. Emphasising listening increases the ability of ākonga to access information (Jalongo, 2008), which means that teachers should explicitly plan to develop these skills. While Jones (2007) advocates for the teaching of cognitive skills, which she views as fundamental to effective learning (Jones, 2007), the link between cognition and emotions suggests that developing skills that fosters relationships is also crucial. Jalongo (2008) notes several conditions that are integral to creating an environment that enables listening skills to develop. These conditions range from ensuring that prior knowledge has been assessed and setting a clear purpose for listening. As such, inclusiveness and equity are affected for underserved groups of learners, such as Māori and Pacific ākonga, if L1 knowledge and different culture contexts are ignored. Other conditions also exist in terms of fostering the ability of students to engage within a listening environment. These include attend to learning, including creating a learning environment that attending to how messages are structured, which should include verbal and non-verbal behaviours.

## Constructivism and UDL

The central tenet of constructivism is that learning and meaning making occurs through active engagement within social interactions (Schrader, 2015). Within Piagetian constructivism, the learner (or group of learners) and peer relations are essential, and knowledge is constructed or reconstructed through equal power within relationships (Schrader, 2015), thus fostering equity. Within Vygotskian sociocultural constructivism, meaning making occurs through a more knowledgeable other (Schrader, 2015); however, Vygotsky did not privilege the learner but argued that culture underpinned the construction or reconstruction of knowledge (Sawyer & Stetsenko, 2014). According to Vygotsky (1962), more complex knowledge systems occur through scaffolding the disparity between knowing and learning. However, the role of culture in the construction and reconstruction of knowledge, means that inherent in sociocultural constructivism is language and collaborative dialogue (Schrader, 2015). This means that the construction of knowledge in ākongā is underpinned by listening and speaking. Vygotsky (1962) viewed external speech and internal speech as holding their own essential functions. Internal speech enables ākongā to bring forth thought, while external speech enables thought to be personified in language. The merging together of thought and speech enables the development of higher order skills, including abstract thinking and conceptual reasoning skills (Sawyer & Stetsenko, 2014).

One framework that supports sociocultural constructivist learning and that can be used to develop and enact listening and speaking skills in ākongā is Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Developed at the Centre for Applied Science Technology (CAST) in response to the reauthorisation of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the US, the UDL framework sought to address the disconnect between the emergence of diverse populations of ākongā (including ELL and those with behavioural difficulties, speech and language difficulties, hearing/visual difficulties, physical difficulties, and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)), and an increasingly narrow curriculum that was largely concerned with academic achievement (Edyburn, 2005; King-Sears, 2014; Metcalf, 2011). UDL recognises that ākongā vary in how they process information (Rao & Meo, 2016) and the framework is underpinned by three principles that recognise the variation in interaction between cognition, learning, and affect, in the development of new skills (Rao & Meo, 2016). The principles include multiple means of engagement, multiple means of representation, and multiple means of expression (Edyburn, 2005). More recently Rapp (2014) proposed a fourth principal, multiple means of assessment.

Multiple means of engagement include accounting for how ākongā engage in learning (Ministry of Education, 2016). This includes consideration around how ākongā engage in diverse types of tasks, which can vary between learning contexts (Rapp, 2014). Engagement can be fostered by aligning learning with ākongā interests, goal setting, and self-regulation (Rapp, 2014). Multiple means of representation include accounting for ākongā learning needs (Ministry of Education, 2016), which represents the input for learning. Inherent in this principal is the notion of equity because multiple means of engagement increase the likelihood that all ākongā can engage in the learning and reflects the importance of

multimodal learning for ākonga, including Māori and Pacific, rather than representing learning in narrow ways, which privileges specific learners. Multiple means of representation also provide opportunities for learning to be reinforced in ākonga, and provides students with opportunities to make their own decisions around the representations that are best fit with the need at hand, thus, reflecting rangatiratanga. Multiple means of expression accounts for the ways that learned can be demonstrated by ākonga, which need to extend beyond traditional means of expression (writing and speaking) (Rapp, 2014). According to Rapp (2014), learning outcomes must be able to be represented by multiple modes of output. These can include physical, written, communicative, and digital technologies (Ministry of Education, 2016; Rapp, 2014), which fosters equity and inclusiveness for underserved learners, including Māori and Pacific ākonga. Multiple means of assessment accounts for the ways that teachers assess students, which must reflect the means of engagement by ākonga (Rapp, 2014). Together these principles enable teachers to design flexible teaching and learning programmes for ākonga that actively incorporate variation in ways of learning and respond to both the identified strengths and needs of ākonga (Doran, 2015).

Essential to UDL is the intentional use of strategies that support both cognition and affect in learning (Rao & Meo, 2016) and the reduction of barriers to learning to ensure teaching and learning programmes are equitable for all students (Rao & Meo, 2016), including those from underserved groups including ELL, with learning and thinking differences (including cultural and linguistic), or impairments such as hearing or visual (King-Sears, 2014). Importantly, teachers are required to consider barriers within the learning environment, prior to learning, which means consideration can be given to accessibility and engagement (Rao & Meo, 2016). According to Coyne and colleagues (2006) this enables teachers to refocus attention towards the content being learned, rather than how ākonga will present or express their understandings as outcomes. The UDL framework is accompanied by guidelines and check points that support the inclusion of responsive pathways with teaching and learning programmes (Lapinski et al., 2012). These checkpoints define physical and cognitive access and ākonga engagement (Rao & Meo, 2016), as well as language and communication (Doran, 2015). Resigning instruction within UDL requires that teachers have a clear understanding of the skills and knowledge to be taught. However, because UDL is ākonga centred, it can be interactive between teachers within different learning areas, which provides another means by which learning can be scaffolded in students (Coyne et al., 2006).

Within the UDL framework, the main way that listening and speaking skills can be fostered in ākonga is directly through barriers to learning. By identifying aspects of listening and speaking that act as barriers to learning, teachers can provide support and guidance within the multiple means of representation. Importantly, UDL means that support and guidance is provided on an individual basis (Pisha & Stahl, 2006), which creates more flexible learning environments, fostering ākonga engagement and success (Coyne et al., 2006). Metcalf (2011) notes that barriers to learning in relation to OL that can include vocabulary, can be represented in numerous ways through UDL, including verbally or pictorially, or expressed with a partner, whereby one ākonga speaks while the other uses non-verbal behaviours. Interestingly, it appears that identifying barriers to learning may also foster listening and

speaking indirectly. Metcalf (2011) noted that barriers to learning in relation to attention and memory can include representations of verbal stories supported by visual representations or with read-alouds, while difficulties in transferring information can be expressed through power points. For ākonga who experience visual difficulties in seeing or reading words, text can be recorded digitally, which also provides capacity for verbal descriptions of illustrations to be included, while for ākonga who experience low vocabulary or decoding skills, words and meanings can be accessed digitally (Pisha & Stahl, 2006). Fundamental to using UDL to support listening and speaking skills, is the ability of the teacher to identify barriers for learning that relate specifically to listening and speaking, as well as, having the knowledge and abilities to provide multiple means within which listening and speaking skills can be developed.

UDL is argued to align with culturally responsive teaching. According to Gay (2010) culturally responsive teaching requires using cultural knowledge, experiences, points of view, and ways of learning to make learning relevant and effective. Culturally responsive learning also includes being responsive to language and culture and these aspects are heavily embedded in socio-historical and political contexts. These histories and experiences are brought to school by ākonga and influence how they experience their schooling (Rao & Meo, 2016). According to Doran (2015) one's culture sits at the centre of UDL, thus, UDL does not actively privilege one culture over another; however, its individualistic focus may negate the collectivist nature of cultures, including Māori and Pacific ākonga. Gay (2010) notes that relationships between school and whānau can be strengthened through culturally responsive teaching, because it acknowledges cultural relevance and histories. Because UDL is implemented within cultural contexts, equity is implicit (Doran, 2015). Importantly, equity is sought from the outset by prioritising all the needs of diverse learners, which include language accessibility using mother tongue (Doran, 2015).

UDL is a means by which diverse demographic of ākonga within Aotearoa New Zealand can be recognised. However, it is also clear that barriers have existed when integrating UDL within Aotearoa New Zealand classrooms. According to Butler (2018), educators struggled to understand the relevance of UDL and differences in terminology, which created barriers to implementation. Butler (2018) outlines efforts to translate UDL authentically within the context of our nation that, interestingly, requires explicitly placing people at the centre of the framework. However, doing so enabled explicit connections to te ao Māori to occur (Butler, 2018). This suggests that the effectiveness of UDL is related to teacher knowledge, skills, and abilities, which could be partially developed within initial teacher education. However, because planning UDL is made more complex by shifting abilities and qualities in ākonga, which are fluid in nature (Meyer et al., 2014) and the requirement to build in multiple flexible learning pathways from the conception of planning, teachers must develop the ability to proactively predict learner responses across contexts (Rao & Meo, 2016). This contrasts with relying on accommodations or differentiation in learning, which occur for ākonga at specific points within the planning process (Doran, 2015) or reactive modifications during or after teaching and learning experiences. This suggests that

following initial teacher education development, further professional development should be provided within authentic teaching contexts to support its practical implementation.

## **Teaching Approaches and the Development of Listening and Speaking Skills**

### **Dialogue**

Dialogue and discourse are inherent within contemporary classrooms. Tamariki engage in dialogue with tamariki, tamariki with teachers, teachers with teachers; discussions occur one-to-one, in small and large groups, and can be formal and informal, occurring over a variety of texts (O'Connor & Michaels, 2007). This inherency is why dialogue has been envisioned as one of the key teaching tools within education, to foster thinking and learning in tamariki (Reznitskaya et al., 2009). However, not all patterns of communication are equally effective, for engagement (Bishop et al., 2007) and the development of higher-level skills (Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013), including self-regulation (Whitebread et al., 2018). Dialogue is not simply conversation or talk; dialogue is goal oriented and includes exchanges that becomes meaningful interactions (Latham, 2005; O'Connor & Michaels, 2007).

The successful use of dialogue requires that ākonga have understandings of conversational features that include turn taking (Stivers et al., 2009). Research in the English language has found that turn taking is specifically organised to avoid gaps and overlaps in turns (Barthel et al., 2017; Stivers et al., 2009) meaning there is a lack of pauses between turns. Research findings also suggest that there is little cultural variation across languages in terms of the cues, although there is some variation in the timings of turns (Stivers et al., 2009). Research has examined recognising cues for turn transitions and well as timings of turns (Stivers et al., 2009). It is that listeners are required to use grammar and pragmatics to effectively engage in turn taking, although debate exists regarding the role of intonation/prosody in turn taking (Bögels & Torreira, 2015).

### **Dialogue and Turn Taking**

Turn taking is complex. To effectively develop turn taking in ākonga, teachers require knowledge of features that underpin turn taking within dialogue in the classroom context. The timing of turn taking has been found to be planned by incoming speakers, during the speaker's turn (Barthel et al., 2017). The listener's ability to do this is influenced by their comprehension of the speaker's message (Barthel et al., 2017; Lerner, as cited in Breive, 2020). The listener must also be able to monitor pragmatics, grammar, and prosody cues for turn taking, which include explicit and implicit techniques such as non-verbal behaviours, to determine when to initiate responses (Barthel et al., 2017; Lerner, as cited in Breive, 2020), which are contextually influenced (Breive, 2020). Research supports the importance of developing turn taking cues, finding that the presence or absence of these cues influences the identification of completion points in speaking (see Barthel et al., 2017). The identification of completion points is fundamental when dialogue includes self-selected speakers, who must identify a place where speaking can be transitioned to the new speaker (Breive, 2020). This becomes more complex if ākonga have difficulties in comprehending the speaker's message.

According to Barnes (2008) disjointed, hesitations, and self-reflections are indicative of ākonga experiencing difficulties in assigning meaning to the speaker's message, although this is also influenced by the type of talk being engaged in.

Literature suggests that the lack of pausing within turn taking is influential to the development of thinking skills in ākonga. According to Wiliam & Leahy (2015), teachers often pace their lessons on the speed of ākonga responses, rather than the quality of responses. Thus, little time may be given to thinking during listening that supports the development of speaking skills. Furthermore, because teachers evaluate the listener's message during their speaking time, this decreases the likelihood of thinking time occurring. While this is reflective of turn-taking in dialogue, ākonga who are slower processors of information or who experience difficulties in making meaning of the speaker's message (including ELL), will be less likely to follow dialogue and will receive fewer opportunities to develop higher level cognitive thought. Furthermore, if ELL that may include Māori and Pacific learners are unable to use their L1 to foster comprehension, accessing dialogue becomes inequitable. However, developing thinking skills is fundamental to the listener processing the speaker's message, and thus fostering their capacity to engage in speaking. Developing such skills requires that teachers incorporate thinking explicitly into turn taking. According to research, thinking time should be between 3 and 5 seconds, but is contextually influenced, as well as, being influenced by the type of questioning strategies used by teachers (Wiliam & Leahy, 2015). According to Wiliam and Leahy (2015) this time enables ākonga to think about what they want to say and then develop their responses further, thus, contributing to the demonstration (and development) of higher order thinking skills.

Within Aotearoa New Zealand, lower levels of OL means that explicit language support that includes the development of turn taking cues and listening comprehension is likely to be fundamental within the early years of schooling, to ensure that ākonga can engage and experience success within and across the learning pathway. One specific cue that may support the development of turn taking cues in ākonga with lower levels of skills, is syntax (a part of grammar). Research by Lammertink et al. (2015), involving toddlers learning Dutch and English found that toddlers, like adults, relied more upon syntactic cues than prosody within turn taking. They found that toddlers enacted syntactic cues that were adult-like, although this could be due to the ability of toddlers being able to use this tool consistently, unlike prosody cues, which may differ in function and require mapping with pragmatics (Lammertink et al., 2015). According to McGinty and Justice (2010) meaningful conversations, i.e., dialogue, are fundamental to ākonga developing syntax. Thus, a focus on developing syntactic cues may provide ākonga with a consistent means by which turn taking can be developed, as well as contributing to developing linguistic comprehension. McGinty and Justice (2010) also inferred that a focus on syntax can be used to recast ākonga responses through feedback, thus contributing to language development. Recasting concerns the use of correct grammatical structures within utterances to correct incorrect grammatical structures. While this may benefit ākonga with low levels of OL, care must be extended. McGinty and Justice (2010) noted that recasting did not foster extended dialogue in ākonga, which is crucial to the development of turn taking and linguistic comprehension. Within their example, they further

noted the attunement between the adult and the developmental level of the tamariki; however, as aforementioned, the association between ākongā speaking skills and teachers' perceptions means that teachers need to ensure that ākongā are not the recipients of lower quality verbal interactions with teachers, which may negatively affect their ability to develop listening and speaking skills. This may occur if recasting becomes the focus of interactions between teachers and ākongā with low OL.

Turn taking in ākongā can be developed through questioning. Early research by Hoff-Ginsberg (1990) found that young tamariki responded to questions more frequently than non-questions, which suggested tamariki paid more attention to these utterances. Hoff-Ginsberg (1990) also identified differences in terms of question complexity. Tamariki were more likely to respond to question forms containing more concrete questions, such as those containing what and where (Hoff-Ginsberg, 1990). This may be related to the use of concrete question forms by whānau within early childhood but also the linguistic capacities of tamariki in terms of being able to make meaning from more abstract questions, such as questions containing why. It appears that developing turn-taking could be fostered by teachers effectively use question to elicit and extend on phrases with tamariki, which are responsive to the context. Research by Breive (2020) in Kindergarten (Year 1) ākongā found that turn taking was developed through questions aimed at developing additive/multiplicative mathematical thinking. Furthermore, Breive (2020) found that ākongā used verbal and non-verbal cues to develop turn taking, including gaze, word emphasis, touch, and direct verbal prompts, which aimed to move the problem-solving conversation towards an outcome. Cabell and colleagues (2015) found that a higher concentration of elicitations and extensions in conversations was related to vocabulary growth over time in tamariki. This may be related to teacher elicitation and elaboration acting as a model of more complex sentence use with ākongā (McGinty & Justice, 2010). This supports the development of linguistic comprehension, as well as the ability of tamariki to develop turn taking skills, potentially fostering their ability to engage in conversations.

Teachers holding quality listening skills are crucial and professional development may be required to enable teachers to increase their sensitivities within their existing listening skills to foster language skills for dialogue within teaching and learning programmes. The importance of teacher sensitivities was identified in Breive (2020), who found that teachers could alter the development of turn taking in ākongā through what Breive termed as interference. In this study, extended dialogue in ākongā was altered dramatically when teachers engaged in interference, thus, altering turn taking by self-selecting their own turns and the turns of ākongā; however, it did support re-establishing the collaborative nature of the task (Breive, 2020). Thistle and McNaughton (2015) found that professional development (in this case Speech and Language Therapists) that focused on active listening skills, effected positive change in communication with tamariki, whānau, and other communication professionals, leading to extended dialogue of greater quality. However, these effects may be related to changes in non-verbal behaviours that were also targeted as part of the professional development. This suggests non-verbal behaviours, such as body language, is also an important aspect of teachers developing active listening skills. Overall, the successful use of

dialogue within classroom settings has been linked to teachers understanding the complexity of its development, consistent application, and clarity around application, as well as changes in behaviour for both teachers and tamariki, including verbal and non-verbal (Topping & Trickey, 2014). These factors may be why variation is apparent across classrooms and why dialogue as a teaching tool for learning has been resisted by some educators, even when research indicates its effectiveness in teaching and learning programmes (Fisher, 2007). Literature is also less clear how dialogic approaches are applied within education (Reznitskaya et al., 2009) and how teachers generate and engage in quality learning experiences with tamariki (Sanjakdar, 2019).

Resistance may also be related to dialogic and monologic<sup>1</sup> discourse being viewed as distinct learning tools. Monologic discourse is often criticised for its high emphasis on teacher talk and questioning (Mercer, 2003), with little opportunity for student responses (Topping & Trickey, 2014) or extension of talk. Teachers often produce most of the classroom talk, ranging between 60 and 90 %, and research has found that teachers do not listen effectively (Boyd & Rubin, 2006; Jalongo, 2008), which is required to foster the development of listening and speaking skills in ākongā. This may be related to the tendency of teachers to use initiation-response-evaluation/follow-up (IRE or IRF) or fill-in-the-blank patterns of discourse (Boyd & Rubin, 2006), although this may be unintentional. The negative effect of curricula scripted with monologic talk has been found in literature. Park and Bridges-Rhoads (2012) in their ethnographic study examined the use of scripted literacy programme in young children. They found that teachers transferred the principles of the scripted literacy programme to mathematics. This had a two-fold effect that included negatively affecting teachers' use of innovative practices with tamariki, who received restricted opportunities to develop important mathematical content and conceptual knowledge. Park and Bridges-Rhoads (2012) noted that this was more likely to occur for ākongā in low decile areas and of minority ethnicity. Similar findings were evident in Dull and Murrow (2008) who, in their qualitative study that compared teachers across 14 high schools in the US, found that ākongā in low SES schools experienced highly restrictive patterns of dialogue that focused on monologic discourse that reflected teacher initiation and student response, in relation to the revision of content. In comparison, ākongā from high SES schools were provided with dialogic interactions that aimed to develop interpretative and reflective understandings.

Within the UK, research indicated the negative impact of the highly structured literacy hour, as part of the National Literacy Strategy, on teacher and ākongā interactions in primary schools. In a study of 30 teachers, English and colleagues (2002) found a decline in extended interactions (beyond 25 seconds) following the introduction of activities within the literacy hour, even though teacher-student interactions had increased. They reported that during the literacy hour, only 10 % of utterances from ākongā contained more than three words, while

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<sup>1</sup> Monologic is described by Batkin (as cited in Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013) as when the truth is known by someone, who instructs someone else who is ignorant or in error.



only 5% contained more than 10 words. However, ākonga utterances appear to be influential to developing extended dialogue. Research by Boyd and Rubin (2006) in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students found that ākonga utterances were contingent to teachers asking questions that extended or elicited elaborated discussion in ākonga. Authentic teacher questions aimed at creating dialogic talk, resulted in monologic dialogic when ākonga responses were not considered. Monologic questions, however, which were viewed as inauthentic questions to which the teacher knew the answer, was found to provide scaffolding that fostered elaborated ākonga discussion when ākonga utterances were considered (Boyd & Rubin, 2006). O'Connor and Michaels (2007) suggest that classrooms require discourse that is both monologic and dialogic, meaning that dialogue exists along a continuum, which is influenced by the ideological stances of speakers and listeners, and what Mercer (2003) terms communicative functions. According to Dull and Murrow (2008), it is essential for all ākonga to experience different forms of dialogue because it enables them to practice skills essential for contributing and participating in society. However, given the disparities in equity for some ākonga, notably those in lower SES contexts, identifying the barriers to effective dialogue within these contexts will be fundamental to ensuring equitable access to the development of speaking and listening skills in ākonga, across the learning pathway.

## **Dialogue and digital technology**

Technological advances and increases in the availability of digital technology has resulted in it becoming a mainstay within developed societies. The revision of the Technology learning area within the New Zealand Curriculum to include digital technology reflects the importance of digital technology in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand and to ensuring ākonga can become digitally capable individuals (Ministry of Education, 2018). The recent lockdowns because of the Covid-19 pandemic have also highlighted the importance of digital technology to teaching and learning programmes being accessible to ākonga for continued learning. Digital technology can play multiple roles within classrooms and schools, including being used as a passive tool, an object of interaction, a participant within interaction, and an active tool for learning (Beauchamp, 2016). Choices around how teachers use digital technology are influential to learning because it changes the locus of control and power dynamics within learning interactions (Beauchamp, 2016). Choices are made more complex by the speed of technological change, which means that teachers must keep informed to ensure that digital technology is used effectively for learning (Beauchamp, 2016). However, alongside the pervasiveness of digital technologies exist differences in individuals' abilities to access digital technology (MacIntyre, as cited in Brown et al., 2016), as well as in individuals' abilities to use digital technologies, in the form of digital capital (Brown et al., 2016). These factors influence the learning experiences of ākonga and, as aforementioned in Mutch (2021), access and use of digital technology in Aotearoa New Zealand is not equitable. Thus, underpinning the effective use of digital technology to foster listening and speaking skills in ākonga are experiences that create equitable conditions for learning for all ākonga and that account for individual differences in access and ability. Major et al. (2018) found that inclusion and engagement was compromised when unequal access to digital technology occurred or there were low participation rates by ākonga in activities. According to Sailer and colleagues (2021) it is fundamental that all ākonga hold the basic digital skills that enables them to effectively participate in society.

Digital technology has the capability to contribute to growth in listening and speaking skills, as well as contributing to reconstructing views around traditional notions of face-to-face dialogue (Major & Warwick, 2019). Within digital technology, dialogue is viewed more expansively. Kerawall and colleagues (2013, p.100) describe the dialogic space as one “where ideas [can] be put forward, respected, scrutinised, and challenged in a supportive discursive environment”. Within this dialogic space sits social media, which is the activity of interacting with others through programmes or websites, such as blogs, wikis, forums, social networking sites, curating sites, and media or content sharing sites (Beauchamp, 2016). However, the role of social media in developing dialogue in ākonga is complex due to age restrictions around use. Digital technology does not necessarily extend dialogue in terms of utterances. For example, microblogging uses forms of social media or instant messaging applications to share, short messages via the internet that represent or create opportunities for knowledge creation in real time (Rasmussen et al., 2019; Schrader, 2015) that can be used as prompts for learning (Major et al., 2018).

One of the key benefits of using digital technology to support the development of listening and speaking skills, is its capacity to foster thinking through joint attention. Schrader (2015) conceptualises these as communities where shared activity occurs, and notes that social media, especially, creates connections within larger, more global communities. These communities often include more diverse members, because of differences in the role of interpersonal skills when using digital technology (Schrader, 2015). Thus, digital technology, especially through social media, may foster conditions for equity, although this is influenced by individual access and their abilities to use digital technology. It certainly provides ākonga with opportunities to be exposed to different viewpoints and perspectives (Major et al., 2018; Schrader, 2015), which have been linked to aspects of socio-emotional wellbeing (Gehlbach, 2010). Joint attention fosters a deeper, shared consideration of information and ideas, and the development of reasoning skills to occur in ākonga as they co-construct understandings and knowledge (Mercer et al., 2019; Schrader, 2015). As such, digital technology, including social media, can be used as a tool and/or an environment for developing a shared dialogic space for learning (Major & Warwick, 2019; Schrader, 2015), in which listening and speaking develop.

The notion of digital affordances relates to the interrelations between object and subject (Merleau-Ponty, as cited in Major & Warwick, 2019) and denotes the possibilities for the use of digital technology within the dialogic space, known as action possibilities. Major and Warwick (2016) extend action possibilities to include enacted affordances, which means that digital affordances are viewed in terms of how they are used to foster dialogue, within a reciprocal relationship. Mediating this relationship is the development of dialogic pedagogies by teachers (Major & Warwick, 2019). Research suggests that digital technology provides multiple affordances, which can be enacted to foster listening and speaking skills. One key affordance is the multimodal nature of digital technology; the enactment of which fosters listening and speaking skills. Within the multimodal space, digital technology can be viewed in terms of how it can be enacted through visual, auditory, and text-based functions (Major et al., 2018; Major & Warwick, 2019), as well as how it provides ākonga with the opportunity to exert control over their learning. Multimodal spaces may provide opportunities for engagement by Māori and Pacific ākonga because it provides a platform where different views and perspectives are discussed and diverse levels of meaning can be represented

(Hindle & Matthewman, 2017), although this may be influenced by whether opportunities foster ākonga connections to culture, language, and identity and how the multimodal space is enacted. According to Sailer et al. (2021) within the interactive, constructive, active, and passive (ICAP) model, interactive activities are where listening and speaking are more likely to occur because they require ākonga to build upon their contributions, usually through a form of dialogue. However, in a large sample of teachers across different educational contexts in Germany, they found that teachers were more likely to foster passive activities that were based on storing information rather than interactive activities that constructed knowledge or involved problem-solving.

Fisher and Frey (2019) outline the role of listening stations (auditory digital tools or applications that can be extended to be multimodal by including other aspects) in developing ākonga knowledge within content areas, through listening skills. Importantly, listening stations enhance engagement and equity because it bridges the gap between listening comprehension and reading comprehension by providing ākonga with access to more complex texts that would be accessible via written text. While the gap between listening comprehension and reading comprehension is argued to narrow over time, it is persistent in nature (Fisher & Frey, 2014), meaning that digital technologies used in a multimodal manner can be enacted across the learning pathway. It also provides valuable opportunities for the development of listening skills, as ākonga can pace the input of knowledge by pausing, rewinding, or reviewing material that fosters processing to create meaning (linguistic comprehension) (Fisher & Frey, 2014). This suggests that digital technology, when enacted in multimodal spaces, can enhance engagement and equitable outcomes for ākonga, including those with reading or processing difficulties and ELL. However, Fisher and Frey (2019) caution that listening stations (and as such other digital technologies) can become problematic if they are used in isolation, because it removes the social interaction that is required for dialogue. They argue that one of the fundamental conditions of the effective use of listening stations, as a form of digital technology, is that listening must be applied through interaction with others.

Digital technology can also be enacted in ways that acknowledges the fluidity and transitory nature of ideas within and between ākonga (Major & Warwick, 2019). Within the dialogic space, digital affordances such as via microblogging or applications enables ideas to be adapted, changed, or modified over time, through visual, verbal, or written methods. This means that variation can occur to meet ākonga developmental needs, such as using visual and speaking methods to record ideas for ākonga who have not yet developed written language skills (Ousselin, 2015) or who may experience written language difficulties. Sharing in such spaces enables ākonga perspectives and contributions to be recognised (and at times critiqued), through the sharing and manipulation of shared ideas, which is a key component of learning via dialogue (Rasmussen et al., 2019). Research in the UK with 8–9-year-old students carried out by Warwick and colleagues (2010) found that using an Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) within a dialogic space, enabled each ākonga to be positioned within the activity on the IWB, which was supported using provisional placings of materials (in this case of solids and liquids), rather than final placings. The activity supported cumulative knowledge building because it enabled a third category to be added, leading to a repositioning of provisional placings. Furthermore, the visual representation of ākonga developing understandings via digital technology meant they could be revisited later. Thus, digital

technology becomes a tool for creating learner histories and on-going dialogue (Mercer et al., 2019), which is not always possible with the use of physical artefacts within classroom spaces, although there are clear similarities between digital technology and physical artefacts in terms of how dialogic talk can be anchored and extended with ākonga, as in Cowie et al. (2008).

The speed of change in digital technology means that teachers are likely to require ongoing support to ensure it is enacted effectively in the classroom. Having digital technologies alone does not support its effective use in student learning (Major et al., 2018; Sailer et al., 2021) and research is paramount to understanding how teachers and students interact with digital technology (Rasmussen et al., 2019). According to Sailer et al., (2021) teachers who hold basic digital skills are more likely to use digital technology in their teaching, including interactive activities. Major et al., 2018 found that familiarity with digital technology types fostered collaborative talk. However, longitudinal research by Orlando (2014) in a group of Australian primary and secondary teachers found that their needs were disparate to the support offered by school-based professional development. Support that reflects teachers' needs becomes more important when digital technology is being enacted within a dialogic space because the task must share, expand, or challenge one's knowledge, thus, providing opportunities for thinking and reasoning, as well as foster dialogue (Mercer et al., 2019). Rasmussen and colleagues (2019) noted that digital technology adds complexity to dialogue, which means ākonga must be explicitly taught to use collaborative and problem-solving strategies for learning. This complexity is why Mercer, Rasmussen, and colleagues (Mercer et al., 2019; Rasmussen et al., 2019) have consistently advocated for talk or local ground rules to foster dialogue and collaboration via digital technology<sup>2</sup>. However, Rasmussen et al. (2019) noted high variability in the degree to which ground rules were implemented successfully by teachers. This variability may be due to the task at hand (Rasmussen et al., 2019), whether the rules targeted collaboration or behaviour management, but also may be related to who the ground rules privileged (i.e., speakers who hold ideas and are not silent participants). This suggests that talk rules (or interaction rules) must be responsive and equitable to all ākonga.

Several other barriers and facilitators have been identified in using digital technology in a dialogic space. To enact digital affordances effectively, teachers must hold awareness of the actual properties and capabilities of the technology, rather than the perceived properties and capabilities (Major et al., 2018). Teachers must also hold factual and procedural knowledge that enables the technology to be utilised to its potential by both teachers and ākonga, which is influential in retrieval, thus, positively, or negatively affecting engagement and foster equity (Beauchamp, 2016). Teachers need to be cognizant of how to enact digital affordances within learning to foster listening and speaking within dialogic spaces, which are influenced by teachers' pedagogical beliefs and understandings. Mercer and colleagues (2019) note that the effective use of digital technologies is influenced by teachers' pedagogical stances and understandings of digital affordances. Yet, they further argue, most of the professional development relates to developing digital technology skills, rather than utilising developed

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<sup>2</sup> Talking rules or local ground rules are further expanded upon in exploratory talk (see page 35). The short discussion here of talk/ground rules, specifically related to literature addressing dialogic talk within the digital technology space.

resources of teacher practice that create spaces for dialogue and critique of existing strategies through explicit links between theory and practice; without which, practices cannot be enhanced or contrasted, and new pedagogical practices developed. This type of workshop model (research informed, school based professional development) has been found to be effective within research (see Hennessy et al., 2017). However, Orlando's (2014) research suggested that those pedagogical changes may not be evidenced in teaching practice instantaneously. She found that changes did not occur until the third year of the five-year study, although this was related to the teachers' own context and their responses within the context. Orlando (2014) suggested that changes in teaching practice were associated to changes in knowledge and learning organisation, meaning that fostering dialogue using digital technology as a tool or an environment requires multi-faceted professional development.

### **Dialogic talk**

Variation in classroom talk is reflected within the work of Robin Alexander, whose cross-cultural research identified that classrooms organised their communicative processes differently. Dialogic talk describes effective types of classroom interactions and is defined as occurring when teachers and ākonga contribute in substantial and meaningful ways to support learning in moving forward (Mercer, 2003). Dialogic talk provides opportunities for sustained dialogue with conversational partners (Mercer, 2003), which provides significantly more opportunities to talk than in traditional classroom settings (Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). The inclusion of open or divergent questioning promotes metacognition and deeper understandings of knowledge, including argumentative skills and content area knowledge (Dull & Murrow, 2008; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). Meaning that is fluid in nature, is constructed through dialogue and is the product of different voices (Fisher, 2007). Thus, the active involvement and engagement of tamariki within this approach is clear. Dialogue, which is thoughtful and reasoned leading to a coherent or common understandings (National Literacy Trust, 2012), provides tamariki with models of language strategies that can then be practised, thus, dialogic talk can include complex language structures. Well-structured oral activities within collaborative contexts are associated with on-task behaviours that are maintained over time (Alexander, 2008), alluding to dialogic talk leading to greater engagement in learning by tamariki.

Dialogic talk appears to emphasise speaking as tamariki are required to share their thinking. Thus, it could be argued that dialogic talk privileges ākonga who hold speaking skills or those who are more confident to apply speaking skills within given learning contexts. The National Literacy Trust (2012) places much emphasis on what dialogic talk sounds like, however, they also provide an indication as to how speaking skills can be scaffolded within the classroom for silent participants or less confident ākonga. One key tool the National Literacy Trust (2012) outlines for developing speaking skills during dialogic talk is the use of talking frames, which Austin (2020) argues can be used by teachers to foster inclusion to diverse learners. According to Frey and colleagues (2013) the use of talking frames reduces the linguistic load on ākonga by providing some of the vocabulary required to engage in the dialogue, thus, also promoting the use of advanced language. This provides scaffolding for

ākonga, including those who may need additional support, including ELL (Frey et al., 2013), or less confident speakers or speakers with lower oral language skills. Talking frames can be used to provide scaffolding for tamariki to build dialogue (Frey et al., 2013), including how interactions can be extended on (in addition to ...), as well as changes or switches of topic (we have covered...), or reflecting upon ideas (to go back to... again) (National Literacy Trust, 2012). Speakers can also be scaffolded to provide feedback using specific talking frames (That is interesting...), although literature suggests that feedback should not be restricted to verbal behaviours but can also include the use of non-verbal behaviours, such as gestures (National Literacy Trust, 2012), or written (or visual) language such as the use of journals to record ideas (Austin, 2020).

Although dialogic talk has been identified as contributing to the success of Māori, as Māori, it is unclear how the use of talking frames would influence the engagement of Māori or Pacific ākonga in learning or illustrate equity. The use of talking frames needs to provide conditions where ākonga can express culture, language, and identity, which contribute to making sense of meaning (Berryman & Eley, 2017) for them to be effective. For ākonga being able to make connections to L1 is likely to be important. Talking frames may be less likely to support relationship development and the conversational styles of talk which have been found to enhance the learning of Māori and Pacific ākonga, which would negatively affect engagement. This is where rangatiratanga is paramount. The use and composition of talking frames and how they are implemented should include dialogue with Māori and Pacific ākonga, although research is required to determine how to do this effectively.

As aforementioned, tools such as the explicit use of rules can be used to support ākonga in relation to the parameters of dialogue (Fisher, 2007; Pennell, 2014), which can be created by ākonga as a class. Other techniques can also be used including, questioning techniques, such as pose-pause-pounce-bounce (PPPB) (William & Leahy, 2015) that aims to ensure deep thinking occurs prior to extracting understandings from ākonga, often in combination with other techniques, such as no-hands-up unless for questions (William & Leahy, 2015). Fundamental to the success of these techniques is providing ākonga with opportunities for engagement, thinking time and the cumulative building of ideas, through dialogue (National Literacy Trust, 2012). These tools can create conditions that aim to foster inclusion, however, Austin (2020) notes that care needs to be extended by teachers to ensure they do not become enforcers of rules. Inclusion, as a form of empowerment for ākonga, means that decision making around levels of contribution to dialogue, should lie with ākonga, which can only occur if opportunities to contribute are present for all ākonga (Austin, 2020). As with talking frames, the use of rules (or guidelines for interactions) needs to acknowledge the decision-making capacities of Māori ākonga, thus rules that make speaking compulsory or that are used to control ākonga behaviour, are unlikely to promote engagement and are therefore not equitable. Supporting Māori ākonga in terms of engagement and equity can occur through other conditions, such as the use of smaller groups or one-to-one interactions, or the use of translanguaging skills to support the use of L1.

While much of the emphasis of dialogic talk is placed on the speaker, Haroutunian-Gordon (2015) argues that dialogic talk is underpinned by listening skills, because it requires tamariki to engage in listening to resolve a question. Thus, for dialogic talk to occur, tamariki (and teachers) must listen actively and with purpose. Dialogic talk disrupts traditional power relations, which equitable engagement because meaning is created through joint construction (Sanjakdar, 2019) and responsibilities are shared among participants (Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013), although different points of views exist. Thus, dialogic talk is an approach that transforms traditional classroom structures into communities of learning (Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). This supports the inclusion of underserved learners through the promotion of ākongā voice and the meeting of needs through discussion that includes knowledge and opinion. However, dialogic talk is dependent upon open structures of discussion that are cumulative in nature, which can vary across contexts (See Sanjakdar, 2019).

While dialogue is open, effective dialogic talk requires planning, which must include active thinking time. According to Fisher (2005) it is thinking time in combination with dialogue that is fundamental to learning within dialogic talk. This means that teachers need to have a repertoire of tools that can be used to develop active thinking in ākongā, which fosters listening and speaking skills. Literature suggests that other conditions are required to foster conditions for dialogic talk. These conditions include a tenet of involvement and respect between teacher and ākongā, the ability to phrase questions to foster discussion between ākongā as they share their ideas and fostering interpersonal relationships within the learning space (see Boyd & Burrow, 2006). Within these conditions, teachers require specific skills, including the ability to model quality reasoning (i.e., think alouds), and the provision of meaningful feedback that fosters further talk, thus contributing to the development of metacognition (Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013).

Much of the difficulty related to fostering conditions for dialogic talk, relates to the scant availability of comprehensive pedagogies for teachers that would enable them to develop the necessary skills and abilities to foster dialogic talk and the development of associated skills and knowledges in ākongā (Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). Reznitskaya and Gregory (2013) argue that to develop dialogic talk, teachers require opportunities to critically examine existing communication patterns within their classroom; it is through this analysis that teachers can become consciously aware of language use and pedagogical choices. As such, it appears that professional development for teachers is fundamental but that attempting to do this within teacher training would be unlikely to provide an authentic context for analysis, although undoubtedly teacher training programmes provide a place where knowledge around language use and effective pedagogies for fostering dialogic talk can be developed. This is supported by research that found targeted interventions or top-down programmes lack effectiveness in terms of developing pedagogy that shifted classroom patterns of talk towards dialogic, which are instrumental for long-term effectiveness (Smith et al., 2004).

## **Exploratory talk**

Exploratory talk is a form of working for understanding, which Jones (2007) argues facilitates effective learning. Exploratory talk occurs when ākongā reshape old or known

knowledge with new or unknown experiences or understandings (Barnes, 2008; Jones, 2007). Working for understanding is carried out by ākonga as they share relevant information (Whitebread et al., 2018) to reach consensus, with support from teachers (Barnes, 2008). Inherent in exploratory talk is that all ideas are worth being attended to (Mercer et al., 2019), even though discomfort in ākonga may occur as they experience cognitive conflict (National Literacy Trust, 2012). This occurs as familiar views or understandings of the world are challenged by the ideas and viewpoints of other individuals (Barnes, 2008; Whitebread et al., 2018). Working for understanding through exploratory talk provides ākonga with opportunities to test out and confirm new understandings within a flexible manner (Barnes, 2008) and has been identified as influential to the development of self-regulation skills (Whitebread et al., 2018). Exploratory talk has also been found to foster metacognitive skills in ākonga over other types of talk including disputational and limited (Grau et al., 2018). Interestingly, Grau and colleagues (2018) did not identify an association between cumulative talk and metacognitive regulation. They suggested it was facets within exploratory talk, such as critiques or examinations of ideas that provided a context for the development of metacognitive skills. As ākonga developed, they were able to apply metacognitive regulation outside of extended interactions (Grau et al., 2018). This is supported by Webb and colleague's (2017) synthesis of research, where exploratory talks exerted moderate to large effects for reasoning skills, in ākonga from 11 to 14 years of age.

Exploratory talk is characterised by hesitations, pauses, interjections and incomplete ideas as the speaker seeks to make meaning through their own ideas. Thus, listening and speaking within exploratory talk includes verbal and non-verbal behaviours such as paralanguage. According to the National Literacy Trust (2012), these behaviours are indicative of the speaker attempting to make meaning as they speak, which makes this approach appear less structured or unstructured than dialogic talk. This less structured form of talk may be why rules of talk are argued to be crucial to exploratory talk. The explicit rules of talk, which must be taught to ākonga, contributes to fostering a community of learning through common understandings (National Literacy Trust, 2012). However, rules have also been critiqued within literature because the talk structures that evolve from these rules are likely to privilege certain groups of ākonga, while not being culturally or linguistically responsive to the identities of other ākonga (Lambirth, 2006). Mercer (as cited in Patterson, 2018) proposed that ākonga agreement on rules of talk would lessen constraints for some ākonga, making the rules localised. According to Sacks (as cited in Rasmussen et al., 2019) rules created through ākonga interaction and agreement reflect the social and cultural makeup of those present, but they must be enacted responsively. However, research suggests that talk rules may also be developed implicitly. Civil and Hunter (2015) found that values inherent within the Pacific culture that included collectivism and family contributed to developing norms for ākonga interaction within their research; however, these were implicitly developed through ākonga social talk. As with dialogic talk, rules of talk (or ground rules) can provide scaffolding to ākonga who are developing exploratory talk or turn taking skills, meaning that they may support engagement in learning, thus, fostering notions of equity, although whether these need to be explicit, which is often advocated in research, is debatable.

Equity is enhanced when culture, language, and identity are accounted for within exploratory talk. This means that care must be extended not to relegate listening, and thus silent participants, to the background that may be reflective of cultural norms. It is the ability



of ākonga to listen and bridge their own understandings and innovative ideas to make meaning that underpins exploratory talk. Exploratory talk places emphasis on ākonga as speakers themselves as they test out new understandings (Barnes, 2008) and co-construction of innovative ideas via productive discussion (Webb et al., 2017), during which teachers are in the background. Exploratory talk also provides conditions for equity, as exploratory talk can occur using mother tongue or second languages (Webb et al., 2017), thus, fostering a context that acknowledges bilingualism in learning. Civil and Hunter (2015) emphasise the importance of having access to L1 to developing argumentation skills within mathematical dialogue.

Exploratory talk has been intricately linked with the development of abstract reasoning skills, which is attributed to the thinking aloud that occurs between ākonga (Webb et al., 2017). Abstract reasoning skills have been found to have far transfer effects to different knowledge domains, over time for ākonga (6 to 12 months), suggesting that this approach fosters ākonga ability to reason on topics unrelated to the current learning (Webb et al., 2017). Grau and colleagues (2018) also identified far transfer effects for metacognitive skills. As ākonga developed these skills, they were able to apply metacognitive regulation outside of extended interactions. Interestingly, Barnes (2008) explicitly contrasted exploratory talk with presentational talk, which in Aotearoa New Zealand commonly occurs as speeches. In presentational talks, the focus of the speaker is on the audience; thus, adjustments to language, body language, or content are to align with the audience's needs, rather than the speaker's needs. Presentational talk means that the speaker has made meaning of the message and is conveying this to an audience, as a final product for evaluation of information and forms of speech, although it is often free from any authentic context. Barnes (2008) argues that presentational talks (and related writing) are often premature because there has been little opportunity for exploring innovative ideas. However, exploratory talk could be used as a basis for presentational talk because working for understanding provides a context in which current ideas can be attended to by ākonga. Undoubtedly this could increase the value of presentational talks because exploratory talk provides ākonga with important opportunities to work on developing their own understandings from the understandings of others, which is likely to lead to the more reasoned construction of ideas. Because exploratory talk occurs within the social domain, it is likely to provide valuable support to ākonga who struggle within the traditional way in which presentation talk is taught and learned, although because presentational talks in Aotearoa New Zealand are primarily delivered through speech, the teaching of being responsive to audience needs is also fundamental to its success.

The effectiveness of exploratory talk may be influenced by group composition and age. In a study of ākonga from 9 to 16 years of age, Grau and colleagues (2018) found that exploratory talk was more effective in small group situations. They identified a positive association between small group size and metacognitive regulation, which they associated to higher levels of quality talk in groups from early adolescence onwards. Webb and colleague's (2017) synthesis of research found that exploratory talks exerted moderate to large effects for reasoning skills, in ākonga from 11 to 14 years of age. Small group formats of mixed ability ākonga have been found to provide a context in which collaborative argumentative skills, such as in mathematics, can be developed (Anthony & Hunter, 2017; Civil & Hunter, 2015). However, the involvement of non-dominant ākonga in mathematical argumentation has been a source of concern within Hunter and colleagues' longstanding research (Civil & Hunter,

2015). Exploratory talk occurs within learning contexts that are underpinned by existing socio-cultural practices that privileges culture, identity, and language of some learners over others, thus, negatively affecting underserved ākonga (see Civil & Hunter, 2015). Thus, small group approaches are not contexts that automatically create learning environments that benefit all ākonga, in the development of listening and speaking skills (Hunter et al., 2005). For Pacific peoples, whose lived realities are underpinned by respect, ākonga were found to consider learning by listening to teachers more appropriate because teachers were considered elders who, thus, held unquestionable knowledge (Hunter & Anthony, 2011). This level of respect also extended to peers, with ākonga being less likely to engage in argumentative talk if it was viewed as leading to embarrassment for their peers (Hunter & Anthony, 2011).

Understanding socio-cultural practices is fundamental to creating conditions that foster listening and speaking skills through exploratory talk. Negative interactions and peer pressure reduces engagement in small group learning that negatively affects the meaning being made and the consensus being worked towards (Hunter et al., 2005). The stereotyping of ākonga can result in less value being placed on some ideas of ākonga, thus reinforcing the norms of the privileged ākonga in meaning making (Hunter et al., 2005). These factors can negatively affect performance, achievement, and psychosocial development, including self-efficacy and self-perceptions (Hunter et al., 2005). Hunter and colleagues (2005) in their research, carried out in Canada with 1727 ākonga in Grades 5 to 11, also found evidence of gender differences in listening and speaking skills in small group formats. They identified a persistent gender gap by Grade 8 whereby females made a higher quantity and higher quality of oral contributions including the voicing of ideas and opinions, engaging in clarification, as well as, engaging with tact, style of interjections, and demonstrating respect. Interestingly, Hunter and colleagues (2005) findings indicated that males held low estimations of the importance of speaking and listening skills, and by Grade 8 held low estimations of their own levels of these skills, which influenced their participation in small group work. While females demonstrated high quality listening and speaking skills, their self-perceptions as listeners demonstrated a plateau between Grades 5 and 8, with an increase at Grade 11. This suggests the importance of focusing on listening and speaking skills throughout the learning pathway but recognises that growth does not follow the same trajectory across genders. These findings are why Hunter et al. (2005) argued that the ability to work in groups must be developed in ākonga, highlighting the role of teacher modelling that also accounted for verbal and non-verbal behaviours.

Like dialogic talk, teacher knowledge, skills, and abilities are required to develop exploratory talk in ākonga and to plan for their effective use within teaching and learning programmes. According to Mercer and Littleton (2007) these skills, knowledge, and abilities must be taught explicitly. However, this is problematic because, as Patterson (2018) notes, there exists scant research literature that provides the pedagogical practices that would support teachers in facilitating exploratory talk, within teaching and learning programmes, in an authentic manner. This suggests that without knowledge, skills, and abilities, teachers are likely to find it difficult to identify opportunities within the curriculum, where exploratory talk can be used to foster listening and speaking skills (Jones, 2007). According to the National Literacy Trust (2012) teachers must be able to pose questions that cause cognitive conflict, stimulate higher level thinking skills, and explicitly model speaking skills. Jones (2007) noted that effective learning through exploratory talk requires that teachers be clear

upon the task, so that ākonga know the type of talk is required, and that the selected topic fosters ākonga to bridge between the known and the unknown. Inherent in teacher skills is the ability of teachers to model interjections, disagreements, as well as turn taking skills. Teachers also need to hold understandings of how the role of culture, language, and identity in ākonga may influence the development of exploratory talk within socio-cultural contexts of learning. For Pacific and Māori ākonga the development of ground rules for exploratory talk may develop implicitly through a relational lens that reflects cultural values. This challenges the well-established notion in literature that ground rules must be explicit within exploratory talk. This suggests that further examination of the role of culture in exploratory talk may be required.

The complexity of exploratory talk for teachers and ākonga may be why it tends to emerge from middle primary school upwards, with more positive effects being found from early adolescence onwards. However, some research exists within the early years of schooling that suggests that the characteristics of exploratory talk may differ across the learning pathway. In research involving reception (Ages 4 to 5) and Year 3 (Ages 8 to 9) aged ākonga, Patterson (2018) found that cognitive challenges were more likely to be reflected through non-verbal behaviours in the younger ākonga, than through speaking. Furthermore, consensus did not always occur within younger students, although this skill had developed by Year 3, when ākonga used their speaking skills to challenge ideas and reach consensus. This suggests that the foundations for exploratory talk can be developed in younger ākonga but teachers would need to recognise verbal and non-verbal behaviour that contribute to extended interactions. Interestingly, Barnes (2008) argues against an overuse of small groups, noting that what is important is how ākonga engage in the absence of a teacher. However, within the younger years, Patterson (2018) reported that all exploratory talk occurred within small groups, which may have contributed to fostering speaking and listening skills, including non-verbal behaviours. These findings suggest that group size and composition undergo change as ākonga develop; however, it is likely that it is the interactions that occur within the group that are fundamental to developing listening and speaking skills. While speaking is clearly favoured within older ākonga, teachers must teach ākonga how to listen to the contributions of others, which provides ākonga with a context in which existing understandings can be challenged by new understandings. Mercer and Littleton's (2007) argument that exploratory talk should be implemented as a regular approach for learning appears supported by Webb and colleagues (2017) finding that reasoning skills developed in ākonga over time.

### **Socratic talk**

Socratic talk is a more complex form of dialogic talk, during which text is interpreted and meaning is negotiated and co-constructed amongst a group (Tensen & Shea, 2017). Within Socratic seminars teachers are usually non-participants, which means that relationships between ākonga are important to effective outcomes. While the discussion topic that can include open questions, may be pre-determined by the teacher, engaging in Socratic talk is scaffolded for ākonga by preparation prior to engagement. This enables ākonga to develop their own prior knowledge, including the use of questions that can be applied within Socratic talk to create meaning. While this appears to be done independently within Tensen & Shea (2017), this was because preparation was performed as a homework task; however,

preparation can occur within the classroom setting, which provides opportunities for inclusion by working with peers or in small groups, which contributes to supporting cognitive load, relational skills, and meaning making. The development of questions within Socratic talk differs from dialogic talk because they tend not to use explicit talk frames, but more complex syntactic forms of talk such as paraphrasing and evaluations. According to Barker et al., (2016) therefore classroom relationships are fundamental to developing equal and critical dialogue within Socratic talk.

Prior preparation means that materials may vary widely, and the independent nature of preparation suggests that Socratic talk, as a teaching approach, is better suited to upper primary or secondary students. However, discussion topics, background preparation, and access to text are all factors that influence the initial engagement of ākonga in Socratic talk. In Tensen & Shea (2017) the vast range of text topics used by tamariki to prepare for Socratic talk that aligned with the discussion topic, hindered the ability of ākonga to engage in talk because they were unable to gain depth in conversation, due to the wide breadth of researched material. Tensen & Shea (2017) further noted that engaging in Socratic talk required texts that could be accessed by all students. While Tensen and Shea (2017) noted the difficulty of this, it highlights the role of multimodal texts and digital technology in supporting access to texts and the development of background knowledge. Furthermore, instead of engaging in Socratic talk, tamariki instead appeared to engage in presentational talk due to cognitive overload (Tensen & Shea, 2017), which may have been related to the breadth of information derived from the identified discussion topic.

Socratic talk is an approach that can be used to foster speaking and listening skills in ākonga. One strategy that promotes both listening and speaking skills within Socratic seminars is the instructional tool, called the fishbowl<sup>3</sup>. The fishbowl includes two concentric circles, with each circle of tamariki being assigned an initial role of listener or speaker (Tensen & Shea, 2017). The concentric circles aim to support the ability of tamariki to apply speaking skills by limiting the number of speakers, which may be important for groups of ākonga, such as Pacific, who prefer small group learning. However, supporting turn taking within the fishbowl is important to ensure that speaking within the circle is not dominated by more confident tamariki who may dominate the role of speaker and to ensure that the ideas contributed by ākonga are not marginalised and devalued. Furthermore, care must be extended not to reduce the use of speaking skills to quantity of interactions or length of utterances over the quality of talk, which has been observed within research (Tensen & Shea, 2017). Concentric circles provide additional challenges, especially in circumstances where the role of speaker or listener remains fixed for the entire session. This fails to support reluctant ākonga or silent participators, who in effect are relegated to speaking or listening for the entire interaction. While, in Tensen and Shea (2017) support was given to tamariki who were reluctant speakers, this included using interference by calling on tamariki specifically rather than developing skills in ākonga that would support them to use turn taking cues to

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<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that this instructional tool could also be applied within dialogic and exploratory talk.

enter discussions independently. Within Barker and colleagues (2016), different supports were evident that fostered speaking skills in ākonga that reflected tuakana teina. Teachers scaffolded dialogue via one-to-one teacher conferencing that incorporated the developing ideas of tamariki within their preparation notes, to encourage and support the independent use of speaking skills. The key role of the listener is to actively listen to their partner within the speaking circle but to also monitor participation within the wider group, which in Tensen & Shea (2017) was based on intensive and in-depth preparation around a targeted text, which included the development of questions for sharing during the seminar. The use of Bloom's taxonomy to develop questions in Tensen & Shea (2017) suggests that the complexity of Socratic seminars could be varied to meet ākonga needs, as well as being used to develop higher order skills, including critical thinking. The development of high order skills, which also reflects the key competencies, fosters the development of more complex listening and speaking skills, thus, a reciprocal effect occurs.

The development and use of listening skills within the fishbowl technique are supported using digital technology, where the listener records interactions and discussions. The teacher monitors these interactions for engagement by tamariki in listening, however, it is also apparent that digital technology can also be used to foster inclusion in multiple ways. The use of backchanneling platforms (Barker et al., 2016) to support engagement is a clear example of how both dialogic and Socratic talk can foster conditions for inclusion and equity and within the classroom. Instead of speaking skills being of key importance, tamariki use technology to engage in dialogue through online conversations, which run simultaneously with the dialogic or Socratic talk. In Barker et al. (2016) the backchanneling platform was available to all students, which provided tamariki with the means to engage in dialogue when they would have been silenced or unsuccessful. Thus, backchanneling facilitates engagement and because it can be used outside of the concentric circle it provides a means for less confident ākonga or silent participants to contribute to interactions. It also provides a means for engagement by which ākonga with processing difficulties or hearing impairments can engage and the multimodal nature of digital technology means that recorded interactions could be visual, written, or verbal in nature, which also enables material to be reviewed that fosters processing to create meaning. According to Barker and colleagues (2016), tamariki involvement via backchanneling platforms reflected engagement in complex dialogic talk, the development of metacognitive skills, student voice, meaning making, and relationship building. The use of backchanneling platforms also fosters conditions for more equitable engagement in both speaking and listening roles than identified in Tensen & Shea (2017), as tamariki in Barker et al (2016) moved between the concentric circles, with the listeners using the platform to guide subsequent discussion as they moved into the role of speakers. Overall, it appears that the skills, abilities, and knowledge that teachers require to create effective conditions for dialogic and exploratory talk and for the effective use of digital affordances would transfer to support Socratic talk, with the addition of pedagogical tools for fostering engagement, such as how to select texts or questions and the use concentric circles effectively. While this suggests that modelling with ākonga is fundamental for effective Socratic talk, it most often appears to be developed through practice.

## Philosophy for Children

Philosophy for children (P4C) is an umbrella approach that provides opportunities to develop philosophical skills in ākonga. P4C involves tamariki philosophising, or problem-solving, existential questions in a collaborative manner, often referred to as a community of inquiry (Lipman, 1981). Because P4C involves all tamariki, an elevated level of inclusion and engagement in learning is inferred, regardless of whether P4C occurs at a whole class or small group level. P4C is a form of dialogic talk (Fisher, 2007), meaning that listening and speaking skills play key roles within this approach. The approach emphasises the development of multiple skills and intelligences, including critical and creative thinking skills, logical and verbal reasoning, and philosophical and emotional intelligence, which reciprocate to further develop listening and speaking skills.

The focus on existential questions means that curiosity is fundamental to P4C and that it is the natural curiosity of ākonga that is needed to create knowledge and to develop dialogic skills (Fisher, 2007). However, background experience and existing knowledge are influential to the ability of ākonga to express curiosity in relation to existential questions. Austin (2020) notes that Bourdieu's *capital* means that ākonga can be advantaged or disadvantaged by their background knowledge and experiences, which influences their ability to be successful within education. This suggests that while curiosity is fundamental to P4C, higher social capital may privilege ākonga who hold the background experiences and knowledges, and the listening and speaking skills that enable them to engage in dialogic discussions. Literature suggests that background knowledge can be fostered in ākonga, which may vary across the learning pathway from highly scaffolded to more independently guided, as in Socratic talk, as well as the use of digital technology to support neurodiversity in ākonga. In Austin (2020), teachers used games and storybooks to develop background knowledge around friendship which underpinned the existential question. Pennell (2014) used picture books and vocabulary discussion to facilitate the identification of philosophical issues, while Trickey and Topping (2006) noted the use of stories and poems. Because P4C is a philosophical approach, Trickey and Topping (2006) also note that background knowledge is also supported through explicit links to previous learning. They argue that this reinforces previous learning while enabling ākonga to bring forward relevant thinking into the current lesson. This reinforces the importance of teachers creating a context that fosters ākonga to bridge their own understandings with innovative ideas to make meaning.

The influence of social capital on the ability of ākonga to engage in dialogic talk within P4C appears to have differential effects. Austin (2020) found that ākonga with lower social capital were able to engage in critical thinking. This engagement is likely to foster a reciprocal effect in the development of listening and speaking skills. Demirtaş and colleagues (2018) identified an association between the quality of the answers given by ākonga and their ability to pose complex question, highlighting the reciprocal effect between listening and speaking skills. However, Austin (2020) identified that teachers' pre-conceived expectations around social capital were influential to ākonga engagement in discussions. This suggests that the ability of ākonga to engage in P4C is related to teachers' perceptions of ākonga, which

means that teachers are influential in fostering or creating a barrier to learning in ākonga within this approach that would have a reciprocal effect on the development of listening and speaking skills and higher order speaking skills in ākonga.

Teacher knowledge, skills, and abilities are fundamental to P4C. Teachers are required to hold knowledge around philosophical aspects and are also required to have the capacity to develop these understandings within ākonga. Philosophical questions may be developed by ākonga or prepared by teachers to provide scaffolded support to ākonga (Fisher, 2007), although often the suitability of questions for philosophical discussion is determined by the teacher, which suggests that teachers need to understand their own socio-cultural constraints. P4C is also underpinned using open-ended sentences and extended verbal responses, both from the teacher and ākonga. It is important that teachers can interpret questions within philosophical understandings to ensure they are not constrained or reinforced by dominant viewpoints, demonstrate collaborative dialogic talk through speaking and listening, and recognise when clarification of thinking is required in ākonga (Austin, 2020). Trickey and Topping (2006) outline the dialogic process, which highlights the importance of teachers being able to foster ākonga understandings in relation to points of views, and how these can be supported by reason. They also note that teachers need to be able to foster the ability of ākonga to understand how points of view can vary between individuals, which is fundamental to creating conditions for inclusion and equity.

While most of the output within P4C is through speaking, listening skills are fundamental to ākonga and teachers engaging in P4C, as well as engaging in a variety of perspectives, which fosters the development of points of view, which vary between ākonga and teachers. The articulation of thinking skills is fostered through the development of philosophical academic language (Austin, 2020), which can be supported through digital technology (including visually and verbally). Austin (2020) argued that the elaborated language code contained within philosophical academic language enabled ākonga to access higher level thinking and understanding; however, in that study, all the participating teachers held strong beliefs around the role of academic language in the learning of tamariki suggesting they held high perceptions of ākonga. This may be why Austin (2020) argued that teachers who explicitly teach philosophical academic language for higher level thinking hold higher expectations of tamariki, thus, scaffolding them for further success.

While Austin (2020) noted teaching P4C through modelling and peer dialogue that was supported using talk frames (i.e., “I think... because...”), there was clear variability in the complexity of student language and thought at the outcome, which appeared to focus on speaking skills, which ranged from silent participation to group dominance. According to Dawes et al. (as cited in Topping and Trickey, 2014) teachers often assume that ākonga hold skills that support them to engage in discussions; however, as aforementioned, verbal behaviours are also related to differing cultural values, such as for Pacific and Asian ākonga. If successful outcomes of P4C are heavily weighted in speaking skills, what can be considered active engagement becomes narrowly defined, which conveys the notion that silent participation is not appropriate and that listening is not a valuable skill. It is unclear

whether consideration of how learning outcomes could be demonstrated in diverse ways occurred within Austin's (2020) research. Some consideration was apparent within the planning with P4C with the use of journal writing to record the development of philosophical dialogue and academic language, although journal writing was also used as a tool for behaviour management.

P4C is a complex teaching approach. Research has suggested that the approach is highly teacher-sensitive; thus, requiring in-depth professional development in its use (Trickey & Topping, 2004). Austin (2020) notes that P4C is challenging for some ākonga. The challenging nature may be attributed to the P4C space being unpredictable, due to the emerging nature of different ideas and subsequent exploration of ideas within open dialogue (Austin, 2020), which requires a shift towards high levels of ākonga talk. This does suggest, however, that such an approach is aligned with te ao Māori because it shifts the talk to ākonga, within open dialogue, thus altering power relationships. It also requires teachers to listen to ākonga, rather than focus on managing behaviours (Trickey & Topping, 2004), which is likely to foster engagement in ākonga, especially Māori and Pacific. Austin (2020) argues that the challenging nature means that P4C fosters the development of resilience in ākonga and teachers, which is required to cope with learning within P4C. However, Austin (2020) also identified that the development of resilience was different between teachers and tamariki. For teachers, the facilitation of P4C was challenging due to the complexity of the process and nature of open dialogue, which alters traditional power dynamics. For tamariki, resilience is required in P4C, as their emergent thinking is challenged by the ideas of ākonga and changed through new understandings and knowledge as they make meaning. According to Austin (2020), it was developing understandings of the normalcy of discomfort that was influential to developing resilience in ākonga, because it evidenced flexibility in thinking. The challenging nature of P4C may be why student confidence is more likely to develop within smaller COL groups, in comparison to the whole-class context (Austin, 2020; Trickey & Topping, 2004); however, this may also be due to cultural preferences around small group formats (Bishop et al., 2007). Overall, multiple reasons exist for the silence, reluctance, and frustration that can exist within P4C. This means that teacher understandings in relation to the conditions for learning are critical for fostering ākonga participation. This includes the influence of different group sizes and relational pedagogies that reflect cultural responsiveness on the effectiveness of P4C.

### **Collaborative Reasoning**

Collaborative learning models are an example of an instructional approach that are underpinned by the construction of understandings, which are shared as knowledge within the public realm, usually with peers (Remedios et al., 2008). Within such approaches, all students are expected to contribute to the group learning through participation in reasoned arguments. Collaborative reasoning (CR) is an approach underpinned by dialogic inquiry (Reznitskaya et al., 2009); however, CR is predicated on understanding a problem or controversial issue that requires tamariki to work together in groups to determine a path forward, thus reflecting mahitahi (working together as one) and kōtahitanga (purpose) (Berryman et al., 2015). CR



enables ākonga to “engage critically in societal issues” (Ministry of Education, 2015, p. 32) and provides a means by which equity and social justice issues can be openly discussed, from Indigenous and other underserved settings, thus fostering inclusion (Berryman et al., 2015). However, because controversial issues encourage the sharing of different viewpoints that are underpinned by attitudes, perspective, and values that reflect social, cultural, and political factors (Lintner, 2018; Taylor & Keown, 2016), CR cannot be used effectively without the development of relationships that are underpinned by trust (Lintner, 2018), mutually respectful, and interdependent that fosters an equitable space for all ākonga (Berryman et al., 2015). Otherwise, a safe environment will not exist<sup>4</sup>. Fundamental to CR is the use of speaking and listening skills to become better informed with the goal of becoming agents of change. According to Reznitskaya et al. (2009) CR enables tamariki to develop an argument schema based on extended dialogic discussion where no information regarding the controversy is withheld (Lintner, 2018), which can also lead to social action. CR involves gaining understandings, through critical reflection and reasoning, evaluative skills (Lintner, 2018), and analysis of values (Taylor & Keown, 2016) in relation to the existence of dissonance among individuals when exploring controversial issues, which is reflective of everyday life when encountering individuals who hold their own viewpoints.

The CR approach often includes pre-determined rules related to speaking and listening (see Schifflet & Henning, 2017), which Lintner (2018) notes are the cornerstone of democracy. This suggests that the skills underpinning rules need to be developed as part of a teaching and learning programme; however, as aforementioned pre-determined rules, which commonly place a heavy emphasis placed on speaking when collaborating with others can act as barrier for ākonga. According to Remedios and colleagues (2008), the emphasis on verbal interaction with peers with CR, which is viewed as a marker of active engagement within the process, is extremely problematic. They argue it reinforces the premise that silent participation in collaborative approaches is inappropriate, which fails to reflect cultural values. As aforementioned, it may also decrease the engagement of Māori ākonga because rules are less likely to provide a context for conversational styles of dialogue.

As part of their two-year ethnographic research, Remedios et al. (2008) examined the experiences of 30 first year physiotherapy students<sup>5</sup>. They identified 21 students as being silent participants, which was a student who spoke minimally between 0 and 5 times per session with limited utterances, lack of questioning, debate, or discussion, in comparison to other students whose input ranged from 45 times and over per session. They found that silent participants included both ELL learners and local Australian speakers. While they argued that

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<sup>4</sup> There is a clear alignment between the conditions required for effective engagement and learning between CR and P4C

<sup>5</sup> While Remedios and colleagues (2008) carried out this research within a tertiary context, the findings were viewed to be applicable to the current review. This research also contributed valuable insight into the role that personal and socio-cultural factors can exert when using collaborative approaches to learning, including in relation to the use of speaking and listening skills

these did not reflect language differences as the source of silent participation, socio-cultural factors influenced participation. Socio-cultural factors privileged specific types of ākonga, heightened ākonga sensitivities to non-verbal behaviours, understandings around verbal behaviours such as the use of humour, and understandings around how to use turn taking cues to enter interactions. Difficulties around engaging in group interactions were especially apparent when they included complex explorations or elaborations of content. Such difficulties were made more complex when background and content knowledge in students was lower, which affect underserved ākonga when they can align background experiences to the social issue and when students demonstrated difficulties in building on the understandings of others to make meaning. They found that the emphasis on speaking constrained students who preferred to demonstrate understandings and knowledge by multimodal methods, including writing or drawing. Students also held concern that questioning would halt the pace of learning, and perceptions of superficial discussions of material. They also found that ākonga were engaged in the collaborative process through active listening and that ākonga often wanted to increase their level of participation but found it difficult to do so, without the skills that facilitated their ability to apply speaking skills effectively. These findings support existing literature that silent participation may occur for a variety of reasons (see Shi & Tan, 2020).

CR, along with Socratic talk<sup>6</sup> can be conceptualised as a teaching approach that contains minimal teacher guidance (MGA) (Kirschner et al., 2006). Within minimally guided approaches, tamariki are not presented with essential information but construct essential understandings on their own (Kirschner et al., 2006), which can support ākonga identity, culture, and language. In comparison, direct instruction is where concepts and procedures that are required for learning are explicitly taught to students (Kirschner et al., 2006). MGA suggests that participation in the development of such knowledge is key, which requires tamariki to use listening and speaking skills. Existing literature suggests that while CR is argued to be minimally guided approach, teachers must hold the ability to select controversial issues that align with the developmental level of ākonga (Lintner, 2018), as well as understanding ākonga themselves to meet learning needs. Background and contextual knowledge are fundamental to CR, meaning that teachers need to have the knowledge around how tools (i.e., interactive book reads and reading material – see Schifflet & Hennig, 2017) can be inclusive and equitable of all ākonga. This is fundamental to ensuring that tamariki hold knowledge that enables them to participate in within extended dialogue, which in turn contributes to bridging the development of new understandings. The balance between the use of instructional tools and MGA may be related to the developmental levels of the child. Younger children may require higher levels of teacher guidance while older students may experience MGA. Listening skills can be an explicit focus within the CR approach because this approach can be used to facilitate the development of diverse types of listening skills, i.e.,

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<sup>6</sup> This also appears to relate to EL (see page 46)

listening for information, listening to interpret information, and listening with relational focus to ensure trust and safety are maintained.

Challenging existing assumptions through social justice and equity issues within CR requires that teachers understand their own culture and associated socio-historical factors to ensure that on-going dialogue does not reinforce the silencing of the worldviews of minority cultures. Kelly (as cited in Lintner, 2018) notes that dialogue can be encouraged through teachers sharing their own views impartially and creates a condition where different views are then welcomed, which contributes to increased engagement and equity among ākonga. This is made more complex by the fact that differing viewpoints, which are underpinned by multiple contextual factors, means that vocabulary can be complex. Taylor and Keown (2016) note the importance of teachers, and therefore ākonga, holding language (i.e., vocabulary) that supports the issue being explored, which also supports the development of listening and speaking skills. This suggests that teachers need to ensure that ākonga hold the vocabulary that enables them to engage in dialogic talk. This is likely to be more complex for ELL, which can be supported by L1 use. There is a clear risk within CR that speaking skills can become the indicator of student learning; however, Taylor and Keown (2016) are clear that speaking skills should not be a barrier to participation, if the teacher incorporates tools that enable ākonga to express viewpoints, including the use of non-verbal behaviours such as thumbs up/down/sideways. Incorporating such tools, recognises the development of listening skills in CR and their contribution to meaning making. Given the alignment between Socratic Talk and CR, it is also highly likely that other instructional strategies, such as backchanneling that incorporates digital technology that is multimodal, can enhance engagement and equity for ākonga, who are less confident in speaking or who are silent participants.

## **Experiential Learning**

Experiential learning is an approach that supports ākonga to develop valuable learning skills (Kolb & Kolb, 2009). Fundamental to EL is life experiences or real-world situations, which are grasped and then transformed, resulting in the creation of knowledge (Kolb, 2015). Within EL the central tenet includes the active involvement of learners, who are engaged as participants within the learning process (Morris, 2020), which emphasises cognitive knowledge<sup>7</sup> (Waks, 2015). The formalised learning process itself is cyclic and contains two phases, beginning with a *concrete experience* that is realistic in their environment. While the notion of concrete experiences has been contested within literature (see Morris, 2020), the experience is underpinned by ākonga taking ownership of the experience and therefore, holding most of the responsibility within the experience. The next part of the cycle is *reflective observation*, which requires tamariki to think reflectively in relation to the concrete experience. Reflective observation occurs in terms of content knowledge gained (i.e., maths skills) and how the experience may have led to growth or change in terms of developing

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<sup>7</sup> Kolb's emphasis on cognitive knowledge differs from Joplin's focus on the emotional aspects of learning, which is usually discussed using the term experiential education. There is considerable overlap between the two approaches within literature, often without delineation.

perspectives around social issues (Morris, 2020). Reflective observation is followed by *abstract conceptualisation* during which time a working hypothesis is developed, which then passes through *active experimentation* as the conditions are tested within context that enables novel concrete experiences to occur (Morris, 2020).

According to Kolb and Kolb (2009), engaging in this learning cycle, enables ākonga to perceive themselves as learners with the learning process, thus, providing conditions in which attention, effort, and task-based behaviours can be fostered. They further suggest positive spin off effects for ākonga, including the development of learner identity, positive peer relations, and the development of positive self-concept and metacognitive skills that enables ākonga to monitor the fit of the learning process in comparison to their own ways of learning and the demands of the learning at hand, rather than a narrow focus on learning outcomes. Hutt (2007) found that learning related anxiety in Maths could be reduced through a focus on developing learner identity that was associated with teacher perceptions. This research highlighted the important level of knowledge and skills required by teachers, which included teachers being able to consciously attend to unconscious processes, fostering in-depth discussions between ākonga, as well as self-talk within ākonga. This meant that like P4C, risk taking in ākonga is an essential element of EL as they develop their learner identities and develop resilience. According to Kolb and Kolb (2009) the development of learner identities requires trust in new experiences and processes, controlling emotional reactions to failure, as well as reassessing beliefs around learning, thus, a safe environment for learning is imperative. However, according to Hutt (2007) a safe learning space for the development of learner identities was dependent upon how the teacher related to the student, thus, suggesting that teacher self-perceptions are also influential to ākonga developing learner identities over time.

One of the challenges in EL is its bias on cognitive development on an individualistic basis, meaning that language and communication within the social context in which EL occurs is not recognised (Waks, 2015). This may be why listening and speaking skills are often not assessed within the formalised cycle of EL, although when the social context is acknowledged, EL is clearly an approach where multiple contexts exist that foster speaking and listening skills in tamariki (Waks, 2015). This notion is reinforced when EL is viewed within an Indigenous lens. For Indigenous tamariki, including Māori, EL provides crucial learning environments, such as kapa haka, for learning about their culture, language, and identity, within their natural world (Education Review Office, 2021), thus reflecting the importance of whenua to cultural knowledge systems. Tamariki engage in EL to learn about their environment and place, which contributes to learning about Indigenous histories, beliefs, and identities (Hare, 2011). EL creates a place where tamariki can develop cooperative relationships with others (relational listening skills), informational listening as tamariki prepare to engage in the activity with others, and practical listening skills as tamariki engage in experiences (Waks, 2015).

Within the formalised cycle, critical listening skills can be fostered through active experimentation and feedback sessions. Although Kolb and Kolb (2009) identify numerous

ways of learning that are dynamic states, within education, learning within the EL cycle is typically judged on the written language outcomes of ākonga (see Conle & Boone, 2008), thus favouring Western over Indigenous knowledge systems. Understanding how to develop speaking and listening skills in EL is made more complex by the lack of empirical research relating to EL within primary and secondary contexts (Hutt, 2007). In Morris' (2020) systematic review of EL studies from 1323 journals, only 60 EL journal articles identified. Of these 60 articles, only three pertained to middle school education and two further articles related to teacher education. The lack of research related to primary or secondary education, in comparison to within specific professions including nursing, business management, and adult samples of English Language Learners (ELL), may be related to the level of content knowledge that is requisite for concrete experiences to occur. However, it also reflects the ignoring of Indigenous knowledge systems within EL.

Engaging in a formalised cycle of EL requires a core basis of knowledge to be developed in individuals. According to Kirschner and colleagues (2006), even though EL is considered a minimally guided approach<sup>8</sup>, it is not until background knowledge is at a sufficient level whereby ākonga are able to guide their own learning process that EL can be effectively engaged in. They further argue for the importance of background knowledge, by stating that ākonga will be expected to engage in cognitive activities unlikely to lead to learning, due to memory storage. This means within EL, didactic experiences occur as a requisite precursor to concrete experiences. These didactic experiences include tamariki and a more knowledgeable other, most commonly a teacher, which enables tamariki to develop specific content knowledge that establishes foundational knowledge within long-term memory. Literature also suggests that background knowledge reduces cognitive load, especially for neurodiverse ākonga or ELL. Background knowledge enables tamariki to fully engage (and derive maximum benefit) from the concrete experience that constitutes EL, which has been found to lead to greater learning, unlike higher cognitive loads that were found to lead to lower learning (Tuovinen & Sweller, as cited in Kirschner et al., 2006). According to Kirscher and colleagues, such effects are not found in ākonga who hold greater levels of background knowledge, further reinforcing its usefulness as a means of scaffolding learning and engagement in ākonga.

EL is underpinned by the active involvement of tamariki throughout the learning process. However, this requires EL to be recognised as a context whereby ākonga are responsible for learning within a collaborative space, thus, acknowledging the social construction of knowledge (Morris, 2020; Waks, 2015). This contrasts with tamariki engaging within the learning process as a lone scientist, such as in Kolb's model, with tamariki taking full responsibility in transforming experiences to create knowledge. It is within the depth and breadth of EL (Coker et al., 2017) where opportunities to develop speaking and listening

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<sup>8</sup> Minimally guided approaches contain two assumptions. First, the construction of solutions by ākonga leads to effective learning experiences. Second, knowledge is best developed through experience, which can be supported by task or process information, if ākonga choose to use it (Kirscher et al., 2006).

skills exist. Depth relates to time invested within the EL process, which within a collaborative space provides opportunities for the development of listening and speaking skills and the development of higher order thinking skills. For example, in a Canadian case study by Conle and Boone (2008), the collaborative space was underpinned by tamariki being engaged in the decision-making process around determining ‘who was a hero?’ as opposed to categories being pre-determined by the teacher. Engagement was also reflected in the case study, as all tamariki had the opportunity to make connections using their own understandings and experiences, which included cultural [and socio-historical] contexts and personal dispositions (Conle & Boone, 2008).

Breadth refers to effort and is related to the types of experiences that contribute to developing soft or core skills, such as social competence through teamwork. Within these experiences, social interactions are fundamental with the use of dialogue leading to deeper understandings (Morris, 2020). It is within the breadth of experiences that EL may provide opportunities for inclusion that is equitable. In Conle and Boone (2008), a multimodal media was included that enabled tamariki to engage in discussions in multiple different ways, including written text (magazines, poetry anthology), video, and audio recordings. This supported the development of critical discussions, which provided ākonga with opportunities to construct novel experiences related to developing new understandings of what is a hero. While the outcome of the Conle and Boone (2008) case study included a written biography, outcomes can also be intentional activities that promote inclusion while enabling speaking and listening skills to be demonstrated in variable ways. This may include the use of digital technology to visually presentation outcomes that can include speaking, graphic novels, role playing, or audio recordings. The EL approach appears to require a high level of planning and pedagogical knowledge to ensure that conditions are fostered that enable ākonga to access learning within the teaching and learning cycle. This suggests that professional development in this teaching approach would be important to its success.

## **Dramatic Inquiry**

Dramatic Inquiry (DI) is a teaching approach that combines drama and the taking of roles for the exploration of imagined worlds that contains tension, with inquiry where learning occurs through exploration and developing understandings within the real world. DI includes the use of inquiry in combination with dramatic strategies (Farrand & Deeg, 2019). Dramatic inquiry is underpinned using spaces (inquiry and drama), known as metaxis, within the classroom to explore inquiry-based questions, to make meaning within the real world (Edmiston, 2014). According to Heathcote and Bolton (1995), meaning is best made with the whole class and a degree of tension exists for both tamariki and teachers in DI. For tamariki, there can be a feeling of anticipation or conflict within a task or in the development of content knowledge. For teachers, tension exists around the planning and execution of the approach with tamariki. According to Farrand & Deeg (2019) facilitation must include explicit modelling of inclusive practices. They further argue that the development of practices in tamariki fosters problem-solving skills, communication skills, and socio-emotional competencies.

The use of inquiry and drama spaces means that DI can include a variety of materials and promotes communication through multiple modalities, including music, movement, discussion, tactile engagement, and art, which supports inclusion and equity as it draws on the linguistic, social, and cultural strengths of all children (Edmiston, 2007). The inclusion of silent or reluctant participants can be fostered through providing a space for them to observe on-going work, which Downey (personal communication, 26 August 2021) has found supports ākonga engagement. Downey also noted that even if ākonga remain a silent or reluctant participant, they typically remain engaged within the process, meaning that learning still occurs. She suggests that DI privileges those with greater developed speaking skills or higher levels of confidence to a lesser degree than other approaches (or teaching practices) that place more emphasis on reading and writing tasks that clearly privilege some ākonga. DI also fosters engagement and equity by transforming the role of tamariki as they are provided with opportunities to step in and out of the role of student and in and out of the role of others (Farrand & Deeg, 2019).

Listening and speaking have a primary role in DI, which develop through collaboration with others. DI has been expanded to include elements of dialogic talk, through drama-based pedagogies that include tools such as theatre games and role work. Edmiston (2008a; 2008b) extended upon role play to include character acting, during which teachers intervene to encourage the construction and reconstruction of understandings. According to Dawson & Lee (2016) the use of drama tools fosters engagement through utilising diverse ways of learning, which creates an inquiry-based environment and cross-curricular links. Downey (personal communication, 23 August 2021) noted that from her experience, DI provides more opportunities to develop listening and speaking skills in ākonga than otherwise would be provided. Furthermore, the range of experiences can be extremely varied, moving away from how these skills have traditionally been represented in teaching and learning programmes. For example, while speeches can be a component of presentational talk within DI, these do not occur outside of an identified context and they can be presented using multiple modalities, including online, via phone, or surreptitiously. This suggests that DI has the capacity to be responsive to ākonga needs and that engagement and inclusion of ākonga can be fostered through DI.

DI may be of particular benefit to our underserved ākonga. Downey (personal communication, 23 August 2021) found that in her experience, DI benefitted Māori males more because they were able to access learning (and thus experience the curriculum), even though they were more likely to hold lower literacy skills. In these ākonga, benefits extended beyond growth in listening and speaking skills to also benefit written language skills, as well as increased engagement and self-efficacy. Downey further noted that traditionally difficulties in written (and reading) language skills would have prohibited some ākonga from accessing the learning; thus, DI creates conditions for learning that are accessible by all ākonga. It also appears that classroom conditions may create a context that fosters the use of DI. Downey (personal communication, 23 August 2021) noted that the use of mixed ability groups and tuakana teina fostered a classroom ethos where ākonga were a team, therefore, a focus on ability within learning did not exist. She found that this supported the use of DI, which served

to reinforce the classroom ethos, thus, leading to a reciprocal effect. This fosters conditions for inclusion because Māori and Pacific cultures are underpinned by collectivism, rather than individual performance or achievement (Civil & Hunter, 2015). In addition, ability related groupings serve to reinforce tails of underachievement in groups of ākonga, which further contributes to subjugate underserved learners, including many Māori and Pacific ākonga.

Within DI, there exists multiple approaches, including child-structured dramatic play, process drama, drama for learning, mantle of the expert (imagined world). Two additional model exist based on mantle of the expert, including the commission model, and rolling role model.

#### *Child structured-dramatic play (CSDP)*

Within child structured-dramatic play (CSDP) approach the focus is on younger tamariki and their creation of an imagined world, rather than being assigned roles or characters (Aitken, 2020). The creation of the imagined worlds is, as with all other approaches, supported by background knowledge or information, such as through picture books, which is integral to children structuring their own dramatic play. Teachers are non-participants and sit outside of the play process, only intervening as necessary through role play. CSDP may foster the development of listening and speaking. Tamariki appear to freely transfer between using listening and speaking skills as they move from actively representing text through using listening and visual cues to recreating text through play, which may include verbal and non-verbal behaviours provide opportunities for ākonga to recreate beyond the text because they act out on their own thoughts to develop their own imaginative world (Aitken, 2020; Dunn, 2011). It also appears that CSDP may provide a context where writing skills can be developed, as ākonga transfer listening and speaking skills to written language (Aitken, 2020; Dunn, 2011). CSDP creates conditions for inclusion and equity, because ākonga apply their own background knowledge, which includes, language, identity, and culture within their response, which may sit outside the context of the media used to foster the dramatic play. One challenge to CSDP is that teachers must ensure that they are cognizant of text and media choices, to ensure that they do not reinforce dominant discourses and therefore, marginalising Māori ākonga and other underserved groups.

#### *Process drama*

Process drama (PD) is underpinned by an inquiry topic that is devised by the teacher. PD enables ākonga to explore issues or conflict within a fictional world to make sense of the issue or conflict within the real world (Kana & Aitken, 2007). In PD, tamariki are active participants as they collaborate within the drama process to create an experience for themselves (Aitken, 2020). As with CSDP, background knowledge is important; however, in PD instead of using background knowledge as a vehicle for drama, the text is instead used to establish a context for the question of inquiry that may also contain a deeper theme, such as bullying, which is subsequently acted out through improvisation. It appears that within PD, listening and speaking skills are important because it enables ākonga to collaborate as they improvise solutions to the issue or conflict. Thus, there is high alignment between the features



of PD and dialogic and other forms of talk, including a collective and safe environment that is based on reciprocity, which builds extended dialogue that is purposeful in nature (Stinson, 2015). In an Australian case study with 22 Year 4 ākonga, Stinson (2015) found that PD fosters OL development, specifically context, register, and vocabulary. The inquiry topic enabled ākonga to make clear connections between their background knowledge and new learning, even though the inquiry topic was situated within a global context. This finding has also been identified in other research. Smythe (2020) argued that bridging between cultures was fostered by ākonga ability to make critical connections, through sharing of understanding and knowledge of aspects, such as gender. This suggests that PD can provide opportunities for equity and inclusion for ākonga through global and local issues. Interestingly, Stinson identified that growth in oral language skills had transfer effects to positively influence whānau relationships in the home, through the increased use of speaking and listening skills which was supported by the context of inquiry.

Engagement is supported within PD because tamariki and teachers can move in and out of the drama, which acts as a safe space, as they explore different perspectives and reflect on the action (Aitken, 2020; Hulse & Owens, 2015; Wells & Sandretto, 2017). CSDP and PD appear to be used primarily with younger children because of the focus is on engaging within the fictional world; however, it has also been researched within the tertiary setting to examine cultural exclusion (Kana & Aitken, 2007), which suggests that it may be applied across the learning pathway with increasingly complex topics of inquiry. Notably, issues and conflict can be used to extend to global issues, which can create links to other cultures within our culturally diverse population of ākonga. According to Wells & Sandretto (2017) PD has the capacity to enhance classroom literacy programmes through making meaning of multimodal texts, which are situated within socio-cultural contexts. Thus, engagement can be enhanced because language, culture, and identity become a means by which ākonga make meaning of text through moving in and out of the drama.

Wells and Sandretto (2017) in a qualitative study in Aotearoa New Zealand with two teachers and ākonga in Years 0 to 4, integrated PD into a literacy programme. While there was no reference to listening or speaking skills this study, they identified that that engagement in PD was increased because of the collaborative nature of PD. They suggested that this engagement would foster literacy development as they engaged in multimodal texts (Wells & Sandretto, 2017), which suggests that listening and speaking skills were fostered. They argued that the teachers were fundamental to the effectiveness of PD because they worked alongside ākonga, in role, which positively influenced ākonga engagement. Working in role, also provided less confident and reluctant ākonga with a safe space to participate, which supported meaning making and the development of higher order thinking skills (Wells & Sandretto, 2017). Growth in written language skills was identified, in ākonga especially with the use of imagination in writing. One of the challenges of PD is developing the knowledge in teachers that is required to integrate PD effectively into classrooms, which requires a specific focus on using drama conventions within literacy, although the teachers in Wells and Sandretto (2017) initially held little understanding of PD. The high level of support and scaffolding required for teachers within this study suggests that professional development

would be required and that having this support within the classroom context would better support the development of a repertoire of PD pedagogical skills.

### *Drama for Learning (DL)*

In comparison to PD, where tamariki spend most of the time within the imagined world, within DL, tamariki only enter the imagined world for a brief period to establish a context for learning and to create connections with the learner (Aitken, 2020). Within DL there is no background knowledge, the sole function of DL is its application across the curriculum, at any time.

### *Mantle of the Expert*

Mantle of the Expert (ME) can be viewed as an extension of PD. It is the teacher's role to empower ākonga that requires the teacher to facilitate learning, which must occur from within DI and not outside (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995). Tamariki engage in real life inquiry to co-construct understandings that are specifically related to a commission. A commission is an authority who poses a fictional question or problem to tamariki, via the classroom teacher, which is situated within an authentic real-world context. Tamariki are viewed as the experts by the commission, which challenges the power dynamics between teachers and tamariki (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995). Thus, ME creates conditions for the development of key competencies, specifically managing self, relating to others, and participating and contributing, which may contribute to motivation and developing self-esteem (Huxtable, 2009), which operate in a reciprocal manner to influence future learning. Unlike PD, the question of inquiry may not be controversial but there is a clear connection to concrete outcomes. While understandings may have an explicit theme (i.e., bullying) (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995), cross-curricular learning also may naturally emerge as ākonga engage in real life inquiry to problem solve a fictional question at hand (Downey et al., 2019).

According to Heathcote and Bolton (1995) it is fundamental that ākonga develop the skills that are required to engage in ME, which develop over time. Heathcote further argues that ākonga need to be cognizant of the skills or concepts being learned because this fosters their ability (and need) to take responsibility for their learning. The use of background knowledge is integral to co-constructing learning in relation to the question or problem, therefore, this aspect of the process can be scaffolded, to align with the needs of tamariki. In their US case study, Farrand & Deeg (2019) included 12 pre-schoolers with developmental or speech delays. Background knowledge was developed in tamariki using a strategy called pass the object, which incorporated tactile methods and extended thinking time along with listening skills. In other populations, including older ākonga, learning could be extended by having them develop their own background information independently in relation to the inquiry, such as in Socratic talk. Interestingly, the use of accommodations within Farrand & Deeg (2019) that aimed to ensure inclusion appeared to foster listening and speaking skills within tamariki primarily using questions that engaged tamariki in thinking. Within ME, tamariki move in and out of role as a collaborative group, and only engage in speaking

(sharing) when they feel comfortable, thus reflecting rangatiratanga, although it is unclear the conditions that foster engagement in speaking.

The use of ME has been examined in Aotearoa New Zealand using kaupapa Māori and culturally responsive pedagogies. Downey and colleagues (2019) used ME with 96 ākonga across Years 1 to 6 to foster writing outcomes. Within this group a specific focus was placed on Māori ākonga who constituted 30% of the total group. Pirini (Aitken & Pirini, 2013) used ME within a Year 3 classroom of a special character religious school with primarily Pākehā ākonga, many with learning and literacy difficulties. Both Downey et al. (2019) and Pirini developed a curriculum that integrated school-based values with ME. Pirini (Aitken & Pirini, 2013) connected a religious theme with Māori conceptions of creation and tapu o te whenua (sacredness of the land), and as with Downey et al., (2019), incorporated the use of culturally responsive pedagogies, including tuakana-teina and ako, along with multimodal aspects including visual representations of te ao Māori. Downey and colleagues (2019) found that their approach enabled Māori to be valued as Māori. Not only did ME reposition power within the classroom by including, student-led approaches such as tuakana-teina and ako, which challenged Eurocentric approaches as central to learning, it also made te ao Māori visible (Berryman et al., 2017) through the inclusion of whānau, local iwi, and hapū and their own cultural narratives. The repositioning of power was also present in Pirini (Aitken & Pirini, 2013) by the teacher taking on board a low status role of a character who was reliant on ākonga to reconstruct knowledge. Interestingly, ākonga showed higher engagement and ownership in learning in both studies. This suggests that an emotional connection existed for ākonga, which fosters engagement and the desire to develop more complex skills (Huxtable, 2009). Downey and colleagues (2019) attributed this to the process of ME, rather than the writing outcomes that had also demonstrated positive gains for Māori ākonga. The increased engagement and ownership through ME may have been due to approaches being responsive to culture, identity, and language (one of Downey and colleague's ME focused on the local Māori History Museum,) and the importance of oracy for Māori.

Engagement may also have been fostered using mixed ability groups (that may promote listening and speaking skills), which, as aforementioned, are more likely to promote engagement of Māori ākonga. This appears contrary to Heathcote, who advocated that best practice for DI and ME included whole class approaches (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995), and suggests that small group work may provide conditions for fostering inclusion and engagement in learning. However, in Pirini, while multimodal forms of learning were present, including visual arts and storying, higher engagement came from character role playing, which placed ākonga in a high-status role as the more competent 'adults' as they engaged in tuakana teina, via kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) (Aitken & Pirini, 2013), thus developing the ability of ākonga to relate to others. Pirini noted the positive influence of repositioning on ākonga behaviour, which included an increase in focus and positive behaviours that reflected their role as 'adults,' which fostered the ability of ākonga to manage their self. Interestingly, Pirini also noted the implicit development of turn taking skills, especially waiting for the others to finish speaking before talking, and the development of language, which reflected their relationship to each other as adults within the ME. Pirini also reported that her own

language register developed and that she posed questions that created contexts for extended dialogue that also appeared to positively influence the development of listening and speaking skills (Aitken & Pirini, 2013). These skills were not considered in the links to curriculum beyond oral presentations, although Pirini appeared to implicitly note their importance to the process of ME (Aitken & Pirini, 2013).

*Rolling role model* is when distinct groups, for example, multiple classrooms, work together to form a community that is threatened by a fictional challenge. Within the rolling role model, work is co-constructed by distinct groups who leave their work incomplete for another group to move forward with the inquiry. These models appear to be suited to upper primary and secondary ākonga. The *Commission model* extends upon ME by placing the inquiry within a real client and thus the inquiry; is therefore not fictional.

DI provides many opportunities to implement strategies with equitable outcomes for tamariki using materials that promote inclusion (i.e., images, drawings, music, or touch to accompany teacher talk, instead of written text to develop understandings) (Farrand & Deeg, 2019). While there can be an emphasis on literacy skills, such as reading and writing, these can be adapted to reflect multimodal forms, including collages (Farrand & Deeg, 2019), video or audio recordings, or visual language or assisted digital technology presentations (i.e., posters or stories). Because DI is based on inquiry and co-constructing meaning around a question or problem, the inclusion of neurodiverse learners and underserved learners can occur through the careful selection of the focus of the inquiry and encouraging connections to self, throughout the inquiry. One challenge to DI, is that it is not a specialist subject but a pedagogical approach, which may result in difficulties in understandings for teachers. Teachers are required to acknowledge that drama is a context in which meaning can be constructed and reconstructed amongst tamariki, and as such, is an authentic learning experience. Heathcote and Bolton (1995) note that ME can be challenging to teachers, because it requires that both ākonga and teachers operate within drama, which challenges existing conceptions of power within the classroom. Teachers may only consider drama in terms of the tension that arises within the imagined world, without translating it to inquiry, which is based in the real world. This may be why most of the literature appears to focus on teacher strategies and actions rather than the skills it develops in tamariki, including listening and speaking skills. The development of skills appears complex because they vary according to the task at hand, knowledge to be developed, learning area, and social health of ākonga (Heathcote & Bolton, 2005). While Farrand and Deeg (2019) outline accommodations to teaching strategies within DI that may foster the development of listening and speaking skills, in general their development is incidental to the learning process. Overall, this suggests that teachers are likely to require professional development that provides support and learning to teachers around how DI can be used to explicitly develop listening and speaking in ākonga. It is also highly likely that professional development would also need to support general planning and preparation, which is required to implement DI effectively and which has been a major factor influencing the uptake of DI by classroom teacher (Heathcote & Bolton, 2005).

## Recommendations

1. The Ministry of Education to fund and develop an overarching rationale for developing listening and speaking skills within English-medium education in Aotearoa New Zealand. It should include a focus on:
  - a. Acknowledging the importance of listening and speaking skills in ākonga, including in the development of literacy skills.
  - b. A coherent and systematic set of curriculum expectations, resources, and assessment tools that explicitly support the teaching and learning of listening and speaking skills.
  - c. The benefits of developing listening and speaking skills within the English Learning Area and other learning areas across the entire learning pathway.
  - d. Recognise the benefits of listening and speaking skills in the development of associated skills, such as critical thought, abstract reasoning, argumentative, and metacognitive skills, and self-regulation, as well as in fostering psychosocial development and wellbeing in ākonga.
2. Research to develop understandings around the development of listening and speaking skills in our diverse population of ākonga in Aotearoa New Zealand. Research should have an explicit focus on:
  - a. Identifying the influence of socio-cultural and historical contexts, place, and space on the development of listening and speaking skills.
  - b. Understanding the role of culture, language, and identity on the development of listening and speaking skills, including verbal and non-verbal behaviours. Research should be carried out in conjunction with key groups, including Māori, Pacific, and Asian, as well as neurodiverse ākonga, and those experiencing impairments in language, literacy, hearing, and sight.
  - c. Understanding the role of digital technology and digital affordances in the development of listening and speaking skills; how tamariki use digital technologies for dialogue; teacher awareness of actual properties, capabilities, and affordances; and how to enact technology to ensure it is used actively and with intention.
  - d. Identifying pedagogical practices and teaching approaches, including those being currently used, which create conditions for fostering listening and speaking skills in diverse groups of ākonga.
3. The provision by the Ministry of Education of teaching approaches and pedagogical tools and resources that are responsive to culture, language, and identity. These should be supported by:
  - a. Ongoing and targeted professional development for teachers in listening and speaking skills that is grounded in theory including diverse types and purposes of listening and speaking skills.

- b. On-going professional development should be explicitly linked to practice to enable facilitators to challenge teacher beliefs and perceptions around tamariki, as well as, growing teacher capabilities.
- c. Ongoing and targeted professional development for teachers on the role of digital technology and digital affordances in creating conditions to foster the development of listening and speaking skills, in diverse groups of ākongā.
- d. Ongoing and targeted professional development for schools that support the development and ongoing consolidation of listening and speaking skills within and across the learning pathway.
- e. On-going incorporation of theoretical understandings related to the development of listening and speaking skills within Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

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## Appendix 1: Scopes and Aim of the Review

This review was carried out under contract to the Ministry of Education (Aotearoa New Zealand). The review was to consist of a systematic review of rigorous quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method studies that have demonstrated how an explicit focus on speaking and listening approaches contribute to improved learning across the whole learning pathway. The review contained one overarching goal.

*The overall goal of the evidence review is to identify approaches that are effective in supporting the speaking and listening demands across the curriculum along with whole learning pathway.*

*The speaking and listening approaches are effective for underserved groups of learners and that they create the conditions for successful learning, and promote well-being, metacognition, and self-efficacy whilst providing engaging learning experiences.*

The review was underpinned by two questions:

1. *What does the literature show to be the most effective, engaging, and equitable speaking and listening approaches that effectively support learning and speaking and listening demands across the curriculum along the whole learning pathway (a specific focus was placed on primary and early secondary education contexts)*
2. *What is the current state of teacher knowledge and practice in terms of these approaches?*

The scope of the review was to consider:

- a. *Publications from the past 15 years, from Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally where curricula was predominately delivered in English, for example, Canada, USA, Australia, Scotland, Ireland, England, and Wales.*
- b. *Give weight to speaking and listening approaches that effectively support learning in primary and early secondary and which foster engagement, wellbeing, metacognition, and/or self-efficacy, and that appear to be effective for underserved learners.*
- c. *To ensure that future work in literacy gives practice effect to te Tiriti o Waitangi and meets the needs of ākonga Māori in English-medium schools, research focused on Māori learners, by Māori researchers or approached from a te ao Māori perspective should be included and prioritised above research from other countries*

The review should include an exploration of innovative and creative approaches to engagement that enrich learning experiences, including but not limited to:

- I. *Experiential learning*
- II. *Collaborative reasoning*
- III. *Dialogic talk*
- IV. *Dramatic inquiry*
- V. *Philosophy for children*

The contract included two deliverables: an interim report and a final report. The feedback from the interim report, included some additional scope. These aspects included:

- *Description of current educational context, including literacy achievement and diversity of ākonga population*
- *Serve and Return and its importance to listening and speaking skills*
- *UDL and how it can promote speaking and listening for neurodiversity in learners and learners with disability*
- *Links to online communication and social media, as well as digital affordances*
- *Emphasis on the interaction between speaking and listening skills, literacy development, and key competencies*

Preliminary recommendations were supplied to the Ministry of Education on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at their request.

## Appendix 2: Literature Search

Literature searches were conducted at the University of Canterbury by Amanda Denston, Seema Gautam, and Karina Sandweg. Initial database searches, following discussion with Fiona Tyson (Education Librarian) yielded excessive literature for each of the nominated teaching approaches. However, the excessive literature was heavily weighted towards scholarly articles focused on English Language Learners (ELL). Subsequent discussions with Fiona Tyson database searches (education) were performed following the identified parameters.

Field 1: [Identified teaching approach]

Field 2: AND: (Speaking or Listening)

Field 3: NOT: (tertiary education or university or college or tertiary institutions)

Field 4: NOT: (esol or efl or esl or ell or english second language or english language learners or second language learning)

The databases included in the literature search included Education Source, ERIC including EBSCO and ProQuest. TLRI, TLIF, and Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga were also searched. The paucity of literature that included an explicit focus on speaking and listening skills within the nominated teaching approaches within English-medium contexts, even when authors had identified speaking or listening skills as key words within their literature meant that the drawing of inferences was required to complete this review. The literature review also included a bottom-up review of literature identified from reference lists of identified literature. Reviews of known researchers' authorships lists were carried out, as well as reviews of literature suggested by colleagues. At times, Google Scholar was also used to identify relevant literature.

Overall, there were 489 pieces of literature identified for review. Of these 288 were identified outside of the scope of review, leaving 201 pieces of literature for inclusion within the review.

I acknowledge that I am influenced by my own backgrounds within a colonial society, as someone raised as Pākehā with Māori whakapapa (Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe, and Ngāi Tahu iwi). As an individual who operates within the liminal space (between Indigenous and Crown), this literature review reflects myself, the perspectives that I hold, and my experience of working within this liminal space with both Māori and Pākehā. Bringing Indigenous knowledges to the fore, to position Māori ways of knowing and being within education, is fundamental to align with the promises exchanged within te Tiriti o Waitangi, the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand.

# Review of the Literature on Speaking and Listening Skills

Denston A

2021-08-31

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*14/03/2024 - Downloaded from MASSEY RESEARCH ONLINE*