

## Chapter Four: Methodology

### Theoretical Issues Around The Development Of Maori Research Approaches

As far as I know, we gave the PhD to three American Scholars. I don't know how many papers have been written about us because we don't usually get copies... Day by day we talked to these new anthropologists in friendship, we didn't know this information would go into books and disclose our privacy. To please you, to get things and money out of you, we learnt to tell any story you want. I fear your writings would hurt the people if they could read.... We want friendship, you want information: we want life long relations, you want information; we want to think of you as part of our families, you want information (An Indian research participant - American Anthropological Association, 1992; p. 3).

The unchecked desire to know, to discover, to claim 'other' has been a central tenet of Western research in the social sciences. This chapter argues that the location of the researcher is central to any study undertaken. Invariably what is seen to be important or unimportant in research is linked to choices that have historically been made by the researcher. Various Maori responses also link research preference to those who participate in the research process. Selecting a methodology for research requires choice on the part of the researcher, at two levels. First, although not always explicitly articulated, it requires the alignment of the researcher with a philosophical position that views scientific inquiry in a particular way. This underpins the second level of choice involving the selection of certain methods, tools or instruments to be utilised in the collection, interpretation and analysis of data. Neither facet is unproblematic within Colonial epistemic and ontological traditions, particularly for those who have historically and currently been more often positioned as the object of study than the objectifying agent. To ignore these underlying methodological issues would falsely suggest that what has been investigated, and why, and how research interests have been developed, have been unproblematic for Maori. However, research processes have been more concerned with exclusion and containment rather than participation,

alienating many of the constituent groups subsumed within the label Maori from any potentiality of enabling research.

The issue, for me, is not so much about the application of particular methodological instruments in research projects. Rather it is the 'taken for granted' ideological assumptions that impinge on the what, why and how of research processes. This chapter therefore focuses on an exploration of concerns around the links between constructions of knowledge, power and discourse. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section locates the problematic of representation of Maori in the disjunctive process of colonisation. Section two acknowledges Western responses to colonising discourses and further considers grounded theory, critical theory and empowerment as specific examples. Section three argues that ignoring the multiple accountabilities faced by researchers researching Maori issues, irrespective of the theoretical position held, will ultimately undermine potential benefits. As will become clear later in this chapter the issues of multiple accountabilities and empowerment emerged out of interaction with participants and thinking about our constituent roles in the research process. The final section addresses two Maori positions on research, while the next chapter outlines the methodological process engaged in this study.

Colonising narratives: The constructing of colonising dichotomies and 'othering' discourse.

For Maori, the problem of research revolves around the inheritance of a scientific discourse that is located within a socio-cultural history which traditionally, under the rubric of positivism, advanced notions of scientific neutrality. That 'neutrality' maintains that such inquiry is unbiased and therefore equally applicable to all. Over time this Eurocentric 'scientific' discourse was to gain acceptance through hegemonic processes of knowledge creation, validation and dissemination. Foucault (1982) asserts that knowledge did not,

.. slowly detach itself from its empirical roots, the initial needs from which it arose, to become pure speculation subject only to the demands of reason....Where religions once demanded the sacrifice of bodies, knowledge now calls for experimentation on ourselves, calls us to the sacrifice of the subject of knowledge (p. 208).

Historically, epistemological, ontological and axiological positions that emerged from positivist assumptions provided the distinction between scientific and non-scientific inquiry. Said (1989), while concurring with Foucault, extends the problematic beyond one scientific paradigm. Said maintains Imperialism and its consequent dichotomisation of the rational observer/ irrational actor, civilised/ savage, Christian/ heathen, is the catalyst neutralising and inhibiting any 'attempt at representing reality mimetically' (p. 3) of racialised groups. Within the social sciences, objectivity and the value driven nature of research, universalising discourse and bias in general have been extensively argued (for example, Chalmers, 1982; Doyal and Harris, 1986; Smith, J., 1989; Longino, 1989; Scheurich and Young, 1997). However, the effects of discourse resulting from early pseudo-objective observations and consequent universalising accounts of colonised groups continue to be borne, by Maori. Through more than one 'scientific' discipline (Byrnes, 1990) Maori have been the sacrificial lamb upon this metaphorical altar of knowledge.

The positivist approach provides a colonial account of Maori that forms the very foundations of the institutions in which dissertations such as this are collected. It is not a position that can be easily ignored, especially when it is the tradition in which we are schooled. Maori, historically caste as 'native', have been slotted, defined, classified and objectified within predefined Western parameters of validity. Validity was not to be sought within the communities under scrutiny, but to meet the externally derived validity checks divorced from the objects of study by time, space

and culture. Historically tenuous positions casting Maori as 'other' have been fed back to us as fact<sup>1</sup>.

The objectified 'us' referred to by Foucault, historically positions the 'other' as the subject of knowledge within an intracultural context. For indigenous people and many groups of colour, 'otherness' (Hooks, 1984, 1992; Said, 1978, 1989; Johnston and Pihama, 1995; Mead, L., 1996 ) is defined by those looking from outside the cultural milieu. Furthermore, until recently this has been the only viewpoint deposited in the Western archive.

While for Maori 'otherness' is categorised by ethnicity, the archive has equally categorised and hierarchically classified people by geographic boundary, climatic influence and physiology, connecting such states as temperament, intellect, immunity to disease and cultural attributes to such factors (Howe, 1997). The assumptions enmeshed in 'othering' processes need to be deconstructed, not as a means of how Maori see themselves in particular for this thesis, but as a means of understanding the discourse about us, that is reflected back to us, through an archive that has had a vested interest in our objectification. The 'rules of practice' (Foucault, 1980) for the objectification of subjects, according to Said (1978 and 1989), are based on the constitutive role of the observer, the history of geographical disposition in ethnography and intellectual dissemination of discoveries. These rules come to represent a set of textual strategies that are seen to have more to do with sustaining positions of power and authority over others than with the advancement of knowledge (ibid).

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<sup>1</sup> Facts in this light are seen to be end points of a process based on positivist assumptions. Debates about subjectivity and objectivity are not new to the Sciences. Positivism in its broadest philosophical sense refers to the theory of knowledge proposed by Francis Bacon, John Locke and Isaac Newton which asserts the primacy of observation and the pursuit of causal explanation by way of inductive generalisation. In the social sciences, it has become associated with three related principles: "the ontological tenet of *phenomenalism*" according to which knowledge can be founded on experience alone (verging on the fetishization of 'facts' as immediately available to sense - perception); the methodological tenet of the "*unity of the scientific method*" which proclaims that the procedures of natural science are directly applicable to the social world with the goal of establishing invariable laws or law like generalisations about social phenomena; and the "axiological tenet of *neutrality*" which refuses to grant normative statements the status of knowledge and maintains a rigid separation between facts and values." (Wacquant 1994, pp. 495-498). These positions are challenged both from within and from outside the natural sciences.

## Objectifying Particular Subjects

The objectification of human beings as research subjects has commanded the critical attention of many writers (for example, Foucault, 1982; Said, 1989; Hooks and West, 1991; Fine, 1994; Pihama and Johnson, 1995; Mead, 1996; Smith, 1997). However the evolution of 'dis-stance' (Fine, 1994, p. 17) and objectivity identified as arising from a specific socio-historical context has advanced normative epistemological foundations for science. Foucault's aim to 'create a history of the different modes by which, *in our culture* human beings are made subjects' (1982, p. 208, my emphasis) provides a typology of three modes of objectification.

The first mode of objectification lies within *dividing practices*. For Foucault this occurred early on in the separation or isolation of easily distinguishable sub-groups in intracultural contexts. This commenced in the Middle Ages with the physical separation of lepers, based on physical disposition, progressing to the confinement of the poor, the insane, criminals and vagabonds, all seen as social deviants according to measures of law or life style. He highlights the different philosophical positions, diversity of procedures and the variable effectiveness of shaping a discourse in which 'the subject is objectified by a process of division either within themselves or from others' (1982, p. 209). The outcome of this process is the categorisation and designation of social and personal identity. Rabinow (1984) provides a synopsis,

Essentially 'dividing practices' are modes of manipulation that combine the mediation of a science (or pseudo-science) and the practice of exclusion - usually in a spatial sense, but always in a social one (p. 8).

Although the dividing practices Foucault analysed occurred within intracultural contexts, Said (1989), using similar methods, deconstructs the study of racialised

others. In Said's 'adversarial critique' of Orientalism, Imperial anthropological practice is linked to a socio-cultural milieu in which political and economic interest is adhered to a context in which discourse about other is made both possible and sustainable. Imperial strategies centred on modes of classification that encompass physical, intellectual and spiritual parameters have, in effect, been used to control and contain those othered by race. Such strategies simultaneously canonise the power and knowledge of the invasive European.

Maori women have experienced the application of such 'dividing practices' by a coloniser eager to differentiate itself from the colonised, while rationalising the way colonisation would proceed under the guise of science. Knowledge locating women centrally in customary Maori society has been ignored or rewritten to become more conducive to colonial belief. Such beliefs have reconstructed Maori women as a multilayered other. Tuhiwai-Smith (1992) illustrates the contemporary impact of this dividing practice on Maori women:

Maori women belong to the group of women in the world who have been historically constructed as 'other' by white patriarchies and white feminisms. As women we have been defined in our difference to men. As Maori, we have been defined in terms of our difference to our colonisers. As both we have been defined by our difference to Maori men, Pakeha men and Pakeha women. The socioeconomic class in which most Maori women are located makes the category of 'other' even more problematic (p. 33).

Foucault's first mode of classification thus divides people as a whole unit from the majority.

Foucault's second mode of objectification, *scientific classification* requires the division of the composite parts of individuals from each other, that is to say, their physical self from their social, spiritual and psychological selves. Colonised groups were divided from their colonisers through both modes of objectification. While we were caste as savage, uncivilised and barbaric as a group, as individuals the canon separated us by gender and divided our bodies and minds into

compartments such as our intellect, our physiology, our language, our customs and our beliefs. Using each as separate phenomena classification separately constituted complete entities. Those doing the ordering and classifying were initially besotted with genitalia (gender divisions), affluence (class) and physiological and psychological states (in European communities). Significantly for Maori, later stages, developed during expeditions of discovery and migration, extended hierarchical modes of classification to include 'race'.

Historical pseudo-scientific recordings of early explorers, missionaries, whalers and settlers within Oceania are testimony to the Euro/androcentric bias of those who were (re)naming and claiming that which they observed (Howe, 1997). Bias favouring the observer over the observed allowed 'scientific scholars' to privilege some aspects of objectified cultures while obscuring others. As part of this process the status of female roles and functions, and of women in Maori societies, was concealed while that of male roles and functions, and men were promoted. Hence fundamental principles of balance and complementarity governing the role and functions of both men and women were being eroded to fit the intellectual mindscapes of the observer. While disjunctives within disciplines have promoted changes in the foci of inquiry, philosophies underpinning scientific investigation have remained fundamentally unmodified. Foucault (1977, cited in Wuthnow, Hunter, Bergesen and Kurzweil, 1984) maintains,

...the intellectual discovered that the masses no longer needed him [sic] to gain knowledge: they *know* perfectly well, without illusion; they know far better than he [sic] and they are certainly capable of expressing themselves. But there exists a system of power which blocks, prohibits and invalidates this discourse and this knowledge, a power not only found in the manifest authority of censorship, but one that profoundly and subtly penetrates an entire social network. Intellectuals are themselves agents of this system of power - the idea of their responsibility for 'consciousness' and discourse forms part of the system (p. 152).

Contrary to these practices, this study which focuses on Maori women educational administrators, does not intend to segregate these women from the broader cultural contexts in which Maori live. As such it recognises the diverse realities in which Maori currently reside. While the study identifies a locus of interest as Maori women who have chosen to be educational administrators in the primary sector, - it does not group them as educational administrators who happen to be Maori, which assumes they will necessarily draw from the same bodies of knowledge to inform their practice.

Foucault's (1982) third mode of objectification, usually seen as the antithesis of modes one and two, is subjectification. This concerns the

.. way a human being turns him- or herself into a subject ...[via a series of] operations on [people's] own bodies, on their own souls, on their own thoughts, on their own conduct (p. 210).

Although Rabinow (1984, p. 11) suggests that such processes of self-understanding are mediated by external authority figures (in the form of confessors or psychoanalysts), the increasing use of subjectification by groups historically 'othered' in an attempt to understand effects on self of experienced domination, adds a new mode to the archive. Arguably in such instances the biggest mediating influence of ethnically diverse researchers is acceptance of the archive's ability to endorse who we are through the act of writing in which cultural analyses are invested. It is an archive that has historically defined the terms of the partnership between science and scientist.

Scientific discourse has been the vehicle through which a myriad of dominant groups have vested in themselves the power and authority to definitively define what Maori look like, how Maori behave, what Maori believe and how Maori need to change. This has in turn been translated into support for political agendas that have a greater interest in the supplantation of indigenous cultures and the



pacification of colonised groups rather than in enabling partnerships. Hall articulates the use of 'cultural power' and 'normalisation' as a means of centring the dominant cultural group while simultaneously decentring other,

... Black people, black experiences were positioned and subjected in the dominant regimes of representation [these] were the effects of a critical exercise of cultural power and normalisation. Not only ... were we constructed as different and other within the categories of knowledge ... by those regimes. They had the power to make us see and experience ourselves as 'Other' (cited in Hooks, 1992; p. 3).

Maori similarly grow up being the pseudo-other, confronted with curriculum, pedagogical and assessment practices that centre the cultural precepts of the dominant group. The result is greater proficiency for example in the dominant language and with credentials in the dominant culture that have been gained often at the cost of our own. This necessitates the posing of questions about the levels of our own complicity with our objectification and about

..the relationship between activism and research, between power and method, (which) immediately brings to the fore a whole set of issues about the social role of research, about the conceptual and epistemological grounding of knowledge claims, about what such knowledge is *for*, and about *who* ultimately benefits from its generation. ... (Apple 1994, p. x).

These questions challenge historical foundations and current practices that continue to exclude those outside the 'regimes of cultural power'.

Foucault does not provide a complete historical analysis adequate for Maori, but rather, identifies a recent demarcation point at which a major set of disjunctives occurred. The disjunctives highlighted by Foucault and based in the histories of Europe only intersect with our history at the point of European contact. A Foucauldian analysis does not therefore form the basis of how we necessarily see ourselves, though power through pseudo knowledge has manifested itself in multifarious ways in an attempt to normalise abnormal representations of us. Scientific inquiry has more often than not imposed methodologies that have often convoluted the very essence of shared knowledge. This has occurred through the

use of mediating filters derived from one cultural archive sitting in judgement of another. These are the dilemmas, then, that underpin this study of some Maori women educational administrators. While delineating the dilemmas provides the problematic, sharing a voice that is being centred, as opposed to rendered peripheral, is the stance that is advanced. The next section explores further how Western responses to the problems that have been discussed need to be revised to make sense of the reality of Maori women's lives and to explain the nature of the contribution they make to educational organisations.

### Addressing the Limitations

Western responses to the limitations of the forms of scientific inquiry outlined, though varied, have tended to be driven by a critique of (i) the position of the researcher as expert and all powerful; (ii) the tendency for research to be done by white middle class men, studying and creating a literate account for a myriad of less powerful 'others', that is, research being driven by the interests and values of the already powerful; and (iii) the assumption that objectivity is achievable or even desirable in some instances. Critical analyses of these issues in the social sciences are largely derived from writers situated within feminist positions, postmodernism, phenomenology, critical and grounded theory approaches. This discussion will focus on grounded theory and critical theory as potential methodological approaches for this study.

Grounded theory approaches are used as inductive strategies advocating theory generation through discovery (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) while critical theory is utilised as a means to critique the taken for grantedness, at both the macro and micro levels (Apple, 1994). The concept of empowerment emerges as significant in this discussion. The development of empowering research methods have been

developed as a means of addressing power differentials manifest in research processes (Court and Court 1998).

Grounded theory approaches involve the 'grounding' of informing constructs in the particular set of data collected, rather than subjecting data to analytical constructs as a means to prove theory (Hutchinson, 1988). Consequently, grounded theory criticises the positivist's conventional deductive approach to research, opposing the focus on verification for theory development and the priori definition of concepts and hypotheses (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The approach is called 'grounded theory' because the research starts by collecting data and then searches for theoretical constructs, themes and patterns that are 'grounded' in the data. For groups 'othered' by previous research, it potentially provides a slate cleansed of ideological and theoretical constructs that have traditionally framed understandings of self as other. It thus, theoretically, then allows an understanding of self to emerge. This approach provided for me a way to move from needing to locate a study within a theoretical framework while finding little in the literature at the time supporting a Maori theoretical position. It was seen as a positional space creator in which Maori theoretical positions could develop.

Critical theory<sup>2</sup> has also gained popularity as a tool for critique of socially constructed human endeavour. It provides a foundation upon which 'what is' can be better understood and therefore 'what might be' is able to be conceptualised and worked toward. However, unlike grounded theory, critical theory provides a school of thought which aims to distinguish and clarify differing intentions and interests attached to a process of critique which provides the foundation for action (Carr and Kemmis 1986; Giroux 1992; McLaren 1994; Apple 1994). As a critical social science it focuses on the forms of social life which subjugate people and the ways of thinking which support subjugation by making oppression seem

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<sup>2</sup> Early formulations of critical theory were developed in the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany during the 1920s. The school produced such theorists as Horkheimer and Adorno, and later Habermas.

unproblematic, inevitable, or simply justified (Durie, A 1994). The application of critical theory requires an inter-disciplinary approach, advancing the need for

.. the coordination of findings from historical, socio-cultural, political, economic, socio-psychological, and bio-psychological analyses in the study of specific problems of human experience and action (Sherif, 1982 cited in Reinharz, 1992; p. 250).

However, in its implied lineal application, critical theory struggles to embrace the multiple positions of Maori. Typically, emancipatory approaches centre on the integral component of transformative praxis. Involved in the process of transformative praxis is conscientisation, resistance and transformative action (Freire, 1996; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1991). In applying transformative praxis to Maori contexts, Smith (G.; 1997b) questions the applicability of lineal models to provide the explanatory tools for understanding Maori initiatives. In response to the work of Aronowitz and Giroux, Smith argues that praxis models represented lineally (as seen in Figure 2.1) inaccurately privilege conscientisation as the point of commencement from which resistance emerges, in turn providing the basis for transformative action.

**Figure 2.1**

**Model A (Linear Development)**

Conscientisation ----> Resistance ----> Transformative Action

(G. Smith 1997b)

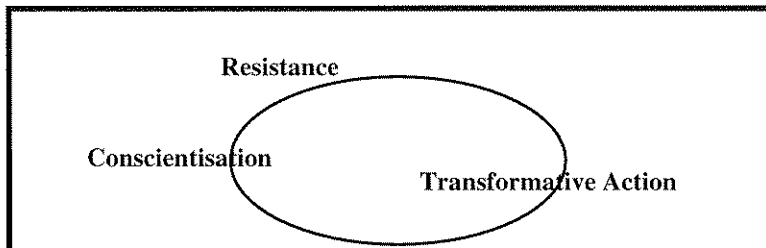
Smith suggests it is not a position that reflects praxis oriented initiatives for Maori.

In order to provide the explanatory power of transformative praxis that encompasses the 'multiple realities of Maori' (Durie, M., 1994), Smith provides a circular representation, privileging neither theory nor practice, in the assumption

that such processes have no definitive commencement or terminal point, represented thus.

**Figure 2.2**

**Model B (Circular - praxis)**



**(G. Smith 1997b)**

The latter representation of praxis better incorporates the diverse Maori realities, inclusive of organic, traditional and 'academic' Maori. It also embraces transformative action both individually and collectively. Maori participation in the Kohanga Reo movement, for example, has meant action first for some, who have taken children to kohanga because their nanny, aunty or friend was either running it or suggested they do it, or perhaps because it simply represented another place for Maori to maintain connections with other Maori and acceptance of themselves and their children was anticipated. In instances such as this action became the forerunner to conscientisation, which itself often commenced in whanau hui and management structures established to run the Kohanga. For others conscious decisions about creating alternative educational options came from grassroots conscientisation, exposure to customary knowledge, hui and/or an understanding of the precarious status of the Maori language and culture in contemporary society. For yet another group, post compulsory courses offered in wananga, universities and pre-employment courses run by runanga and other Maori providers offered the first opportunity to raise levels of awareness of issues. Only for the latter two groups does the lineal model of transformative praxis provide an accurate level of

understanding regarding the nature of Maori praxis in which the place of the academic is privileged.

Lineal models equally ignore the position of a number of Maori students for whom transformative action without conscientisation is evident. For example some Maori youth truanting, suspended or expelled from schools, may be understood as resisting hegemonic processes and practices of which they have little understanding. Not being cognisant of the breadth or depth of forces leading to the desire to resist does not necessarily negate them bearing the brunt of experiences that supply messages about their less than equal status.

The preceding discussion does not provide a definitive list of the ways Maori praxis is reflected within Aotearoa; rather it points to a way of acknowledging the many lived realities and the multi directional flow of power incorporated in circular models of praxis. Critique of critical theory is thus seen to focus on two points; first the tendency to apply the theory lineally and second; the elitist view of 'empowerment' and 'empowering' research approaches.

Questions around empowerment: A wolf in sheep's clothing; who's empowering whom?

Attempting to make transparent positional power in research is a primary principle underpinning empowering research models. As a student researching articulate women already conversant with school, local and national politics, I became concerned about questions around who was empowering whom?

Empowerment as a research principle is seen as a genuine response to dealing with power relationships in research designs that have historically been disempowering and disabling to othered groups. If however, empowerment

becomes a presumptuous position it can paradoxically perpetuate the problems. This section raises questions about the applicability of the concept of empowerment as a response to previous research for Maori juxtaposed with the cultural precept mana.

Western definitions of power in twentieth-century debates are commonly the result of simply posed questions:

- How is power conceived?
- How is power to be identified or measured?
- What distinguishes power relationships?
- Who or what possesses power, and
- Which outcomes count as the effects of power?

The simplicity of the questions more often than not belies the complex array of responses evoked. Any consideration of power requires an understanding of interdependent situational and contextual determinants that will factor in responses to the question raised. Empowerment as a concept has emerged out of these debates;. It is a concept increasingly used in research methodologies associated with power redistribution. It has become a central theme in the way critical social science research projects are perceived and initiated and an increasingly central tenet in theorising, development of research, policy, delivery of educational initiatives and hoped for outcomes.

Research with empowerment as a guiding principle is often used in one of two ways: either to indicate a process that will be in some way uplifting and inclusive in design and process; or, to indicate that the legacy of the research will be a clearer understanding by the participants of whatever constitutes the focus of inquiry. Moreover it is used in the attempt to invert or reduce power differentials between the researcher and the researched, particularly in projects where the researcher defines themselves as an 'insider'. However the act of implementing research

methodologies that involve greater cognisance of personal position, does not necessarily provide a causal link between participant understandings and reduced actual or perceived power differentials either internal or external to the project.

Research projects based on the intent to empower do not necessarily lead to desired outcomes. The mismatch of intent and outcome, the struggle to name and claim is not new to research. It has always been a site in which textual strategies have been created and recreated to claim analytic authority over self and other (Said 1989). Lankshear (1994) argues that the struggle for symbolic power through words, their meaning and ideological capture, often results in the loss of the conceptual vitality of much that is embodied within language. While the mismatch between two distinct languages, such as Maori and English, often cause interpretational complexities, Lankshear, and Fernandez (1994) raise the issue in relation to class-based genre within the same language.

[T]he dominating class, through its hegemony in [the] existing structure, recuperates the liberating concepts of education and immediately transforms them into empty terminology, void of useful meanings and strength as ideas...[They]...become only words...always [lacking] the expected content. They await recreation of their content through the political practice of liberating education (p. 73).

Empowerment as it is often currently used in research design provides an example of Lankshear's argument.

Delgado-Gaitan (1990) resisted the use of empowerment as an analytic and explanatory construct in her study of education in a Southern Californian migrant community based on her observation that,

... [empowerment has] been used to mean the act of showing people how to work within a system from the perspective of the people in power (p. 74).

In Delgado-Gaitan's experience, empowering research design has come to mean identification of strategies and programme development aligned to hastening the



assimilation process for 'others' while not fundamentally challenging the assumptions, processes or structures of those wielding power in that context.

Lankshear (1994) extends this criticism, suggesting that educational theorists and practitioners pursuing libertory ideals, including himself, have contributed to devaluing the currency of empowerment through either misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Lankshear argues that this has been done in one of two ways, the first of which is that it has been unintentionally diminished through its use "to name the space where theoretical work is needed rather than to fill that space" (p. 166). Secondly, 'empowerment has been reduced to hollow, nominal, and empty terminology' by its overuse as some 'kind of educational magic bullet', as though adhering the term to educational discourse will somehow produce a strategy for solving personal and collective educational problems, overcome existing barriers to 'emancipation' and 'equity'. In an attempt to rejuvenate the value of the term, Lankshear (1994) articulates the need for at least four variables that require consideration in any schema of empowerment.

**A** (the subject) is empowered in the respect of **B** (some aspect of the discursive structuring of power) by/through **C** (a process or quality) such that **D** (a valued end or outcome) ensues (p. 166).

Nevertheless strict adherence to these principles will not in itself ensure empowerment ensues if it continues to suggest a unidirectional flow from the all powerful researcher to the subject, or that the research process can pre-empt outcomes for participants. Adhering emancipatory language to research processes that do little to change factors that constrain is contradictory. The contradiction is made further apparent when the researcher extends their own academic kudos by retaining ultimate interpretive, analytic and disseminative power. This is especially so when the primary responsibility or ownership of the final product remains with either the researcher or the funding agency.

What is needed is a shift to considering power within a Maori cultural context that requires an understanding of mana<sup>3</sup>. Te Awekotuku (1996), maintains that mana,

..(has) layers and levels of meaning; primarily, it is about power and empowerment, about authority and the right to authorise.. (p. 27).

The layers and levels of mana attributed to individuals and collectives are given expression through mana atua, mana tupuna, mana whenua and mana tangata, providing a framework in which power and authority becomes the basis for ritual encounter. At the risk of grossly understating each facet, mana atua recognises the power/authority of the celestial realm delegated to earthly agents. In this sense people 'remain always the agent or channel, never the source of mana' (Barlow, 1994; p. 119). Mana tupuna is a channel through which people maintained their status and connection to whanau, hapu and iwi through human descent lines (Te Awekotuku, 1996; Mahuika, 1992; Marsden, 1992; Barlow, 1994; Pere, 1982). Mana tangata provides the means through which the mana of individuals and collectives is established, recognised and potentially multiplied. Mana whenua is derived from the connection to land and the authority to provide, produce and maintain guardianship of resources. In applying the questions regarding power posed at the beginning of this section to the concept of mana. Mana, is recognised as an integral component of encounter between people and in the relationships that link cosmological, spiritual, human and physical elements. The origin of mana emerges from the earliest of cosmological narratives and extends beyond simply human interaction. Increased mana is a collective exercise in which individuals and/or collectives increase their mana by collective recognition of significant acts or enabling processes rather than by self ascription. Therefore mana embodied in self and other requires consideration in processes of encounter which emphasises

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<sup>3</sup> The use of the word mana has itself been a contentious issue, dating back to the translating of the Treaty of Waitangi. Critics suggest that an alternative word for mana was consciously sought in the knowledge that Maori chiefs would not subordinate their mana to any other authority. Te Heuheu, of Tuwharetoa, in debating the treaty, recognised the implication and refused to subsume his personal mana or the mana of the tribe to the Queen of England (Grace 1959: 369, & Cox 1993: 29)

researcher's ability to potentially diminish the mana of others if it is ignored or disregarded.

Consequently 'empowerment' which situates only those directly involved as the sole 'players' within the project, makes no sense in a research context which demands recognition of the wider groups to which both parties are connected. For the researcher this involves recognition of accountabilities, broader than the disciplinary precepts, given the communities in which research activity occurs. Likewise, the participants themselves need to consider whanau, hapu or iwi interests in the sharing of cultural intellectual property which is often inevitable in engagement with research. Further, advancing notions of empowerment in a Maori context thus cuts across understandings of tuakana/teina status and the channels through which power is perceived and distributed. In other words, even where cultural and gender differences are absent, imbalances of power can still exist between the researcher and the participant. This is so because power has a variety of cultural determinants (Foster 1994), which still operate even in the presence of a shared cultural and gendered identity<sup>4</sup>. Within this understanding of power, as an individual, I do not have the personal authority to assume that I as the researcher can whakamana others. Further to this, Ruruhira Robin (1991), a kuia of Ngati Kahungunu, Rongowhakaata and Ngati Porou, describes the interrelated nature of mana Maori and women.

Well, it's a very serious thing 'mana wahine' and I don't think it can be separated from "mana whanau", 'mana hapu', 'mana iwi', 'mana tangata'. You see mana wahine is very special but it doesn't live by itself (p. 3).

Recognition of the location of mana that resides with each participant implies a process that requires the consideration of individual and collective mana derived from sources outside the research process. Thus although I have the potential to diminish mana through lack of recognition, any increased mana afforded

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<sup>4</sup> Notions of insider research often oversimplify groups by collapsing rich diversity to one factor commonalities (ie gender, ethnicity, poverty, sexual preferences ..). This appears contrary to Maori who will openly argue homogeneity and diversity juxtaposed with whakapapa and specificity simultaneously.

participants will be derived from the collectives to whom they are connected outside of this process.

Hence, in spite of my initial attraction to the notion of empowerment, it wasn't until I attempted to work with the concept in a Maori context that the complex problems associated with its utilisation became clear. Not to recognise the locus of control and distribution of mana in a Maori context assumes that mana resides in researchers, and in a research archive in which the mana of Maori has never been recognised. This is not to say that methodologies can't be developed to provide scope for mana to be recognised. Processes are employed that do respect its existence. However, the potential for belittlement of mana at the hands of researchers unprepared to question their own position in relation to Maori participants, usually results in the failure to recognise participants as the embodiment of mana. This can result in the opposite of the methodological intent of empowerment.

As a consequence of considering the response I would get if I suggested to ~~kaumatua or tuakana that I was there to 'empower' them, my initial attraction to the~~ notion gave way to a growing concern that the discourse of empowerment was a new way of talking about old, thinly disguised, hierarchies. If I could not be honest in sharing the terminology I intended to use in shaping the research and the rubric under which I would talk about the project in disseminating the findings, it felt deceitful to use it at all. It was ultimately my inability to resolve such contradictions that saw the removal of the term from the aims of the project and avoidance of its use as an analytical and explanatory construct.

Some further points can be made. Power, like praxis, is multifaceted and does not flow in a unidirectional fashion. It is far more complex than most of the research projects using empowerment imply. While having talked about the potentially

inappropriate use of empowerment for insider research in Maori contexts, I am not suggesting the abandonment of the underpinning intent of 'empowering' research. What is suggested is the need to use terminology that better reflects what it is we do and offers a more realistic reflection of what individual research outcomes achieve. When this project is finished, rather than being 'liberated', the women in this study will continue to use their personal power to struggle with the multifarious internal and external sites of power that confront them on a daily basis.

To summarise then, when applying the notion of empowerment to research involving Maori a paradox is created, that is we purport something new while unwittingly advancing an old Western tradition. As a researcher, a Maori, a woman, and an educator working with other Maori women educators centralising Maori cultural imperatives, empowerment as a motivation is not a mantle that sits comfortably on my shoulders. Research involving Maori requires the acknowledgment of where mana resides. Westernised notions of power take for granted that the researcher has the culturally defined power to delegate/disseminate authority in the first place.

### Multiple accountabilities

What the previous section suggests is that mana is an integral component of Maori human encounter that requires the consideration of accountabilities extending beyond that of a particular disciplinary based scientific rigour. It further suggests that being Maori and working with Maori does not automatically elevate researchers to a plane upon which issues of power or accountability to the community in which research occurs, becomes irrelevant. Walker (1992) maintains,

It is not acceptable for a person to claim that by virtue of their being a Maori researcher their research will be 'more valid' than that of a Pakeha when the tools both are using are viewed by Maori as coming from the same deficit tool box (p. 1).

A further issue of accountabilities arising from all of this however is that Maori are not devoid of checks against which validity can be measured. As researchers we are answerable to two culturally derived forms of validity that are more often than not polarised. The first is based within the communities to which we are connected, while the second is derived from the disciplines within the universities in which we are located. This places the researcher in a precarious situation that raises significant questions of accountability; to whom is the researcher accountable and to what end is the project intended?

The nature of some of the problems can be illustrated by the following episode which occurred during the process of outlining the research proposal to potential participants. A participant asked for further clarification of the aims and purposes of the project. In discussing the aim of grounded theory to allow the themes and framework to emerge from the data, she challenged the assumption that I could come to the project without any hypothesis about what I thought I would find. This exchange led to further questions about why I chose to focus on Maori women. For this participant particularly, my position was important<sup>5</sup>. It was not acceptable to be superficially seen to be Maori, a teacher or a co-trainee. While for those outside the group this superficial homogeneity may seem acceptable, it was not enough to gain unqualified acceptance in this instance. Her reservations were based on an awareness of and concern about two issues. Firstly there was her understanding of the diverse realities of Maori, that did not automatically make us necessarily either culturally (iwi defined), socially or politically homogenous. The second concern involved the nature, purpose and outcomes of many past research projects and the

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<sup>5</sup>We had met on this day with the express intention of carrying out the first interview. However, I was unsure that this participant felt free of any obligation to participate freely or withdraw from the research. This was possibly complicated by the fact we had trained together and that I was another Maori woman, her desire to support the project was constrained by worries about the cost to self. Bearing this in mind I suggested that we not interview at that time but talk further about the project: the aims, purposes, as well as the rights and obligations of those involved. The interview did proceed after our discussion. Nevertheless, during the course of the discussion a previous experience of the participant's was shared. This participant had during the completion of a door to door survey asked for the return of her questionnaire and expressed her desire to withdraw from the project. The researcher refused, concerned about the amount of time he had spent working through the questionnaire. In short she locked him in the house and suggested he ring his supervisor and ask for advice - the questionnaire was returned before he left the house.

potential for misinterpretation. She believed that much of what she did in her professional role involved countering the effects of previous research which perpetuated negative stereotypes of Maori in general and Maori children in particular in education. Her questions further included the identification of my supervisors, their research interests and to what extent they could influence the project.

The former point about homogeneity is clearly articulated by Irwin (1991),

A number of factors influence Maori women's development - Tribal affiliation, sexual preference, knowledge of traditional Maori tikanga, knowledge of the Maori language, rural or urban location, identification on the political spectrum from radical to traditional, place in the family, the level of formal schooling and educational attainment's to name but a few (p. 2).

The women in this group are situated across a wide array of reference points, indicated by at least six of these variables. Though none of the remaining participants openly questioned me about methodological issues prior to the commencement of interviews, I was nevertheless made aware that willingness to participate was given based on the unspoken assumption that I would sustain their integrity as an 'inside' researcher. For these participants, whanau and other collectives also become vulnerable to the research process yet often they have little control over the ways in which the data is interpreted. Finch (undated cited in Lee 1993) records, for example, her concern that the data collected from women on the basis of trust could, given a particular interpretation, be used against their interests. The dilemma here is not simply, as Finch argues, an ethical one, but ultimately involves a political choice of the 'whose interests will be served?' kind. The juggling act required to work at the crossroads of so many interest groups is felt in more than just the discipline of education.

Maori film makers have to address several issues not of their own choosing when they decide on a project.... They have to satisfy the demands of the cinema [institution], the demands of their own people [the participants], the criteria of a white male-dominated value and funding structure [credentialling agents], and somehow be accountable to all..... Worst still is the knowledge that the Maori film maker [academic] carries the burden of

having to correct the past and will therefore be concerned with demystifying and decolonising the screen [archive] (Mita, 1992; cited in Paraha, 1992; p. 40) (my bracketed inserts).

From the discussion with one of the participants came the impetus to articulate not only where I saw myself (within the group), but also to share the philosophical issues underpinning the project during feed back during the group focus interview. In response to many of the foreshadowed concerns the call for Maori, by Maori, with Maori (Penetito 1996) is in recognition that such projects are 'more likely', but not automatically, conducted in ways that display,

..an in depth understanding of Maori values, attitudes and mores necessary for a successful outcome, as is the probability of an understanding and willingness to abide by a Maori system of ethics and accountability (Durie, A., 1992; p. 4).

#### Maori positions on research methodology

What colonial disjunctives have necessitated is the development of a Maori paradigm<sup>6</sup> cognisant of Maori. The two responses in the following discussion simultaneously recognise the threat of science *and* its potential promise predicated on principles that centralise and thereby normalise being Maori. The promise of science lies in its potential to assist Maori social and economic development, while the threat lies in science continuing to serve only the needs identified by its current patrons, principally central and local government (Walker, M., 1997). Two emerging paradigms are Maori Centred Approaches (Durie, M., 1997) and Kaupapa Maori (Mead, L., 1996; Smith, G., 1997). These positions posit a 'taken for granted' in which the cultural locations of the researcher and the participants are made transparent.

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<sup>6</sup>In Kuhn's second edition of *The structure of Scientific revolutions* (1970) he distinguishes two main meanings of paradigm (i) 'the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques and so on shared by the members of a given community' forming a disciplinary matrix, and (ii) 'one sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle solutions which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as the basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science', as an exemplar. Both meanings are applicable to a Maori paradigm, (i) in that the constellation of beliefs is predicated on customary and contemporary diverse Maori realities, and (ii) while many elements are common in the emerging Maori positions in research there are also variances that provide exemplars across a variety of contexts.



Durie, (M, 1997) advancing a Maori centred approach, maintains

...education and research have the capacity to both empower and to devalue. All too often New Zealand's past policies have erred on the side of devaluing Maori realities and in the process undermining Maori confidence and the impetus for positive development. It is time now to do the opposite: to employ research methodologies and approaches to teaching which place Maori at the centre; to facilitate a more secure identity for Maori by increasing opportunities for accessing Maori resources; to avoid misappropriation of Maori intellectual knowledge while encouraging ongoing retention, transmission and development of that knowledge; to enable greater Maori participation across the range of sciences, humanities and professions without compromising a Maori identity (p. 14).

He identifies three principles that underpin a Maori centred approach, (i) whakapikitanga - enablement, (ii) whakatuia - integration, and (iii) Mana Maori - Maori control drawing on the concept of tino rangatiratanga; Maori self determination. The first principle posits that research activity 'should aim to enhance people so that either their position improves as a result of the research or they are better equipped to take control of their own futures' (p. 10). The second recognises holistic Maori views linking wellbeing, culture, economics, social standing into a matrix that takes account of the individual, the collective and the complex interactions between past and present. The third principle locates the locus of control of research involving Maori, or aspects of Maori society, culture or knowledge with Maori. Associated with this principle are issues of intellectual property rights, guardianship and management of research design and processes (p. 10).

As articulated by Durie (A., 1992; 1993) the principles of mana, mauri, mahitahi and maramatanga are also significant when advancing a Maori approach to research. To be actively conscious throughout the research process of 'mana, mauri, mahitahi and maramatanga' suggests that the mana of all the participants (myself included) is recognised as pre-existing and that processes are established to ensure it remains intact. These principles will assist the integration of the

individual and collective well-being of those directly involved in the research project and those who, by connection to the participants, also have a vested interest. The ability to enact these principles rests on the understanding and active protection of individual and collective mana. Closely aligned to mana is recognition of tribal mauri invested in intellectual property. Acceptance of these principles requires respectful negotiation with appropriate Maori authorities. Mahitahi, working together as one monitoring the process provides the means through which mana and mauri are sustained, and maramatanga, understanding of the project at hand is achieved (Durie, A; 1993). Hence no universal 'regime of truth' (Lather 1994; p. 37) is advanced, rather a mode of common understanding between the researcher and participants. Central here, to a participative mode of consciousness, is kinship between self and other, providing the ground from which participatory knowing emerges (Heshusius, 1994). In the past 'knowing' in this way has been trivialised as insignificant and stigmatised as bias of assumed 'interest group' membership by those who have rendered them peripheral.

A Kaupapa Maori approach equally provides a matrix of praxis and the advancement of Maori interests. Kaupapa Maori is thus political in nature as it consciously brings into the research process historical influence, cultural identity and aspirations. Smith (G., 1997) asserts,

Kaupapa Maori theory is more than simply legitimating the 'Maori way' of doing things. Its impetus is to create the moral and ethical conditions and outcomes which allow Maori to assert greater cultural, political, social, emotional and spiritual control over their own lives (Smith, G 1997; p. 456).

Mead defines kaupapa as a philosophy in which cognition plus action are intertwined. It involves a plan: a programme or a set of principles 'which incorporate Maori preferred ways of operating and embracing Maori values' (Mead, L., 1996; p. 201). It is a theory related to being Maori that does not posit objective distanced forms of scientific inquiry. It predicates the validity and legitimacy of Maori as the taken for granted and the survival of Maori language and

culture is assured. As Smith<sup>7</sup> (L, 1997) states, 'the struggle for autonomy over our own cultural well-being, and over our own lives is seen as vital to Maori survival' (p. 27). Mead has articulated four key assumptions that underpin her work: that being Maori in Aotearoa is about being normal; Maori ways of knowing have validity and legitimacy; people can make strategic changes that have emancipatory potential and theorising our understandings and experiences is an important activity for Maori (Mead, L., 1996; pp. 27-29). This current thesis draws on these assumptions for its research design and methodology, which are explained in the next chapter.

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<sup>7</sup>Note L., Smith, L., Tuhiwai-Smith and L., Mead are all names used by the same author.