The Va'atele Framework: Redefining and Transforming Pasifika Education

Rae Si'ilata, Tanya Wendt Samu, and Alexis Siteine

Abstract

To successfully transform current notions of culturally responsive practices for Pasifika learners, teachers and educational leaders must move beyond practices that hinge on Pasifika learners adopting majority culture language, literacy, and identity in order to achieve academic goals. This chapter explores the process and outcomes of transforming education and schooling to better meet both the learning and cultural aspirations of Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa, New Zealand. A Pasifika metaphor of the *Va'atele* is offered as a framework for Pasifika learners' success in order that schools and educators might understand how it is possible to both privilege and utilize students' linguistic and cultural resources within curriculum learning at school. (*Va'atele* is the Samoan name for the ocean-voyaging double-hulled canoe of Pasifika peoples.) In this way, Pasifika learners can make meaningful connections between home and school funds of knowledge, and are able to experience success in both domains. We present evidence from two distinct but related case studies that draw attention to the central roles teachers and school leaders play in enabling Pasifika learners to connect, rather than replace, the worldviews, languages, literacy practices, and experiences of their homes with the valued knowledge and literacy practices of school.

E kore ahau e ngaro; He kakano i ruia mai i Rangiatea.
I will never be lost; I am a seed born from Rangiatea (our ancient Pacific homeland).
He mihi mahana ki nga tangata whenua o tenei motu
We acknowledge and greet the people of this land
He uri matou no Ngati Raukawa, no Tuhourangi, no Fiti (Fiji),
no Ngati Kahungunu, no Hamoa (Samoa)
We trace our ancestral lines to Raukawa, Tuhourangi, Kahungunu, Fiji and Samoa.
Tena koutou katoa, ni sa bula vinaka, malo le soifua.

R. Si'ilata (✉) • T.W. Samu • A. Siteine
Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand
e-mail: r.siilata@auckland.ac.nz; t.samu@auckland.ac.nz; a.siteine@auckland.ac.nz

The enactment of linguistically and culturally responsive pedagogies raises students' linguistic and literacy achievement and acts as catalyst for the development of stronger connections between home and school domains.

Contents

Introduction

This chapter introduces the Pasifika metaphor of the *Va'atele* to reflect on and theorize the journey of Pasifika learners through the New Zealand schooling system as bilingual/bicultural people. Their journey is likened to the building, launching, maintenance, and sailing of the double-hulled deep-sea canoe (*va'atele* in Samoan, *ndrua* in Fijian, *tongiaki* in Tongan). The ocean voyaging of our Pasifika ancestors, or their *folauga* – their "navigational journeying" – is symbolic of Pasifika people's successful advancement through life. The people of the Pacific Islands are known as the canoe people and, for the Polynesian seafarers who sailed further to the east than any other people group, ocean voyaging was about survival, the search for land and food, for sovereignty, and the right to self-determination. Many of the migrant parents and grandparents of the Pasifika learners in classrooms in Aotearoa came

to New Zealand with the same aspirations as their ancestors – the desire for improvement and for a "better life" for their children (Si'ilata 2014).

The double hulls of the *Va'atel*e are compared with the two worlds of home and school that Pasifika learners are navigating. One hull may be seen to represent the language, literacy, culture, and worldview of home, while the second hull is representative of the language, literacy, culture, and worldview of school. We argue that in the same way that the twin hulls of the *Va'atele* provide greater strength and safer passage through the unknown of sea voyaging, a culturally responsive environment that privileges bilingual and biliterate goals over monolingual goals are more likely to elicit effective outcomes. In order for Pasifika learners to be successful in the dual (and often multiple) worlds they inhabit, effective teachers should acknowledge, strengthen, and build students' capacity and capability in both (Si'ilata 2014).

The New Zealand Context

The twentieth-century migrations of Pacific peoples from their island homelands into English-speaking Pacific Rim nations such as Aotearoa New Zealand began in the 1950s. The main sources of migrant flows included the island nations of New Zealand's colonial administration, such as Western Samoa, Niue, Tokelau, and the Cook Islands. Pacific migrants were encouraged in order to meet the unskilled labor shortage of the 1950s and 1960s. The established connection between these Pacific Islands and New Zealand provided a sense of familiarity with the language and culture between both groups. They established lives for themselves within the towns and cities of New Zealand and, as others joined them over time, cohesive island-based communities were established. For many Pacific nation migrants, heritage languages and culture were maintained within the home and church, thus shaping their collective identities in relation to the wider society around them.

The Establishment of a Pacific Population

For much larger nations such as the United States and Australia, Pacific settlement has had a barely discernable impact on the population profile at the national or state level. In New Zealand, however, Pacific peoples are the third largest ethnic minority and are highly visible in the national socioeconomic indices. Pacific communities became established in New Zealand after World War Two with particularly significant levels of migration occurring in the 1960s to the mid-1970s. To illustrate, in the national census of 1945 there were 2159 "Pacific Polynesians." Just over a decade later, there were 8103; in 1966, there were 26,271; and in 1976, this figure stood at 65,694 (Statistics New Zealand 1997). (The term used at the time to distinguish Pacific island immigrants from Māori, the indigenous Polynesian population.) Since the 1970s, the Pacific population has grown and become more diverse. Statistics

New Zealand and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (2010) note that the current Pacific population is mostly young, urbanized, and New Zealand-born.

A number of factors account for the diversity of Pasifika peoples (Samu 2015). First, each Pacific group has unique social structures, histories, values, and identities although some forms of identity are not exclusive to any one Pacific cultural tradition. Two further significant features of New Zealand's Pacific population are worth noting here. First, a recent feature of this population is the growing proportion with multiple heritages or identities. (This stood at 37.2 percent in 2013 (Statistics New Zealand 2013).) Multiple heritages reflect growing levels of cross-cultural and cross-ethnic relations within New Zealand society. Second, of the seven largest Pacific heritage groups in New Zealand, three have more members living in New Zealand than in the home nation – namely, the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau. The New Zealand resident communities of Cook Islands Māori, Niue, and Tokelau peoples have become critical locations of language and culture transmission, even revival, for their respective Pacific diaspora as a whole.

According to the most recent census, Pacific peoples in New Zealand form the third largest ethnic minority group (7.1% of the total population) after Māori (14.9%) and Asian (11.8%) (Statistics New Zealand 2013). Much of this population increase has been due to natural increase, rather than immigration. This accounts for why 62.3% percent of Pacific peoples are New Zealand born (Statistics New Zealand 2013). The Pacific population is very youthful with the median age of 22.1 years, compared to 41 years for the dominant European population (Statistics New Zealand 2013). Given the population now includes third and fourth generations of New Zealand–born Pacific peoples, this group can no longer be considered as an immigrant minority population.

There is a degree of variability in the formal terms used by different government institutions to describe Pacific peoples. What remains consistent, however, is the administrative practice of identifying the various groups, and their New Zealand–born descendants, under one broad category. For example, the terms "Pasifika peoples" or "Pasifika" are used by the Ministry of Education (2009b) while the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs uses the terms "Pacific peoples" and "Pacific population." (It is worth noting here that "Pasifika" is also used by the local government for the city of Auckland, which has the world's largest population of Pacific peoples. See: http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/AboutCouncil/Pages/Home.aspx; See: http://www.mpia.govt.nz/pacific-peoples-in-new-zealand/) "Pacific peoples" is also the main term of reference used within the New Zealand Ministry of Health (http://www.health.govt.nz/).

The use of such blanket terms can unintentionally camouflage the distinctiveness of the different Pacific linguistic and cultural groups. A "vigorous if softly spoken debate" (Perrott 2007, p. 8) exists within Pacific communities about the use of terms with a pan-Pacific scope. In terms of education, Manu'atu and Kepa (2002) expressed concern for the learning needs of specific students (e.g., Tongan) because they are rendered invisible when grouped together under such umbrella terms. Samu (2015), however, stated,

> Sometimes the main advantage of a unifying concept is the countering effect it has against oppositional forces such as neo-colonialism – or for migrant community groups such as Pasifika in New Zealand, countering oppositional forces such as assimilation and social/economic/cultural marginalisation. (p. 7)

The use of such blanket terms will continue to be problematic. That is why it is important for writers to explain whichever collectivizing term they have determined to use. Pasifika Education is the term used in the remainder of this chapter to refer to the education and development of the Pacific diaspora resident within New Zealand.

The Position of Pasifika Languages, Cultures, and Identities

For many Pasifika peoples, the movement away from home represented acts of betterment for both individuals and their families. It was a movement made in the collective belief that the social and economic prospects of both those who remained, and those who left and resettled elsewhere, would be enhanced. The broader macrolevel process that enabled such transnational movements of labor has been explained as the political economy of labor migration (Ongley 1996). Hauofa (1993) described it as the process of "world enlargement" – the deliberate and purposeful extension of the scope and reach of Pasifika extended families. For most migrating Pasifika peoples, there was no intention to cut off all ties with home, or, conversely, to wholeheartedly assimilate into the host nation. Concerted effort was made to maintain their respective languages, cultures, and identities.

The transmission of language, culture, and traditional forms of identity on to the next generation was more problematic. Pasifika migrants tended to locate in the same suburbs, find employment in similar areas of the labor market and often worship in heritage island groups, in their traditional languages. Their children were exposed to wider influences, including the powerful process of state schooling. Tongan American educator-activist, 'Anapesi Kaili (2012), while speaking of her experiences in the US context, also describes the overall consequences of Pasifika children's exposure to mainstream education in New Zealand:

> We have criticized them for not knowing their language and culture, yet we don't take the time to teach it. I have been in numerous meetings where administrators and teachers clearly do not see a need for multiple histories or epistemologies or anything that is not in par with mainstream culture and values. Yet, the minute our young people show any sign of resistance in this mainstream classroom they are labeled as having a behavior disorder, tracked into ESL and special education courses and their Pacific cultures blamed for their so-called failures. The same culture that they are not allowed to practice or even emulate. The same culture that they hardly even know!

The influence of state schooling was to have a powerful impact on the language, culture, and identity of migrant children and the subsequent New Zealand–born generations.

Framing Pasifika Education

Many Pasifika children in the 1960s and up to at least the mid-1970s experienced the kind of schooling that delivered a Eurocentric school curriculum (MacPherson 1996) where teachers advised their immigrant Pasifika parents to speak only English to their children at home (Anae 1998). However, the current schooling situation in Aotearoa, New Zealand, while not perfect, contrasts significantly with those earlier times. Both policy and practice reflecting cultural responsiveness of curriculum and pedagogy emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s, due to the influence of multicultural theories and ideologies (Coxon et al. 1994). Such changes signaled a state-influenced shift away from a Eurocentric education system toward the recognition and inclusion of minority languages and cultures in the curriculum. The only directive from the Ministry of Education, in terms of the education of Pasifika learners, was via the social studies curriculum in which a Pacific-centered topic was to be taught at least once every 2 years across both primary and junior secondary schooling levels (Samu 1998). This was to change remarkably from the mid-1990s onward and can be understood in three progressive phases.

Three Phases in the Development of Pasifika Education

The first phase of state-funded and -directed programmes of research and development that influenced, rather than deliberately targeted, Pasifika learners commenced in the late 1990s. The impetus was low-performing schools located within "two of New Zealand's most entrenched areas of urban socioeconomic disadvantage and white/middle class flight" (Thrupp 1998, p. 198). Highly publicized debate merged as a consequence of a report in 1996 by the Education Review Office, which argued that chronic issues of low student attainment, truancy, poor teacher morale, and recruitment in these schools were caused by poor school performance. School and community leaders argued the issues were due to the sociopolitical context (Thrupp 1998). The majority of students in these schools were Pasifika.

The second phase was an intensification and consolidation of state funding in national policy, research, and development. The release of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) first Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) results in 2000 accelerated this process. New Zealand student performance was both exemplary and concerning. Those students who performed poorly were shown to be disproportionately Māori, Pasifika, and children with special needs (Alton-Lee 2005). This international measure of literacy and numeracy positioned New Zealand as having the second largest gap in terms of equity, of OECD member nations. It led to Pasifika targeted systemic change and development by the MOE including: the first 5 year Pasifika Education Plan; the first comprehensive literature review of research on Pacific education and the development of the nation's first Pacific Research Guidelines – a document defining Pacific research in general, and ethics of good practice (Anae et al. 2002).

The third, and current, phase is characterized by a reduction in research and development contracts and a significant increase in professional learning and development (PLD) projects, informed by the evidenced-based research outcomes of phase two. The Ministry of Education identified three key priority learning groups: Māori, Pasifika, and children with special needs. This has become so much a part of the language of practitioners within the compulsory education sector, that the terms Māori, Pasifika, and special needs are often dropped. "Priority learners" on its own is sufficient for researchers, practioners, and policymakers alike to know which group is the focus.

The rich and comprehensive research carried out over these three phases has established that for Pasifika learners, culturally responsive pedagogies are of crucial importance and at the heart of such approaches, are responsiveness to Pasifika cultures, languages, and identities. The major professional challenge for teachers is to manage simultaneously the multifaceted strengths and learning needs of Pasifika learners. Quality teaching is seen as a key influence in attaining high-quality outcomes for Pasifika students at all levels of learning (Alton-Lee 2003).

What Constitutes Pasifika Success?

Success for Pasifika peoples and their children should be considered holistically, relative to the multiple worlds they live in. Generally for Pasifika communities, academic success is not only about the success of the individual but is also reflective of the success of the family and the community from which they come. To be deemed fully successful in Pasifika contexts, Pasifika children are encouraged to strengthen and build capability in the "valued knowledges," and "ways of being" of their family/community domains, as well as the valued knowledge of school. Ideally, success achieved in one domain should have benefits or "capital" in the other domains in which learners are socialized.

Transformative education that enables Pasifika learners in classrooms in Aotearoa, New Zealand, to see their languages, cultures, and identities represented in the "valued knowledge of school," and to be utilized as a normal part of language and literacy learning in their classrooms suggests that their perceptions of success will include, rather than exclude, their linguistic and cultural identities. The continued development of Pasifika languages and literacies not only enables learners to be successful in the worlds of their families and communities, but also has direct impact on their successful acquisition of English language and literacy (Baker 2011; Cummins 2008).

Pasifika Languages Policy

The New Zealand Ministry of Education's current policy stance within English-medium education focuses on the learning of "additional" or "new" languages, under the "Learning Languages" learning area of the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry

of Education 2007), rather than on supporting community language maintenance of languages: "Learning a new language extends students' linguistic and cultural understanding and their ability to interact appropriately with other speakers" (p. 24). Included are international "high status" languages, and some Pasifika community languages, including Cook Islands Maori, Niuean, Samoan, and Tongan taught as separate curriculum subjects to "new learners" of that language. Although the Learning Languages learning area states that Pasifika languages have a special place "because of New Zealand's close relationships with the peoples of the Pacific" (p. 24), the reality in many schools with high numbers of Pasifika students is that they are given no greater (and sometimes less) prominence than languages such as French, German, Mandarin, and Spanish.

Within English-medium education, the Ministry of Education promotes the utilization of family language resources to support successful transition to English. There is minimal systemic support for ongoing Pasifika language maintenance, or for biliteracy development through Pasifika bilingual/immersion education. As stated in a 2014 Ministry of Education (2014) "request for proposals" for teacher PLD in the utilization of dual language texts in English-medium education, "Teachers need to build on all of the Pasifika children's language knowledge, skills and experiences to support English language learning and literacy" (p. 6).

In 2015, 47 schools offered Pasifika bilingual/immersion education including 32 primary schools, 14 secondary schools, and 1 composite school. Sixty-six percent of those schools (31 out of the 47) were in the Auckland region, with Samoan being the most common Pasifika medium of instruction. Thirty-five out of the 47 schools delivered curriculum through the medium of Samoan, and ten schools offered bilingual/immersion education in two or more Pasifika languages (Education Counts n.d.). The provision of Pasifika medium education is the result, in many cases, of community concern about language loss, and of goodwill toward the maintenance of Pasifika languages, on the part of schools. Language shift and loss among New Zealand Pasifika communities are occurring at an alarming rate. Concerns about Pasifika language loss have been expressed within educational forums for many years: "According to New Zealand Census data (2006), all Pasifika languages in the Realm of Aotearoa New Zealand are showing significant signs of language shift and loss" (Post Primary Teachers Association 2010, p. 1).

Historically, the Ministry of Education has provided Pasifika language texts (Tupu Readers) in the five main language groups of Reo Maori Kuki 'Airani (Cook Islands Maori), Vagahau Niue (Niuean), Gagana Samoa (Samoan), Gagana Tokelau (Tokelauan), and Lea Faka-Tonga (Tongan); online support through the LEAP – Language Enhancing the Achievement of Pasifika website (McComish et al. 2008); language learning material for new learners of those languages, but not necessarily speakers or members of those speech communities (Ministry of Education 2009a); and PLD provision for Pasifika bilingual teacher aides (Ministry of Education 2007; Si'ilata 2007). However, there is currently no further development of instructional reading material in Pasifika languages to enable biliteracy development within the schooling sector. It is necessary, therefore, to consider notions of "Pasifika success" within English-medium education, where the majority of Pasifika learners are schooled.

Biliteracy Development

Pasifika bilingual learners are able to draw on language resources that include their receptive and productive capabilities in their Pasifika heritage languages, as well as a repertoire of sociolinguistic registers in their English language proficiency. When students are supported to access their common underlying proficiency (Cummins 1980, 2000), their bilingualism, biliteracy, and academic development can develop simultaneously rather than sequentially (Baker 2011; Garcia 2009). The implications of the common underlying proficiency construct require teachers to actively *teach for transfer* of linguistic, metacognitive, and metalinguistic knowledge. The theoretical rationale for this teaching for crosslinguistic transfer originates from several sources. Hornberger (2003) first proposed that both literacies are interconnected in the unconscious mind of the learner, cannot be separated, and have to be viewed as a single biliteracy system. This means that rather than ignoring what students know in their heritage language, teachers in English-medium contexts should draw on, make links to, and build on students' language, literacy, and curriculum content knowledge in their heritage languages and show students how to transfer skills, strategies, and content learned in English to their other language (Cummins 2007, 2008, 2011).

In English-medium and bilingual classrooms, the "monolingual principle" has dominated, meaning that students' first languages are often ignored and are kept rigidly separate from the learning of English and content (Cummins 2008; Si'ilata 2004). Cummins argues that when educators are freed "from exclusive reliance on monolingual instructional approaches, a wide variety of opportunities arise for teaching bilingual learners by means of bilingual instructional strategies that acknowledge the reality of, and strongly promote, cross-language transfer*"* (Cummins 2008, p. 65). In order to achieve biliteracy within bilingual or immersion classrooms, teachers need to make strategic use of the first language resource to support second language acquisition.

Many researchers in the area of language and literacy development emphasize the importance of utilizing learners' linguistic and cultural resources in teaching and learning interactions in schools. Dickie (2010), for example, described the "out of school" literacy experiences of Samoan children "reading passages of the Bible aloud with perfect accuracy; and *tauloto,* which are passages from the Bible to be memorised" (p. 25). Dickie argued that Samoan church literacy practices maintained a strong focus on comprehension, as well as memorization, and that being informed about these practices could enable teachers to link to and build on these strengths in their classrooms.

Subtractive bilingual contexts for Pasifika learners were identified by McComish et al. (2008), as being those where bilingualism is seen as a negative phenomenon in wider society; the learner's first language is not valued and encouraged, and is replaced by the dominant language (English). In these contexts, bilinguals will not learn to use both languages extensively and are unlikely to have high proficiency in both languages (McComish et al. 2008, p. 17). These authors maintain that regardless of the language skills of bilingual (and other) learners, teachers should build on those competencies as a basis for further teaching and learning. They outline some

key principles for teachers working with Pasifika learners. Two of the principles foreground the importance of creating opportunities for Pasifika learners to utilize their languages to support learning: "the languages that bilingual (or *Pasifika)* students bring with them are a key linguistic resource and a crucial foundation for their learning" and "Bilingual (or *Pasifika)* students learn better when they are able to use their first or home language at school" (p. 2).

The need for teachers to utilize linguistically and culturally responsive pedagogies when teaching Pasifika learners is highlighted in Chu et al. (2013) summary of Pasifika education research literature. Their findings revealed widespread consensus in New Zealand "that culturally responsive pedagogies are important to support learning but the focus of research in this area has been primarily on Maori rather than Pasifika" (p. 2), and that there is "growing evidence of the importance of teacher skills and understandings in culturally responsive pedagogies for enhancing educational outcomes for Pasifika learners" (p. 24). Not surprisingly, Ferguson et al. (2008) identified the need for further research and development, including responsiveness to the prior knowledge and experiences that Pasifika learners bring to the teaching and learning context and how this affects opportunities to learn.

Dimensions of Effective Practice for Pasifika Learners

Dimensions and indicators of effective practice for Pasifika learners were developed from the literature and from the research findings, and were used to analyze teacher practice. The dimensions included:

- Knowledge of Pasifika learners
- Expectations of Pasifika learners
- Knowledge of Pasifika bilingualism, second language acquisition, and literacy learning
- Instructional strategies, including Pasifika languages as resources for learning
- Pasifika connections with texts, world, language, and literacy knowledge
- Partnerships with Pasifika families/aiga and community knowledge holders

This set of six dimensions of effective classroom practice for Pasifika learners, each elucidated by two indicators, was used to consider all of the evidence collected and was then applied to the Va'atele Framework. The description of effective teacher practice described in the dimensions and elucidated through the indicators was developed primarily through a top-down process informed largely by the relevant research literature. However, these indicators were checked in a more bottom-up process against the practices of the effective teachers, who were known to be successful in promoting accelerated student achievement in literacy. The original six "dimensions of effective practice" for learners in general are described in *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4* (see Ministry of Education 2003, p. 12).

The six dimensions of effective literacy practice were modified to make them more specific to Pasifika learners and to validate the utilization of their linguistic and

cultural resources within the New Zealand education space (see Table 1). These Pasifika-specific dimensions were used as the overarching framework for the analysis of teaching practice, and form the lens through which the data from teachers and the observations of their practice have been analyzed and the results articulated. The way in which teachers demonstrated the aspects of these dimensions are described in vignettes below.

Case Studies

The next section presents two illustrative case studies that report on interventions to Pasifika student achievement in English medium primary schools. Case study 1 introduces the Va'atele Framework as a metaphor for Pasifika success, with two of its indicators under the "connections" dimension being described through illustrative vignettes, in order to exemplify what effective teaching for Pasifika learners might look like in practice (Si'ilata 2014). Case study 2 provides a further illustrative narrative of one of the Va'atele dimensions: Instructional strategies, including Pasifika languages as resources for learning. It is based on research undertaken with year 1–2 teachers of Pasifika learners who participated in a professional learning and development programme that was focused on utilization of Pasifika dual language texts to support literacy learning at school. (The New Zealand Ministry of Education has developed Pasifika dual language texts in five Pasifika languages: Gagana Sāmoa, Gagana Tokelau, Lea Faka-Tonga, Reo Māori Kūki 'Airani, Vagahau Niue. See http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Planning-for-my-students-needs/Pasifika-dual-language-books) Initially, Samoan/English texts were piloted with Samoan children and were followed by the development of dual language texts in four other Pasifika languages. Teachers are now able to use specific dual language texts with different children, depending on their heritage language resource.

Case Study 1

The research in this case study was located in literacy teaching and learning practices in primary schools. The work in the schools was based on the six (generic) dimensions of effective literacy practice identified from the research and brought together in a resource developed under contract to the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2003, 2005). These six dimensions formed the basis for the Literacy Professional Development Project intervention, the research site for case study 1 (Ministry of Education 2003). The resource includes a section on the importance of teachers making links between learners' home and school contexts "in ways that are visible and significant for the child"(p. 117). For Māori and Pasifika learners, in particular, the writers suggested that this could be done by incorporating and building on familiar content in classroom practices, including "using texts that reflect the cultural values and perspectives of Pasifika students, building on Pasifika children's expertise

Table 1 Dimensions of effective practice for Pasifika learners (Si'ilata 2014)

Dimensions of effective literacy practice	Dimensions of effective practice for Pasifika learners	Indicators
Knowledge of the learner	Knowledge of Pasifika learners	(1a) Teachers analyze and use English language and literacy data in their practice. (1b) Teachers analyze and use Pasifika home language data and family/cultural funds of knowledge.
Expectations	Expectations of Pasifika learners	(2a) Teachers set high, informed expectations for student learning which build on Pasifika learners' aspirations and values. (2b) Teachers build effective teacher-student relationships that focus on learning and build Pasifika learner agency.
Knowledge of literacy learning	Knowledge of Pasifika bilingualism, second language acquisition, and literacy learning	(3a) Teachers know about Pasifika bilingualism, second language acquisition, and literacy learning. (3b) Teachers use evidence from student data and from practice to design learning sequences, and monitor progress in relation to Pasifika learners' language and literacy needs.
Instructional strategies	Use of instructional strategies including Pasifika languages as resources for learning	(4a) Teachers explicitly teach English language and vocabulary by building on Pasifika home languages and oral practices. (4b) Teachers explicitly teach strategies for written language, including use of Pasifika literacy practices.
Engaging learners with texts	Supporting Pasifika connections with text, world, language, and literacy knowledge	(5a) Teachers support Pasifika learners to make meaningful connections with Pasifika cultures, experiences, languages, literacies, texts, and worldviews. (5b) Teachers provide opportunities for Pasifika learners to transfer knowledge, languages, and literacies from one context to another.
Partnerships	Partnerships with Pasifika families/aiga and community knowledge holders	(6a) Teachers collaborate with Pasifika families/aiga in identifying student learning needs and valued outcomes. (6b) Teachers build reciprocal relationships with Pasifika families/aiga and community experts to utilize their knowledge at school.

Adapted from 'The Dimensions of Effective Practice' Ministry of Education (2003, p. 12)

in recitation, developed through church and family literacy practices, by including recitation among classroom activities and by building on the concept of tuakana-teina relationships" (p. 117). It states further that teachers should encourage bilingual students to use their first language as a foundation on which to build their knowledge of English and that learning to read in their first language supports a child in achieving success with reading in a second language. Beyond these general statements, however, there is little in the way of specifics to guide teachers about how to do this.

The overarching purpose of this research, therefore, was to identify the specific actions of effective teachers of Pasifika learners in English-medium primary schools in Aotearoa, New Zealand, that led to acceleration of their language and literacy learning and achievement, and ultimately to the promotion of equitable outcomes and their success at school.

Methods and Data Sources

The study utilized a case methodology, supported by both quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to answer the research questions. The study itself developed out of the results of a prior literacy intervention where the lowest achieving students, including Pasifika learners, made the greatest progress: between 2.4 and 6.2 times the expected rate. Five effective teachers and five improvement teachers were identified and participated in the study over a 2-year period. (The five effective teachers were located in four "existing schools" that had joined the literacy project a year prior to the schools in which the improvement teachers were located. The effective teachers had already completed 1 year of professional learning when the Pasifika research began. They had reasonable numbers of Pasifika learners, and having produced accelerated gains, were selected as being among those particularly successful with Pasifika learners. The five "effective teachers" were chosen because of their Pasifika learners' achievement levels related to those schoolwide gains. The five "improvement" teachers were located in three schools that were new to the literacy project in 2009. These "new schools" had considerable numbers of Pasifika learners and the school leaders wanted to address issues of Pasifika achievement. The improvement teachers were volunteers who were willing to be interviewed and have their practice observed.) The research questions posed in this study were focused on inquiring into four areas:

- Effective teaching of Pasifika learners
- Improvement of teaching for Pasifika learners
- Leader and facilitator actions that enabled improvement
- Leadership practices that promoted reciprocal partnerships between schools and their Pasifika communities

Results

The effective teachers taught in schools that showed higher effect size gains in reading than improving teachers' schools at comparable points in time on the intervention. The effective teachers' schools showed progress substantially above the usual rate, while the improvement teachers' schools took the first year to accelerate to the national average rate of progress, and almost doubled this in the second year. Similarly, in writing, the effective teachers' schools also had higher rates of progress. The rates of progress in writing among these schools were very high in all 3 years, with the large effect sizes most likely to be at least in part due to the very low baseline. Although the progress among the improvement teachers' schools was lower, progress was still around double the rate indicated in the norms.

Two illustrative vignettes are now described from the effective teaching section, including the theories of practice held by the identified "effective teachers" of Pasifika learners, with illustrations of their observed practice, supported by the voices of their Pasifika learners. Data relating to the effective teachers' theories and practices were obtained and analyzed through observations of, and interviews about classroom practice. The observed or reported practices of all case study teachers were described in relation to the dimensions and indicators of effective practice for Pasifika learners, with examples drawn from the observations of their practice at Times 1, 2, or 3.

Dimension 5: Supporting Pasifika Connections with Text, World, Language, and Literacy Knowledge

Indicator 5a) Making Meaningful Pasifika Connections

Kat was a teacher of a Year 1 class at School 2. She was particularly astute at supporting her students to make meaningful connections between their existing linguistic and world knowledge and the world of school. Her writing text purpose was linked strongly to her oral language programme and to the current topic focus, as well as having an authentic rationale that often included making connections with *aiga* (Family) and home. To illustrate: the literacy focus of one of Kat's lessons was persuasive writing and entailed students writing a letter to persuade their *aiga* to take them to the public library. Kat encouraged her students to connect their home funds of knowledge with school and to make school learning relevant and meaningful for home. Kat also made strong connections with her Pasifika learners through the use of their first languages as part of everyday communication in the classroom, rather than as "standalone" language lessons:

> I use Māori and Pasifika languages because I guess it respects those cultures... and I quite like the idea of not just saying, 'Right now is the Māori lesson'. It is integrated and it makes things a bit more interesting... and the children really like it. They like learning a new word in Samoan or a new word in Māori. They like to say, 'Oh we learnt something new'. It's really good for children like Sione – me saying I don't know... but for the status to change

and for me to be a learner and for Sione to be the teacher. It was really good for him to be the expert and for me to say, 'You teach us what it is called', and you could see he was making all these little connections to do with 'fala', and I think things like that are really good to empower students.

Kat recognized the value of connecting with students' languages and experiences and focused on enabling students to make connections between their first language and their English language development:

On my door every week we have a word focus and we learn it . . .So every week we think of a word that we use at school and then we look it up [in our Samoan and Māori dictionaries] . . . The children are supposed to pick me up every time, like if it is 'book' and if I accidentally say book they are supposed to try and remind me that we are supposed to say 'pukapuka' or 'tusi'. I suppose it validates, I mean it is all really good learning because all the children are really keen to learn all these new words regardless of what their background is and it helps validate those Samoan speakers and maybe increases their sense of belonging. I bring it into topic work by looking, for example, at the verbs – what the Māori word and Samoan word for those things are and now it is set up. Yesterday at home time they all had to go and get their shoes and Student 2 just came up with 'Oh the Samoan word for shoes is 'se'evae' and we practised saying it altogether . . . by me initiating initially I guess they know that it will be encouraged and welcomed. So now it happens spontaneously as well with those boys. I can see them just kind of beaming with pride that they are teaching.

Kat's ability to enable her students to make meaningful connections and to transfer knowledge between their school and home lives by ensuring their language learning experiences and literacy products were significant in both domains meant that their literacy learning was relevant and authentic to their lived experience.

Indicator 5b) Transfering Pasifika Knowledge, Languages, and Literacies

This illustration provides an example of a Samoan teacher regarding her articulated knowledge of her students' home language and literacy practices and how she utilized that knowledge to create meaningful bilingual opportunities in the classroom to build her students' literacy in English. Va was a Years 5/6 teacher with predominantly Pasifika students in her class. She was cognizant of the language and literacy practices held by her Pasifika students, and believed that some non-Pasifika teachers held incorrect assumptions about Pasifika students' language and literacy capabilities and were not aware of the funds of knowledge held by them outside of school (Gonzalez et al. 2005):

I think we bring a lot of wealth and knowledge when we start school. You know a lot of teachers will say Samoans don't know how to read, they don't know how to write, but we have had our literacies forever and a day. We have our White Sunday, when our children learn their taulotos (memory verses) and have to read the Bible. So at five years of age we are learning how to sit down with Mum and Dad and learn John 3:16 "For God so loved the world. . .", and this is in Samoan. So I think the more teachers know about that and can make the time to find out a bit more about our children. . . the better teachers we can become. . . I think a lot of teachers group them and go, 'Oh he's a Samoan and all Samoans learn like this', or 'Tongans learn like this'. I'm not saying all teachers do that, but I think it is a mind-set that is definitely out there and before we head in that direction I think we as teachers need

to stop and let's just find out about the lives of our children because there's so much wealth; there's so much that we can tap into, in relation to their successes. As professionals we have all these big discussions, what do we need to hook them in? Well let's find out about their backgrounds – what they know that is relevant to their worlds and then let's bring that in and celebrate it and look at it. Let's dissect it and analyse it in class: that is what we need to do.

Va described how she used Samoan to support teaching and learning, while at the same time creating opportunities for other bilingual learners to utilize their first languages. She focused on creating a classroom environment where learners' bilingualism was celebrated, encouraged, and "normalised":

> I don't ever stop using Samoan. I use it with my non-Samoan children as well. All my children know what 'Nofo i lalo (sit down), tu i luga (stand up), fa'amolemole (please), fa'afetai (thank you), tapuni fai toto'a (shut the door), tapuni fa'amalama' (shut the window). Cos I'll say it and then, 'I beg your pardon, that was Samoan for please sit down'... We do a lot of this in our classroom – I'll say the Samoan word is 'this', and then my Arabic child says – 'In Arabic it's this', my Sudanese child will say, 'It's this'. I'm no longer saying 'What's your word?' I'll say 'Great, can you come and write it up and she'll come and write it up in Arabic and we'll look at the letters, I'll say, 'Wow look at this alphabet, so different from ours.'

Va used her expertise adaptively by recognizing and connecting with the bilingual and biliterate skills that her Samoan students held in their total language resource. She determined individual students' language and literacy capability by utilizing her Samoan language with learners requiring first language support. She recognized that a learner's lack of proficiency in English did not necessarily equate to illiteracy. Rather she sought to ascertain, connect with, value, and utilize Pasifika learners' total linguistic and literacy resource in the classroom:

> I speak Samoan to children who have just come straight from Samoa who have no idea of what is happening. So I try to explain it in Samoan as best as I can and if I could do it in any other language I would. I have one student in particular who has just come from Samoa this year... I will often give instructions to her in Samoan. I will explain a task to her in Samoan. I will even carry out testing in Samoan with her. I have done numeracy testing with her in Samoan and for running records I have prompted her and spoken to her before the reading in Samoan... I have found because this is the second year I have had my class, a lot of my New Zealand born children who last year wouldn't dare to speak Samoan have become a lot more comfortable in speaking Samoan in class. So that is fantastic...I just promote that it is nothing to be embarrassed about and it doesn't matter if your mum or your Nana can't speak English properly... So rather than mock and laugh, don't be embarrassed, be proud that you can speak two languages.

During the second observation of her teaching, Va had a major focus on the teaching of academic vocabulary and language features. She clarified the structure of a recount through a language experience activity by making three types of sandwiches to illustrate levels of weak to strong narrative writing. She implicitly used a Samoan communicative device (use of metaphor to make a point) that her students connected immediately to their knowledge of effective narrative writing. In Samoan oratory

and discourse, the use of proverbs, metaphor, and subtlety in language are highly esteemed as forms of communication.

Although the teacher did not explicitly articulate to her students that she was using the sandwich making activity as a metaphor to demonstrate weak to strong models of narrative writing – they implicitly understood that that was what she was doing. They were able to independently describe what each sandwich represented:

Va:	*We are thinking and we are talking about recounts and I want everyone to be thinking,* 'What could bread have to do with recounts?'
Student:	*The first bread is for the beginning – like the introduction and the last bread is for the conclusion.*
Va:	*What do you think all my separate ingredients represent on my plate? My marmite, my jam, my peanut butter, my mayonnaise...*
Student:	*They are all mixed up – like they are not in the right places.*
Student:	*Lots of information but no order of events.*
Va:	*Can you tell me why you said that Student 1?*
Student:	*Because they are all mixed up.*
Va:	*So what does this (other) sandwich show?*
Student:	*The introduction and the order of events and the conclusion.*
Va:	*Fantastic and this is what I wanted to show you. See all my ingredients here: did I just throw them all onto one plate and then throw them onto the bread?*
Students:	*No.*
Va:	*No I layered them one by one.*

Following the modeling and discussion of the correct structure of a recount, the teacher provided another opportunity "for authentic language use with a focus on learners using academic language" [ESOL principle 5] (Ministry of Education 2006), by reinforcing the learning gained from this "metaphorical" language experience. She shared a personal recount of her recent trip to Samoa for a family bereavement. The sequence was jumbled and students needed to collaboratively "un-jumble" it. She created opportunities for tuakana/teina pairings with "more able" students providing support to "less able" students to complete the narrative-sequencing task. Toward the end of the lesson, Va explicitly referred to one of the language features evident in recount writing: "metaphor" (which had been demonstrated previously through the visual language "sandwich making" experience).

Student:	*She was like a sister to you?*
Va:	*Yes absolutely, what sorts of words tell you that? You are right about "darkest", anything else? Oh, "my heart was about to explode". So what sort of word is it called when you say something like, "I couldn't think or read, instead my heart and head felt like they were about to explode?" What is that called when you use language like that?*
Student:	*A metaphor.*

Va: And what does a metaphor mean again?
Student: It is something that isn't real.
Va: Right so a metaphor is like when something is going to happen but it
             can't really happen because my head and my heart can't really explode.
             Is there any other language in there that… shows you a metaphor?
Student: "The world stopped".

The teacher's willingness to share about her family bereavement created an authentic focus for her literacy teaching and meant that her students were fully engaged, because she had been absent for an extended time and they wanted to hear about her trip. The interactive language tasks enabled her Pasifika learners to draw on their own world and literacy knowledge and to use their explicit knowledge of the structure of a recount to write about a shared language experience (the weekend school gala) situated within their current class writing purpose. The purpose for the writing was authentic in that the teacher had not been present at the gala and wanted her students to provide her with an account of it.

In the final observation of her teaching, Va demonstrated strong practice in the explicit teaching of language and vocabulary and in making meaningful connections. She supported her Pasifika learners to make connections across writing purposes, using knowledge gained from the structure of a recount to inform their knowledge of the structure of an explanation. Va also seamlessly embedded the use of humor, within the body of her lesson, a practice perceived by students in the Pasifika Schooling Improvement project (Amituanai-Toloa et al. 2009) as being a strong motivational tool. They reported that students articulated that they preferred teachers who were organized, firm, clear, and demanding but also had a sense of humor. The importance of oracy underpinning literacy development and the value of strengthening reading/writing links was evident throughout the observations of Va's teaching where Pasifika learners were provided with multiple opportunities to work in communicative pairs or groups and to negotiate their understandings of academic vocabulary within meaningful contexts prior to writing.

Case Study 2

Dimension 4: Instructional Strategies, Including Pasifika Languages as Resources for Learning

Indicator 4b) Teachers Explicitly Teach English Language and Vocabulary by Building on Pasifika Home Languages and Oral Practices

The following case study is drawn from pilot research undertaken with year 1–2 teachers of Samoan learners who participated in a professional learning and development programme that was focused on utilization of Samoan dual language texts to support literacy learning at school (Si'ilata et al. 2015a, b).

The case focuses on what enabled teachers of Samoan children to change their beliefs and practices in relation to the use of Pasifika languages as resources for learning. The preeminence of the role of pre-existing knowledge as a foundation for learning has been well documented by Bransford et al. (2000) who emphasize three requirements for effective learning: (a) engaging prior understandings, (b) integrating factual knowledge with conceptual frameworks, and (c) taking active control over the learning process through metacognitive strategies. The inquiry and knowledge building cycle from the best evidence synthesis on teacher professional learning and development (Timperley et al. 2007) connects strongly with Bransford et al.'s thinking about how people learn. The synthesis identified how cycles of teacher inquiry and knowledge building can improve learners' engagement, learning, and wellbeing. The stages of the inquiry cycle focus on teacher inquiry in order to meet student-learning needs: identifying valued outcomes and student learning needs; identifying professional learning needs; engaging in professional learning to deepen knowledge and refine skills; engaging in new learning experiences; and assessing impact and re-engagement in the next cycle.

In order for teachers to learn effectively, it is vital that their existing beliefs in relation to their students' learning are surfaced and engaged (Bransford et al. 2000). If teachers' existing beliefs about their students' ability to learn, and about what is important for their students' learning, are not surfaced and challenged, it is unlikely that they will engage in the next stage of deepening their pedagogical content knowledge because their existing beliefs may prevent them from doing so. In relation to their Pasifika learners, this would mean surfacing existing teacher beliefs and assumptions about the ways in which Pasifika learners learn, about what helps them to learn, about their families' aspirations for their learning, about their abilities and experiences outside of school, and particularly about their languages, family, and cultural backgrounds.

The overarching principle of the PLD program, encapsulated in each of the workshop underpinning principles and outcomes, was the *integration of home and school 'funds of knowledge' and utilization of Samoan children's total language and literacy resources (TLLR)*. This focus on utilizing Samoan children's funds of knowledge, rather than maintaining a focus solely on student needs as a basis for effective teacher PLD, meant that teachers were supported to view their Samoan (and other linguistically diverse learners) through an alternative and appreciative lens. Teachers were encouraged to engage in communicative bilingual approaches to language and literacy learning throughout the PLD programme, which prompted reflection on their current practice and classroom environment.

Teachers' Existing Beliefs

Before endeavoring to change teacher practice, it was first necessary to surface teachers' existing beliefs about how Pasifika bilingual children learn, and about what it means to "tap into students' funds of knowledge." Teachers needed to surface and understand their own tacit beliefs about the perceived value of making

connections with bilingual students' funds of knowledge to support teaching and learning in the classroom. Through conversations with teachers during workshops, there was evidence that some teachers knew little about the out-of-school lives and experiences of Pasifika children and their families. Some teachers expressed that they had previously taken a deficit view of Pasifika children's and families' lives and experiences, primarily their language/s, dialects, registers of English, and their particular literacy practices (for example, church literacy knowledge and practices). They were provided with opportunities to discuss how their beliefs about what works in classrooms for bilingual learners had been challenged, the impact on their practice, and the changed outcomes:

> The bottom line is I failed this child and I have changed. Now I am really emotional about this because if I failed him how many other children have I? And I've noticed that every single one of my children is now moving... I was given two children that haven't moved at all in another class, and then I got them. They are now moving. And this has all taken part in the last month or so... It's happened. I am proof of that and I am such a happy person because of that... And often we think we know it all. Actually we don't. I used to think I was a damn good teacher and you woke me up on that day. I had to have a really good check of myself and my teaching practices and what was working and what wasn't, and how I could change it and to this day it has affected me so greatly...

Many teachers expressed that they already made connections with students' prior knowledge, but the connections made were often limited to a brief discussion about children's prior "world knowledge" prior to reading. A few monolingual teachers were making connections with children's existing linguistic or first language knowledge. Some teachers expressed the belief that it was better to keep the first language separate from the learning of English and that five-year-olds would get confused if teachers tried to teach more than one language at a time. This was a distinctly monolingual perspective/belief that was difficult to change, until teachers were put in the position of the language learner. Many teachers talked about an activity in one of the PLD workshops where they were prompted to read a Samoan text and engage in communicative tasks using the Samoan language, as new and challenging learning, highlighting for them the realization of the degree of oral scaffolding required in order to read and write in a language that they did not speak. This caused them to reflect on the experiences and challenges faced by bilingual learners in English-medium classrooms. It was apparent that teachers' beliefs needed to be surfaced and challenged prior to any change in practice:

> The example with the reader about the airport and the picture on the front of the boy brushing his teeth and getting us to try and figure it out, because we couldn't access the words, what that story was about was a really neat eye-opener. Like that is how the kids have to process it, so it just put us in the shoes of the learners. So keep that example. That was really great.

They then understood the value of providing opportunities for their bilingual children to tap into their total language and literacy resource when reading English texts. Thus teachers' understanding of bilingual theory was enhanced by seeing it enacted

in practice, through utilization of their own "common underlying proficiency" (Cummins 2011), when reading Samoan. In effect, teachers understood to a greater degree the preeminence of prior linguistic, world and literacy knowledge, in enabling children to make connections with text.

In a PLD program focused on effective practice for Pasifika bilingual learners and the utilization of dual language texts in English-medium classrooms, it is necessary to surface and challenge teachers' existing beliefs before endeavoring to change their practice. Facilitators need to discover and understand teachers' current beliefs and practices about literacy for Pasifika students and their families, and to develop an environment that encourages critical, reflective dialogue, while also acknowledging the changes that are taking place in teachers' literacy pedagogical practice when responding to Pasifika learners and their families.

Teachers can learn to view linguistic diversity as a "total language and literacy resource" (TLLR) (McCaffery 2014) for learning rather than framing children's linguistic diversity as a problem to be addressed. Teachers should be supported and encouraged to explore Pasifika families' and children's resources, and to be willing to put themselves in the position of the learner, with Pasifika children and their families as teachers. Facilitators can support teachers to find creative ways of responding positively to the incorporation of Pasifika children's funds of knowledge within classroom teaching and learning programmes that synthesize well with their existing literacy lessons. Teachers should be supported to enact "owned" practices that build on the linguistic and family resources that Pasifika children bring to school, and to believe that when combined with effective second language acquisition (SLA) and literacy practice, this is the most effective approach to advance Pasifika learners' educational and literacy achievement.

Teachers Connected New Knowledge with Existing Knowledge

The workshops were run in a Pasifika way that synthesized Pasifika specific knowledge with effective second language acquisition (SLA – ESOL) and literacy practice, in order to draw on and make transparent and explicit "better practice" principles and pedagogies. Teachers were able to see how they might incorporate Pasifika, bilingual, and SLA practices within their existing literacy program. This was done by utilizing and practising Pasifika interaction and literacy practices, and connecting them with language and literacy learning, such as:

- Use of humor
- Storying and song
- Co-constructed and collaborative group tasks
- Tuakana/teina The tuakana-teina relationship provides a model for buddy systems. An older or more expert tuakana (brother, sister, or cousin) helps and guides a younger or less expert teina (originally a younger sibling or cousin) pairing (more able with less able Samoan speakers)
- Choral reading, memorization, and recitation in meaning focused literacy tasks

• Engaging in communicative tasks that required integration of receptive (input) and productive (output) modes in two languages

Teachers who were Samoan or who had specific language and cultural knowledge in relation to Samoan children and their families were acknowledged within the PLD context and were utilized as role models for language learning within the group. The PLD workshops for teachers encouraged collaborative inquiry where the facilitators, teachers, families, and children were "working together" (enacting in practice the meaning of the words: *Gālulue Faʻatasi* – the text series), inquiring genuinely into how teachers (and families) might utilize these texts with Samoan children in English-medium classrooms, where there were usually a range of ethnicities present. Some teachers claimed that they were now more open to utilizing children's total language resource as well as family and cultural knowledge and experiences in the classroom. A number of teachers said that they had developed greater awareness about their children's bilingualism and were now viewing it as a resource rather than a problem.

A number of (non-Samoan) teachers read Samoan texts with their students, by using digital sound files of the texts that provided models of correct pronunciation. Teachers supported their learners to connect their own schema with the schema in the book, and enabled them to utilize the text structure to tell and write their own bilingual digital stories using ipads:

[Teacher with new entrant five-year-olds creating their own digital stories about themselves using the dual language Samoan text as a structure]:

Teacher:	*Off you go, you guys carry on.*
Children:	*Yay!* (Reading the story they have written on their ipad): *ʻO laʻu ʻato āʻoga lea. Here is my school bag.*
Teacher:	*Okay do you maybe need to record that one again if you can't really hear it?*
Child 1:	*You need to delete it.*
Teacher:	*Okay so delete that one. You guys have another go at the sound file.*
Teacher & child together:	*ʻO laʻu ʻato āʻoga lea.* (Here is my school bag).
Teacher:	*Wanna play it and see what it sounds like?*
Children play their sound recording:	*ʻO laʻu ʻato āʻoga lea. Here is my school bag. ʻO laʻu pusa meaʻai lea. Here is my lunch box. ʻO laʻu tusi lea. Here is my book.*
Teacher:	*Let's see if they've got their sound file* (plays the file). *Awesome. You guys are way ahead. Let's read it together* (uses the digital text on the interactive whiteboard to read with students):

Teacher & children:	*What's this one? We can read this one; we're clever. ʻO laʻu tusi lea. And what does that one mean? Here is my book.*
Child:	*How do you know how to do it?*
Teacher:	*Because Mrs. Roberts has been practising at home!*
Child:	*Are you Samoan?*
Teacher:	*No sweetie, but I'm learning.*
Child 2:	*She's English. She's from England…*
Teacher:	*Yes, cos even though I'm a teacher, I never stop learning either. I have to go home and do homework too.*
Child:	*Cos you're a English. You're from England.*
Teacher:	*I am from England, yes.*

It was evident that the teacher's willingness to put herself in the position of the learner, to privilege the linguistic knowledge of the children, and to create opportunities for them to connect their Samoan linguistic and conceptual knowledge with their English language and literacy acquisition had a major impact on the children's willingness to utilize their linguistic resources at school. The use of their linguistic resources had a direct impact on their English language acquisition and on their biliteracy development. They were also prompted to consider their teacher's and their own linguistic and cultural identities as a result of reading dual language texts together.

The Vaʻatele Framework

The dimensions of effective practice for Pasifika learners were applied to the metaphor or model for Pasifika learner success: the *vaʻatele*, or double-hulled canoe. The analogy of the Vaʻatele Framework may be applied to Pasifika learners as they navigate their way through the education system, enabled by teachers and leaders who employ the dimensions of effective practice for Pasifika learners in their practice. These particular dimensions and indicators specify the teacher actions articulated metaphorically through the Vaʻatele Framework, by providing the combination of proven principles and practices to support learning in both school and home contexts. An analogy is drawn between each of the dimensions and the representative part they could be seen to symbolize in the *vaʻatele* (see Table 2).

Understanding the Vaʻatele Metaphor

To understand the metaphor in relation to Pasifika learners and their experiences at school, the double hulls and the voyaging of the deep-sea canoe are compared with Pasifika learners' passage or journey through the schooling system as bilingual/

Table 2 Dimensions of effective practice for Pasifika learners applied to the Va'atele Framework (Si'ilata 2014)

Dimension	Indicators	Representative part of the va'atele
Knowledge of Pasifika learners	(1a) Teachers analyze and use English language and literacy data in their practice (1b) Teachers analyze and use Pasifika home language data and family/cultural funds of knowledge.	The hull/va'a of the va'atele as the foundation of the vessel – The uniqueness of the canoe is specific to the hulls and the knowledge of the builder to craft it according to the conditions in which it will travel.
Expectations of Pasifika learners	(2a) Teachers set high, informed expectations for student learning which build on Pasifika learners' aspirations and values. (2b) Teachers build effective teacher-student relationships that focus on learning and build Pasifika learner agency.	The mast/tila that connects the hulls/va'a with the sail/la, enabling it to withstand the strength of the wind and to act as a solid base from which to furl the sail.
Knowledge of Pasifika bilingualism, second language acquisition, and literacy learning	(3a) Teachers know about Pasifika bilingualism, second language acquisition, and literacy learning. (3b) Teachers use evidence from student data and from practice to design learning sequences, and monitor progress in relation to Pasifika learners' language and literacy needs.	The sail/la that enables the va'a to catch the wind – Combining the strength of the hulls/va'a and mast/tila, with the height of the sail, and the power of the wind to enable greater speed and success toward the journey's end.
Use of instructional strategies including Pasifika languages as resources for learning	(4a) Teachers explicitly teach English language and vocabulary by building on Pasifika home languages and oral practices. (4b) Teachers explicitly teach strategies for written language, including the use of Pasifika literacy practices.	The paddles/foe that are used by the paddlers to advance the va'a when there is no wind, and that use the water to generate the motion through which the va'a sails.
Supporting Pasifika connections with text, world, language, and literacy knowledge	(5a) Teachers support Pasifika learners to make meaningful connections with Pasifika cultures, experiences, languages, literacies, texts, and worldviews. (5b) Teachers provide opportunities for Pasifika learners to transfer knowledge, languages, and literacies from one context to another.	The platform/fata that connects the two hulls so that they sail as one vessel, enabling the progress made with one hull to benefit the other hull.

Table 2 (continued)

Dimension	Indicators	Representative part of the va'atele
Partnerships with Pasifika families/aiga and community knowledge holders	(6a) Teachers collaborate with Pasifika families/aiga in identifying student learning needs and valued outcomes. (6b) Teachers build reciprocal relationships with Pasifika families/aiga and community experts to utilize their knowledge at school.	The keel/ta'ele running from stern to bow, which helps the va'a maintain its stability and straight movement despite the conditions – Keeping the va'a "grounded" and secure.

bicultural people. Ideally, Pasifika learners would be in school settings that support the development of their bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism, enabling success not only in the world of school, but also in the world of home and community. Pasifika families want their children to be successful at school while also maintaining strong identities that are grounded in the language and culture of the home. As explained in the introduction, one hull may be seen to represent the language, literacy, culture, and worldview of home, while the second hull is representative of the language, literacy, culture, and worldview of school. The platform/fata built over the two hulls is a bridge that helps to hold the whole *Va'atele* together, thus enabling the hulls/va'a to move through the water as one vessel, while also providing the stability needed to sail through any storm.

For Pasifika learners at school in Aotearoa New Zealand or throughout the Pacific, enacting the metaphorical double-hulled canoe (or linguistically and culturally responsive environment that privileges bilingual and biliterate goals over monolingual ones) is more likely to elicit effective outcomes than the single-hull metaphor – whether the single-hull be "English only" language, literacy and cultural knowledge, or a single-hulled Pasifika-only language, literacy, and cultural knowledge. In order for Pasifika learners to be successful in these two worlds, they need to strengthen and build capacity and capability in both.

The hulls/va'a of the *va'atele* were of equal size and were sufficiently stable to enable sailors to transfer supplies and people from one side of the *va'a* to the other. This reflects the role that schools, leaders, and teachers play in supporting their Pasifika students to connect with, utilise, build on, and transfer the existing "knowledges," languages, and literacies of their families from home to school, with their role being foundational to the successful connections made between these two domains. The connecting platform/fata enables the stability, continuity, and progress of the whole vessel, with each hull/va'a supporting the other, and the vessel in its entirety. Similarly, leaders and teachers who are expert at supporting students to make connections between home and school knowledge, ensure that both languages and literacies develop and flourish, with the language and knowledge of home utilized to develop the language and knowledge of school which, in turn, is employed to further enhance the language and knowledge of home.

Conclusion

The demise of the Polynesian double-hulled deep-sea canoe, along with the decline of the knowledge and practice of navigation methods, occurred after the colonization of the Pacific by Europeans: "Canoes were replaced with European ships and some colonial governments introduced regulations restricting free movement between different administrative territories. The decline was so dramatic that theorists about canoe voyaging began to deny that Pacific journeys were possible" (Taonui 2012, p. 5). In more recent years, and partly to test such theories, replica canoes were built and sailed, with the Polynesian Voyaging Society of Hawaiʻi building the *Hōkūleʻa* and completing a voyage to Tahiti in 1980. In 1999 and 2000, the *Hōkūleʻa* sailed from Hawaiʻi to Easter Island and back, one of the longest and most difficult pathways sailed by Polynesian ancestors.

The demise and renaissance of the Polynesian double-hulled deep-sea canoe may also be likened to the demise of Pasifika languages and traditional knowledge throughout the Pacific and in particular in New Zealand, where Pacific migrant families have been encouraged since the 1950s to speak English to their children, and to clothe themselves with the accoutrements of the dominant culture, in order to be seen to be successful in their migrant home. Since 2012, however, the New Zealand Ministry of Education has acknowledged the need for teachers to be able to recognize and utilize the funds of knowledge and linguistic capital of Maori and Pasifika learners as a platform to scaffold learning in English-medium schools. Generally most English-medium schools do not have bilingual or biliteracy goals and, predominantly, tend to be English only language domains. In English-medium classrooms where teachers do endeavor to create opportunities for Pasifika learners to connect with and utilize their languages, literacies, and cultural resources, their profile might be more likened to the Samoan *ʻaliʻa* (a later design than the *vaʻatele,* with one larger and one smaller hull). In English-only classrooms where Pasifika learners are given no opportunity to connect with or utilize their linguistic or cultural capital, their profile would more closely resemble a *paopao* (or single-hulled canoe, used for short trips only), lacking the stability, speed, capacity, and capability of the *vaʻatele*. Similar parallels can be drawn with Pasifika learners who no longer speak their languages, who are alienated from their island cultures, and no longer feel "at home" either in their Pasifika heritage, or in the "Palagi/European" heritage of the school. With the Ministry's acknowledgment that many schools still need to learn how to better connect with the worlds of their Pasifika learners, the following statement was published in the March 2012 Education Gazette, in relation to professional learning and development (PLD) provision:

> All PLD providers must recognise and reinforce the central role that identity, language and culture play in learning. Research shows that this is an essential platform for lifting achievement for all learners, especially Maori, Pasifika, learners with special education needs and learners from low socio-economic backgrounds.

There is little evidence to date that PLD provision across the nation has had a focus or impact in this area, with doubts about whether PLD providers have the capability themselves, specific to bilingual and biliteracy development for Pasifika learners. For the PLD providers that do have Pasifika facilitators, it is possible that the latter lack knowledge about the processes of second language acquisition and bilingualism (although they could well be bilingual themselves) or, alternatively, they are not in sufficient positions of power to drive systemic change in their respective provider teams, before endeavoring to change the beliefs and practices of leaders and teachers in schools. The 2013 Education Review Office (2013) report on accelerating the progress of priority learners in schools states that:

> While different ethnicities were recognised, little was done to show that their identity, language and culture was valued and responded to. As schools develop their curriculum they should take into account the cultures, language, interests and potential of all their students. Maori and Pacific students below the standards were often subsumed into the more general group of under-achieving students, with no recognition of their particular identity, and no implementation of strategies likely to build on their cultural capital and promote success.

This chapter began by providing an overview of the educational landscape for Pasifika learners in Aotearoa, New Zealand, followed by an explanation of the Vaʻatele Framework and vignettes that illustrate two dimensions, as one suggested way to reframe Pasifika success in English medium education. The case studies illustrate three principles in relation to Pasifika learners' success at school. Through the development of inquiry-focused, collaborative, and success-oriented relationships, the following are possible:

1. Pasifika learners can be highly successful at school. Their utilization of language and literacy as interactive tools in meeting the demands of the curriculum is fundamental to that success.
2. Teachers can teach Pasifika learners effectively, and in particular ways that connect with and build on their specific languages, cultures, and identities, to meet the demands of the curriculum.
3. School leaders and PLD facilitators can support teachers in adaptive ways that enable them to improve their practice, and to utilize teaching and learning approaches that facilitate Pasifika learners' success at school.

Future Directions

Successfully enacting each of these dimensions and their indicators in the classroom with Pasifika learners was not solely the province of Pasifika teachers. These indicators were enacted in classrooms to varying degrees by the teachers involved in the research studies, with only two of the fifteen teachers being of Pasifika ethnicity (Samoan). The findings of this research illustrate that any teacher, regardless of ethnicity can improve their practice in creating opportunities for Pasifika

learners to make the timely, meaningful connections that build on their languages, cultures, and identities in order to master the linguistic and cognitive demands of school. Further research into the systemic structures and effective classroom practices that enable English-medium teachers to work in linguistically and culturally responsive ways to enable their Pasifika and (and other) linguistically diverse learners to utilize their bilingual and bicultural resources at school is urgently needed.

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