Taki Akina:
Te Reo-a-Waha Intervention Strategy
Manutuke School (TLIF 1-003)

For the Ministry of Education
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Summary

Taki Akina is an intervention strategy to raise the standard of te Reo Māori oracy of children and kaiako in Māori-medium learning settings. It is an example of innovative practice because it is a collaboration about indigenous language across a number of schools in a region. It also seeks to improve the quality and correctness of spoken and written te reo Māori.

Inquiry Team

The inquiry team comprised of classroom teachers from four schools who each taught a group of 8-10 seven year-old children. The lead kaiako was Keita Ngata from Manutuke School. The other team members were

- Keita Ngata - Manutuke School
- Hana McFarland - Te Kura Reo Rua o Waikirikiri
- Helen Amorangi - Wairoa Primary School
- Tunisia Keelan - Tolaga Bay Area School

As well as a number of kaiako from schools in the region, te reo Māori expertise came from the following supporters of the project:

- Ethel Macpherson – retired school teacher, reo advocate
- Parekura Kupenga – historian, reo advocate
- Merekuia Tawhara – Kāiārahi-i-te-reo, reo advocate. Native speaker of te reo ake o Tuhoe.

Finally, Cath Rau’s expertise will be utilised in the critique of the completed teacher’s manual.
Background

The identified problem of practice was the difficulty that teachers of te reo, almost all of whom were second language speakers of Māori, were having in identifying and addressing children’s errors in spoken te reo.

The inquiry

This involved second language learning acquisition to design an inquiry around improving teachers’ approaches to the teaching of oral language in te reo. The approach was intended to improve children’s vocabulary usage and accuracy in spoken Māori.

The inquiry began by collecting baseline data for each child by recording them retelling a familiar story. These were transcribed and analysed. Teachers and their external experts came together with the data from all of the children and identified common errors. These were used to develop a set of eight 30 minute ‘AKO’ lessons.

Resource cards contained key words for the language structures being learned. Nouns, verbs and adjectives were presented as pictures to reinforce existing vocabulary as well as to practice new language structures. The resource cards also provided accurate models for kaiako. Lessons were taught over a three week period, and a second sample of oral language was then collected and analysed.

Key findings

1. All children made positive gains in their Reo-o-waha after eight lessons. Confusion between tenses and pronouns was reduced and wider vocabulary usage was demonstrated.

2. Although the focus of the inquiry was on accuracy of oral language there were demonstrated changes in written language.

3. Teachers’ confidence and commitment to teaching regular structured oral language lessons increased. With one exception, teachers now timetable daily oral language lessons.

4. The programme is now being offered to other cohorts of students, along with continuing professional development for teachers.
5. Interest has been expressed by teachers in other Māori medium settings and Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB). A teaching manual is currently underway.

**Key implications**

1. Teachers benefitted from professional learning and development, oral language development targeted towards the needs of their own students, and to their own development needs. The programme, to be useful beyond the context of this inquiry, requires the support of targeted professional learning and development.

2. Given the impact on written language when this was not specifically addressed, greater gains might be achieved by linking oral language teaching more specifically with written language teaching.

The project findings and impacts have been shared with some kura in other regions. A number of Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour with little or no te reo have received te reo Māori language training using strategies and practices discovered from the project. Kohanga Reo have expressed interest in the programme for pouako. The findings are planned to be shared at an appropriate conference in the future.

**Reference List**


**For further information**

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