


# Chapter 9

## Translanguaging in a Bilingual Context in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Case Study of a Multi-Level Paper Focused on Writing Skills in Te Reo Maori

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The integration of translanguaging as a pedagogical tool in the tertiary education context is integral for supporting the revitalisation of te reo Māori. Māori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa and te reo Māori the indigenous language. Drawing on a case study, this chapter examines how translanguaging practices enhance language learning and foster cultural identity. The challenges faced by Māori students are highlighted, particularly in an urban setting where the use of the Māori language is less prevalent. The potential of translanguaging to create inclusive, dynamic, and collaborative learning environments is discussed, particularly through the tuakana-teina mentoring model, and from both the lecturer and student perspectives. The findings suggest that embracing superdiversity in higher education can promote a holistic, culturally responsive approach to learning in a te reo Māori environment. A call to action completes this chapter, with a call for policy reforms and institutional*

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-0107-5.ch009

*changes to better support linguistic, and cultural diversity in Aotearoa universities.*

## **INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT**

In an era marked by unprecedented cultural and linguistic diversity, classrooms worldwide are evolving into superdiverse learning environments where learners bring with them a wide range of linguistic repertoires, cultural identities, and lived experiences. This shift has profound implications for language education, particularly in contexts where historically minoritised languages, such as te reo Māori, are being revitalised and integrated into mainstream curricula. The indigenous peoples of Aotearoa are Māori, Māori have been politically marginalised due to colonisation and so too has te reo Māori, the Māori language (Black, 2011).

In recent educational discourse, translanguaging has emerged as a transformative pedagogical approach that challenges conventional language boundaries, by harnessing students' multilingual capabilities to enhance learning outcomes (García & Wei, 2014). Research into bilingualism and multilingualism has long emphasised the potential of translanguaging as a pedagogical practice, and its implementation has often remained limited, especially in Anglophone countries (García & Wei, 2014). There are many challenges to teaching and learning languages in a university setting, particularly indigenous and perceived minority languages like te reo Māori, where the complexities are amplified by historical, social, and cultural factors (Te Huia, 2023). Within this context, the university setting offers a unique space for exploring translanguaging, as it is often a site of cultural negotiation and linguistic experimentation, where students can engage with both academic discourses and the revitalisation of indigenous languages.

In particular, this chapter focuses on the value and status of te reo Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand, and how translanguaging can be used as a tool for supporting the learning of te reo Māori in the tertiary education environment. While many te reo Māori students are already bilingual, and in some cases multilingual, the challenge often lies in the ways in which te reo Māori, as an indigenous language, is integrated into university curricula, especially in disciplines where it is less traditionally represented. This chapter looks into how translanguaging can facilitate more inclusive, flexible, and dynamic language learning in te reo Māori classes, and how it allows students to draw on their full linguistic repertoires to support their academic and cultural development.

We share a case study to examine the use of translanguaging in a te reo Māori class at university, focusing on a paper that teaches writing styles in te reo Māori, conducted entirely in the medium of te reo Māori and utilising a Māori cultural concept, tuakana-teina, as an effective teaching pedagogy<sup>1</sup>. This teaching strategy

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