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**Weaving 'Muka' and 'Iron'?: A Content Analysis of How
Māori and Pākehā/Western Inter-relationships are
Articulated in Academic Texts for Māori Educational
Benefit**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master in Education at Massey University, Palmerston North**

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Professor Don Miller who passed away suddenly two months before I completed this work.

Your mentorship and guidance, your quiet and humble manner and endless encouragement of my potential as an educational researcher will last long in my heart and memories.

Thanks for all your support Don.

We'll still go out for that beer sometime.

This one's for you.

Ngā mihi e te Rangatira.

Abstract

This thesis analyses and describes how different academics articulate and define inter-relationships between Māori and Pākehā people, in terms of power and identity and Māori and Pākehā/Western epistemological worldviews. In examining a selection of four academic texts, it aims to provide an insight into how varying definitions and articulations of Māori and Pākehā/Western inter-relationships are utilised for varying philosophical, theoretical and political purposes. In comparing and contrasting the content analytic findings with a review of historical and more contemporary exchanges between Māori and Pākehā people and Māori and Pākehā/Western epistemologies in the realm of education it aims to probe into the over utilisation of monoglossic binaries to inform theorising heavily influential in education spheres concerning Māori.

In noting that a small number of academics are beginning to move beyond the sole use of binaries to inform their position of how education for Māori ought to be conceived and conceptualised, this thesis suggests that what is lacking in educational academic discourse impacting upon Māori people is a more carefully considered theory of Māori heterogeneity, diversity and ambivalence. This research aims to provide some significant sign-posts from which a more thoughtful and careful examination of the blurring of Māori and Pākehā power and identity boundaries and Māori and Pākehā/Western epistemological worldviews can take place. It is suggested that when the political, philosophical and epistemological diversities of Māori people are legitimated and validated in academic discourse, more appropriate and purposeful strategies can be devised to provide suitable forms of education for them.

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Table of Contents

	Page
<i>Title Page</i>	<i>i</i>
<i>Dedication</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Abstract</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>ix</i>
 Chapter One: Introduction	 1
 Chapter Two: Literature Review	
2.0 Introduction.....	9
2.1a Māori and Pākehā Inter-relations: Mission and Native Schooling Eroding and Challenging Māori Worldviews	13
2.1b Māori Integrating into Pākehā Society: State Schooling for Māori	16
2.2 Māori ‘Speaking Back’ to Pākehā Dominance	19
2.3 Articulating Māori and Pākehā/Western Inter-relations in Academic Discourse	20
2.3.1 <i>Theme One: Unequal Māori and Pākehā Power Relations in Education</i>	24
2.3.2 <i>Theme Two: The Knowledge/Power Nexus</i>	31
2.3.3 <i>Theme Three: Contemporary Māori Realities</i>	36
2.4 Summary of Literature Review.....	40

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0	Introduction.....	43
3.1	The ‘Western-Objectivist’ Research Paradigm.....	44
3.2	Māori Critiques of the ‘Western-Objectivist’ Research Paradigm.....	47
3.3	‘Western-Subjectivist’ Research Paradigms.....	51
3.4	Māori Ambivalence Toward ‘Western-Subjectivist’ Research Paradigms.....	56
3.5	Outline and Critique of Māori Research Paradigms.....	59
3.6	Articulating a ‘Hi-Ha’ Māori-Centred Research Methodology....	69

Chapter Four: Method and Procedure

4.0	Introduction.....	76
4.1	Content Analysis.....	77
4.2	Procedure.....	82
4.2.1	<i>Getting Focused, Articulating Questions and Selecting Material to Analyse.....</i>	87
4.2.2	<i>The Content Analytic Process.....</i>	91
4.2.3	<i>Sorting the Data, Constructing Categories.....</i>	94
4.2.4	<i>Reliability, Validity and Bias.....</i>	96
4.2.5	<i>Ethics.....</i>	98
4.2.6	<i>Limitations.....</i>	102

Chapter Five: Results and Analysis

5.1	Major and Minor Themes.....	104
5.2	Analysis of Themes.....	108
5.2.1	<i>Major Theme D1.....</i>	109

5.2.2	<i>Major Theme D2</i>	112
5.2.3	<i>Major Theme D3</i>	115
5.2.4	<i>Major Theme D4</i>	118
5.2.5	<i>Minor Theme D5</i>	119
5.2.6	<i>Minor Theme D6</i>	120
5.2.7	<i>Minor Theme D7</i>	121
5.2.8	<i>Minor Theme D8</i>	122
5.3	Summary of Themes.....	123

Chapter Six: Discussion

6.0	Introduction.....	125
6.1	Articulating Power, Identity and Epistemological Inter-relations.....	127
6.1.1	<i>Discussion of McKinley Article</i>	127
6.1.2	<i>Discussion of Rata Article</i>	133
6.1.3	<i>Discussion of Durie Article</i>	139
6.1.4	<i>Discussion of Tau Article</i>	146
6.2	Working With and Beyond the Binary: Critically Representing Inter-relating Power, Identity and Knowledge Boundaries in Educational Academic Discourse.....	151
6.2.1	<i>Working With and Beyond the Binary: Theorising Ambivalence</i>	153
6.2.2	<i>Concerns Over Theorising a 'Hi-Ha' Māori-Centred Approach</i>	157
6.3	Conclusion.....	162
<i>Appendix 1:</i>	<i>Full Outline of all Major and Minor Themes, Contributing Variables and Distribution Rates</i>	165
<i>Appendix 2:</i>	<i>Number and Distribution of Unsorted Content Units</i>	187
<i>Appendix 3:</i>	<i>Number of Content Units Per Theme</i>	188
<i>Appendix 4:</i>	<i>Number of Total Content Units Constructed</i>	189
<i>Appendix 5:</i>	<i>Inter-Coder Reliability Coefficients Results</i>	190

<i>References</i>	192
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List of Tables

	Page
<i>Table 4.1 Pre-Sorted Distribution and Total Number of Content Units.....</i>	94
<i>Table 4.2 Post-Sorting Distribution and Total Number of Content Units Utilised.....</i>	95
<i>Table 4.3 'Hi-Ha' Māori-Centred Research and Ethicality.....</i>	99
<i>Table 5.1a: Four Major Themes.....</i>	104
<i>Table 5.1b: Four Minor Themes.....</i>	104
<i>Table D1: Distribution Table (Theme One).....</i>	105
<i>Table D2: Distribution Table (Theme Two).....</i>	106
<i>Table D3: Distribution Table (Theme Three).....</i>	106
<i>Table D4: Distribution Table (Theme Four).....</i>	106
<i>Table D5: Distribution Table (Theme Five).....</i>	107
<i>Table D6: Distribution Table (Theme Six).....</i>	107
<i>Table D7: Distribution Table (Theme Seven).....</i>	107
<i>Table D8: Distribution Table (Theme Eight).....</i>	108
<i>Table D1a: Distribution and Weighting of Content Units of Major Theme D1.....</i>	109
<i>Table D2a: Distribution and Weighting of Content Units of Major Theme D2.....</i>	112
<i>Table D3a: Distribution and Weighting of Content Units of Major Theme D3.....</i>	115
<i>Table D4a: Distribution and Weighting of Content Units of Major Theme D4.....</i>	118
<i>Table D5a: Distribution and Weighting of Content Units of Minor Theme D5.....</i>	119
<i>Table D6a: Distribution and Weighting of Content Units of Minor Theme D6.....</i>	120
<i>Table D7a: Distribution and Weighting of Content Units of Minor Theme D7.....</i>	121
<i>Table D8a: Distribution and Weighting of Content Units of Minor Theme D8.....</i>	122

<i>Table 6.1a: Examples of Elizabeth Rata's binary theorising.....</i>	<i>134</i>
<i>Table 6.1b: A Critical 'Ha' Māori-Centred Re-orienting of Rata's Binaries.....</i>	<i>138</i>
<i>Table 6.2a: Examples of Graham Smith's binary theorising.....</i>	<i>160</i>
<i>Table 6.2b: A Critical 'Ha' Māori-Centred Re-orienting of Smith's Binaries.....</i>	<i>160</i>
<i>Table 4.4a: McKinley Inter-Coder Reliability Co-efficient Table.....</i>	<i>190</i>
<i>Table 4.4b: Rata Inter-Coder Reliability Co-efficient Table.....</i>	<i>191</i>
<i>Table 4.4c: Durie Inter-Coder Reliability Co-efficient Table.....</i>	<i>191</i>
<i>Table 4.4d: Tau Inter-Coder Reliability Co-efficient Table.....</i>	<i>191</i>
<i>Table 4.4e: Overall Inter-Coder Reliability Co-efficient Table.....</i>	<i>191</i>