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Toi Ako – Developing Māori  
Arts Pedagogy: A Kaupapa  
Māori Literature Review

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# Toi Ako – Developing Māori Arts Pedagogy: A Kaupapa Māori Literature Review

Allana Goldsmith, Hinekura Smith and Kim Penetito

## Introduction

This article weaves together literature to theorise whatu – the traditional Māori practice of weaving used to make cloaks – as a toi Māori (Māori arts) pedagogy. In its simplest form, pedagogy can be understood as the deliberate processes by which knowledge, attitudes or skills are conveyed (Miller & Findlay, 1996), the systemised learning principles or ‘methods’ of teaching (Good & Merkel, 1973), or how and why we teach the way we do.

Internationally renowned scholars of pedagogy such as Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner and Freire have shaped Western teaching pedagogy and, as such, the ways that we teach and learn. Theories and scholarship around pedagogy are broad and vast, and extend far beyond the interest of this study. Instead, this article is a kaupapa Māori literature review to explore broad notions of pedagogy, through a Māori arts lens, that intersect with Māori pedagogies (Hemara, 2000); those that are grounded in Māori language, aspirations, tikanga (customs) and values, to support our developing theorisation of whatu as Māori arts pedagogy. What might we learn about how and why we teach Māori arts practices by developing a Māori arts, or toi Māori, pedagogy?

This literature review feeds into a two-year, kaupapa Māori qualitative research project funded by the New Zealand Centre for Educational Research’s (NZCER) Teaching and Learning Research Initiative (TLRI). The study, named

*Toi Reo, Toi Ora, Whatuora*, explores Māori arts-based pedagogy and practice to story the aspirations of three connected Māori-medium whānau in the Waitemātā Kāhui Ako, in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Through the Māori pedagogy and practice of whatu kākahu (cloak making), this research contributes to the scholarship and practice of Māori arts-based pedagogies as key language and cultural revitalisation practices within rūmaki reo (Māori-language immersion) education. Importantly, this research sets out to strengthen Māori-language community relationships through the pedagogy of whatu wānanga, to better support kura understandings of, and responses to, whānau aspirations for flourishing reo and tikanga.

Using kaupapa Māori research methods and ethical consent, qualitative data was gathered over 12 months and eight whatu weaving wānanga with 30 whānau who have a child or children in Māori-medium education. As we taught whānau participants how to weave a whatu kākahu (traditionally woven cloak) for their child, the research team gathered qualitative one-on-one interview and wānanga data (conversations recorded during large group discussions), photo data of pedagogy in practice and journal data (note, this study in progress is due for completion in mid-2025). This article is co-authored by three members of the research team. The lead author is a postgraduate student and member of the research team who undertook a kaupapa Māori review of the literature as part of our commitment to growing kaupapa Māori research capability and capacity.

The aim of this literature review is to support our argument that Māori creative practice, in this context of whatu, is more than the traditional finger-weaving practice used to create whatu kākahu (woven Māori cloaks) as a product. Instead, whatu is a practice, a set of ideas, and theory that has previously been characterised as kaupapa Māori research methodology (G. Smith, 2003; H. J. Smith, 2017; 2019; L. Smith, 2021) and is now being advanced as Māori arts pedagogy.

The review begins with the whakapapa of the word 'pedagogy' from its ancestral Greek heritage, and its adoption in education as the English term for the 'art' of teaching. We offer a brief overview of definitions of pedagogy, and outline a critical difference between definitions from multilingual European countries and anglophone countries. Focusing on education from an international perspective, two major branches of educational pedagogy practice are reviewed – teacher-centred teaching and learner-centred teaching. Vygotsky, Bruner, Piaget and Freire are introduced as four key constructivist theorists. Constructivism as an educational pedagogy in an Aotearoa New Zealand context is discussed, highlighting seminal Māori pedagogical models in the fight for equity and sovereignty.

An Indigenous global perspective on textile-arts pedagogies shows many similarities amongst Indigenous fibre artists in the collective struggle to maintain their practices and modes of teaching for knowledge transmission. This leads on to a brief look at the state of Māori arts-based pedagogies. Finally, a review of the whatu and raranga literature introduces whatu as methodology, and how this has led to developing a theorisation of whatu as a Māori arts pedagogy, before signalling how this literature review will inform our next research steps.

## Introducing broad notions of pedagogy

There is a long Western European tradition associated with the word 'pedagogy'. It has its etymological whakapapa (lineage) beginning in ancient Greece, meaning 'a leader of children' (Shah & Campus, 2021; Young, 2011; M. J. Smith, 2006; McFarlane & McLeod, 2004). Shah and Campus (2021) give an in-depth historical overview of different definitions, and how the use of the word pedagogy has changed over time throughout the world. Young (2011) points out the unusual use of the word pedagogy, stating that it has been taken up in English to describe teaching as an artform, which has little to do with its humble beginnings.

In the contemporary context, pedagogy has many broad and wide-ranging definitions (Alexander, 2009). Associate Professor Rajendra Kumar Shah, a highly published and decorated peer reviewer in various national and international journals in education disciplines, and a senior member in the education department at Tribhuvan University in Nepal, offers an extensive review in defining pedagogy, stating that "pedagogy is not therefore simply describing the activity of teaching, but reflects the production of broader social and cultural values within the learning relationship" (2021, p. 7). This is reiterated by Professor Avril Loveless (2011), from the University of Brighton, UK, who notes the "understanding of pedagogy as a relationship, conversation, reflection and action between teachers, learners, subjects and tools" (p. 301). We are able to observe through this literature an evolutionary shift in the development of how pedagogy is understood and, therefore, how pedagogy is practised.

A differentiation in the ancient Greek context, as described by Shah and Campus (2021) and Young (2011), is the distinction between teachers and pedagogues, instruction and guidance, and education for school or life. This difference between teachers and pedagogues could be positioned in line with Māori ways of thinking, being and living. For example, a pedagogue in Māori society could be understood as a kaumātua, an elder or grandparent, or kaitiaki (guardian) who guides tamariki (children) in moral supervision and life decisions. It is important to give a brief background on pedagogy from its Greek roots, to add greater perspective for the introduction of kaupapa Māori pedagogies.

Loveless (2011) and Shah (2021) are critical of the lack of theorisation of pedagogy in anglophone countries, which include British-colonised Aotearoa New Zealand, whose society and education system are overwhelmingly anglophone and English-centric. Shah and Campus (2021) observe that, in comparison, European countries regard education highly as an academic field and therefore have a deeper understanding of pedagogy. For example, teachers in non-anglophone European countries are encouraged to engage in ideas such as Didaktik (didactic), or "the focus on the planned support for learning to acquire Bildung [theory], often translated as 'formation, education or erudition' in becoming an educated person able to engage purposefully in the world" (p. 303). In central and northern Europe this theory is a central part of all education, and particularly in the training and critical reflection of teachers on their practice. This idea supports our argument that teachers of

Māori creative practice would benefit from reflecting on how and why they teach the way they do, exploring questions such as: What is Māori about my pedagogy? How and why do I teach the way I do? How much of how I teach stems from the way that I was taught?

## Educational pedagogy

There are two major branches of educational pedagogy practice: the first is teacher-centred teaching (TCT), and the second is learner-centred teaching (LCT) (Aldamigh, 2018; Shah & Campus, 2021). TCT is “heavily influenced by the behaviourist learning theory which enhances teacher’s authoritative role in class and whole-class didactic teaching, while it minimises students’ choice and interaction” (Shah & Campus, 2021. p. 17). In the 1970s a new set of theories began emerging from educators and psychologists Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner. These three scholars are recognised as revolutionary in a shift to a student-centred learning theory called constructivism (Aldamigh, 2018; Olsen, 2007).

Constructivism is defined by Aldamigh (2018) as “a learning theory that allows individuals to construct their own meaning and make their own understanding of the world around them” (p. 6). Teachers are encouraged to provide learning opportunities that support exploration, collaboration and problem solving, and that generate activities that relate to students’ lives. A brief introduction of Vygotsky, Piaget and Bruner highlights their most well-known ideas, and their positions on constructivism. These global pedagogical foundations inform education in Aotearoa New Zealand at all levels. Paulo Freire is also introduced here as a crucial educationalist forerunner vital for informing kaupapa Māori pedagogy.

Lev Vygotsky was a Russian scholar who died in 1934. It was not until 50 years after his death that his theories began reaching the Western world (Moll, 1992, p. 59). Arguably, Vygotsky’s most well-known and most drawn-on theory for modern analysis relating to education is the Zones of Proximal Development (ZPD). The basic idea of the ZPD is to study the interdependence of the process of human learning and development, and the social context that provides for that development (Connery et al., 2010; Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000; Moll, 1992).

Jean Piaget was a Swiss psychologist who published over 100 books and 600 papers in French. It is estimated that 43% of his authored or edited books are yet to be translated into English (Müller et al., 2009). While Piaget is credited with being the founder of cognitive development and learner-centred learning, many concepts within his theories have received negative critique, particularly in the educational practice of Piaget’s Pedagogy (L. Smith, 2009). Piaget’s theory of cognitive development (Developmental Stage Theory) has been disproven in many studies, as the stages he described failed to take into account the effect that social setting and culture may have on cognitive development (McLeod, 2018).

Jerome Bruner was born in America to Polish Jewish immigrant parents

in 1915. He died at age 100, having been awarded 32 honorary doctorates throughout his life (Smidt, 2011). He is best known for his pedagogical theory of 'scaffolding', which is a well-known educational term he coined by applying an engineering model to pedagogical practice, and is now part of education rhetoric used by educators all over the world (Smidt, 2011; Connery et al., 2010; Olson, 2007).

A kaupapa Māori review of international pedagogical literature would not be complete without mention of Brazilian educational theorist Paulo Freire. His best-known book, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, was released in English in 1970, and since then Freirean pedagogy has continued to influence educational practice and inspire educational activism around the world, including well after his death in 1997 (Florence, 1998; Roberts, 2013; Bartlett, 2005). Freire's constructivist theory includes the idea of 'critical pedagogy', or in Latin America known as 'popular education', where teachers and students learn together through dialogue, posing problems and investigating their own worlds around them (Roberts, 2012; Bartlett, 2005, p. 345). The introduction chapter to Freire's book *Literacy: Reading the word and the world* (1987), written by Henry Giroux, outlines a basis for developing a critical pedagogy.

Within the limitations of this literature review, only four significant pedagogy theorists have been discussed. A recurring theme in the critique of pedagogy theorists is that there is often a shallow or surface-level understanding of the full scholarship of these pioneers, which can lead to misinterpretations and incorrect assumptions in the application of their theories (Freire et al., 1987; Moll, 1992; Penetito, 2010; Roberts, 2013). We are cognisant that a more in-depth study would highlight other contributing academics and critique regarding educational pedagogy and their applications from a wider global perspective. Our aim, however, is to understand how pedagogy has been taken up in the Aotearoa New Zealand education context. We are theorising whatu as a Māori learner-centred teaching (LCT) pedagogy that is inextricably linked to Māori language, customs and culture. Therefore, understanding a broad educational pedagogical viewpoint is necessary to inform our Māori arts-based theorisation.

## Pedagogical approaches in Aotearoa New Zealand education

Pedagogy literature points to constructivism as the dominant pedagogy in Western educational practice and policy (Aldamigh, 2018; Shah & Campus, 2021). Yet there is a perceived weakness of constructivism as an educational pedagogy in recognising the important role that cultural context plays in teaching and learning. This question is, how effective is constructivism in developing countries or underprivileged socio-economic regions that are affected by factors such as the availability of resources, class size, the quality of teacher education and training, teachers' and learners' motivation and experiences, curriculum, assessment and government policies (Aldamigh, 2018; Alexander, 2009; Freire et al. 1987; Shah & Campus, 2021)? Many

of these factors occur as a result of colonisation and, as such, manifestly impact Indigenous peoples and their ability to engage in, and benefit from, pedagogical practices that are culturally appropriate.

In 1995 in Aotearoa New Zealand the constructivism debate was specifically addressed by eminent kaupapa Māori professor Graham Hingangaroa Smith, who outlined the 'Māori crisis' in education. He addressed the weakness of constructivism within the hegemonic Aotearoa New Zealand mainstream schooling system, which privileges Western knowledge while excluding and marginalising "Māori forms of knowledge, pedagogical practice and culture within schools" (G. H. Smith, 1995, p. 109). Nine years later, in a keynote conference speech, Emeritus Professor Wally Penetito (2004) suggested that not much had changed in the culturally misaligned pedagogy of the Aotearoa schooling system. He added that Aotearoa pedagogical practice is "ego-centric (individualistic), process-oriented, literacy-oriented, and motivated by linear recipes for progress" (2004, p. 14). Both Penetito and Graham Smith advocate for Māori pedagogies to have a central and recognised relevance in Aotearoa education.

## Māori pedagogy

Ways of teaching and learning are not new to Māori. Our language and practices such as *ako* (Hemara, 2000) and *tuakana-teina* suggest a shift away from egocentric and meritocratic individual learning to a collectively beneficial learning approach. Other examples, such as teaching and learning through *whakapapa*, *waiata*, *whakataukī* and *whaikōrero* (Derby, 2023; Hemara, 2000; Pihama et al., 2004;), offer creative, oral and artistic pedagogical approaches to learning. What remains under-researched is academic scholarship on Māori pedagogies from a kaupapa Māori research perspective (Hemara, 2000; Pihama et al., 2004; H. Smith, 2017).

An important question to consider is what makes a pedagogy Māori, and what are our cultural assumptions? Penetito (2004) speaks to three fundamental ideas: 1) a sense of belonging to place; 2) a relationship of cohabitants between themselves and their environment; 3) embodying ways of knowing and being with an imbued "conscious union of mind and spirit" (p. 6). *Whatu* as a Māori pedagogy embodies all three of Penetito's criteria for Māori pedagogy and will be elaborated on further in this review.

Following the emergence of *Kōhanga Reo* (te reo Māori immersion early-childhood education) in the mid-1980s, Māori education models have continued to flourish. *Kura Kaupapa Māori* (total-immersion te reo Māori education) are founded on a Māori philosophical framework of education called *Te Aho Matua*, providing guidelines for what excellent kaupapa Māori education should entail (Mataira et al., 1989; G. H. Smith, 2003). *Te Aho Matua* is an example of Māori educational philosophy interrupting Western constructivism in the education setting. In another example, *Te Whāriki*, the national Early Childhood Education (ECE) Curriculum (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996) provides a framework and pedagogical approach for



pre-school teaching and learning that utilises Māori concepts (Lee et al., 2013), highlighting how Māori principles have been successfully integrated into a modern educational context at a national level (Hemara, 2000). Despite both *Te Aho Matua* and *Te Whāriki* documents being clearly Māori-centric, Māori pedagogies – the how and why we teach the way we do – are only implicit throughout. We argue for a need to deepen our understanding and theorisation of Māori pedagogies more broadly across Māori education, and offer our contribution here with a focus on *whatu* pedagogy as a Māori arts pedagogy.

There has been little attention given to literature specifically about Māori pedagogies since Hemara's seminal contribution almost 25 years ago. His book *Māori pedagogies: A view from the literature* (2000) scans a broad range of sources to canvass historical and contemporary approaches to teaching and learning in Māori education, including principles that guide Māori pedagogies, key findings on what works, and the challenges at that time to Māori education in the early 2000s. Hemara (2000) quotes Tā Pita Sharples, who states that "formal education in New Zealand should more adequately reflect Māori philosophies, principles and practices, and should be in accord with Māori aspirations for their people" (p. 60). Of interest to our study is that Māori arts pedagogy is afforded one line in this book: "because the arts are considered particular forms of individual and collective expression they are linked to imagination, thinking and feeling" (Hemara, 2000, p. 57). We suggest that developing *whatu* pedagogy, as an element of a broader Māori arts pedagogy, will encourage educators to elevate creative arts from practice and product to a focus on how and why we teach and learn through our arts practice.

Ideas around culturally responsive pedagogy have earned notable attention in Aotearoa New Zealand. Both Savage et al. (2011) and Sleeter (2012) use Gay's (2010) definition of culturally responsive pedagogy as a means to teach to and through a student's personal and cultural strengths, intellectual capabilities and their prior accomplishments, meaning that learning is closely intertwined with ethnic identity, cultural background and student achievement. In another Aotearoa New Zealand education example, the pedagogy of *āta*, or growing respectful relationships (Pōhatu, 2004), and the Hikairo rationale are examples of Māori knowledge-based pedagogical approaches to teaching (Macfarlane, 1997; Forsyth, 2017).

The most well-known example of culturally responsive pedagogy is arguably *Te Kotahitanga*, which was a highly successful, culturally responsive, relationship-based programme, grounded in the philosophy of Paulo Freire (Bishop et al., 2003) and rolled out extensively throughout Aotearoa secondary schools. *Te Kotahitanga* was a national professional-development initiative developed and implemented from 2001 by the Māori Research Institute at the School of Education at the University of Waikato, and was funded by the Ministry of Education from that time until 2013. There have been many publications during its time (Pillai, 2015; Cranston, 2018; Joyce, 2017) that show positive results, with Māori students having greater gains in the schools that implemented the intervention.

In kaupapa Māori research, *pūrākau* is an example of Māori knowledge theorised as pedagogy and methodology based on *mātauranga*, values and

tikanga from a Māori worldview (Lee, 2008). Pūrākau, or Māori narrative, as a pedagogical strategy is a critical tool that has been taken up across academia (Cliffe-Tautari, 2020; Pihama et al., 2019). It is important to note that this review can only hone in on a few seminal works to exemplify Māori pedagogical models of practice. Further analysis and discussion on each of these pedagogies is beyond the scope of this review; however, these culturally responsive Māori pedagogies offer a foundation of thinking from which whatu pedagogy has developed.

## Arts pedagogies (textile arts) – Indigenous global perspective

The historical, global context of textile arts dates back to ancient civilisations around the world, with evidence of flax seeds and fibre cultivation dating back to 4000 BC (Melelli et al., 2021; Herbig & Maier, 2011). Weft-twining, similar in practice and function to whatu, is found in other Indigenous cultures around the world, including Polynesia, Alaska and Zaire, Africa, with a full-turn weft-twining of the same structure as tāniko (Tamarapa, 2019).

In South-East Asia, for example, there is a culture of inherited pedagogical networks based in families and villages that have sustained their weaving industry for thousands of years (Crickmay, 2003; Lo & Wangchuk, 2022; Abdulla & Schmidt di Friedberg, 2022; Wijayapala et al., 2022). Textile arts and education in Sri Lanka, from the earliest handloom weaving, was practised as an Indigenous craft and tradition (Wijayapala et al., 2022). In the Maldives traditional weaving and embroidery are thought to be “the most tangible manifestation of intangible cultural heritage” (Abdulla & Schmidt di Friedberg, 2022, p. 145). In Bhutan there were no written texts; instead, the weaving culture was transferred as “peer-learning and handed down within extended families” (Lo & Wangchuk, 2022, p. 182).

These examples demonstrate the implicit role of pedagogy in textile weaving – something that we intend to make more explicit in our theorisation of whatu pedagogy – and highlight examples of Indigenous textile-arts pedagogies from around the world dating back thousands of years. While all practices have undoubtedly modernised over time, there are recurring themes across the literature that show a transmitting of cultural knowledge and Indigenous ways of being *through* the context of textile art. There is also a clear emphasis on the delicate state of sustaining the Indigenous art form and its practice. Through the examination of literature in arts pedagogy, and in particular Indigenous textile arts, the retention of customary practices and reclamation of cultural histories and narratives is a driver for those knowledge holders. In Aotearoa, Māori textile arts show the same trend. Whatu as a Māori arts pedagogy is one such example.

## Māori arts-based pedagogy

Māori arts, and more broadly mātauranga Māori, in adult learning institutions such as *whare wānanga* and local community groups, are growing steadily (Education Counts, n.d.). Examples include the Haumanu Collective, who run *wānanga* on all aspects of *taonga pūoro mātauranga* (Haumanu Collective, n.d.). Te Wānanga o Aotearoa runs courses from certificate to master of 'Māori arts', including the subjects *whakairo*, *mau rākau* and *raranga* (Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, n.d.). In 1990 Toihoukura, the school of Māori Visual Arts, was established under Tairāwhiti Polytechnic. The kaupapa is delivered through *wānanga* learning in response to "the need to strengthen Māori Art within a contemporary Māori context" (EIT Te Aho a Māui, n.d.). These examples of *wānanga* learning centres show a small section of a growing Māori arts offering. While we celebrate an increased interest in teaching and learning Māori arts, we wonder what pedagogies are being practised and what makes these pedagogies Māori.

Māori performing arts are an example of how Māori arts participation has exploded, thanks in part to a funding boost of \$34 million to support the biennial *kapa haka* festival, Te Matatini. Concurrently, *haka* is now recognised in the New Zealand Curriculum alongside dance, drama, music and visual arts, as a new NCEA subject called Te Ao Haka or Māori Performing Arts. Te Ao Haka is described as a culturally responsive art form that centres a Māori worldview, including Māori language, identity and knowledge systems (NCEA Education, n.d.).

A recently published study (Bright et al., 2023) highlights the benefits of Te Ao Haka for *ākonga*, spanning the spiritual, social, physical and mental aspects of *hauora* and wellbeing. The study highlights the need for sound pedagogical practice by *kaiako*, including reciprocal learning environments between *ākonga*, *whānau* and *kaiako*. The report speaks to the transforming capabilities of Te Ao Haka as a subject and its ability to create positive outcomes for Māori. Like *whatu* pedagogy, a focus on developing *haka*-specific pedagogy would further deepen thinking and practice around how *haka* is taught. There is ample evidence that Māori arts-based pedagogies, whether textile, performative or other, for both adult and school-age learners, are being supported at all levels. Developing *whatu* as a pedagogy through the practice of *whatu* (cloak making) is contributing to this continued groundswell of sustaining and growing Māori arts and culture.

## Whatu as a pedagogy

*Whatu* has been defined, discussed and theorised by a handful of Māori scholars (Evans et al., 2005; Buck, 1911; H. Smith, 2017; 2019; Tamarapa, 2019). Awhina Tamarapa (2019) defines *whatu* as finger weft-twining, used to form the body of woven cloaks and their intricate geometric patterned borders. Hinekura Smith (2017) describes the verb 'whatu' as the creative practice used to make *whatu kākahu*, or traditionally woven cloaks, also

theorising an analogous metaphor of whatu as the Māori term for ‘eyes by which we see the world’ (H. Smith, 2017; 2020; 2021). Tamarapa (2019) explains that “in the whatu structure two aho twist or twine around each other to enclose adjoining whenu” (p. 77). Bidois et al. (2015) add that the method or technique of whatu uses muka, the fibre that is stripped from inside the harakeke leaves and rolled into threads. Donna Campbell (2019), in her doctoral thesis, explains the relationship between the two Māori weaving methods of raranga and whatu: “raranga is the weaving of [leaf] material, and whatu is the off-loom process of twining muka, the internal fibre of the harakeke leaves” (p. 1).

The literature reveals the important relationship of raranga and whatu to the female deity of Hine-te-iwaiwa, who presides over Te Whare Pora, the house of weaving. Māori women arts scholars appear to be in consensus that Te Whare Pora can be both the physical space where weaving takes place, and also a state of mind for weavers (Bidois, 2015; Campbell, 2019; Ngarimu-Cameron, 2010; H. Smith, 2017; Tamarapa, 2019). The practice of whatu, as well as its language and customs, is perceived as mātauranga Māori, and through this creative practice we sustain and pass on mātauranga as an active and continuous reclamation of cultural identity (Campbell, 2019; H. Smith, 2017).

Whatu and raranga have been theorised, beyond their practice, as research methodology by Māori women scholars. Campbell (2019) advances raranga as a methodology in her doctoral research, and states:

Raranga and whatu to me are acts of resistance, spaces of conscientisation that impact not only the kairaranga, but our whānau and wider communities. As lived-experiences raranga and whatu are practiced from the principles of tikanga which inform the principles of kaupapa Māori theory. (p. 34)

Kahutoi Te Kanawa (2022) claims Te Aho Tapu as a methodology in her doctoral research, and explains the two reasons for choosing it:

One is because the process of whatu tāniko has developed over generations, and the construction of geometric designs iconic to our woven textiles also encompasses the source of knowledge from our past. The other reason is to know the responsibility of intergenerational transfer through the practices and skills as a kairaranga. (p. 67)

Hinekura Smith’s scholarship of ‘new’ kaupapa Māori methodology from the ‘old’ practice (H. Smith, 2019; 2021; H. L. Smith, 2023) theorises her practice of whatu as a research methodology she names whatuora. While not specifically naming whatu as pedagogy in her PhD research, Smith hints at a desire to further explore the potential of whatu as pedagogy, in this pūrākau about her then five-year-old daughter Kahukura:

I do not ‘teach’ Kahukura to whatu. She watches, she talks, she sings. The pedagogy at work here is not teaching. It is education. It is the deliberate act of whatu pedagogy – reclaiming knowledge and learning and passing this on to our children. (H. Smith, 2017, p. 92)

By advancing raranga and whatu beyond the bounds of practice and product, these three methodologies (to name just three) ensure the practice of our taonga tuku iho, ancestral treasures – that is, our mātauranga Māori in the form of Māori textile arts, including our tikanga, methodology and pedagogies – is carried on for generations to come.

Other than these doctoral theses, there is a dearth of current scholarship that explores the art and its practice beyond process and product. While this review has examined literature including recently published books, newspaper articles and websites, it is by no means an exhaustive search, and is therefore limited in the scope of the study. Finally, both H. Smith (2017) and Te Kanawa (2022) note a paucity of literature from the perspective of practising kairaranga or kaiwhatu on the subject of transmitting cultural knowledge specifically in raranga and whatu.

## Summary

This literature review is part of a wider research project based on the practice of whatu kākahu (cloak weaving) and whatu as pedagogy. While the broad aim of our TLRI project is a kaupapa Māori storying of whānau Māori aspirations for their children in three Māori-medium education settings, we have a simultaneous scholarly responsibility to advance thinking around Māori pedagogies in this context. Our contribution of whatu as pedagogy is ‘new’, yet draws on ‘old’ ways of being and doing that emerge from whatu practice. The idea of being in whatu practice but not exploring its omnipresent pedagogical value, or ignoring the pedagogy of how we teach whatu to those involved in the research, would be incongruent with the kaupapa Māori foundations that this work rests upon, and would be a missed opportunity to add to Māori pedagogy scholarship.

This review set out to show that theorising whatu as toi Māori pedagogy is valid, and furthermore contributes to kaupapa Māori research methods and methodologies. We will use this woven literature to support our development of whatu pedagogy as part of our research in progress. Furthermore, both this literature review and the whatu pedagogy theory it leads to will feed into a research collaboration with two other Māori arts research scholars in haka and raranga to draw forward a theory of Māori arts pedagogy as a wellness approach through creative practice, a pedagogy we tentatively name ‘toi ako, toi ora’, or Māori arts pedagogy for hauora. In doing so, we encourage those in other areas of Māori creative practice, such as tā moko, whakairo, photography, visual arts and more, to think and write about how and why they teach and learn in their art form, so that we can continue to build scholarship and practice around Māori arts pedagogy specifically, and as part of a broader emphasis on developing Māori pedagogies.

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