

Ngā Kaupapa Whakarauora Reo o Raukawa

Kāhui: Tainui





INTRODUCTION

As part of Te Mātāwai’s support in revitalising te reo throughout Aotearoa, we are showcasing some of the kaupapa kaitono have been doing in Tainui. Tiare Tepana sat down with us to kōrero about Raukawa Charitable Trust’s various kaupapa reo.



HE AHA TE KAUPAPA WHAKARAUORA REO?

Raukawa Charitable Trust held a number of kaupapa reo (described below) that have been in operation since 2008. Funding through the Tainui Kāhui has helped subsidise the events in recent years. Each of these kaupapa cater for ability, rather than specific ages, and are detailed below.

Te Kura Reo o Raukawa

Each year, since 2008, week-long kura reo are held for Ngāti Raukawa whānau. Tiare emphasised how “they’re not just a forum for revitalisation, but for growing our own kaiako:

“We got experts from outside our rohe, like Timoti Kāretu, to support the kaupapa. Under their support, we grew our kaiako in our own space – and now they’re in hot demand! Our kura reo are also a forum where we can encourage kaiako from kōhanga, kura, etc, as well as our whānau, to join the reo revitalisation movement, come and get involved. It’s just this hub of week-long total immersion, learning, and having fun.”



Te Uru Raukawa

On the back of the success of Te Kura Reo o Raukawa, there was a desire to keep momentum going with monthly wānanga reo. Initially starting with 5-10 people, Te Uru Raukawa now typically sees 40 attendees attending. Held since 2010, the wānanga focus on different reo

domains, such as karanga, whaikōrero, etc. There are two streams: rūmaki, for advanced speakers, and a level to support ākongā just starting on their reo journey. The impact of Covid-19 has been an opportunity to increase the reach of the wānanga by shifting learning online, as Tiare explains:



“This year, because of Covid, we’ve converted the kaupapa to an online forum, and have had whānau from Australia and America consistently attend. Also, we organise a new kaiako every month for the advanced class, and this is an opportunity for kaiako to get a bit of professional development. It’s a good forum for students to see some of the different teaching styles for the language. We’ve been getting some really good feedback from testing the online forum.”



Te Whare Kōrero o Raukawa

The third kaupapa is Te Whare Kōrero o Raukawa, designed to support whānau anxious about, or in the beginning stages, of their reo journey. “These wānanga shift from marae to marae every year”, explained Tiare, “to give an opportunity to be in different parts of the rohe, and see how things are done there.” Te reo is the main language of communication, and there is also an emphasis on whaikōrero and karanga. Being marae-based, Whare Kōrero includes learning about kōrero tuku iho from each marae, and haerenga to sites of significance.



“On the last day we have a pōwhiri where new speakers (students) conduct the responsibilities of whaikōrero and karanga which is an opportunity for people who have never spoken formally to have a good go at it. Kaumātua from the marae attend and review the pōwhiri. The day finishes with a big hākari, we invite all the kaumātua to have a kai and offer some thoughts and critique the day. It’s a really good opportunity to step outside of your comfort zone, and not focus so much on the reo, but instead to have a play around with some of these areas if you don’t have the language.”



Te Hei Māpuna

Te Hei Māpuna are weekly classes held in Tokoroa and Putaruru. Like Te Uru Raukawa, Te Hei Māpuna has two streams, one for advanced speakers, and one for beginners. “We get students from all over the place”, explained Tiare, “a lot of the community participate and have a desire to learn the language.” Covid-19 has also meant Te Hei Māpuna has shifted to online learning, but is still seeing success.



WHAT ARE THE LESSONS YOU'VE LEARNED?

When we asked, “He aha ngā hua e puta mai ana?”, Tiare noted three key fruits of the various kaupapa the Raukawa Charitable Trust has been running:

1. “Not a lot of people knew of our kaiako in the earlier days, but now, they’re widely recognised in the reo revitalisation space.”
2. “We’re seeing an increasing confidence and fluency, as well as accuracy, amongst tamariki at Wharekura, Kura Kaupapa and High School.”
3. “On the marae, most of our speakers under the age of 50 have graduated through one or more of our programmes. For example, our current kaiako in Te Hei Māpuna have both gone through as basic level learners right through to fluent speakers and now regularly attend events like kura reo. These are all big wins for the kaupapa!”



Key motivations for applying to Tainui Kāhui for funding centre around the sustainability the funding offers for long-term reo revitalisation, and the impacts this can have on reo speakers in Raukawa. As Tiare noted,

“We’re really appreciative of Te Mātāwai support and our kaupapa aligned to the main objectives of Te Mātāwai, so it made sense to put in a tono.”



There is a “definite” desire to continue with Raukawa’s kaupapa reo, and they have applied again for funding from the Kāhui.

Covid-19 has been one of the most significant challenges for the Trust in delivering their kaupapa, but transitioning to online teaching has worked well. In line with this, kaiako have been asked to prepare a

contingency plan for further alert level changes, that will allow the kaupapa to continue if this occurs. Another challenge that sometimes arises is that whānau, busy with multiple demands on their daily lives, aren’t always able to attend the wānanga, classes, or kura reo. But for Tiare, the journey of reo revitalisation is “so rewarding”, and the passion for this continues to push through despite these obstacles. “We know that we’re doing the right thing”, he explained.

“We have the right and responsibility to use and speak the language of our ancestors. And there’s power in that!”



The main advice Tiare would give to future or potential kaitono would be to “not push yourself too hard. Reo revitalisation is a long road and it needs to be an enjoyable experience too. Make sure you have the mandate of the people you’re working with, and don’t make it too heavy that you can’t deliver it.”

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE ASPIRATIONS FOR TE REO MĀORI?

Looking to the future, Tiare sees te reo as a language flourishing in Aotearoa:

“I can already see the reo as the main language of communication in Aotearoa, mō ngāi Māori i te tuatahi. We’re starting to see that. I think the language will be revitalised in my generation, and I can already see that in parts of our whānau. And I see it ever growing and moving into different domains and spaces.”

