Pacific voices: teacher education on the move
Chapter 15
Teacher education for new times
reconceptualising pedagogy and learning in the Pacific
Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, workshop critical friend

Locating ourselves: situated responses and standpoints

The world we live in today differs quite markedly from the world of our childhood, or what we may think of as ‘the world that was’. That world was much closer to, though not identical in every detail with, the world of our parents, grandparents and their grandparents. Nevertheless, we and ‘the world of the now’ are all linked through our families to ‘the world that was’. Such is the way of all cultures.

The world continues to change, albeit in various ways, with a range of intensities and at different rates, in the Pacific Islands. With these changes, both desirable and undesirable elements creep into our Pacific lives, at times changing the landscapes or configurations; sometimes temporarily, sometimes forever. If we strategise, anticipating change, then we may position ourselves better for handling the different influences of change in our lives. This applies no less in the field of education and teacher education, where the fundamental strategy must be to attempt to amalgamate global developments and local Indigenous knowledges that we deem useful to us, so that we can move forward, benefiting from ‘both worlds’.

I am reminded of the famous little cautionary tale of the sabre-tooth curriculum, a situation we may not want to experience in the Pacific. J. Abner Peddiwell’s satirical story (1939) urges on our attention the necessity for reimagining, refocusing and reconceptualising education in the light of changing contexts. I describe this process as adaptation in the ‘changing ecologies of education’.

Global and local: oppositional or complementary?

Blending the best of contemporary global and indigenous local practice is not only an appropriate strategy in facing up to the realities of the changing ‘ecologies of education’, it is a necessary one. What does this mean for teacher educators and teacher education? What does it mean to blend indigenous and global ideas?
Global ideas flood into our Pacific cultures, through every nook and cranny. Yet do we scrutinise them thoroughly? Where do these global ideas, including those of pedagogy and learning, originate and what cultures do they implicitly and explicitly represent? Pedagogy itself—the theory of teaching—is never free of cultural values and ideologies of the society in which it originates. The reality in the contemporary Pacific is that in the main, our systems of schooling and education, of pedagogy and psychology, are an inheritance from other times and other cultures, which we continue to utilise without adequate interrogation of their appropriateness to our contemporary situation and needs, visions and desires. Furthermore, I share with many other Pacific Islands researchers the opinion that teachers (pretty much quite unconsciously) transmit and reinforce the cultural values embedded in the teaching approaches they use, quite apart from what is transmitted in the content of their lessons and textbooks. This is scarcely surprising; these were the formative values in their own experience of schooling.

Our Pacific world is part of the globalising world, nor would we have it otherwise, it seems; there is no escaping this fact. But it is precisely in the face of this situation, I suggest, that our Pacific responses should be critical and well informed. Our responses must be located within our own languages and cultural contexts. As well, they must take an informed position on the background, the origin, the dimensions and discourse of globalisation itself. In teacher education, globalisation, like any other contemporary topic, should become a part of the curriculum. It should be presented as problematic, hence lending itself to systematic inquiry and critique.

Another important question relates to the dialectic we hear so much about today, that of globalisation versus the local or indigenous. This is problematic in that it suggests that in effect, globalisation is a particular ‘local’; to be sure, a powerful one, but a ‘local’ interpretation nonetheless, its very definition implying the existence of the other local and indigenous. Groppo (2005: 29) makes this point succinctly when he emphasises that the current discourse about globalisation lacks ‘precisely the characteristics of being global, being in the end a particular and a regional approach to world affairs’. He goes on to suggest that ‘the global idea is a capitalist and European global’ (2005: 35). In considering mindful blending, we will need to work consciously with that as our starting point and context.
With the help of postcolonial and postmodern theory, Pacific people must devise ways of incorporating the local and the indigenous more effectively into the mix. I contend that the modernisation of the fifties and sixties, the neoliberal paradigm of economic liberalisation from the eighties and nineties, and globalisation since the creation of the World Trade Organisation in 1995 have effectively marginalised our efforts at blending the ‘local’ and ‘global’. If our blending is to be successful, we must work with ideas that are well informed and critically evaluated, including ‘new conversations between indigenous and Western (Anglo-American) peoples’ (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999: 39).

The next important question to ask is whether global ideas about educational reform, which may have worked elsewhere, could work in the Pacific. The vantage point of most Pacific countries is that of emergence from the experience of colonialism in varying shapes, colours and intensities. I call this position a ‘vantage point’ (Smith, 1999) because being colonised and neocolonised should give one a thoroughly critical edge in reflecting on the so called ‘global flow of goods and ideas that have now become the hallmark of globalisation’. In one of his keynote addresses to this workshop, Allan Luke rightly remarked that Pacific people need to realise that the ‘new’ ideas in education and reforms have not always worked in their countries of origin. As he pointed out, there are no answers anywhere else nor has our reliance on experts from outside worked. He explained that solutions have not, and will not, come from colonial masters and that all systems from the West are themselves in crisis trying to solve the problems in their own systems. Luke challenges us to find our own solutions; to find models that suit us, answers that are local (see Chapter 2; and see also A. Luke, 2005).

Reconceptualising curriculum and practice in education

The need to reconceptualise Pacific education revolves around some of the assumptions that underlie teacher education in the Pacific. After we examined these assumptions at the Sāmoa workshop, participants agreed that:

- **teachers** play a central role in realising national, regional and global educational goals
- **teacher competence and capacity** must be the absolute baseline factors in the reconceptualisation of the policy, content and delivery of teacher education
- following the global trend and local needs, **quality and relevance** in formal education must remain major goals of teacher education in the Pacific
• teachers, the curriculum, teacher education, education policy and practice must be relevant to our island contexts and the needs of the students in these societies
• all educators must create an inclusive learning environment that allows students to share the power space that educators once monopolised
• the ultimate goal of education and teacher education is improved quality of life for our people. This is variously described in our Pacific languages by such terms as mana, sautu (Fiji); toronibwai (Kiribati); hauora, mara (Māori)
• quality of life indicators need to be strategically engineered by Pacific peoples and included in teacher education programmes. In engineering these indicators, local and global realities, lifeways and pathways need to be considered.

For the workshop participants, these were the key assumptions that should underpin teacher education in the Pacific; they are recurring motifs throughout the chapters of this book.

In addressing the need to reconceptualise education and teacher education, Russell Bishop challenged us to develop a responsive pedagogy for the Pacific. He explicated by drawing on research that outlines what Māori people want most: (i) to be Māori, (ii) to be global and (iii) to have control over their own lives. To reach these goals, Māori scholars working with Māori communities list the following considerations as keys to successful outcomes: self-determination, cultural aspirations, reciprocal learning, mediation between home and school, extended family relations and a common vision or philosophy. This has evolved as Kura Kaupapa Māori. In the Pacific, there have been numerous initiatives, some brought to fruition and others still in process, to achieve just such objectives.

Pacific encounters of ‘new times’: locating ourselves

At this point, I turn in the next section to the Pacific voices from the workshop, to highlight what they regarded as key challenges and strategies for teacher education today. I do this deliberately to contextualise the reforms and global ideas of these ‘new times’. The Pacific voices from the workshop provided the contemporary context and reality about indigenous pedagogy and learning. This, after all, is the context in which the global and local meet. I will perhaps seem to place too much emphasis on the challenges, because only as we meet these challenges will any
blending of global and local take place. This, though, does not imply dismissal of the strategies and responses the groups proposed.

All global ideas from ‘outside’ are (or ought to be) subjected to local selection and rejection processes by individuals, institutions and systems. Ideas that flow in with globalisation are dealt with in numerous ways by local and indigenous peoples. Uncritical acceptance is rare, as also is passive reception. Local and indigenous peoples sieve through changes in a variety of ways. Responses may differ from one Pacific country to another depending upon the nature and degree of global encounter. There are even variations in responses from individuals, institutions and systems within a country. But the underlying reality is that the boundaries between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ are blurring, and it behoves us to take a much more active role in determining the processes and outcomes that we wish to see: being swept along blindly or mindlessly is no longer acceptable or good enough. Perhaps we need the baby and at least some of the bath water, and let us not forget the bathtub!

Pacific voices (Domodra na i-taukei ena Pasifika; Pasifik tok tok en spik)

In speaking about the many problems facing their teacher education programmes and institutions today, Pacific participants described the present challenge of engaging in globalisation discourses as a quantum leap. For many, bridging that gap can seem overwhelmingly difficult. In the words of Allan Luke: ‘this may require Pacific people to short circuit reforms’, forgoing some or all of the steps. By implication this may mean circumventing the constraints and moving forward into reforms and changes that are quite radical. At the grass roots level, for instance, it could mean designing a Pacific curriculum for ‘new times’ in the form of our own ‘new basics’.

A brief overview of the challenges of incorporating the global into teacher education programmes points significantly toward the ‘failure of the modernity project’ and the onslaught of postmodernity. It also throws up the associated theorising about ‘embracing difference, the Indigenous and the “other”’ and the inclusion of ‘peripheral: values, cultures, spirituality and Indigenous philosophies’ (Groppo, 2005: 34).1

1. For further clarification refer to Groppo’s discussion in the 1997 United Nations Report on Trade and Development.
To date, finance remains the single most pressing challenge in all facets of educational reform in the Pacific but we must be cautious lest the solutions prove even more problematic than the complaint. The funding of higher education, including teacher education, has changed dramatically since the nineteen eighties and nineties. The implementation of economic liberalism policies has shifted the burden of schooling costs as much as possible from governments to parents (i.e. to a ‘user-pays’ system), support for the ‘extras’ (such as teacher education) being sought from outside. For this reason, teacher education in the Pacific has become donor and project driven, the educational reform agenda being, in most cases, dictated by donors (Baba, 1989; Nabobo, 1999; Sanga, 2000; Coxon & Taufe‘ulungaki, 2003).

Listen now to some of the major concerns voiced by workshop participants. Presenting each report as an individual Pacific ‘voice’ highlights some of the major points raised in the workshop groups as they investigated their individual topics. (By this ‘workshopping’ of topics in separate groups and reporting back to plenary sessions, all participants were able to pay some attention to the full range of problem areas.) First, I present the group that focused on the question of values education, and second, the report from the group considering the place of local knowledges and wisdom in teacher education. These voices speak to fundamentals that underlie all teacher education, as indeed all education. Next, I will attend to the voice speaking in a general way for the professional development of teacher educators, because how we prepare these people is critical to the achievement of the vision we have for the training and development of our teachers. Then three separate voices speak for aspects of pre-service teacher education (one looking particularly at the place of the practicum in this process), followed by four spokespersons on in-service training—and it is significant that participants agreed that these two important aspects of teacher development should be recognised as having different though not unrelated needs, which must be tackled appropriately.

*Voice 1 Values education: do Pacific teacher education programmes need it?*

A recurring theme across all groups was the centrality of values in the shaping of people’s identity. Roy Obed, Kalala Unu, Evotia Tofuola and Rosa Tuia teased out the four interconnected realms that are basic to Pacific value systems: spirituality, relationship/connection, personal development and philosophy (Chapter 4). The interplay among these realms has created the interdependence
among people and between the spiritual and material worlds that is characteristic of the Pacific world. Across the history of the region, survival in the face of the heavy influences exerted by incoming groups has been the achievement of the cohesive sustainable communities these values have produced. Though change and adaptation are inevitable, our education systems must be alert to the need to preserve and celebrate the best aspects of traditional community life at the same time as equipping today’s young people to live in tomorrow’s world. Key to this will be a change of attitude. We must know and believe that we ‘own’ what goes on in our schools; that the day of the traditional values has by no means passed; and that teachers and all stakeholders must be involved in the shaping of relevant, truly Pacific, curricula at all levels of the education systems.

Voice 2 Local knowledge and wisdom in Pacific teacher education

Starting with the idea—expressed by most groups—that cultures define who we are and must be strongly established in our teacher education programmes, Salanieta Bakalevu, Nauto Tekaira, Vaiso Finau and David Kupferman are strong advocates of the preservation of indigenous knowledge systems, not only because this is the familiar background on which teacher trainees and all pupils are building, but also because a new consciousness of culture must be melded with the new knowledge thrust on us by globalisation (Chapter 5).

Teacher education programmes must provide ‘multivocal’ content and pedagogy. Local contexts, activities and vernaculars are the ground in which knowledge and understanding will develop. Teacher education programmes will need to pay particular attention to vernacular languages, recognising that language is the vehicle for content as well as for theories of psychology, knowledge, pedagogy and so on. The school and teachers mediate between the pupils and the ‘brave new world’ they are entering, but they must ensure that they are clearing the pathway to it, not building walls that make it unattainable.

The group also alerted us to possible areas of resistance to the path they propose, presenting some culturally appropriate alternatives: a teacher education village; vernacular education; rigorous research, carried out by Pacific researchers for a Pacific audience; localisation of textbooks and resources; and perhaps most interestingly—and certainly an idea endorsed by several other voices—the active involvement of local communities in the education enterprise.
Voice 3 Training the trainers: the professional development of Pacific teacher educators

At this point I step aside from the order of the chapters in the book, to look at the group report concentrating on professional development of teacher educators in a more general perspective (Chapter 9). Kaure Babo, Tryphosa Keke, Lice Taufaga, Malama Faasalaina and Sauma'eafe Taule'alo, like other groups, noted first the challenge of finding sufficient funding to provide enough high quality professional development opportunities for teacher educators. They saw limited educational infrastructure and institutional politics as inhibitors. Proactively, they suggested that networking with colleagues across institutions in-country and across the region could assist in the creation of more lively, more sustainable and more accessible professional development programmes. They are strong advocates of the GEPRISP model, emphasising the power of relationships and interactions and pleading for the maintenance of a balance between the old and the new.

Reviewing the role of local Ministries of Education led this group to specific suggestions for greater ministry support of all kinds, and better coordination and cooperation. Also recommended are more opportunities and incentives for teacher educators to attend conferences and to be more involved with professional activities and associations; for training institutions to allow staff to balance teaching, research and writing time, rather than demanding that teaching alone be their prime responsibility. The need to nurture teacher educators who are culturally sensitive and responsive to cultural difference is critical. In sum, teacher educators must engage in effective teaching interactions with trainees, understanding that they, no less than their students, are culturally located human beings.

Against this generalised background on professional development, listen next to the voices on pre-service and in-service training.

Voice 4 Back to the drawing board: remodelling pre-service teacher education

Cresantia Koya, Tagataese Tuia, Susan Faoagali and Teremoana Hodges, under the engaging title ‘Transforming the fale: from the “known” to the “new” of pre-service teacher education in the Pacific’, pinpoint the following challenges (Chapter 6).

There is a need to reconceptualise the framework of pre-service teacher education in a way that is firmly grounded in Pacific realities. This includes recognition
of Pacific knowledges, cultures, philosophies of life and epistemologies. Here, the group suggests the *fale* as a metaphor for teacher education in the Pacific, describing the changes needed in Pacific teacher education in terms of transforming the *fale*—removing, adding, moving around, repainting and refurbishing—and stressing the importance of the supporting posts, embedded in the local cultural foundation, in giving the structure its shape and strength.

The supporting posts they analyse range across: philosophy/vision; policies; alignment of goals; responding to student teachers’ needs and aspirations; teacher educators; quality learning and teaching; assessing learning; and evaluation of the overall programme of teacher education.

In sum, they argue for a thorough review of the foundations and structural elements of teacher education as the only basis on which meaningful reform of pre-service teacher education can be undertaken. The new framework must be future based and firmly rooted in indigenous knowledge systems. The reform process must maintain the Pacific cultural focus even while bringing in international standards and practices and recognising that Pacific societies are also in transition within a changing world, and therefore have to meet changing needs for knowledge and skills. In this, our region is no different from the rest of the world. There is an urgent need for collaborative, action-based research on all aspects of education and teacher education. Positive moves towards reform must take in the content of the pre-service teacher education programme as well as the processes of implementation.

**Voice 5 How to deliver good-quality pre-service delivery: easier said than done**

The ideas and discussion about models of pre-service teacher education delivery presented by Michael Tapo, Joanna Daiwo, Dawn Rasmussen and Alvina Timarong (Chapter 7) identify both systemic and institutional challenges.

Systemic challenges, say the presenters, include: the absence of a teacher education standards framework; and a lack of coordination between ministries’ national educational plans and the goals and philosophy of education transmitted in the teacher education programmes. At the same time, suitable resources and facilities, adequate remuneration packages and appropriate terms and conditions for teacher educators remain some of the biggest challenges today for Pacific Islands nations. These challenges are closely linked with financial constraints and limited teacher education budgets.
Institutional challenges abound. Budgets do not provide realistically for exemplary teacher education programmes. Teacher educators are given too few ongoing professional development opportunities. Existing curricula need revision, to include ethics and values education, ICT, media studies and courses that include information about local cultures and knowledges. Even the quality of basic education requires attention. Staffing presently relies too much on the cadre of older, experienced teachers and provision for their eventual replacement is inadequate. Other resources, too, are insufficient for the need.

**Voice 6 Beyond the ivory tower: the place of teaching practice in preparing teachers**

Lavenia Tiko, Liuaki Fusitu’a, Lina Tone-Schuster and John Arukelana use their presentation (Chapter 8) to take a close, constructive look at teaching practice and how it can be strengthened. They have focused on the practicum as the training ground where training institution theory is transformed into classroom practice, thus constituting a critical period in teacher education. For trainees, it is partly learning by doing, partly learning by seeing, and it becomes their first teacher’s eye view of teacher–pupil, teacher–teacher and teacher–community relationships. From this proving ground they will emerge with new understanding of teacher education institution theory in relation to classroom practice, the implications of differences in teaching–learning styles, and the necessity to see schools in the context of community.

The group advocates a teaching practice model that is developmental (i.e. based on progressive learning), articulated (i.e. marries training institution theory to practices in the classroom), firmly based on shared responsibility for all players, and above all, reflective (i.e. conscious of the importance of reflection—on one’s own performance, on others’ styles and precepts, on the nature of schools and schooling, and on the time and place setting of contemporary schools).

They also underline the importance of evaluative processes: how well are the training institutions preparing teachers, how culturally appropriate is the model, can the assessment model be more collaborative, and so on? They enter a plea for teaching–learning models that are less western-based and more locally-developed.

One of the group’s most significant emphases, and one that implicitly fits best with traditional models of teaching and learning, is on the power of support,
mentoring and feedback. Their commendation of learning conversations and critical dialogue will resonate.

**Voice 7 In-service teacher education: managing it nationally**

Asked to consider the national management of in-service teacher education, Tili Afamasaga, Ken Miere, Stanley Karuo’o and Nemani Drova took some of the challenges as their starting point (Chapter 10). They suggest that one of the biggest challenges is finding sufficient funding to implement effective in-service teacher education; another is the tendency to prioritise it too low. All countries depend on external aid funding to top up the budgeted allocations provided by each Pacific Islands Ministry of Education but finding enough financial resources to run any effective programme—which it is accredited, non-accredited, short course, modular, a summer or holiday school or a long-term study—has been a constant challenge for every Pacific Islands nation. Managing in-service training is not hard in itself, thought these group members; the difficult task is finding the funds to meet all of its demands.

Lack of sustainability and the non-recognition of accumulated non-credit courses are cited as another set of challenges. Not surprisingly, given limited financial resources, a complaint is made that in-service teacher training is predominantly reactive rather than proactive. The lack of effective national planning models is suggested as the pivotal reason for the minimal impact of in-service teacher education programmes in the Pacific. That is the fire: where is the frying pan?

**Voice 8 Pacific models of in-service training: doing better with what we have**

Reporting on Pacific models of in-service education (Chapter 11), Jimione Buwawa, Debbie Tkel-Sbal, Molly Helkena, Benson Moses and Silia Pa’usisi identify many commonalities as well as many challenges. They base their comments on the experience of the four countries they represent but there seems little reason to doubt their applicability across the whole workshop membership.

Commonalities include utilisation of offshore and on-island programmes of diverse kinds and a variety of means taking advantage of developments in flexibility of access, and provision through part-time and full-time study opportunities. Challenges include the slowness of producing a cadre of upgraded teachers because of the time and money costs of supporting more than a few at a time for full-time study; the failure of teachers too set in their ‘bad old ways’ to appreciate
the importance of such staff development; the geographical isolation and scatter characteristic of many of the island nations, which limits the availability of in-service training opportunities and the provision of adequate follow-up and mentoring; the need to localise foreign teacher training concepts and develop innovative strategies for making better use of local and regional human resources and extension and distance possibilities for training programmes; the need for trainers who start with a better understanding of the trainees; and the limited resources and supplies that are the norm everywhere in the region.

Turning then to a ‘wish list’ for future teachers, the group points to desirable qualities that include ‘universal’ ones (leadership, integrity, etc.) and the market-driven global ones (IT technology, knowledge, best aspects of the global world, etc.) in addition to ones that celebrate, work with, savour and build on the best of local epistemologies and cultures. Achieving teachers who fit this profile will require starting with a needs assessment; providing for long-term and follow-up training; allowing plenty of opportunity for practice; and facilitating coaching and mentoring over the long haul, including team teaching that conjoins experienced and novice teachers.

Like the group, I dwell on two final observations. First, the impacts of the new technology are here to stay. Rather than bemoaning this fact, we would do well to be active in guarding against its bad points even while taking advantage of its good. Secondly, our local ways emphasise that we do best when we capitalise on group work and team efforts. The use we make of global best practices and modern technology will need to accommodate this.

**Voice 9 Finding the way in the reform of in-service teacher education**

Seeking pathways to reform, Viliame Rabici, Elaine Lameta, Bernadette Aihi, Upokoina Hermann and Lili Tuioti take an overall look at in-service delivery and teacher education in the Pacific (Chapter 12). Taking as their starting point the centrality of in-service training (IST) to the reform of education, this group throws down the gauntlet with a thoroughgoing list of the current challenges to its effective delivery: overcentralised structures and decision making, out of touch with the needs on the ground and prioritising IST training too lowly; inadequately funded; poorly served by its curriculum, which desperately needs to make better provision for both specialist and generalist mind-expansion; the combination of scatter of schools and centralisation of resource people that produces a poorly serviced periphery; and inadequate monitoring and evaluation.
Nothing daunted, they propose eleven pathways for change, which are models of practicality and geared towards better inclusion of local expertise and effort. Particularly appealing features are the suggestions that make better use of the expertise of principals, experienced teachers, team teaching, local community expertise and involvement, fostering and celebrating local school and community culture, and improving incentives and support for teachers, not least by making better use of professional teacher associations in the areas on monitoring, evaluation and implementation of educational reforms. The proposals are breathtaking in their simplicity and positive approach, the epitome of pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps.

**Voice 10 Last but not least: give new teachers a sporting chance**

Aloesi Logavatu, Janet Sipeli-Tasmania, Steven Potek and Gauna Wong tackle the question of how to use the first year of teaching as the basis for setting up new teachers for a long and happy teaching career (Chapter 13). While this is by no means a uniquely Pacific problem area, it does seem that all Pacific Islands nations have been negligent about putting in place mechanisms for support at this crucial stage—despite all the rhetoric about concern, community, and supportive rather than competitive ways of doing things.

Worldwide, novice teachers’ needs range across the professional, personal and instructional. Agreement about appropriate remedial measures is equally apparent, clustering (as we have heard so often in this choir of voices) on concepts such as support, assistance, observation, mentoring and induction. These approaches recommend themselves particularly well in the Pacific world, because they accord so well with proclaimed Pacific values, and ways of knowing, learning and doing.

This group has offered us an idealistic but practical framework for using teacher induction, especially through mentoring, as a positive object lesson in translating cultural epistemology and praxis into real-life demonstrations of the values and principles at work.

**Remaking Pacific schools in ‘new times’**

As I listened to the Pacific voices at the Sāmoa workshop, four scenarios took shape in my mind as the region’s educators grappled with the challenge of remaking
schools, teachers and teacher education for new times. I heard participants reflect on the huge task ahead as they drew on their educational experiences to visualise how globalisation might, ironically enough, provide the opportunity and means to enhance teaching and learning in Pacific schools, rather than to sweep the local context off the beach or over the cliff.

Scenario 1 Give-up mode

*It’s all too hard!*

*Too many others are ‘calling the shots’.*

*Let’s just give up.*

Like a hypnotising mantra, inducing in educators a state of inertia, these sentiments come too often to the lips of Pacific educational administrators. I denounce this viewpoint, believing that it is based on a false assumption that globalisation of necessity produces homogeneity of culture, rendering us powerless to affirm our cultural difference. While some aspects of dominant Anglo-American cultures have become rampant and insidious worldwide, I strongly believe we should not overrate or cave in to the dominance of such ‘homogenising powers’. I take comfort from Allan Luke’s observation that within globalisation today significant shifts in global power bases are occurring. No longer does the Western world dominate all things. The rise in the power and influence of China and India is having an increasing impact. So we should denounce ‘the give-up mode’ and believe we have the chance to celebrate and ‘hold on’ to the uniqueness of our cultures, even as the forces of globalisation make their way into our Pacific Islands nations.

Scenario 2 Society is too fragmented

In responding to an increasingly fragmented contemporary society, our people turn in on themselves and cling fearfully to what they have and what they know. In becoming rigidly exclusive, they lose the flexibility a healthy degree of inclusivity allows. In our region this loss would be the more severe because the capacity for adaptation and tolerance of diversity has been a talent that has served us well throughout the millennia of our history. Groups that become exclusive risk closing their boundaries and asserting their identity, their race and their culture to such an extent that they seize up or shut down altogether. Extreme exclusivity can be like a volcano waiting to erupt. We have seen, in the Fiji coups and the Solomon
Islands uprising of 2006, cautionary examples of what can happen. Exclusivity causes and exacerbates societal fragmentation and can lead to a breakdown in civil order. This then inhibits educational reform.

Scenario 3 No! No! No!

Some Pacific Islands people see both the dominance of certain cultures and further fragmentation of the world as overwhelming. Their cry of: ‘No! No! No!’ is an expression of their sense of powerlessness. I assert that we must never underestimate the potential of dominated Pacific cultures to resist globalisation. Neither must we overestimate the insidious degree of dominance of Western and other dominant world cultures over the Pacific. I firmly believe that if we seize our opportunity to exercise agency, we are able to marshal our own cultures and identity and make use of outside influences to forge our own destinies.

Scenario 4 Interdependency

Those who support this view believe that with globalisation comes an increasing interdependency of countries across the world. I think this is a naïve assumption, because it implies an unnatural and impossible ‘equality of island states’ in relation to dominant global forces.

What are ‘new times’?

To remind us of what ‘new times’ may imply for us, let me recapitulate a number of questions that have underlain our deliberations in this workshop:

- How can and how should we respond to elements of economic and cultural globalisation in these ‘new times’?
- What local ways can we use to critique, debate, examine, question, reflect upon and engage with global/transnational/regional and North–South/East–West flows of capital, knowledge, personal expertise and discourses?
- How can we as Pacific communities, educators and teacher educators engage in a strategic repositioning to meet the challenges of ‘new times’ head on?
- Further questions may include:
  - What are we changing and for whom?
  - Who are making the decisions?
- Where are we getting our ideas from?
- We may need IT, but of what type and for what purpose?
- How much IT can we really afford?
- Who is in control?
- Who is setting the pace for reform?
- What are we doing with our languages and cultures?

Globalisation has infiltrated all aspects of our Pacific lives, education included. The concomitant accelerating rate of social change has brought about ‘new times’ and new ‘eduscapes’. Keynote speaker, Allan Luke, highlighted these concerns:

- New migrants are taking the jobs of local and indigenous populations.
- Increasing drug use has seen a rise in drug related problems.
- New Pacific youth identities are emerging. An increasing number of Pacific children and young people do not go to temples or churches; they wear jeans; they act like African-Americans; they don’t respect their elders and parents; and they ‘hang out’ in malls. Some cannot speak the vernacular that would (in ‘old times’) have been their ‘native tongue’; nor can they speak formal or official languages, such as English, with mastery.
- With rapid rates of culture change, indigenous people live their lives as if under assault. As a consequence, new life styles and new values evolve. These changes are often confronting. Undoubtedly they are changing the social fabric of all Pacific Islanders.
- New movements of capital, people and information are changing the socioeconomic face of every Pacific Islands nation. New forms of work and leisure are impacting on lifestyles.
- The phenomenon of ‘McDonaldisation’ versus vernacularisation is significant.

The shifting ground of media
Carmen Luke points to the increasing presence of media and ICT in these new times and reminds us that ‘the media is not free of prejudice. We need to ask whose face it is behind the media. We need to know and understand the ideology that shapes our media’. The digital divide is real in the Pacific, although as yet, the Internet is enjoyed by only a tiny proportion of Pacific students. She goes on to ask a serious question: ‘What are we going to do with this new world of ‘techno-kids’, young people who have lost the art of conversation (talanoa)—or
perhaps have just stopped feigning an interest in grown-ups’ styles of speech and conversation?

Luke describes the media as ‘shifting ground’. Computer models change rapidly but we have to deal with this. Communication and language changes have occurred because of rapid changes in ICT. There is increased global connectivity but the media are creating a ‘cartography of difference’ in the Pacific. There are increasing disparities in education; some have access to ICT, while some do not. The question to ask is: How do we handle this ‘digital divide’? A more pertinent question for us, however, is: ‘How do we decrease the disparities in education in the Pacific that ICT will increasingly create?’ Perhaps the most critical issue is what do we have to do to ensure that Pacific children excel in computer or ICT skills while not losing touch with the cultural knowledges of their own people?

New ‘eduscapes’ in new times
Together with ‘new times’ come new ‘eduscapes’. In these new ‘eduscapes’ teachers, in my view, are caught in a dilemma. On the one hand they are expected to be innovative, flexible and committed to change for economic development to occur. On the other, teachers are expected to counteract problems created by ‘new times’, such as increasing gaps between the rich and the poor and between the generations, excessive consumerism, loss of languages, cultures and identity, and the loss of community.

Shifting discourses
Allan Luke suggested a need to shift our educational discourse to focus on a critical analysis of global trends as we try to blend Pacific and global ideas of teaching and learning. For instance, teachers have to catch up with current IT trends used by ‘new kids’. Luke notes: ‘Pacific kids have already changed radically; a metamorphosis is apparent. However, teachers, school leaders and academics have not kept pace.’

There is a pressing need for us as Pacific educators to be focused in our thinking, writing and debate about globalisation, so that we can explore, explain and reform our educational agendas for our Islands communities. We must not be caught up in the spider web of resistance and reaction by local communities. We must acknowledge that there is, as yet, only limited analysis or real understanding of the effects of globalisation on the lives of Pacific Islanders, and our research into the impact of globalisation on our education systems has barely begun.
Allan Luke explores the increasingly important dimension of globalisation as it affects educational policy and practice around the world. He draws particularly from his Australian experience, offering two major challenges to Pacific Islands educators. In reconceptualising curriculum by attending to these two critical issues, he suggests, we must:

- create a ‘new basics’ curriculum that is future oriented
- introduce new curriculum policies that encourage multiliteracies over standardised testing.

To reiterate this point, Luke invited workshop participants to imagine an old car that is constantly being mended or having parts replaced. He asked: ‘How roadworthy is this vehicle?’ He suggested that our education systems will have to metamorphose, as butterflies do from caterpillars. We must create new forms that fit the Pacific and that are future oriented. He warned that we must not be caught out playing ‘catch up’; we must recognise new educational problems and prepare teachers to manage ‘new kids in a new world’.

**Pacific education is changing**

The costs of education have risen dramatically in the Pacific. The cost of globalisation itself, beginning with the structural adjustment programmes that have been forced onto the Pacific since the early 1990s, has had many effects on educational financing, such as the introduction of the ‘user-pays’ system. Little serious consideration has been given to the appropriateness of these impositions to the socioeconomic realities of the region; they have gone ahead anyway. In addition, the responsibility for running schools has devolved on the communities. By implication, richer communities will afford better resourced schools that in turn offer better opportunities for their students. In Fiji, for example, where schools are largely owned by communities, there is obvious disparity between schools in better off communities and those in the squatter settlements in urban areas. The ideals of social justice have come off a poor second-best.

The students who face us expectantly in the Pacific today have also changed. Allan Luke reminded us that we as teachers have different ‘animals’ in our classrooms today. Because teachers have grown up in different times, there is a huge generational gap between them and our school children. The enormous influence
of the media and technology has probably been the most influential ausative factor. Luke maintains that given the new global changes in society, children’s cognitive development has changed as well. Recognition of this fact underpins the calls for adaptation to new teaching and learning styles where teacher authority will have to be shared with new ‘techno-advanced’ youngsters in the classroom.

Today’s ‘new world kids’ are growing up in an environment of increasing cultural hybridity where linguistic and cultural diversity is magnified. Young people are increasingly mapping out their own ‘youth cultures’. In this scenario, youngsters are good with new technology and teachers lag far behind them in their technological understanding. Luke cautions: ‘Having a lot of new computers in the classroom will not improve learning and new technology. It can create huge moral vacuums.’ He goes on to suggest that we have to create a system for our ‘hybrid kids’.

Our people need the tools so that they can begin to think, create and analyse for themselves. They need to be able to weigh up the impact of globalisation on their environments, knowledges and ways of life. In terms of educational planning, Luke suggests that global flows of knowledge and ICT need to be engineered into educational planning.

We need to be absolutely clear on the purposes of education. Luke suggests a shift from a needs based model to a reconceptualist model. This is a model where you first think of what sort of a human being/people/society you want to create, then working backwards from there, map the curriculum that will produce such an end-product. For example, we need to project the type of person we want, say in 2010. This way we will create a ‘new’ ideal, identifying the things we need to get right. Then planners can define/draw or conceptualise a curriculum using that guideline.

The need for teachers of high quality has never been more obvious. In terms of teacher capacity, they need to acquire a baseline of specialist content knowledge and at the same time have the broader base of a rich general education. Teachers also need to use creative, alternative, teaching methodologies. Issues such as the ‘McDonaldisation’ of cultures, flows of monies, how we preserve lagoons and fish stocks against local exploitation by expanding populations and overseas driftnets and so forth must be opened up for general discussion and debate.
The solutions for Pacific Islands educators do not lie in more tests, tougher exams, different school management or assessment models adapted from the West. I believe there is a need for each Pacific nation to define its own ‘new basics’ and to reconceptualise its own curriculum in terms of its own unique social context. Teacher educators need to be at the forefront of that work. Luke suggests that in drawing up new basics for the Pacific, local educators need to get rid of Piaget and get into cross-cultural psychology. The most pressing need is to develop an indigenous psychology based on indigenous philosophies of knowledge, epistemology and psychology.

I suggest that all roads lead back to teacher capacity. Schools need to be pushed to think about the future and prepare students to prepare for that future. This preparation must include problem solving and the development of intercultural and transcultural communications. Teacher trainers must explicitly embrace and implement approaches and strategies in all their courses to ensure that this happens. As a matter of policy, teacher education courses should ensure that multiculturalism and globalisation become problem solving exercises in all areas of their curriculum (Gagliardi, 1995: 10). Teachers who graduate with this capacity will be better equipped to manage ‘new age kids’.

Indigenous approaches to teacher education

Unquestionably, indigenous approaches to pedagogy and learning will benefit teacher education in the Pacific. In reconceptualising teacher education for ‘new times’, the Sāmoa workshop, through Pacific voices and workshop resource persons, reiterated what some Pacific academics have been talking about for some time. The work of Thaman (2003), for instance, spells out the need to account for and include indigenous Pacific philosophies of knowledge, local epistemologies, and Pacific methods of teaching and learning, in all areas of education, teacher education included.

Why do we need to include indigenous approaches to pedagogy and learning? As I say, for over a decade some Pacific academics and educators, perhaps most prominently Konai Helu Thaman, have pushed for this inclusion of approaches rooted in Pacific philosophies, epistemologies and values. Her work (e.g. 1992a and b, 1993, 1999, 2000a and b, 2003) emphasises the important role culture plays in influencing pedagogy and learning. She reminds us that ‘culture shapes
people’s beliefs and attitudes, and their roles and role expectations, as well as the way they interpret and make meanings of their own and others’ behaviour’ (Eagly & Chaiken, quoted in Thaman, 2003: 3). Role expectations and role conflicts are culturally defined, she adds by way of clarification. This highlights the importance of understanding the congruence between teacher–student role expectations and pedagogy.

Thaman (1999) argues that pedagogy is shaped by the values and ideologies of the culture of origin. She says that a teacher’s professionalism and cultural sensitivity are important determinants if children are to succeed in their schooling. She emphasises that if teaching and learning in schools and universities are to be culturally inclusive, there is a need to target teachers, because they are the people who can bridge the cultural gaps between the learners’ home cultures and the expectations of formal education (2003: 8).

The work of teacher educators can become a powerful tool in the Pacific, because they can ensure that trainee teachers can develop into focused, professional teachers in their Pacific Islands schools. Most importantly, they can also ensure that curriculum offerings and pedagogy are culturally inclusive. To this end Thaman (2003: 9) has outlined a cultural framework for education that she calls *kakala*.\(^2\)

Russell Bishop points out that if meaningful reform is to take place, teachers of indigenous students must ensure that:

- culturally appropriate, quality teaching takes place
- deficit theorising is never used to label students who are poor performers
- they get out of the ‘deficit spaces’ they have been occupying for too long and have become committed to
- they know how to bring about change in educational achievement
- they care for children and young people, and see them as culturally located human beings
- they care about the performances of all students
- they create a secure, well managed learning environment
- they engage in effective teaching–learning interactions with all students

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2. *Kakala* is similar in some degree to the *Kaupapa Māori* framework of education, whose underlying rationale is: ‘Be Māori, Be Global and Live a Healthy and Secure Life’.
they use appropriate teaching–learning strategies to promote change
they promote and monitor positive educational outcomes
they understand the reasons behind student success and failure.

Efforts toward using indigenous approaches to pedagogy and learning may be enhanced by creating a list of priorities. The Inter-institutional Consortium for Indigenous Knowledge (ICIK) based at the Pennsylvania State University has suggested these priorities as a way forward for educators. The directions they suggest, though addressed to a wider audience, are relevant for Pacific educators.

Educators should be:

• engaging in the validation of indigenous knowledge
• producing new research methods for studying indigenous knowledge
• giving students and faculty both the methodologies for recording indigenous knowledge and the tools for using it effectively
• promoting diversity by valuing the ways of knowing that are characteristic of various cultures
• promoting interdisciplinary, participatory research and cooperative problem-solving between communities and academic institutions
• enhancing locally appropriate development efforts in the Commonwealth
• enhancing the internationalisation of the curriculum of academic institutions by giving faculty and students ready access to a global network of indigenous knowledge centres
• identifying and compiling resources
• increasing teacher awareness of indigenous knowledge through a worldwide integrated database and the National Association for Science, Technology and Society
• providing teacher training programmes that demonstrate how to use both local and scientific knowledge to make decisions about natural resource use and the environment
• providing a linkage to Science, Technology and Society educational programmes
• encouraging interaction between indigenous epistemologies and Western epistemologies for the purpose of finding new methods to produce knowledge.
(Semali & Kincheloe, 1999: 5)
It seems to me that most if not all of these points, especially the last one, resonate closely with the main aims and deliberations of the Sāmoa workshop, which focused primarily on the need to encourage the interaction between and blending of indigenous/local knowledge—its approaches, philosophies and epistemologies—with global ones. In this way the outcome will not only be enhanced learning; new ideas of pedagogy and learning will evolve.

**RRR—DVD: revitalising, revamping, redefining — delivery, visions, directions**

I suggest that for Pacific teacher education, the way forward will be to revitalise our delivery, revamp our visions of education and redefine our directions. In order to revitalise delivery in teacher education, we need to redefine our philosophies of teaching and learning. Here the use of local knowledges, metaphors and wisdoms is needed, to ground ‘outside’ theories and beliefs of teaching and learning. As a starting point, a consistent commitment to a similar vision and philosophy based on carefully thought through and generally accepted beliefs and values of Pacific peoples is crucial. This is a tricky proposition; we all know that it is hard to agree on any one philosophy of teaching and learning. Every serious teacher educator has her/his own philosophy of education born out of individual experiences, values, beliefs, cultures and life in general. This does not mean we should not make the effort.

Our redefined directions, then, must embrace a collection of teacher education philosophies in any one context, and the collection will need to include (but not be limited to) new ideas adopted from the ‘global context’ and adapted to our own Pacific context. This will remain the biggest challenge for us as teacher educators in the Pacific.

Change must not be a threat; instead, change must be enabling. It must enable us to feel the ‘flow of life’ through ideas new and old, local and global. Newness is inherent in life. As nature itself reinvents its life through changes in cycles and seasons, similarly we in education must change, expand, grow and keep refreshing and reinscribing our directions, our visions and our lives. But we in the Pacific must not be pushed around or trampled by change. We must ensure that we are always in a position to evaluate change, to reject it or accept it, to use or modify it according to its merits for our context.
Building research capability among Pacific teacher educators

There is a recognised need to increase indigenous Pacific scholarship; more local researchers and writers must be encouraged to let their voices be heard. This should be done in ways that recentre, reaffirm and empower Pacific knowledge systems, philosophies of knowledge, cultural pedagogies and epistemologies. For teacher educators, research and writing in these areas will need more and more attention and focus. Research is crucial; teaching needs to be continually informed by it. But most teacher education institutions, it seems, are so busy with their teaching engagements that research is neglected, despite the fact that research has been increasingly identified as an important area of teacher education and that research initiatives are already underway. Smith highlights this important point:

> The history of research from many indigenous perspectives is so deeply embedded in colonization that it has been regarded as a tool only of colonization and not as a potential tool for self-determination and development especially for reestablishing our own academic engagement with and scholarly authority over our own knowledge systems, experiences, representations, imaginations and identities. (Smith, 2004: 4–5)

The past decade in the Pacific has seen an upsurge in writing, debate, research and networking among Pacific indigenous scholars. Working alone, among themselves or with ‘the Other’ they have explored research topics, methodological issues and agendas relating to indigeneity. Their objective is to affirm cultural identity, enhance Pacific lives, and recognise cultural change and development. This is in line with what Rigney describes as the effort by indigenous researchers to ‘not only disrupt hegemonic research forms and their power relations, but to alleviate and reinvent new research methodologies and perspectives’ (quoted in Smith, 2004: 5).

Further, I believe that research by Pacific educators needs to be transformative. It needs to question the status quo and to strike out for new horizons where new forms of knowledge are created by us. Again, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2004: 6) emphasises that indigenous researchers must work to produce indigenous bodies of literature, by leading and mentoring others, and encouraging them to engage and share in the research process. She suggests that there needs to be reconciliation and a reconnection between the academy of researchers, the diverse indigenous
communities and the larger political struggle of decolonisation.

In teacher education, the challenges of research include the need to make spaces in our cramped curricula to allow time for Pacific teacher educators to research and write. Research funding, which in most cases is next to nothing in institutional budgets, is in urgent need of review. We must expand the capability of Pacific teacher educators to undertake research themselves and/or in collaboration with ‘the Other’. As well, Pacific research, according to Sanga, must be ‘conceptualized philosophically’ (2004: 49). Another major challenge relates to academic leadership. Sanga pointedly argues:

The academic leadership for indigenous Pacific research, however, is weak. This leadership base must be strengthened. As well, a deliberate developmental agenda should be created wherein emerging Pacific researchers are trained and mentored. (2004: 50)

On a similar note, I have argued that:

[our] Pacific leaders in research and academia must not be seen as easy pawns in the power games of those that dominate academia . . . where brown or native faces who are easily agreeable, and are easily manipulated by those in power, are strategically put in places where those dominant can then keep power and control over them. (Nabobo-Baba, 2004: 20)

And as on that occasion, I want to emphasise that ‘this is a point of silencing, strategic silencing, that we as Pacific scholars have to confront and strategise against’ (ibid.).

Creating a Pacific research community. A desirable outcome for Pacific teacher education is the building of capacities within countries and within institutions, with the objective of creating a Pacific research community. Although some research has been done in a number of Pacific teacher education institutions, it is true to say that research remains an area of need. Unfortunately, it is rarely formally identified as a priority in Pacific teacher education institutions.

A number of research initiatives are emerging. Researching the Pacific Initiative from the Pacific Educator’s network, spearheaded by the Victoria University in
Wellington and the University of the South Pacific, is one such example. This initiative has, in a major way, rekindled interest in researching Pacific indigenous knowledges, and in rethinking and re-visioning Pacific education. Increasingly, as researchers develop networking relationships, they are promoting better educational outcomes for Pacific peoples. It is in these processes of networking and sharing, of exchanging ideas and experiences, that educators can be nurtured further.

Smith outlines the direction and strategies taken by the New Zealand Māori to establish an effective research community that incrementally permeates all other areas of academia. The Pacific experience can benefit from that of the Māori, but each country and institution has to define its priorities and agendas. Smith points out:

Building a research community is an important part of building research capacity and research culture. The purpose of a research community is that researchers need to communicate and contest ideas, they need to operate in a system where some basic values about knowledge and research are understood and shared . . . In other words they need to breathe, talk, drink and eat knowledge and research and scholarship. (2004: 8)

Pacific researchers also must take into account Bishop’s (1999: 17) advice drawn from the Māori context. He cautions that research and teaching must never simplify and commodify Māori knowledge and history, but must enhance indigenous capacities in education. Further, he suggests that indigenous metaphors and relationships, in the case of Māori, whanau metaphors and whanau relationships, must be used in education contexts (1999: 174–5).

**Identifying research priorities.** For Pacific education and teacher education the identification of priority areas of research is pivotal to our development. Priority areas may differ from country to country and institution to institution. However, some general agendas may include some of the hopes that workshop participants articulated for Pacific children. Research topics related to pedagogy and learning that suggest themselves include:

- the inclusion of a strong indigenous/local knowledge base in the curriculum. In part this would entail a radical reorientation of teacher education
programmes to ensure Pacific children learn about indigenous knowledge relating to the island culture to which they belong

- an examination of indigenous cultural pedagogies to see what implications they have for our work
- an examination of local and indigenous epistemologies and their implications for education
- the identification of Pacific philosophies of teaching and learning and the drawing up of a collective philosophy of teaching and learning, a Pacific analogue for Kaupapa
- the use of Pacific indigenous conceptual frameworks, such as kakala, to reconceptualise pedagogy and learning in order to enrich teachers’ knowledge and teacher education programmes
- the examination of the impact of globalisation on local institutional development, curriculum and ethos
- a critical examination of the impact of attempts to blend local/indigenous and global knowledge and the adoption and or adaptation of ‘new ideas’ from ‘outside’
- a re-examination of the standard offerings of teacher education (social foundations of education, educational psychology/human development courses, some arts and the practicum). Research is needed, in these ‘new times’, to see whether we can use Luke’s reconceptualist model of teacher education, in which we define what type of person/child we want in the future and then draw up curriculum offerings designed to produce that outcome. This is referred to as the ‘new basics’. As Pacific educators, we have still to define the nature of the ‘new basics’ we would like to offer in our own Pacific contexts. This will no doubt be contentious, but the debate must be informed; any such undertaking must be based on rigorous research by Pacific researchers.

This judicious comment from J.M. George best sums up the ultimate goal of these priorities. Our goal must be to:

facilitate the empowering of students with an indigenous knowledge base to understand and evaluate conventional science [and school offerings that are a result of global trends], and to make judicious choices between their indigenous knowledge and conventional science [or other global introductions] when such situations arise. (George, 1999: 92)
References


