Pūrakau taketake, biculturalism and education policy

Kelly Panapa
Te Puna Ako, Unitec
Toi Tauira mo te Matariki conference
Wed 7 Oct, 2015
Biculturalism is the coexistence of two distinct cultures, Maori and Pakeha, within New Zealand society with the values and traditions of both cultures reflected in society’s customs, laws, practices, and institutional arrangements, and with both cultures sharing control over resources and decision making (Durie, 1991)
In this session we consider...

- Peter Gossage’s version of how Maui found his father as an indicator and metaphor for Māori adaptation to multiple and complex realities

- Māori adaptations to multiple iterations of biculturalism since its inception

- Critical Biculturalism’s as a contemporary theoretical basis to a more meaningful biculturalism (treaty based partnership relationships) in education
Maui was happy; he had found his mother Taranga. But two things bothered him. Who was his father? And where did his mother go during the days?
How Maui found his father...
Maui fluttered into the branches of the purin tree. He plucked a berry and dropped it on the man. The man looked up and Maui dropped another.
As the man bent to pick him up, Maui sprang to his feet in his human form. Then they knew that they were father and son.
What is bi-culturalism?

- Focus on learning *about* the Māori ‘other’
- Emphasis on ‘national unity’ – devalues diversity and Māori contributions
- Devises a false dichotomy between biculturalism and multiculturalism
- Privileges Euro-centric systems of government and its institutions

http://www.britannica.com/topic/hongi
Kaupapa Māori as a counter-narrative

**Colonial discourses**
- Assimilate
- Undermine
- Not worthy
- Marginalisation
- Deficit
- Hegemony
- Blamed
- Dysfunction
- Erosion
- Passive
- Subordinate
- Dominate

**Discourses of Rangatiratanga**
- Legitimates
- Asserts
- Theorises
- Alternatives
- Maintains
- Builds-on
- Enhances
- Conscientise
- Strength based / empowering
- Agentic (agency)
- Self determining
What does Maui’s story tell us about how we need to be thinking about biculturalism?

Critical investigation: Take nothing for granted?
- Decolonising practice including conscientising of indigenous and settler minds
- The interrogation and transformation of structures and power relations

Relationship between Maui and his whanau with his whanau of ‘other worlds’
- Indigenous-settler relationship
- Māori cultural (epistemological and ontological) legitimacy
- Telling, retelling and application of korero o nehera to new contexts
Pūrakau taketake, Critical Biculturalism and education policy

Panapa, 2015