



BENEFITS OF THE MĀORI SLT WĀNANGA 2023

MAY 2023 // HANA TUWHARE AND KAREN BREWER ON
BEHALF OF THE MĀORI SLT RŌPŪ



New Zealand
Speech-language
Therapists' Association
*Te Kāhui Kaiwhakatikatika
Reo Kōrero o Aotearoa*

MIHI

E te kākā wahanui, e mihi kau ana ki a koe Matua Rukingi. Mōu i whakapeto ngoi ki te tiaki te iwi Māori. Nāu i rangatira ai tā tātou hui o ngā kaimahi Māori. Ko te hauora o te iwi Māori te take. E kore e ea i te kupu ngā mihi o te ngākau.

We are grateful to Matua Rukingi Haupapa, who hosted us at his whānau marae, took us on a hikoi to learn about the rohe, taught us taonga pūoro, and so much more. Matua Rukingi spoke about using what we already have within our whānau of speech-language therapists (SLTs) before reaching out to others. We have many capabilities, and when we come together, we can utilise all our capabilities.



A big mihi to Renee Taylor for capturing photos throughout the wānanga.

INTRODUCTION

The Māori SLT Wānanga was hosted at Kuirau Marae in Rotorua on 3 - 5 March 2023. This was the second of our annual wānanga, led by Māori and designed for Māori. The wānanga is for Māori SLTs and students, including NZSTA members and non-members. Around 34 people attended this wānanga. Roughly half of the attendees were students, representing all three universities. The other half were SLTs working for MoE, special schools, Kindergarten Associations, universities, NGOs, community initiatives and private practices. They included NZSTA board members and people in leadership positions.

Keeping with the tikanga of our Māori SLTs rōpū, the three-day wānanga included plenty of opportunities for whanaungatanga and Māori kaupapa such as learning taonga pūoro in a culturally safe environment. We also organised informal kōrero on topics relevant to Māori SLTs, interspersed with plenty of waiata and katakata.



This short report highlights the benefits we see of this wānanga for employers of Māori SLTs and universities with Māori students.

It also details the benefits of the wānanga, as perceived by the attendees. It is based on spoken and written feedback received from wānanga participants around what they enjoyed, what they learned, and their suggestions for the rōpū going forward.

**By Māori,
for Māori**

BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYERS AND UNIVERSITIES

The SLT workforce has a small number of Māori SLTs and an even smaller number of te reo Māori speakers. Ensuring our Māori SLTs and students are supported and excited about their careers is part of a wider strategy to ensure we move towards a robust Māori SLT workforce that meets Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations.

Universities

The Māori SLT wānanga is the only face-to-face kaupapa connecting Māori SLT students across the three universities. We believe this kaupapa supports the retention of Māori students studying SLT, especially for those learning by distance. Students can connect to form friendships and connections that will support them through their studies and, likely, into their professional lives. These connections play a huge role in ensuring students feel supported. The cost of not having our Māori students feeling supported can be low retention rates within the universities and not feeling confident to identify as Māori.

Employers

This is also the only kaupapa that connects Māori SLTs across the sectors - health, education, justice and NGOs. Many of us are the only Māori SLTs in the workplace, which makes it challenging to find SLT-specific cultural support. This wānanga allows Māori SLTs to develop their SLT cultural knowledge, receive and provide mentorship and grow their network of Māori SLT colleagues. We believe these informal connections support our Māori SLTs to keep feeling excited and growing professionally.

Over the next few pages, you can read about the benefits of the wānanga as perceived by Māori SLTs and students who attended.



WHANAUNGATANGA

Māori SLTs and students shared that it was enjoyable and empowering to connect with and learn from other Māori SLTs, including those practising and still learning. With kōrero on diverse topics, shared ideas and many contributing voices, there was a sense of community and strength. Indigenous joy was very much evident throughout the three days.

It is encouraging to hear this feedback because bringing Māori SLTs together has been a strategic goal for Māori SLT leaders for some time.

CULTURE + IDENTITY

For many SLTs and students, this wānanga offered an enjoyable opportunity to strengthen their sense of culture and identity and build confidence as a Māori SLT. Participating in Māori kaupapa such as pōwhiri, preparing hāngī, doing the dishes, walking the whenua, learning kōauau, and sleeping on the marae gave Māori SLTs and students a valuable opportunity to build connections, share experiences and connect to cultural practices that they may not be able to access elsewhere.

Providing such opportunities contributes to the NZSTA's aspiration to ensure Māori SLTs are valued and supported to practise as Māori.



SUPERVISION + PLACEMENTS

There was much kōrero around how we can continue to support each other's growth and learning as SLTs, researchers, students and practitioners. Informal and formal conversations allowed us to explore opportunities for:

- More culturally safe research supervision
- Māori students to connect with placements that grow their cultural confidence
- Establishing tuakana / teina roles between practising SLTs and tairā
- Cultural supervision and kaitiakitanga

LEADERSHIP

As we have a small number of Māori SLTs and students, it is important to grow leadership within our rōpū and practise good succession planning. In attendance at the wānanga were NZSTA board members, university lecturers and supervisors, students in leadership roles, PhD students, te reo Māori speaking SLTs and more. With so many different Māori SLT leaders in attendance, there were many opportunities to learn about current leadership opportunities and consider preparing to take on those roles in the future.

Seeing students and SLTs interested in stepping into various leadership roles is encouraging.



TAUIRA | STUDENTS

A major benefit of this wānanga was that it enabled Māori SLT students from the three universities to connect. This was especially important for the students who are studying by distance. Many of our students are on a journey of reconnecting with their Māori whakapapa. At this wānanga, students could engage and connect with Māori practices and kaupapa in culturally safe and joyful environments.

Seeing students interested and excited to learn about leadership roles was encouraging and inspiring. It was also exciting to see students asking about gaps in the research and exploring potential kaupapa Māori research topics for honours, masters and doctoral studies.

It was also incredible to see the confidence growing in our students who had attended the previous wānanga in 2021. Many of these students have now pursued kaupapa Māori research projects at the PhD and Masters levels.



NEXT STEPS

Māori SLTs and students are excited about:

- Staying in touch throughout the year to continue to grow support networks
- Helping each other find organisations and rōpū to join for further support and professional development
- Exploring research supervision and student placement opportunities within our rōpū
- Taking on leadership roles
- Creating pathways for te reo Māori speakers to become SLTs and to deliver therapy in te reo Māori
- Securing funding to ensure Māori SLT kaupapa can continue to thrive

The Māori SLT wānanga is booked for 2024 and be held at Waipapa Marae at The University of Auckland on 16 - 18 February 2024.

We look forward to continuing to grow and strengthen a rōpū of Māori SLTs and are excited for our future leaders.

Mauri ora!

The Māori SLT rōpū



We are grateful to the New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association (NZSTA), University of Canterbury, Ngā Pou Mana and employers who recognise the value of this kaupapa for the speech-language therapy profession.

We appreciate the financial support that allows Māori SLTs and students to attend the wānanga.

