

# WHORF- SAPIR HYPOTHESIS



How can Tertiary Learning  
Advisors use it for the benefit  
of our akōnga?

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Unitec



MIHI



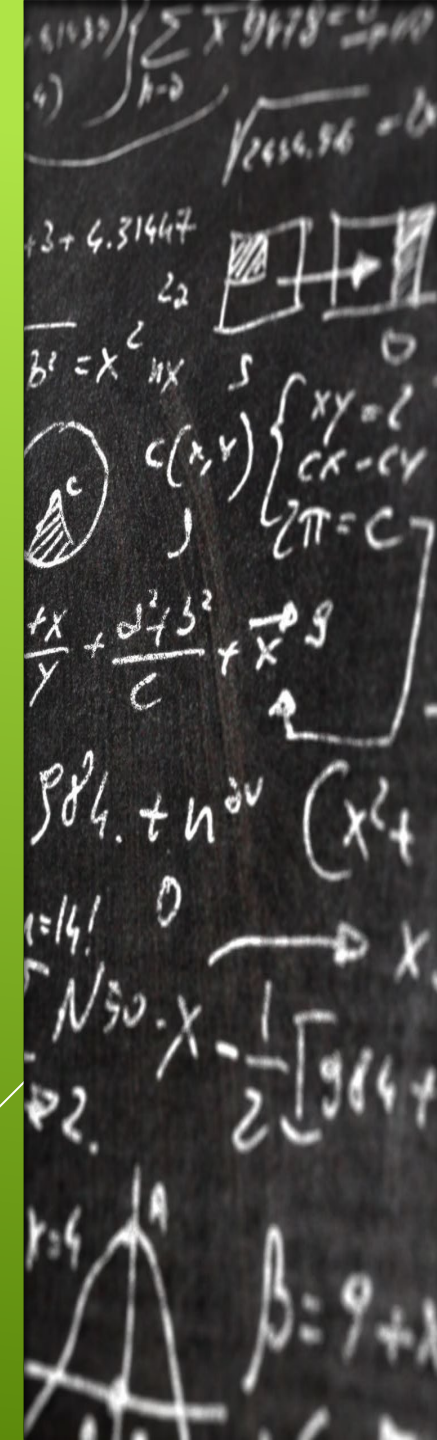
Basically, Whorf- the interconnectedness of language, thinking patterns, and reality they maintained in that language; Sapir-language and the cultural reality they deliver and maintain that pertain to that specific language/reality

e.g. English word “family”

Māori “whānau”

Chinese term “国家”-国 Guo Jade in a closed boundary, 家Jia -family -family comes after their nation, be protected by their nation. Therefore, the reality for the Chinese is that protecting their nation is as important as, or even more important than, protecting their family. Because the relationship between the big family, the country, and the small family, their individual family, is like that between the lips and the teeth

## WHAT ABOUT WHORF-SAPIR HYPOTHESIS?




If Whorf indeed studied a certain native American language he claimed to have,

Never the hypothesis itself,

Thus, I conclude that the hypothesis is accepted as it is.

THE DEBATES,  
DOUBTS, AND  
EVEN ATTACKS  
ON THE  
HYPOTHESIS  
OVER THE  
DECADES OR  
CENTURIES

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# HOW HAVE I GOT ENGAGED WITH THE CONCEPT?

- ▶ My very first encounter with the concept at the university as a student majoring in English Language and Literature
- ▶ Again at Sydney University as a Master's student in Applied Linguistics, I read Sociolinguistics by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913), Benjamin Lee Whorf, and the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis
- ▶ The developments in neuroscience, about new language helping establishing or shifting patterns in the brain and the way people think that play out in their reality
- ▶ Therapists use new language or languaging as tools to help their clients reexamine their reality and shift away from old patterns that have stopped serving the clients, and move into a new reality that supports their growth and development.

- ▶ Just a couple of examples of my interactions with a student and a colleague:

A student with their bioscience study: I don't understand it, I don't know anything about it, I don't know how to do this, I want to quit.--  
-from the several "I don't" one can hear the frustration –emotions  
which is part of their reality and know that the student was feeling  
overwhelmed -their reality.

Metabolism –

Pass and well on their way to succeed in their studies

HOW I APPLY MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE  
HYPOTHESIS TO SUPPORT OUR AKŌNGA  
AND COLLEAGUES?

- ▶ My interaction with a subject lecturer three weeks ago
- ▶ The lecturer was preparing for a conference, telling me she might have bitten off more than she could chew. -The partner had withdrawn from the korero, leaving a gap of knowledge in the presentation.
- ▶ The topic was chosen by this lecturer; therefore, she must have felt drawn to the social issue and have felt passionate about it to bring about change. Therefore, it might just be the right size for the lecturer to present on by herself.
- ▶ I responded with that one question: What if it is the right size for you to chew on? -Then showed her how to pre-record her korero
- ▶ Last week, she happily confided in me that she had submitted the presentation and she was happy with that.

CONTINUED



THANK YOU AND  
WHAKAWHITIWHITI  
KORERO

NUI TE MIHI MAIOHA KI A  
KOUTOU KATOA  
KIA PAI TŌ RĀ EHOA MĀ