Maraea Hunia

Dr. Maraea Hunia, Ph.D, recently completed her doctoral thesis at Victoria University of Wellington, supervised by Professor Carmen Dalli and Dr Winifred Bauer. Her thesis is titled: *He kōpara e kō nei i te ata / Māori language socialisation and acquisition by two bilingual children: A case-study approach*. Maraea’s thesis presented an exemplary piece of research and demonstrated her contribution to New Zealand early childhood education. Of particular note was the originality of the research and the commitment to an interdisciplinary investigation.

Maraea's thesis is the first in-depth study of the bilingual language acquisition of Māori and English from birth, primarily in the home but also in kōhanga reo. Her supervisors noted that “the most important goal of any language revitalisation programme is the re-establishment of natural first-language acquisition of that language, which takes place in the home. Because the home is not subject to government policy, and not often available as a research domain, [Maraea’s] detailed case-study of that process in the home constitutes a rare research achievement.”

Maraea succeeds in providing empirical evidence of factors that lead to successful bilingual language acquisition. Maraea's thesis demonstrates the successful integration of theoretical and methodological elements from three different disciplines: the early childhood education field with its roots in child development and socio-cultural research, the anthropological field of cultural study, and the linguistic field of language description. In recognition of this high-quality thesis, the NZARE ECE SIG is pleased to announce Maraea Hunia for the 2016 Lyn Foote Award.