

The Intersection of culture and talk (blog article about March network meeting) –meeting minutes-

<http://www.talkingmatters.org.nz/blog/post/17043/The-Intersection-of-culture-and-talk/>

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The March Talking Matters network meeting was particularly powerful because it focused on the intersection of culture and talk.

Rae Si'ilata spoke about Wantok Talanoa. We can develop fluency by utilising current practices such as: text memorisation, story telling, tauloto (oral performance and recitation), song, poetry and dance. It is about recognition of bilingualism as a cognitive, social, and educational advantage.

Huia Hawke shared what it is like to talk more and differently with her first mokopuna. The conversations left people with some powerful take home messages: Silence and listening come first, before talk, and are as important as talk. Every family has different times and places when it is right and respectful for children to talk, Families have a 'heart language', that they use for their most important conversations and that may not be English. Singing and storytelling are powerful ways of developing language, particularly when families also want to preserve their culture and heritage.

Top take home messages:

- Silence and listening come first, and are as important as talk
- Recognise 'heart language', the language families use for their most important conversations.
- Every family has different times and places when it is right and respectful for children to talk

- There is power in singing!

