Whakarāpopoto Kōrero

I tēnei tuhinga ka matapakihia te āhuatanga o ngā rauemi reo Māori, arā te rahi me te kounga o aua rauemi hei āwhina i ngā kaiako me ngā tauira reo Māori. Katahi ka whakamārama te anga mō Toi te Kupu kua whakawhānakehia hei whakarārangi, hei whakamārama hoki i ngā rauemi reo Māori. Mā Toi te Kupu e whakaemi ngā rauemi ki te pātenga raraunga kotahi, kia taea ai e te kaiako me te tauira te rapu i ngā rauemi e hiahia ana ia. Mā tēnei ka kīte tātou i ngā wāhanga o ngā rauemi e hapa ana, pēnei i te kōrero, te kaupapa me te momo rauemi. Ka matapakihia te pūtāke mō ngā āhuatanga o ngā rauemi reo Māori ki tēnei anga.

Abstract

This paper discusses the dearth of Māori language resource materials available to teachers and learners of the Māori language and outlines the Toi te Kupu framework that has been developed to catalogue and describe Māori language resource materials. The Toi te Kupu framework provides co-ordination and greater utilisation of these resources and it will identify the gaps in the range of levels, mediums, contexts and themes. The paper also discusses the rationale for the inclusion of the main characteristics on the framework.

Introduction

In the past 5 to 10 years there has been an increased number of people both learning and teaching in and through the Māori language. This increase has occurred at a tremendous rate in all sectors of education, namely early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary. In addition to this Māori have been actively pursuing the retention of their language at an iwi, hapū, whānau and community level. This growth has highlighted both a lack of high quality resource material and a lack of co-ordination and utilisation of existing resource material in a number of ways.

Firstly, the growth in Māori language learning and teaching programmes has seen an increase in the number of teachers of Māori who are second language learners themselves. These teachers are having to cope with teaching all the curriculum subjects through the medium of te reo Māori as well as developing their own language. It is important that learners are exposed to good language models. Because of this resource materials have become increasingly more important as a source of model language exposure for learners.

Secondly, the growth in the number of Māori language resource materials has highlighted the need for an appropriate cataloguing and referencing system that will allow teachers and learners to identify and locate material with ease.

Thirdly, many resource materials, including translated material, are being developed without considering the learners language needs. When translating or adapting resource materials (Birch, in Berthold 1995) consideration needs to be given to how the new content is best transmitted. For example will a series of questions or diagrams, pictures and graphs best guide the learner through new content. The language form that will best support the way in which this new information is structured also needs to be considered. For example, an activity on cooking in a hangi requires students to focus on language suitable for explaining cause and effect and describing processes. It is also important that resource materials encourage the learner in various forms of interaction so that they are able to practice newly acquired language and newly learned content. Interaction such as problem-solving interaction, pair and group work. Finally resource material needs to develop language accuracy without compromising fluency.

Fourthly, there has been an increase in the number of children learning in total immersion programmes which has highlighted not only the poor quality of resource materials but also the enormous lack of them. Parents are demanding that their children have access to all areas of knowledge through te reo Māori. The rapid growth in technology and the need for children to be familiar with it has only exacerbated the situation. Government funded research and reports concerning Māori language education have in fact been highlighting these issues for the past 6 or 7 years now (Hirsh 1990, Mitchell 1993, Waite 1993).

In 1995 the Department of Māori Studies, Massey...
University responded to the need for the co-ordination of Māori language resource material and began a research programme funded from the Public Good Science Fund. The programme is titled Toi te Kupu.

Ka whakapāoho te wairua o te Atua, ko te Atua anō taua kupu, ka tipu i konā tēnei reo rangatira. Ko te reo i ngunguru ake i te mana o te whenua ki te tangata hei reo whakatūāpapa i te ira tangata ki te whei ao ki te ao mārama. Te momo reo o nanahi, te momo reo mō nāianei tonu, te momo reo mō āpōpō mai. Kia rite! Kokiri whakamuatia. Toi te kupu, toi te mana, toi te whenua, toi te tangata.

Aim of Toi te Kupu

Toi te Kupu aims to provide teachers and learners of the Māori language with a user friendly computer program that will assist them to search out and identify those resources that are most suitable for their language programme. This database will also show the gaps in the quantity of resource material that is available in terms of the range of levels, mediums, contexts and themes. This will provide accurate information for Māori organisations and policy makers regarding the current situation of resource material in order to strategise, prioritise and co-ordinate the future development of resource material for te reo Māori.

The Research Programme

In year one of the programme the research team developed and tested a framework for the cataloguing and description of Māori language learning and teaching resource materials. In year two an estimated 3000 resources will be described, catalogued and entered onto the database and a literature search carried out to identify those types of resources that have been successful in assisting the revitalisation of other indigenous peoples language in other countries. Having identified those types of resources, in year three different types of resources will be developed, tested, produced and evaluated in a number of learning and teaching situations.

The Framework

A framework was used to ensure consistency and quality of the description of each resource material as it is entered into the database. The framework provides consistency between each resource description and therefore the user can make comparisons between the resources and informed choices. The framework also ensures quality of product. There was no previous research in this area to guide the development of the framework and therefore each characteristic needed to be researched for sound justification for its inclusion.

The framework had to be broad enough to apply to all published Māori language resources materials, whether they be print, audio, visual and those resources yet to be published or produced. It also had to be a framework that provided all users with a description that they would find useful and informative so that they may make accurate decisions about the material. Therefore the learner, the parent, the teacher, the Ministry of Education, the policy analyst, the purchaser, the publisher and the resource materials designer all need to be able to glean useful information from both the framework and database so that they are able to carry out their role more accurately. In order to achieve this the framework has been based upon the following.

**Principles of second language learning and teaching.**

For example Krashen’s input hypothesis argues for the central importance of providing linguistic input, both aural and written, a little beyond the learners competence thus helping the learner to move to the next stage in language development (Krashen, 1983:32). The input must be comprehensible to the learner (comprehensible input) but also contain some structures just beyond the learner (+ 1) for movement to the next stage to occur. Therefore it was necessary for the framework to show the sort of information that would allow the user to choose resource material that would provide comprehensible input + 1 (ci + 1). This is one of the reasons for the inclusion of the language level, reading level, a description of the type of language and a sample of the resource on the framework. These, when used in combination, will allow the teacher to choose appropriate resource materials for their students thus catering for the principle of comprehensible input + 1.

**Experiences as a second language learner and teacher.**

For example, the paucity of available resource materials means that each resource needs to be utilised to its fullest. This is one of the reasons for offering nine different options for searching out material on the database. They are by author, title, subject, language level, reading level, language function, sentence structure, dialect and publisher.
The information that a framework of this type can provide for policy in the area of Maori language resource development.

For example the purpose that the resource has been designed for has been included on the framework particularly for the information it will provide as to the number of resources designed for each curriculum area.

It is a framework that has been designed not only for the Maori language but also designed in the Maori language. It is the first known database in which Maori is the only medium of communication.

Characteristics of Resources

The following are the framework characteristics of the resource material that have been included in the framework.

• Te ingoa - The title: if this is to be a comprehensive database then it is important to catalogue and describe every story published in the Maori language. This will also ensure full utilisation of each of those stories. For example each title that appears in Nga Kohikohinga Tuatahi, the first book in a series published by Learning Media, will be catalogued, not just the book itself.

• Te kaituhi - The author: the original author will be indicated here.

• Te kaiwhakamaori - The translator: if the story has been translated then the translator will be acknowledged.

• Te rauemi - The resource: if the story or article is part of a bigger resource then the title of the resource will be noted here, for example 'He Kete Ahau' is a story in the resource title 'He Kohikohinga Tuawhā'.

• Te momo rauemi - The type of resource: there are various types of resources which come under three main categories. In the category of print there are books, picture books, magazines and serials. In the audio category there is compact disc and tape and in the audio-visual category there are video cassette, compact disc, film and picture series.

• Te kaiwhakaputa - The publisher:

• Te tau whakaputa - The date published:

• Te whainga atu - Accessibility: the publishers’ address, phone number, facsimile, e-mail will all be noted here if available, along with the price of the resource and any other known place it can be accessed from such as schools and the National Library of New Zealand.

• Te roa - The length: in pages, minutes, words or pictures will be noted.

• Te rahī - The size: of the resource. This will apply to books and picture series.

• Āna kaupapa - Keywords: all keywords that describe the content of the resource will be written here. It is important to get as many words as possible that describe it so that when searching by kaupapa the user will be able to search on any one of the listed keywords and find this resource.

• Te whāinga o te rauemi - The purpose of the resource: the purpose for which the resource was written will be indicated here. For example it will be stated if the resource was designed for a particular curriculum subject such as reading, language, maths, science, technology, social science, physical well-being or for communicating information or for teaching or learning te reo Māori.

• Reo-ā-iwi - Dialect: the dialect will be noted here if it is obvious that the resource has been written in a particular dialect.

• Taumata whakaputa - Production level: if it is a print resource then the type of picture and size of print will be described. If it is a video or audio the clarity and speed of the sound will be described.

• Koeke panui - Reading level: a reading level will be given only to those resources that have been designed for the purpose of teaching or developing reading skills in children. Ngā Kete Korero2 is the document that will be used to guide the levelling of Māori language readers. A diagram showing the levels for Ngā Kete Korero will also be provided so that the user can see immediately where the particular resource fits in relation to all 11 levels.

• Koeke reo - Language level: a receptive language level of 1 - 8 (8 being the top) will be given to each resource. These levels correlate to the 8 levels in Te Tauāki te Reo Māori i roto i te Marautanga o Aotearoa3. Again, a diagram showing the 8 levels and how that corresponds with the number of years spent in total immersion schooling will be able to be accessed so that the user can identify for which age group the language of that resource is most suitable. The framework has been aligned with Te Tauāki te Reo Māori i roto i te Marautanga o Aotearoa levels because these are the levels that are designed to guide the teacher and the learner of the Māori language. It is the only attempt thus far to describe different levels for te reo Māori, and
therefore the type of language, the kinds of language activity that might be suitable for learners at each of the levels. Although the document is not widely used at this stage the more often it is reinforced the more familiar people will eventually become with it. Language level is different to reading level in that length of sentence, topic, text size and pictures are not considered as they are when allocating a reading level.

- **Te momo rco - The type of language:** a description of the type of language a resource uses will note features such as language function, repetitive sentence structures, new or technical vocabulary, transliterations, idiomatic expressions, colloquial language and formal or informal language.

- **Te kaupapa - Content:** a full description of the content of the resource will be given here including whether it is a documentary, advertisement, poster, interview, editorial, and so forth. The age group for whom it is suitable, the curriculum strand and level for which it has been developed will be mentioned if appropriate. Any particularly positive Māori and or female role models in the resource, will also be noted (as well as any negative stereotyping). Other published activities or material that may compliment the resource will be noted here.

- **WhakaO - Suggested uses:** some ideas on how the resource could be used will be given here. For example it may be a resource that would be good for teaching or reinforcing a particular aspect of language, for strengthening various language skills (e.g. listening, speaking, reading or writing), for introducing a topic or idea, for teaching a concept or for encouraging children to talk about something in particular.

In addition to this comprehensive description of each resource a sample of the resource will be able to be accessed from the database (e.g. a page out of a book or a 15 second section of video) so that the user can confirm the information that has been provided about the resource.

The second part of this paper discusses the rationale behind the main characteristics on the framework, that is the language level, reading level, content, type of language and suggested uses. Each of these characteristics when considered independently are significant and informative for the language teacher and learner. However when considered in combination to each other they offer even more information. When identifying and developing each of the characteristics the learner and teacher working in total immersion was foremost in the mind. However the framework is also appropriate for other types of Māori language programmes.

### Language Level

As mentioned earlier Te Tauākī te Reo Māori i roto i te Marautanga o Aotearoa is the guide for analysing and allocating a resource a receptive language level of 1 - 8. Although Te Tauākī te Reo Māori has only recently been introduced to Māori language teachers and therefore teachers are still becoming familiar with it, assigning the resource with a language level will signal to both the teacher and the learner that language level is important. It is important the language level of the learner and that of the resource are matched, that is if the language of the resource is either too hard, or too easy, then perhaps the learner’s language will not develop and grow. According to Krashen (1985:2), "...humans acquire language in only one way - by understanding messages, or by receiving ‘comprehensible input’. We progress along the natural order (hypothesis 2) by understanding input that contains structures at our next ‘stage’ – structures that are a bit beyond our current level of competence."

Comprehensible input can be either aural or written. The Input Hypothesis (Krashen 1983:131) at this stage makes no distinction between these two types of input, and in fact suggests that reading as input contributes to the overall competence in a second language.

Secondly, it states that a language level can be assigned to resource materials and that provided the learners language level is known, appropriate resource material can be chosen as input for the learner in order for them to successfully acquire and develop the target language.

It is important for the linguistic and cognitive development of the learner that the standard of their Māori language is lifted as close as it possibly can to that of a native speakers. There is a danger of fossilisation for many second language learners, where their level of language plateaus, and does not approach the native level of fluency (Krashen 1985:43). The lack of quality language input is one reason identified by Krashen as a cause of fossilisation. The choosing of resource material that provides appropriate input in the form of comprehensible input + 1 assumes greater importance.

If input is not considered carefully then it can be
expected that the learners linguistic growth will not keep pace with their cognitive development and the children will inevitably revert to English when involved in cognitively demanding situations. Hollings and Murphy (1992) while carrying out a study with children in a kura kaupapa Māori reinforces this point: “the children easily master the basic structures and even though some of their utterances are grammatically incorrect, they are able to operate effectively at a basic interpersonal communication level. What is lacking are the subtleties of the language that will ultimately enable these children to articulate their higher level thoughts.”

A wide range of quality resource materials across all language levels is necessary if learners are to attain a high level of fluency. At this stage of the research programme it is suspected that the majority of available resource material spans levels 1 - 4 and the few resources at levels 5 - 8 are either unsuitable topics, that is the learner does not find the topic of interest, or inappropriately presented for many of the groups that require them.

Type of Language
In the Toi te Kupu framework, Te Tauākī te Reo Māori i roto i te Marautanga o Aotearoa has been used as the guide not only for the language level but also for ‘Te momo reo’, that is the style of language used in the resource. The revitalisation of the Māori language “involves increasing the number of native speakers of the language, increasing the number of domains in which the language is used, increasing the amount of printed material available in the language and often extending the vocabulary base of the language to meet the demands of the new domains” (Waite 1992:30). Increasing the vocabulary and language functions of Māori speaking people will help ensure that there is a greater chance of increasing the domains in which they are likely to use Māori as a medium of communication. Therefore the principle language functions and new vocabulary that are used in the resource will be highlighted in this section of the framework.

Language and Content
The immersion method of acquiring the Māori language has grown over the past 7 years through such Māori driven initiatives as kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori. There is plenty of literature on the success of immersion programs (Krashen 1984, Swain 1993, Keegan 1996). Birch (1995:151) summarises that: “the major strength of immersion is that in focusing on the content of various curriculum areas rather than the language to be learnt, the programs replicate the process which was so successful in first language acquisition where language was acquired incidentally while the child was engaged in the process of learning how to mean.”

In the context of Aotearoa, English is the first language for many of the children who attend kōhanga reo or kura kaupapa Māori. This is because English is the language that is used by most parents to communicate with their children at home and it is the language of wider society. Those children for whom Māori is their first language, that is they are being brought up in the Māori language, soon switch to English due to its pervasiveness in this society.

However unlike the first language English which is widely spoken in the community and accessible to everyone each minute of the day, the Māori language is not. It is for these reasons that immersion programmes, and programmes based on second language acquisition theory are so important in the efforts to revitalise the Māori language.

In the immersion method however it is not enough to simply teach the curriculum without consciously considering language learning at the same time. As already mentioned the cognitive development of children learning in total immersion can soon outgrow their language development and as a result they begin to break into English, which inevitably becomes their dominant language. Therefore it is absolutely necessary to increase the children’s ability to communicate at higher cognitive levels in the Māori language. There are many issues involved in trying to achieve this. The learner for example must develop their vocabulary, which according to Nation (1987:10) is 3 - 7 new words a day, their range of sentence structures, language functions, language learning strategies such as paraphrasing and also access opportunities to use the Māori language outside of the kōhanga or kura. The teacher may need to develop their own language further as well as their teaching methodology. The Toi te Kupu framework addresses many of these issues in various ways.

There are particular language skills, language functions and sentence structures that are best taught, introduced or reinforced with particular curriculum
content. For example an astronomy unit lends itself to the language functions of sequencing and comparing and contrasting. An activity could be sequencing the planets from the sun and another could be comparing and contrasting the appearance of the planets. The importance of the language functions has been highlighted in the ‘Te momo reo’ section of the framework by indicating the main language functions, frequently used sentence structures, and new vocabulary in each resource material. Potential language and curriculum activities the resource material could be used for will also be mentioned.

Reading as Comprehensible Input

Reading is a source of comprehensible input and is thought to contribute significantly to general language competence. Reading can be used as comprehensible input as soon as the learner has enough of the second language “to derive meaning from the text” (Krashen 1983:131). However if reading is to help the language acquisition of the learner the material must;
1. be comprehensible to the reader
2. focus the readers attention on the message of the text rather than the language
3. contain i + 1, that is it must contain some language items slightly in advance of the learner.

According to Krashen (1983:132), an appropriate reading text for a learner must meet two criteria. Firstly, it must be of an appropriate complexity for the reader and secondly the reader must find it interesting. There are several aspects of a text that determine its complexity. The three main ones vocabulary, syntax and semantics will be considered here. It is not known how many unknown words in a text rule it too difficult for the reader however the extremes are more easy to identify. If for example the reader is having to use a dictionary too often to gain meaning of a passage then it could be considered too hard. At the same time the reader doesn’t need to know every word to understand the text. It is for this reason that the Toi te Kupu framework will highlight what may be new vocabulary in the resources. Although those words highlighted may not necessarily be new to the user, teachers and learners will be able to consider for themselves their difficulty, whether or not there are too many and how best to introduce them to the learner.

Vocabulary alone is not a gauge of text complexity, syntax is another aspect to consider. It is difficult however to ascertain the amount of unfamiliar syntax a reader can put up with before it begins to interfere with meaning but it is known that passages that have syntactic structures well beyond their comprehensible input + 1 can still be understood. The reader tends to rely more on familiarity of topic and known vocabulary to gain meaning from a text than syntax. Language features that occur frequently in a text are noted in the Toi te Kupu framework under ‘Te momo reo’. For example a text that uses the verbal particle ‘Ka...’ frequently at the beginning of sentences will be noted with examples from the text. Of course it would have to appear frequently enough for the amount of text for it to be mentioned.

In the ‘Te kaupapa’ section of the framework a detailed description of the topic covered by the resource is provided so that the user can decide whether or not the content is familiar enough to themselves or the user for whom they are choosing the resource material. This allows them to decide whether the topic will hold the learners interest, the second criteria for choosing an appropriate text, and also whether the user has any prior knowledge about this topic which will help them to gain meaning from the text.

Once an appropriate text is identified the teacher needs to give the learner a reason to read and to hold their interest so that they become involved with the message and the purpose for reading. Although the framework does not address this directly there is a section called ‘WhakaO” that suggests some ways in which the resource may be used for language development, curriculum learning, group and independent work.

Summary

The desperate need for the co-ordination, increased utilisation and identification of Māori language resource materials has been well documented for several years. Hirsh (1990:47) stated,

“It is clear that some schools and teachers are not aware of what is available, with resultant duplication and ‘reinvention of the wheel’. Some fine material in Māori emanates from a publishing house in Whakatane, but resources like this need to be more widely known. So not only is there a major development needed in this area, but there needs to be co-ordination of effort in the production of curriculum materials.”
More recently at the Hui Taumata held by Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Māori for the conclusion of 1995 Te Tau o Te Reo Māori, Mary Boyce (1995:40) in her paper urged that a group be established to carry out two goals:

“to solicit and distribute finance to identify what other resources are needed, plan their development and co-ordinate the production and distribution of these”

Furthermore she believes that this group would need,

“to build a database of resources already available, and those who produce them. It would perhaps establish a resource quality rating to guide practitioners in their purchase of material, but more importantly to ensure that new resources meet minimum standards of language quality.”

The Education Review Office (1995:7) have also acknowledged the lack of resource materials and the serious effect this has on the children learning in the Māori language,

“In some kura the lack of teaching and learning resources in te reo Māori is impeding students’ learning.”

Finally, and most importantly, the Ministry of Education in point one of their ten point plan for Māori education have identified the urgent lack of quantity and co-ordination of resources. They have prioritised the following key objectives to alleviate the problem,

a. Increase the number of fluent Māori language teachers.

b. Increase the availability of suitable learning and curriculum resource material.

c. Establish priorities for the allocation of teachers and resources.

d. Develop strategies to overcome the shortage of teachers and resources.

e. Evaluate the usefulness and effectiveness of existing resource material.” (1995:48)

The Toi te Kupu database will address some of these issues. Not only will it provide for better co-ordination and increased utilisation of Māori language resource materials but it will also enable the identification of gaps in the range of levels, mediums, contexts and themes. Having identified the gaps it can then be used as a tool to assist publishers, resource material designers, policy analysts and the Ministry of Education to prioritise and plan the future development of Māori language resources. This is essential if Māori medium education is to be a vehicle for quality education that meets the several needs of future Māori language learners.

References


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