

CHAPTER THREE

KIA MAU KI TŌ REO - LANGUAGE REGENERATION

Kia mau ki tō reo Māori

Akona a koutou tamariki

Te reo, te reo rangatira

Na te Matua i te rangi

He reo i tuku iho

ki nga tūpuna.

Kia kaha, kia mau

Pupurutia.

*(Moana Maniapoto Jackson and the Moa Hunters,
Sonny Kauika Stevens & Dalvanus, 1989)*

*It takes years to learn how to look at the destruction
of beautiful things;
to learn how to leave the place
of oppression;
and how to make your own regeneration
out of nothing.*

*(Gerald Stern, When I have reached the point of
suffocation. Rejoicings. LA. Metro Book Co. In T.
McMillan (1987) Mama. London: Jonathon Cape
Ltd.)*

INTRODUCTION

Given effective recovery strategies, one might expect something that is lost to be found again. Not so with language. The essence of what is lost is not something concrete, something see-able, or rather hear-able. It is not something made up only of vocabulary and syntax, phonemes and pronunciation. Language is also processes, practices and uses. It is made up of and makes relationships between humans, living and dead, in close proximity or distanced by time, space, institutions. Language loss itself is a process rather than a case of here today, gone tomorrow. When the process of language loss is identified

and when commitment to intervene in the process is made, intervention is less about bringing something back from the dead and more about finding and tending whatever life has survived. What survives may be actual although ever-decreasing language use, or seeds of a language deposited in cultural storehouses. The intervention process into language loss has been given various labels, such as language revival, language revitalisation and language reversal.

What factors are involved in the process of intervention into language loss? A related question is that, given language is intimately bound up with practices (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986), what is the role of culture? This leads to a set of further questions, to what extent and under what conditions does language revitalisation also involve cultural revitalisation? Is it a process aimed at returning to traditional language (and cultural) practices or is it about people making space for their language and culture in their present and future? Where does responsibility rest to ensure a language does survive, in real, meaningful and productive ways?

This chapter considers the ways in which intervention into language loss may be best achieved. In keeping with the context developed in Chapters One and Two, the significance of 'family' and 'schooling' are examined. It is argued that for meaningful intervention to occur, the language targeted must gain meaningful space as a language of intimacy and of activities within primary socialisation settings, in particular those of 'family'.

The role of 'literacy' in contemporary language regeneration campaigns is discussed. The extent to which literacy activities involving printed Māori text are or should be a 'natural' part in the lives of kura kaupapa Māori whānau today is examined. Implications of literacy practices in homes of kura kaupapa Māori whānau for Māori language development and use are identified.

As well as literature focusing on intervening in language loss, one might expect research literature in two other areas to be significant. One is the area of second language development. A second is the development and use of literacy in a second language. These were initially considered useful as the thesis explores family reading activities as a

site for second language development and use. My scanning of the second language literature did not support such an expectation. While there is a deal of attention given to second language and literacy development, linguistic, attitudinal and cognitive functioning at the individual level tend to be the focuses. I have yet to find extended discussions of second language learning that consider it in the wider context of maintaining and regenerating an indigenous language and culture. For example, a recent review of bilingualism and second language learning in the 'Handbook of Educational Psychology' (Berliner & Calfee, 1996), in discussing reasons for learning a second language does not include the desire to maintain and regenerate an indigenous language.

LANGUAGE REGENERATION

To date, Fishman (1991) provides one of the most comprehensive discussions of intervention efforts into language loss under the heading of 'Reversing Language Shift'. I prefer terming the process of such intervention as language regeneration. 'Reversing' involves going backwards, over ground already covered, returning to where or what was before. There is little sense given by the term 'language reversal' of language as living. Another term used by sociolinguists (e.g. Spolsky, 1989), 'revitalisation' does reflect notions of life, of the essentiality of language to the existence of human cultures. However, neither conceptualisation reflects a sense of development and growth. As well as playing a fundamental role in our development as humans and the development of cultures, living languages are constantly being developed and re-created. Ensuring the explication of developmental aspects of language is probably not a fundamental concern for a sociolinguist. In contrast, my own academic roots trace back through to the study of development from a psychological perspective.

Regeneration speaks more of growth and re-growth, development and re-development. Nothing re-grows in exactly the same shape that it had previously, or in exactly the same direction. The way a new shoot of a fern, a koru, grows might be used to symbolise the return and re-growth of a language. The koru first circles back towards itself, then unfurling from itself spreads out in different directions, the frond connected back through the strength and stability of its trunk into the nurture of Papatūānuku. Regeneration of a

language is much the same, often very contained and constrained growth initially, confined to limited contexts, gathering strength to push out in different directions and into different settings.

Māori have seen to our cost what happens when a new language is imposed on a people with purported intentions of providing access to benefits of a changing world but in such a way that it restricts the growth and development of a natal language. Benefits have not been greatly forthcoming to the majority of Māori. The costs to Māori language have been outlined elsewhere (e.g. Rei, 1998, and Chapter Two). More and more it is being recognised that for colonised indigenous groups their own language “must survive in order to bridge the traditional and modern worlds that the people carry within themselves and confront in their daily lives.” (Fogwill, 1994; 235).

The goal of language regeneration is not to return to the ‘traditional’ but to secure the life of a language and culture. Living languages are modern languages, in that they are in the present, they contain and provide meaning in the day to day lives of their people. Beliefs, values, the practices of a culture that are carried by a language, are part of a people’s lives now, today and everyday. The goal of language regeneration is to ensure that language and the culture it indexes are a vital part of a people’s wellbeing and healthy existence.

Legislate, educate, regenerate

The viability of a language is affected by the degree of institutional recognition and support it receives. Languages in danger of disappearing are often not officially recognised, in some instances they have been officially sanctioned against. Many indigenous colonised groups have only recently begun having their languages receive official recognition in their homelands. For example, six languages indigenous to Canada were finally given equal status to the two introduced majority languages, French and English, in 1990. While Māori was the first language to be spoken in Aotearoa-New Zealand it was not officially recognised alongside English until 1987. Official recognition of indigenous languages reflects an acceptance of their importance for the peoples and the places to which they belong. It often signals an acknowledgement of the role colonial and state governments have played in bringing about the precarious state many such languages are in at the time of official recognition. However, while official

recognition is important, it is of little comfort when the language itself is heard little and spoken less.

The legislation is important but legislation alone cannot ensure that the languages and cultures will survive into the next century. Intensive strategies are necessary to support the people in their efforts to reclaim their language and culture.

(Fogwill, 1994; 230)

Many acts of official recognition are preceded by local efforts to hold on to the language and closely followed by government sanctioning of (and fiscal support for) language remediation efforts. Interventions at the level of schooling are a feature of many efforts to regenerate indigenous languages. It is also where government support is sometimes visible. Early childhood and primary school education in the native language played pivotal roles in language campaigns in Ireland, Wales, and Israel. Māori language regeneration is also epitomised by eventually government sanctioned educational interventions aimed at young children, using te reo Māori as the medium of instruction.

For many indigenous peoples today, including Māori, a commitment to the retention and regeneration of our language and culture implies on the part of adult members a commitment to learning to speak and understand our native language as a second language. With the majority of parents of kura kaupapa Māori and kōhanga reo children being initially monolingual speakers of English any programmes designed to develop parents into speakers of Māori will, at best, produce bilinguals.

As well as a healthy corpus of speakers and institutional recognition, status factors and demographic factors are identified as key elements in language vitality (Baker, 1993). Vitality of a language is supported by links to positive economic experiences that hold social status or prestige and to experiences that symbolise cultural heritage or identity. The geographical distribution of language speakers also influences language vitality, so clearly shown in Richard Benton's studies of Māori language demographic patterns spanning over twenty years. Another demographic feature that influences language vitality is the degree to which speakers are literate in the language.

When someone can speak a minority language and not read and write in that language, the number of functions and uses of that language is diminished. Bilingualism without biliteracy also means a decrease in the status of that language.

(Baker, 1993; 52)

Interrelationships between language regeneration and literacy practices will be considered in more depth in a later section of this chapter. Suffice to say, the levels of biliteracy amongst Māori have increasing significance for te reo Māori being retained as a living, contemporary language.

Contexts of language regeneration

As a field, sociolinguistics has been responsible for much research and theoretical energy in developing understandings of language regeneration. As noted previously, Joshua Fishman is a key player in the study of efforts to reverse language shifts. Fishman deals with “theory and practice of assistance to speech communities whose native languages are threatened because their intergenerational continuity is proceeding negatively, with fewer and fewer users” (1991; xii).

A major claim is that such language shift cannot be reversed at a societal level if it is not reversed at the family and local community levels. In order to effect a language shift, ‘small-scale social life’ must be focused on and it is here that the nurturing of a threatened language needs to occur, “the qualitative emphases of daily informal life - always the most difficult arenas in which to intervene.” (Fishman, 1991; 8). His major argument is that;

[t]he priorities at various points in the RLS [reversing language shift] struggle must vary but they must, nevertheless, derive from a single, integrated theory of language-in-society processes that places intergenerational mother tongue transmission at the very center and that makes sure to defend that center **before** setting out to conquer societal processes that are more distant, dubious and tenuous *vis-à-vis* such transmission.

(Fishman, 1991; 6, my emphasis)

The fostering of intergenerational mother tongue is viewed as a cultural right and societal resource that requires commitment at institutional and at governmental levels. However,

Fishman is critical of efforts to reverse language loss through controlling the institutional language of education, mass media, or government without sufficiently safeguarding the 'intimate, intergenerational language transmission context'.

Fishman (1991) has developed a 'Graded International Disruption Scale for Threatened Languages' essentially as a guide to what extent a language is endangered. It also provides a plan of action for prioritised intervention in language loss (Baker, 1996). That is, it is based on the premise that intervention at one stage will be futile unless earlier stages are at least partly addressed, and that actions taken at each stage take cognisance of how they contribute to intergenerational transmission and continuity of a language. Ensuring intergenerational continuity is identified as the sixth stage of an eight-stage process, with Stage 8 as the worst case scenario and Stage 1 as the best. In the context of this thesis, Stage 6 as well as Stage 5, described as the development of literacy in a threatened language, are of particular significance.

At least early on in efforts to reverse language loss, Fishman advocates a diglossic existence (a particular language used in particular settings or domains) for cultural communities whose language has little political power in the public and institutional levels of the society of which they form a part. He recommends that their community language remain bounded in their sociocultural traditions, values, beliefs and practices. If these 'traditions' are still extensively practised in 'modern' life, in the sense that a significant proportion of the people practise them in their day to day lives and across a range of contexts, then concentrating efforts in this way may be fruitful. Indeed Linda Smith (1989) argues that te reo Māori was protected from total loss in much this manner. Diglossia is considered by Fishman to be a point on a language shift continuum that, as an initial stage of reversal, provides boundaries that afford a language protection.

Alternatively, Chrisp (1997a) proposes that diglossia, rather than being considered an early point on a language revitalisation continuum, be utilised to develop a theoretical framework for Māori revitalisation. He argues that by working from such a framework, Māori language domains and English language domains can be identified and mechanisms developed to facilitate the expansion of Māori language within Māori language domains.

Public domains are often perceived as politically more significant. Arguing that language regeneration attempts should focus on so-called traditional and personal domains may conceivably restrict the political influence of a language and its speakers. Like Fishman, I do not see 'language in culture' concerns as somehow less worthy than political concerns. Actually 'language in culture' is a political concern in itself. What happens in the homes of a cultural community, for example in relation to languages used in the families' daily practices, is political. What happens in traditional and personal domains is political. However, irrespective of how the relationship between personal and public domains is perceived, neither one should be seen as having priority over the other, a kind of fix this first, then fix that.

Probably even more significant politically, is the potential that public, non-traditional contexts such as educational institutions have to either take over socialising functions, or help to regenerate socialising functions of traditional, personal contexts such as those of whānau (Ulrich Cloher & Hohepa, 1996). Indeed taking over and replacing the socialising functions and practices of families was the implicit and explicit agenda of various types of schooling (e.g. boarding schools) set up for 'native' children, including Māori, in many parts of the world.

Fishman's downplaying of 'power' and 'conflict' invites critique from sociologist Glyn Williams (1992). He considers Fishman's stance as politically conservative and reflecting a preference to minimise the conflict and ignore the role power plays in language loss. As a consequence the anger, discrimination and frustration felt by linguistically disenfranchised groups is not expressed. In cognisance of past experiences and the dangers inherent in political powerlessness, I would argue that language regeneration effort needs to be strategically expended at all levels, spanning public and personal domains.

Cultural renaissance, power play and language regeneration

Fishman's assertion that language reversal should be strongly linked to traditional practices, beliefs and values is played out in domains or contexts reflecting what has sometimes been labelled the 'Māori cultural renaissance' of the seventies, eighties and nineties. There is a paradoxical danger that such renaissance may contribute to a gradual

decrease of everyday, informal language use. If traditional practices using an indigenous language become restricted to relatively formal, ritualistic contexts and become more and more prescribed to defined sectors of the population, fewer and fewer potential speakers may be influenced in direct, meaningful and language regenerating ways. Similarly, restriction to rituals such as those around birth and death, to performing arts festivals and to formal protocols such as *whaikōrero* may result in less and less informal language being incorporated in and around such activities.

‘Cultural renaissance’ is often accused of being apolitical. Indeed, recreational culture such as performing arts, canoe racing and carving, is seldom perceived as a direct political challenge. These activities may even be co-opted to use against decolonisation agenda. For example, there is growing emphasis at Māori performing arts festivals on commercial or financial outcomes rather than on providing Māori easy access to validating and empowering Māori cultural experiences. Another paradox exists in that cultural ‘art and craft’ and ‘recreational’ culture can create rich mediums for politicisation and debate. The high profile gained by Māori art and artefacts at the end of the twentieth century has precipitated examination and contestation of their historical, technological and spiritual significance (L. Smith, 1992). Many highly political issues and debates are also carried through cultural performances, such as *waiata* and *haka*, performed at seemingly apolitical sites, such as cultural festivals and competitions. However, in these instances the messages may be understood and appreciated by but a select few.

It is unfortunate that much of what the Māori world has to say in Māori is available for Māori consumption only - that is, for speakers of Māori. Therefore much of what is said in the dance arena is available to only a limited audience, an elitist group, those who speak and understand Māori.

(Karetu, 1991; 162)

Conversely, decolonisation movements may be mis-conceptualised as ‘cultural revivals’. Hawai’i academic and activist Haunani-Kay Trask identifies the perceived lack of connection between cultural and political actions as problematic and argues that indigenous mobilisation towards cultural and language regeneration is political,

language instruction is understood here to be both a cultural and a political assertion. *Cultural* because it seeks to preserve the core of a way of being and living that is uniquely Native, and *political* because this attempt at preservation takes place in a system where the dominant group has employed legal and social means to deny the use and inheritance of the Native language by Natives themselves.

(Trask, 1993; 53, author's emphasis)

Cultural resurgence amongst indigenous people involves reclaiming of ancestral languages, practices, lands and economic bases and working towards various forms of self-determination. A Hawaiian sovereignty movement, Ka Laahui Hawai'i, defines self-determination as "the ability of a people who share a common culture, religion, language, value system and land base, to exercise control over their lands and lives, independent of other nations" (Trask 1993; 96). While this thesis does not set out to track such relationships, the desire to reinstate the indigenous language is often a key element of moves towards self-determination. The push for education through the indigenous language reflects not only movements to intercede in language loss but also to address lack of control and power indigenous people have over our own lives. A significant site for such related agendas is that which constitutes 'family'.

THE ROLE OF 'FAMILY' IN LANGUAGE REGENERATION

If a language is to be retained where there has been a substantial degree of loss in use, it needs to re-attain an integral place in significant facets of 'family' social activity. Where adult family members are predominantly speakers of the indigenous language, it is appropriate that efforts to regenerate the language be focused on children. If this language regeneration is to be realised in situations where language loss has been occurring over several generations, all family members must be provided as much opportunity as possible to "learn and use language along with the younger children, to create a true speech community" (Fishman, 1991; 18).

Recognition of the significance of Māori language uses in home and school for Māori language regeneration was being articulated in Aotearoa-New Zealand during the seventies. In 1974, psychologist Marie Clay, considering whether Māori should be taught

to new entrant children, stated that the;

... children do not know Māori and could face an entirely new language which was not the medium of conversation in the home environment and not the language of instruction.

...Māori pupils had three other areas of deficit in their early school learning - in oral English, in visual perception of print, and in reading. Diverting teaching time to Māori language seems likely to increase rather than decrease the opportunities for failure unless the language could be re-activated in the home environment also.

(reprinted in Clay, 1982; 151)

Given that Māori is now the language of instruction for some new entrants, many of who have attended kōhanga reo and do know Māori, this view is arguably even more applicable. Te reo Māori has still not reached a safety level, particularly in terms of intergenerational language transmission. That is, relatively few Māori children, even those who are speakers of Māori, have acquired Māori primarily in the context of their genealogical whānau. As discussed in the previous chapter, there has been relatively little research energy focused on intergenerational Māori language use within whānau and home contexts. The lack of focus was made more obvious in interim reports of the results of the 1995 Māori language survey (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo, 1995a). While identifying the degree to which informants used Māori in community and informal settings such as sports and church, information about the use of Māori in arguably the most critical informal setting, the home, was not provided.

What are the implications of concentrating language regeneration efforts within families? What resources are available to families to help regenerate a language? How might focusing on 'small-scale social life', on family domains, influence the resourcing of a language?

Human resources, native speakers, are obviously a key resource. Re-introducing a language as a primary means of family communication is potentially more straightforward where a family has easy and regular access to native speakers. For whānau who still have a living generation of predominantly native speakers, cross-generation living arrangements are an obvious intervention where intergenerational language development processes have been severely undermined.

But as language developmental processes within Māori whānau have shifted, so have whānau living arrangements. Currently, nuclear and single parent living arrangements are the most common amongst Māori. Māori parents who are learning te reo Māori may have limited resources in terms of regular access to native speakers for themselves and for their children. The development of kōhanga reo has partially helped to address this lack of access, although a large proportion of adults and staff in this and other settings that act as primary Māori language socialisation settings are also second language speakers of Māori (ERO 1995). However, access to native speakers is but one of wide host of factors that influence the effectiveness of ‘family’ as a key site of language regeneration.

Factors influencing family as a primary site of language regeneration

Children

Children themselves are often expected to play a pivotal role in language regeneration movements. Historically, one of the most successful movements has involved the regeneration of Hebrew in Israel. Nahir (1988; 283) describes the role of Israeli children in a process of spreading Hebrew to their families and the rest of their communities that involved four steps:

- i) children were instilled with positive linguistic attitudes towards Hebrew,
- ii) children were presented with and acquired Hebrew as a second language within schools,
- iii) children spoke and transferred Hebrew as a second language out of the schools,
- iv) newly born children received and spoke Hebrew as a first language.

These were overlapping steps and most significantly in terms of the focus of this thesis, “they involved activities that were not necessarily consciously aiming at achieving the revival of Hebrew”. This can be paralleled with school-related activities that have explicit aims other than language development, such as supporting the development of children’s print literacy skills.

Children often become the most effective vehicles for spreading a second language amongst their families. A common experience for many immigrant families is second language acquisition occurring in essentially the reverse direction from that of the first language, from children to adults. Children do not necessarily need to transmit language

to older family members in active direct ways. They can be catalysts so to speak that set up conditions conducive to the language being used by other members of their families. However, this is usually in the context of the predominant language across society.

In some instances, children can be the initial motivating factor for parents striving to acquire a second language. In studies that are reported in Part Two, some parents described initially learning Māori for their children's sake, but later doing so because it had also become a personally significant and important task.

The most critical and complex phase of Hebrew language transition was identified as the transfer of Hebrew as a second language out of schools. In the first decade of the language regeneration process many of the children, even the graduates of the Hebrew schools who were relatively fluent in the language, stopped speaking Hebrew, particularly in their homes (Smilansky, 1930 in Nahir, 1988). However, some children did begin to transfer Hebrew out of the schools. Younger children were the most successful in building links between homes and schools. This has also been found to be the case for Māori (Royal Tangaere, 1997b).

Transfer and use of Hebrew out of school was seen to occur through children identifying prestige and social desirability being attached to the Hebrew language. Even though Hebrew may not have been the most effective form of communication for many children, it was chosen over their first or strongest language because it clearly had superior social and political status.

English is the high status language for most functions and settings in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Māori speaking children can be expected to develop favourable attitudes towards the English language and indeed it has been observed that many are using more English outside of Māori medium education settings as they get older. Clearly what is critical to Māori as a living language is, along with its active encouragement and facilitation, according it status outside of the classroom. However, there is a danger that children may be left 'carrying the can' in terms of language regeneration. Adults, in particular those who are parents, must "develop linguistically along with the child" if a language is to survive and regenerate (R. Benton, 1993).

Parents

In Aotearoa-New Zealand, parents have played a pivotal role in initiating, implementing and supporting educationally located language regeneration attempts. For example, parents support and in some instances pay staff, fund-raise, prepare resources, transport children to and from centres and schools. However, one of the key ways in which they can work to support language and educational agendas for their children as well as give Māori language status is by learning and speaking it (Nicholson, 1987).

There are dangers inherent in parents not keeping up with children's development of te reo Māori. At one level these may be related to education. Parents have theories and ideas about what their role is in their children's learning (Goodridge, 1995). These ideas may complement or contradict teachers' beliefs and practices related to Māori language competencies. For example, while kaiako may state that they believe parents need to learn Māori, they may restrict the complexity of tasks they send home, based on the perception that parents' language levels are not 'up to it'.

At another level, these dangers may have implications for parent-child relationships. For example, it has been observed that Māori speaking children can become arrogant, perceiving that they have 'one over' their parents (discussions in hui). This can be conceptualised as a reversal of the experiences of earlier generations of Māori parents, similar to those of immigrant parents for whom English is a second language (Auerbach, 1989). They may also impact at the level of adult-child role delineation. Children may be expected and encouraged to take on adult roles, for example in the performance of karanga, whaikōrero, waiata or karakia during ritual observances and practices. This is seen by some as placing them in potentially culturally, psychologically or spiritually harmful situations (L. Mead, 1996). Auerbach (1989) describes the ambivalence children themselves experience when made responsible for adult or parental roles, because parents and other older family members are unable to operate effectively through the required language.

A significant element in language regeneration attempts is parents' attitudes to the target language across a number of dimensions. Positive parental attitudes to their children learning and being schooled in the language relate to cultural and practical considerations.

Lyon and Ellis (1991; 247) found that in Wales, parents' positive attitudes towards their children learning Welsh were "related to a feeling of Welshness", often combined with the necessity of being able to communicate and fit into Welsh communities. Additionally, the perceived significance of speaking Welsh for their children's future employability figured highly in positive parental attitudes towards children learning Welsh.

Parents can contribute to language regeneration in language-specific ways. In the case of Hebrew in Israel, fathers notably contributed to the process of their children's Hebrew language development. Nahir (1988) describes that the study, knowledge and regular use of Hebrew, particularly in written forms, has traditionally been a major aspect of Jewish males' education and way of life. The situation at the early stages of Hebrew re-development as a spoken language meant that most if not all of the Jewish males in Palestine were linguistically well-prepared to acquire Hebrew in a spoken form. As parents, they were in a position to provide linguistic models to their children, supporting school learning as well as actively teaching. This helped to accelerate the regeneration process.

Particular Māori language protocols around *whaikōrero* may provide opportunities to learn and to practise Māori in the spoken form to men of the generation of parents who participated in the case-studies. Indeed, a few of the fathers described Māori language-related expectations being attached to them as Māori males in employment situations. They identified these expectations as providing them with career-related as well as personal incentives to learn and use more formal patterns of Māori language use.

Schooling

It is claimed that schools are not and cannot be expected to be a critical factor in the regeneration of a language (Chrisp, 1998, Fishman, 1991; Jacques, 1991). It is argued that they cannot take a major responsibility for ensuring that a child becomes a competent speaker of a particular language. This claim while valid, is rather ironic given that schooling has played a pivotal role in language shifts undergone by many indigenous groups across the world. Many indigenous peoples have experienced severe disruptions

in the socialisation of culture and language from one generation to the next, particularly in the nineteenth century. Church and state administered schools have been key players in this disruption, as was the case for Māori, discussed in the previous chapter.

It seems more ironic, given that schooling is still playing a significant role in the decline of many indigenous languages at the latter end of the twentieth century. For instance in the case of Canada's indigenous peoples, English is the main language of instruction for many groups. It is reported as fast becoming the mother tongue of the majority of these groups (Burnaby, 1988). It is fast becoming the home language of even those who are first language speakers of their native language. However in the homes of native speakers, children who are below school age are less likely to speak English (or French). In the eighties many children who came out of kōhanga reo as Māori language speakers and entered into English medium primary schooling very quickly stopped speaking Māori (Sharples, 1989). Schooling is still a most prominent factor in language shift to English.

There are well-publicised cases of language regeneration in which immersion schooling has played a critical part, such as in the cases of the Hebrew and Welsh languages. Schools are viewed as a major means of regeneration by many groups in danger of language and culture loss (Keegan, 1996). In Aotearoa-New Zealand, formal education is playing a role at the very least, in helping 20% of Māori primary school children to have some degree of learning experience as speakers of Māori.

Schools are major contributors to the acquisition and development of threatened indigenous languages by their students. Their role can be seen as that of a tool. A tool that is used to carry out a campaign or revolution to effect the transformation of a language and a culture back into the lives of a people. It is true that educational settings such as kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori cannot ensure the survival and maintenance in themselves. Other whānau members actively participating, not only in their children's Māori language learning and development but also in their own, is imperative. Te Kōhanga Reo Trust has recognised this in the development of 'Te Ara Tuatahi' and 'Te Ara Tuarua', training packages aimed at parents and others involved in kōhanga reo who have little fluency in te reo (Royal Tangaere, 1996).

Fogwill (1994; 236) advocates intervention at multiple fronts including schooling. She identifies three types of interventions as being critical for the survival of indigenous languages in the Northwest Territories of Canada.

First, a new schooling system must provide an education that meets the cultural and linguistic needs of the children and their families in each community. The community school must become part of the traditional passing of the culture and the language from one generation to the next.

Second, the damage and loss from the past must be undone. The adults, especially the young adults, must be provided with an opportunity and a reason to recover their language and culture. People need to see some value and to have the opportunity to integrate the traditions of the past with the life of the present and the future.

Third, the languages must not be relegated to languages of the past alone, because if they do they will die with the elders and their way of life. The language must become the living languages of the present, as comfortable and as expressive with computer technology and legislative writing as they always have been with the knowledge and wisdom of the land.

Thus, the critical thing to understand is that providing linguistically and more culturally relevant school programmes for the children of indigenous groups will not be enough. Providing opportunities for adults to recover their language and culture will not be enough. Schooling and community programming for language regeneration must be combined with the use of the language across many aspects of daily modern life in the homes and communities of its speakers (Chrisp, 1997b).

Like many other countries that are sites for language and cultural regeneration, one aspect of daily modern life in Aotearoa-New Zealand that impinges on all public and personal domains is literacy involving printed text. Literacy is an integral part of family life, school life, business life, community life and political life. In contexts such as these, the use of a threatened indigenous language can be promoted in written as well as oral forms.

LANGUAGE REGENERATION AND PRINT LITERACY

Literacy plays an integral part in Fishman's conceptualisation of language reversal. He lobbies for literacy acquisition by the old as well as the young in order to attempt the survival of a language. The development of an extensive range of written material is a fundamental requirement of any language regeneration attempts. For example, a key component of the transition to Hebrew was the development of Hebrew language reading materials, in particular the Hebrew press.

There are three important roles for print literacy in the survival and regeneration of an indigenous language (Fogwill, 1994; 245). The first is validating the contemporary value of the language and giving it status. In situations where an indigenous language is largely used for oral communication and print literacy is practised in the majority, colonised language, an indigenous language has less chance of survival. By using written forms of Māori we work to counteract the view that English is more important and more valuable because it is only or mainly in this language that we read and write.

The second is supporting the preservation of traditions of the past for future generations. In the past our beliefs, knowledge and traditions were recreated from one generation to the next mainly through oral means. More and more we are separated from those with knowledge by death and by space created by our living arrangements. One way the lessons of our tūpuna can be taught to children and parents of present and future generations is through print. Literacy in languages such as Māori enables the culture and attendant traditions to be accessed and reproduced. Over the last century a great deal of effort has gone into recording the stories, histories, traditional knowledge and ancient oral texts of our tūpuna (e.g. Grey, 1928; Reedy, 1993; Sissons, Wi Hongi, & Hohepa, 1987). A number of children's storybooks and school texts presenting traditional Māori stories have been produced.

However, if written materials produced in Māori deal mainly with information about the past, there is a danger that our language and culture will be presented and understood as something that only exists in the past. This leads us into the third role for literacy, to recreate the language within a changing culture, within a changing society. Languages

such as Māori have a greater chance of survival when bureaucracy, books, newspapers, magazines, advertisements and signs are in Māori (Baker, 1996). Literacy in contexts of language and cultural regeneration recreates the past into the present, especially where schooling systems have denied a particular language and culture opportunities to do this more or less naturally over a long period of time. That is, the demand of producing written text to express contemporary ideas and concepts almost forces the language to grow and develop. It may also reinforce and extend the oral transmission of a language.

In the face of an overwhelming English language culture, the aboriginal languages cannot afford to use the English words for fax machine or computer or pneumonia. Terminology must be developed that brings technology or foreign concepts and words within the language and culture of aboriginal people. In the face of newspapers, magazines and books in English, aboriginal languages literature and publishing is essential. There is little point in people learning to read and write their language unless there is material to read....

(Fogwill, 1994; 245-6)

Extending the domains of traditionally oral indigenous languages to include print discourses are not always seen as productive ways of meeting goals of 'language preservation and revitalisation' (e.g. Hornberger, 1988; Sims, 1996). The consideration of the necessity of literacy to the survival of te reo Māori raises issues to do with the traditional and contemporary uses of Māori language. It has been argued that the traditionally oral nature of Māori historically renders the literate use of the language as artificial. Richard Benton (1993) dismisses such arguments out of hand, pointing to the dynamic nature of Māori culture, indeed any culture to acquire and innovate new technology as clearly disputing and nullifying such claims. Literacy is a tool, our traditions are what we require as a framework into which print literacy is incorporated (Cruikshank, 1990; Melbourne, 1991).

Flourishing languages change constantly and adapt to new circumstances and technologies. As languages with essentially an oral tradition adapt to the changing circumstances of our modern world "they must become more than an expression of the past and of traditional culture. Creating a written literature is part of re-creating the languages within a new context for ancient cultures.

(Fogwill, 1994; 243-244)

From the perspective of an indigenous language such as Māori, literacy is important for the survival, reversal and enhancement of the language. Literacy gives languages such as Māori increased functions and usage at both the group and the individual level. It is argued that print literacy provides a fast and effective avenue to good language models and is a means by which adult second language learners' can rapidly increase vocabulary in circumstances where access to oral language input is limited (e.g. McCaffery, McMurchy-Pilkington & Dale, 1998).

Hornberger (1994) argues that there is a close relationship between oral and literate uses of language. Just as groups can use language in very different ways and for different purposes, literacy can vary in its functions and uses across history, cultures, and contexts of use as defined by particular communities. Written texts also help develop and recreate an individual's understandings of their language at the word level. As one meets language that is written, one is forced to consider what that language means, particularly if meeting words for the first time (Wood, 1988).

The experiences of indigenous language groups in Central Mexico highlight the critical role print literacy plays in the vitality of a language today. At the beginning of the nineties a bilingual education programme in the most widely spoken indigenous language in Mexico, Nahuatl, was introduced. The practical effects of this "de-facto maintenance" kind of programme have been studied. Some bilingual materials were available and students were speaking Nahuatl freely. However, print literacy was taught and developed almost exclusively in Spanish. Evaluation of student's language skills showed that students' language skills in Nahuatl were progressively lagging behind their language skills in Spanish. Francis & Rafael (1996) argues that narrative, both oral and written, is a key interpretative framework for language learning that not only provides a bridge between oral and print language but works to the benefit of language preservation.

Freire and others argue that if people are not able to use their own language they are in danger of being trapped in 'cultural silence'. Māori educational experiences, as are those of many other indigenous groups, have been ones of linguistic and cultural disempowerment. When people of indigenous minorities, with a legacy of colonialism do use their own languages there is opportunity to transform social structures and

relationships with dominant groups. Where Māori culture and knowledge is viewed as valid and legitimate, it has potential for 'radical transformation'.

From a Freirian perspective, Māori autonomy, involving Māori taking responsibility for our own learning, resorting to our own cultural mechanisms and retaining control over our own processes, is key to a legitimisation process. Other critical actions include raising Māori awareness and politicising Māori towards transforming and emancipating ourselves from an oppressive condition. Graham Smith (1997) proposes that these do not have to occur in any set order. Te reo Māori has become an important focal marker in Māori moves to regain authority and cultural integrity particularly in the sphere of education. (Hollings, 1991; 55). This emphasis has included the teaching of 'reading and writing' in Māori. It has the potential to intervene actively in the ways that Freire discusses, the potential for 'radical transformation'.

Liberation comes only when people reclaim their language and, with it, the power of envisagement, the imagination of a different world to be brought into being.

(Berthoff, xix in Freire and Macedo, 1987)

Becoming literate through te reo Māori

Why teach children to become literate through and in te reo Māori? Most if not all children in Māori medium settings are accomplished users of English. It can be argued that for many of them it is Māori, not English, that has the hallmarks of a second language. Experts and theorists of reading acquisition argue that children learn to read and write most effectively in the language over which they have the most control. According to Clay (1992; 35),

[t]he least complicated entry into literacy learning is to begin to read and write the language that children already know and speak. What they already know about language can be used to power their literacy learning.

This kind of view expressed by Clay and others (e.g. Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998) reflects a particular set of concerns, those related to reading achievement. The desire of Māori whānau for their children to develop literacy initially in Māori, even when this is

not their children's strongest language, reflects another set of concerns around language regeneration and cultural maintenance.

Furthermore, children coming into kura kaupapa Māori and other Māori medium settings are already familiar with te reo Māori, although there may be wide variations in their levels of fluency. Māori is a language they have at least heard and 'know the feel of', even those children who have minimal linguistic control over it. Whilst Māori may not be the language in which all children coming into Māori medium educational settings are the most competent, it is not a language that is totally new or foreign to them.

There are also developmental and educational rationales for teaching Māori children literacy through and in te reo Māori, even when it may be a second language. Children who develop language and literacy skills in a second language that holds a minority position in the wider society, have been found to do so without cost to the development of the majority (usually their first) language. That is, there are no negative consequences. The success of overseas immersion programmes, such as those in Canada and Wales, where children are learning to read and write in what might be their second language indicate that there may be benefits (e.g. Swain & Lapkin 1991). In Aotearoa-New Zealand, children who learn to read and write in Māori can be expected and have been found to transfer their literacy expertise easily and effectively to English written language (Bradley, 1991). In contrast, there are negative implications in not having the opportunity to develop literacy in Māori and to carry out literacy functions through Māori. For children who speak Māori, having language oracy in isolation from literacy can disadvantage and disempower.

Alternatively, learning to read and write in the language encourages the development of belonging, self-identity and self-esteem. It also encourages and reinforces one's cultural world-views. In schools in Aotearoa-New Zealand, often among the early texts children experience are ones they construct about themselves and their families. When I taught in the junior end of primary school one of the first themes we worked on was 'My family and me'. Here is a similar such text, jointly constructed by a kura child, his teacher and his whānau.

Ko M___ tōku pāpā.

Ko S___ tōku māmā.

Ko Ngāti Porou tōku iwi.

Ko Te Whānau a Hinerupe tōku hapū.

Ko Nukutaememeha tōku waka.

Ko Hikurangi tōku maunga.

Ko Tokarāangi tōku moana.

Ko Waiapu tōku awa. (M is my father, S is my mother. My tribe is -. My sub-
tribe is -. My canoe is-. My mountain is -. My sea is -My river is -.)

It is very similar to oral texts observed in children's language practices of mihimihi in kōhanga reo (Ka'ai, 1990; White, 1995). It is also similar to those that this child was observed producing in kōhanga reo (Hohepa, 1990; 62). By encouraging literacy development in their cultural language, we can provide opportunities for children to use written language in ways that have relationships with cultural understandings they have been developing through oral means.

Not only children's language development and competencies, but also that of whānau members, have significant bearing on their learning to read and write through and in Māori. For instance, parents may feel less able to be actively involved in their children's literacy when their major or strongest language differs from that used in literacy acquisition. Children may have fewer opportunities and fewer supportive contexts out of school to make progress in a language that is not a strong home language. In some homes of children at kura kaupapa Māori, a major if not the first language of the home is English. In such cases, parents may feel able to support the development of literacy in English in more direct and effective ways than they are able to in the case of in Māori.

Alternatively, to rephrase Clay (1992), what parents already know about literacy, albeit in English, coupled with having their children becoming literate through Māori has the potential to support and motivate parents' Māori language learning. It is argued that this makes it even more imperative for formal or school-based programmes to concentrate on the Māori literacy development of Māori speaking children, for their own benefit and for that of their whānau. This is especially so in early literacy development, but also needs to

be sustained throughout a child's school life if high levels of literacy, or as is more likely the case, biliteracy are to be achieved.

A common finding of research on many of the attempts at language regeneration is that people use the language that will help meet communicative needs most effectively. In order to encourage and elicit Māori language use across a range of different contexts including homes, expertise needs to be developed in activities that can be carried out effectively through Māori language and across a range of settings. Literacy activities involving written Māori texts are activities that call for the use of Māori language. They are also highly transportable. Furthermore, literacy activities involving reading can be effective sites for language learning. Becoming literate through Māori, and carrying out literacy practices in Māori, are of significance to the goals of Māori language regeneration.

SUMMARY

'Family' language practices have been identified as a pivotal factor when attempting to regenerate a language under threat of being lost. Families develop a range of ways of using language in order to meet the demands of the wider community in which they live as well as in order to engage successfully in activities in family contexts. For Māori this has involved the development of English language use within whānau homes, to the detriment of Māori language development and use. A major challenge today facing whānau who are committed to Māori language regeneration is the regeneration of Māori as the language of everyday activities in their homes.

A number of studies have examined the viability of everyday activities occurring in the home for supporting language development. For example, Beals (1997) showed how the use of rare words "embedded in the messiness of everyday life" such as family mealtimes is positively associated with a child's later vocabulary. Whānau, such as those involved in the studies described in Part Two, are to varying degrees faced with the challenge of 'embedding' any Māori words "in the messiness of everyday life", let alone rare words. In effect, any Māori word may be a rare word!

A challenge for families in which two languages are being developed, as is arguably the case for whānau involved in Māori medium education, is to acquire a range of language expertise in both languages that will enable them to function at community and at family levels. The range of contexts, both family and community, providing opportunities and activities that utilise, as well as that encourage the use of, the respective languages affects the ease with which this is achieved. This is of critical importance for a language such as Māori that at present has a relatively small set of functions across a rather narrow range of contexts. In comparison, English has many more contexts of use in the majority of communities in Aotearoa-New Zealand. For whānau whose children attend kura kaupapa Māori and other Māori medium schools, homes also often reflect this imbalance.

In identifying ‘family’ as having a fundamental role in language regeneration, it is then not sufficient to focus language learning and teaching efforts solely on children. If the goal is the preservation and continuance of te reo Māori as a living language, then the Māori language needs of all whānau members are of priority. In many ways it is mainly children who regularly participate in te reo Māori contexts, in the form of educational settings. Parents, for a complex variety of reasons, are not always able to sustain initial enthusiasm and commitment to learn Māori, use Māori and advocate Māori language in our lives.

An obvious way that Māori regeneration as an everyday language can be accomplished in whānau of such children is by facilitating Māori language activities in the home. There is potentially a lot of linguistic mileage to be gained through supporting activities that meet the demands of Māori medium school life in the home. The goals of literacy development and literacy activities are common to all schooling types, including kura kaupapa Māori.

Literacy is also identified as having a critical role to play in any attempt to regenerate a language. The viability and status of a language are fundamentally influenced by the degree to which it is used for literate purposes and practices. As will be discussed more fully in Chapter Five, literacy practices are a feature of many families and whānau in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Such activities provide a site where the imbalance between the uses of Māori and English can be mediated. How might literacy activities encourage and support the development and use of te reo Māori within whānau?

People speak the language that will help meet communicative needs most effectively. What can be done, is to support literacy activities in the home that can be carried out most effectively through te reo Māori. Reading Māori language texts is one such activity that entails the use of te reo Māori. The next chapter further explores the relationships between print literacy, language regeneration and whānau, this time at the level of issues related to Māori language and print.