

CHAPTER FOUR

TE AO TUHI -

PRINT LITERACY AND MĀORI LANGUAGE

To write in Māori is to maintain contact with the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual ground of the Māori people.....(130)

What are the chances for a 'literature' in Māori? This question is inseparable from that of the survival of Māori as used speech in everyday life.....

What we need is to set about discovering how the rich heritage of the Māori past, both oral and written, might provide a continuing basis for 'literature' in Māori. (140)

(H. Melbourne, 1991)

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter historical and present day relationships between Māori language and print are examined. While aspects of the development of Māori print literacy are evident in descriptions and discussions contained in Chapter Two, Māori experiences of print literacy and the development of a body of Māori language literature in print form are separated out from language-related experiences and developments to be considered more explicitly. This is somewhat an arbitrary separation, given that the experiences are inextricably interrelated. However, while relationships between aspects of our life are seldom linear, words presented on pages are.

Specific issues and themes related to Māori words presented on pages are also teased out in this chapter. These are issues of representation including what is presented and 're-presented' using Māori language in written forms as the medium. This chapter also focuses on the availability of such texts in terms of quantity and quality as well as the degrees of access that Māori homes and schools have to them.

In this thesis, literacy is conceptualised as tool and activity shaped and mediated by the user-culture. The development of print literacy is not seen as a marker of higher cognitive functioning, or an indicator of superior cultural development and enlightenment (Scribner, 1988). Māori eagerness in the nineteenth century to acquire print literacy is seen in the context of engaging with and adapting, as well as adapting to, unfamiliar technology.

However, the initial development of print literacy in Māori society to a large extent has involved the co-option of Māori language and culture as a means of facilitating colonisation processes. Print literacy had a significant influence in Māori language decline across at least three dimensions. Print literacy worked as an efficient tool in the task of dismantling te reo Māori as a medium of the education system (and to a large extent, the system itself) that existed prior to contact with non-Māori. It was also utilised in the process of removing te reo Māori from the introduced western forms of schooling. Thirdly, it is implicated in changing the language for communicating, socialising and educating that took place in personal domains of Māori life, as discussed in Chapter Two.

One of the accompanying consequences of the move from Māori to English in formal schooling contexts has been the move from Māori to English as the means of communication in the home. In the twentieth century, practices and activities that Māori children and their whānau have been encouraged to carry out around printed text in their homes have been almost exclusively in English (e.g. Awatere, 1984; McNaughton, Glynn & Robinson, 1987; Elley, 1997).

In contrast, for school-aged children, and arguably for many adults directly involved in the present movement to restore te reo Māori, sizeable proportions of their Māori language experiences are in the form of print. From findings of the 1995 Māori language survey, it has been estimated that about 39% of Māori adults read or write in Māori at some time (Te Puni Kōkiri, 1998). This compares with findings from the first Māori language survey (R. Benton, 1997), that in the seventies only a quarter of the fluent speakers stated that they preferred Māori as the language for reading and writing. Today's adults who carry out some literacy activities in Māori are likely to be more fluent and older than 45 years. There is little information currently available regarding adults and children being jointly involved in Māori language literacy activities in homes.

While it cannot be stated strongly enough that activities involving print of interest here are but one of many kinds of activities that children and whānau may participate in to support and engender te reo Māori, printed text can be used effectively as a tool in the retrieval and reassertion of Māori language. For example, kōhanga reo whānau are realising and taking advantage of different modes of transmission for language and tikanga knowledge. The development and use of print resources in individual kōhanga reo reflect creative strategies continually being devised by whānau to increase the supply of te reo Māori (Ruawai-Hamilton, 1994). While kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori provide contexts for parents' language development, there is the dilemma that a degree of fluency is needed if they are to effectively work in these settings (rather than working in these settings essentially to become fluent). Productive opportunities to learn and use te reo Māori in other settings, particularly the home, are needed (Ruawai-Hamilton, 1994). Print's usefulness extends to assisting the re-creation and re-presentation of Māori knowledge, culture and language into individual homes. It is argued here that the intersection of whānau reading activities and whānau Māori language development can be drawn on to make meaningful space for whānau interactions in te reo Māori.

Availability of and access to printed material in Māori are intertwined with the complexities of educational, cultural and linguistic resourcing of Māori. These complexities include issues around who produces, publishes and distributes Māori texts, and what is represented in print through the medium of te reo Māori. This chapter provides a discussion of some of these issues and how they impact on whānau whose children attend Kura Kaupapa Māori or other Māori medium schooling contexts.

DEFINING LITERACY

This thesis develops a definition of literacy drawing on sociocultural and critical approaches. In keeping with sociocultural conceptualisations, literacy is viewed as being culturally constructed within social activities and practices. As a practice itself, literacy is defined by social and cultural meanings and by activities to which it is put. Thus, literacy is a social achievement, an outcome of cultural creation and recreation. It is acquired through participation in socially organised activities that sometimes involve writing

systems. Individual literacy is the ability to participate in such socially organised activities with particular language forms, including written language.

Literacy is also seen as a tool that may be used properly or improperly. This notion of proper and improper is extended to see true or proper literacy in a critical, Freirian-influenced way. Giroux, discussing the view of critical literacy as an ideological construct and as a social movement, stated that;

[a]s an ideology, literacy had to be viewed as a social construction that is always implicated in organizing one's view of history, the present and the future; furthermore, the notion of literacy needed to be grounded in an ethical and political project that dignified and extended the possibilities of human life and freedom.

(in Freire & Macedo, 1987; 2)

From such a critical literacy perspective, proper or true literacy enables people to participate in the understanding and transformation of their society. As discussed in the previous chapter, this may be realised in a number of ways, for example, when people are able to practise literacy in ways that help make meaningful and positive changes in their personal lives and in the lives of others who belong to their community or culture. It may also be realised when, through critical and transformative changes in their experiences, they are enabled to carry out literacy practices that express what counts as true and proper literacy for their group or culture.

What counts as true literacy today for Māori? It includes developing and using literacy-related skills in Māori and English (Hohepa & Jenkins, 1995; Jenkins, 1991; Yates, 1996). It includes gaining knowledge and understanding of 'Māori literacy', oral through to written, and 'reading' the natural and spiritual world. It includes knowledge of our history, 'reading' the historical world. It includes understanding the effects of colonisation evidenced in the physical and psychological bruising sustained by Māori (Dewes 1981; Jenkins, 1991). It includes seeking avenues to address these. It includes the ability to use our own language to control definitions of our culture, our knowledge and ourselves (Melbourne, 1991; Thiongo, 1986).

Māori literacy

Māori literacy existed prior to the introduction of print literacy. There was already a literacy system containing important bodies of knowledge that were necessary to the survival of customs and traditions by which Māori society lived (Jenkins, 1991). My conceptualisations of proper or true Māori literacy incorporate understandings of how meaning is symbolised and carried, linguistically through oral literacy traditions and oral performance and texts, and materially through such things as whakairo, tukutuku, kowhaiwhai and raranga.

The status of Māori oral literacy traditions and how they have come to be understood has been influenced by anthropological theory (Dewes, 1981). Anthropological emphasis has been on collecting and summarising narratives or stories whose origins could be traced. Reasons for this emphasis are located in “distance” and “desires” (L. Mead, 1996). That is, the distance between Māori oral forms of literature and western understandings of literature, and the desire on the part of non-Māori to collect and repackage it in forms more familiar and understandable to western thinking.

Anne Maxwell (1991) elaborates this repackaging in her discussion of the ways non-Māori people such as Governor Grey went about the task of re-presenting Māori knowledge. Grey and others recreated Māori literate traditions in written texts, contributing to selection processes for defining what was/is acceptable Māori knowledge, what forms this knowledge should take and the development and establishment of structures through which to ensure that only selected knowledge in particular forms was/is accessible.

This repackaging has also influenced who has access. Traditionally, selection processes based on whakapapa or the identification of particular gifts for instance, helped decide who would have been privy to specified areas of knowledge (e.g. L. Smith, 1991). Re-presenting such knowledge in print, either Māori or English, has eased such control of access. In another sense, it has resulted in different forms of restriction of access for Māori. For instance, opportunities for Māori to learn about and read books that record repackaged knowledge, such as an edited version of Governor Grey’s (1928) ‘Nga Mahi a

nga Tūpuna', became more and more linked to opportunities to engage in university academic study of the Māori language.

Māori and print literacy

What might Māori society have expected from the external introduction of print literacy into their existing literacy system? Jenkins (1991) states that Māori society ought to have had the expectation that the introduction of print literacy would include availability and access to reading and writing in Māori and English. What was arguably required was print literacy of a kind that would help Māori to facilitate communication with and control over new non-Māori arrivals. Literacy as a tool had the potential to facilitate communication between Māori and these more recent arrivals, to help ensure Māori interests within the changing society and to help maintain Māori political power and control over their own society.

Mastery of literacy skills was also considered desirable by Māori as a way of accessing and understanding the unfamiliar technology, skills and knowledge they were being exposed to and were eager to make use of (Jackson, 1975). While Māori expected literacy to be an avenue to new knowledge; technical, political, theoretical; in reality the access provided by initial print instruction was limited to non-secular knowledge and delivered almost entirely through the medium of Māori (e.g. Beaglehole, 1955; Jenkins, 1991; McKenzie, 1985).

As already indicated in Chapter Two, missionary programmes for Māori were aimed at developing little more than basic functional literacy, initially only in Māori, later in Māori and English. Over the first part of the nineteenth century some Māori did learn to read and write in Māori and in English, but the empowering potential of this was not realised (Hohepa & Jenkins, 1995; Jenkins, 1991). It did not result in equitable relationships with those coming into Aotearoa-New Zealand, particularly in the second half of last century, who increasingly took up governance and control. The problem was that while Māori society became more and more print 'literate', essentially it was only "as uncritical, mystified, passive readers with a non-empowered view of their changing world" (Jenkins, 1991; 137).

Why did this come to pass? The first teachers of reading and writing printed text, the missionaries, had a 'mission' that incorporated a notion of the transformation of Māori society - changing Māori into a civilised and Christian people (Jenkins, 1991; Simon, 1988). Print literacy was both tool and 'carrot' or motivation utilised towards achieving this mission.

Development of reading and writing skills was identified as the way to expose Māori to western policies and values, particularly religious policies and values. For the missionaries, literacy was a way of changing Māori society, enlightening and informing Māori, transforming them from heathens to saved (e.g. Church Missionary Society Minutes, 13 May 1816; 189; 3 March 1818). What was not made easily available was knowledge needed to understand and control the technologies being imported, the developing political situation and the non-missionary colonisers. In essence, print literacy functioned as a powerful tool in the process of attempting cultural domination and the dismantling of traditional Māori society (Jackson, 1975; Jenkins, 1991; Ngawai in Te Rau Press Ltd, 1985; Rei, 1998).

Colonisation through the 1800s was partly achieved by the promotion of Māori dependency on teaching and learning strategies, and the advice, of missionaries (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974; Jenkins, 1991). Print literacy instruction was implicated in changes to Māori educational processes, practices and pedagogies. Changes were occurring in terms of what counted as knowledge, who had access to learning, who taught and how, and where teaching and learning should occur (Jackson, 1975; Simon, 1998). New institutions were developed, for example the missionary school and later the native school (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974; Simon, 1998). Specialist buildings for literacy instruction were constructed in pā. Older buildings, settings and institutions took on new print literacy related functions (Jackson, 1975). Processes of education were increasingly taken out of the hands of whānau and hapū, and particularly out of those of elders. However, there was overlap with and adaptation of traditional teaching and learning methods. For example, the use of exposition, memorisation, discussion and debate on marae were used by Māori to participate in their own learning and to teach each other, shown in written observations and illustrations of the time (e.g. 'Night Scene New Zealand' Richard Wade, 1937; Reed & Reed, 1935).

Schooling and other introduced forms of education did not encourage or foster political awareness about how literacy might be used to resist colonisation and subordination. However, this was not to mean that Māori could not develop this awareness and express it through print. Documents, letters and newsletters from last century show print used as a device for supporting whānau, hapū and iwi political actions and activities. Māori also used print in ways that reflected critical understandings of colonisation, for example, in the writing of Aporo (1867), accompanying a drawing depicting a devil carrying a sack with people in it.

Ko Kawana Karei i haere mai ki konei ki te maminga i nga tangata Maori.

A riro ana i a ia te Peke [This is Governor Grey. He has come to deceive the Māori people. He has got them in a bag.]

(in Turnbull & McLaren, 1964; 100).

However, the irony was that for the most part becoming literate meant becoming “a constituent element of European culture...Māori language, the life force and expression of its culture, was governed within the new rules of literacy, written by western culture” (Jenkins, 1991; 40). For Māori, the development of ‘print literacy’ occurred alongside the development of powerlessness and a loss of control over Māori destinies. The Māori system of literacy, rather than being enriched, was supplanted or replaced by western forms, accompanied by a replacement of what counted as literature and of forms literature could acceptably take. Traditional systems of knowledge and belief were increasingly marginalised, as was the language by which they were indexed. A hiatus in Māori cultural continuity began.

The marginalisation of Māori traditional knowledge, practices and language has arguably resulted in losses that can never be recouped in a ‘pure’ form, un-touched by external influences (Melbourne, 1991; L. Smith, 1989). Loss and change (as well as growth) is a part of the process of ‘normal’ cultural development in societies that have not been subjected to colonisation. It is impossible to predict how much change Māori society would have undergone if it had been in control of what is now largely unavoidable - contact with other cultures. However, the last quarter of the twentieth century has seen a growing commitment by Māori and other colonised indigenous groups to reclaim, regain

and regenerate what they identify as fundamental elements of who they are (Durie, 1998; Ka'ai, 1990, Pohatu, 1996; L. Smith, 1989). For many Māori, language is one of these elements.

In Chapter Three it was argued that print literacy has a significant role in any contemporary language regeneration process. Such a role demands the reinforcement of literacy as having transformative potential. In the context of this thesis, its transformative potential is considered in relation to whānau uses of te reo Māori. That is, how might literacy in the form of whānau bookreading practices facilitate the re-transformation of Māori whānau as Māori language users in the home? Obvious factors affecting the efficacy of print literacy as a tool for Māori language regeneration are availability of and access to written Māori text. An arguably more significant issue relates to representation.

WRITTEN MĀORI TEXT: AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS

Concerns about physical resourcing for the development and practices of print literacy in Māori include availability, access, and appropriateness of printed Māori texts. These concerns, which also relate to equity of provision, are just as significant for year 12 and year 13 students and whānau in wharekura and other secondary Māori medium classes, as for new entrant children and their whānau, such as those involved in studies discussed in Part Two of this thesis.

Resource implications for literacy learning and teaching are considerably more complex than simply a matter of 'books on shelves'. Family resources play a significant role in educational outcomes for children (Nash 1993). Māori language resources (e.g. native or fluent speakers, whānau contexts for Māori language use), as well as Māori literacy resources (e.g. Māori language books, whānau literacy practices, literacy-related knowledge and expertise) available in homes are heavily implicated in education in and through Māori, and Māori language development of children and their whānau.

Availability

During the period in which this thesis was being written, a child learning to read in Māori medium educational contexts could expect a narrower range of contexts in which to develop a strong oral base in te reo Māori (Te Puni Kōkiri, 1998). While the retrenchment of Māori language shows some signs of reversing, for example its re-emergence in educational settings, contexts providing opportunities to experience Māori language are still relatively few compared to English. Similarly, a child could also expect comparatively limited reading texts appropriate for early reading instruction and a very limited set of recreational reading material to facilitate reading for enjoyment (Hohepa & Smith, 1996; Benton et al, 1996). This is amply illustrated in the evaluation findings of a programme aimed at getting books into 'bookless homes', initiated by Māori writer, Alan Duff. Even when involved in a programme with such an aim, children in Māori medium settings experienced difficulty in accessing Māori language books, often having to settle for English ones (Elley, 1997).

Members of whānau whose children were learning to read in Māori could expect greater difficulties in obtaining both instructional and recreational reading material to use in the home, illustrated for example by the relatively small number of books written in Māori available in retail bookstores. They could expect a higher likelihood of repeatedly seeing the same materials; what is available in shops, will also be what is available in libraries (if they have Māori language books) and in schools. They could also expect little generally available information about how they might help support and teach their child to learn to read in Māori, particularly when many are second language learners themselves.

Teachers developing classroom programmes for children learning to read in Māori could expect limited graded reading resources and little information on processes of reading and assessment in Māori. They could expect few training resources and advisory networks specifically involved in developing and supporting language and literacy programmes in Māori medium settings. They could expect students drawn from whānau with a wide range of resources and expertise to bring to Māori language and literacy activities with their children (Benton, et al, 1996).

Many teachers working in Māori medium settings will themselves be second language speakers of Māori. Large-scale evaluations of immersion and bilingual education programmes in the United States have identified teacher quality as a key factor affecting their success (Cazden, 1992). 'Quality' undoubtedly includes competence in the language of instruction as well as teaching expertise (Allen-Westray, 1997). Where maintenance of an established home language with a strong speech community is the goal, competence in the language of instruction (of teachers, learners and other family members) is more of a given. In comparison, Māori medium school settings and their students' homes are integral sites of language regeneration, in which teachers, students and whānau members are at varying levels of fluency in te reo Māori. That is, in many instances Māori is not their first or their strong language. In such a situation, the quality and quantity of Māori language resources available have huge implications for the language development of all groups involved.

Concern has been expressed about the minimal resources available to teachers working in Māori language schooling contexts and to children's whānau by local and overseas experts in bilingual and language revitalisation education (e.g. R. Benton, 1993; Spolsky, 1989; Benton et al., 1996). The concern about teaching resources and identification of the need for graded materials is not a recent one, that has emerged only since the development of Māori medium and kura kaupapa Māori educational contexts. It existed prior to that in relation to bilingual schooling, a situation at the time involving children and their whānau who were essentially native speakers of Māori (e.g. Ritchie & Ritchie, 1978).

Some progress is being made in working towards a more equitable situation in the development of Māori language reading resources. In 1995, over a third of reading resources material produced by Learning Media Limited for the Ministry of Education was in Māori. There are other groups and publishers. Some are relatively new, such as Kia Ata Mai Trust based in Ngaruawahia who have been producing translations of English early readers as well as original books written in Māori. Others are more established, for instance Huia Publishers are producing early reading materials as well as other curriculum-based materials in Māori. Commercial publishers may produce Māori books independently, or through contracts with Ministries. However, the situation is still far from ideal, let alone acceptable. It entails differing emphases for and expectations of

kura kaupapa Māori and Māori medium teachers. In order to get maximum quality of use out of the small pool of currently available resources, the development of kura kaupapa Māori and immersion teachers as creative and skilled users of published and unpublished reading materials is critical.

While this thesis was being written, studies in the area of Māori reading included a project aimed at developing a Māori language reading assessment tool (Clay, 1993) and another aimed at supporting Māori medium reading programmes for junior children. The first project (developing and evaluating the effectiveness of a Māori version of the observation survey employed by teachers in conventional new entrant classrooms after one year of instruction) involved collaboration with teachers in junior kura kaupapa Māori and Māori medium classes across ten schools. The second project, 'Nga Kete Kōrero' (Benton et al, 1996) initiated by Te Puni Kōkiri, has resulted in the development of a framework to classify reading books in Māori into increasing levels of difficulty, and the production of teacher guidelines and a set of early readers. A computer programme for cataloguing and referencing Māori language resources, 'Toi te Kupu' (<http://toitekupu.org.nz/>), was also developed (McKinley, Black, Christensen, & Richardson, 1996). Together they have gone some way to ameliorate the situation, although it is still far from optimal. Coupled with insufficient quantities of reading materials has been the relative inappropriateness of many of the texts produced for initial reading acquisition through Māori.

Appropriateness

Appropriateness of a text can be considered across a number of dimensions: from the ways print is presented, the font, and size of print; the illustrations; through to the content, messages and values being re-presented through print. An issue highlighted in a number of places throughout this discussion is the dearth of material suitable for early reading instruction in Māori. Among the findings of the project 'Nga Kete Kōrero' was that while there are gaps in the supply of reading resources available to kura kaupapa Māori and Māori medium classrooms generally, there is a severe gap in the supply of readers suitable for use at the beginning stages of reading (Benton et al, 1996). One of the recommendations made in the report's study was that the;

M.O.E. in its contractual arrangements with Learning Media and other publishers require producers of government-funded Māori language resources to:

- i.) implement a policy of trialing Māori language reading material in Māori medium classrooms prior to final production to ensure that texts produced are appropriate for classroom use.
- ii) support the implementation of the classification system by ensuring that all baseline Māori language readers are produced in line with the framework and address the short falls identified.
- iii) produce a wider range of Māori language reading material and reading support material e.g., non-fiction texts, tapes, videos.

(Benton et al, 1996; 5)

The project team was able to identify only one existing reader they considered suitable across a range of dimensions such as print size, language difficulty and content, for the very beginning stage of reading. Two years on the situation has improved somewhat, but there is still a long way to go before it can honestly be said that provision of reading resources for beginning reading is adequate.

Kura kaupapa Māori and Māori medium education are part of a wider educational, social and political agenda related to Māori language and cultural regeneration. Teachers work with parents and whānau who, although not all able to bring expertise in te reo Māori, bring commitment in the form of their children attending such schooling provisions.

The optimisation of language and literacy learning of children in these schooling types calls for strategies that will support the learning needs of parents and whānau as second language learners. Strategies for interceding in the inequitable situation whānau face in terms of access to Māori reading materials, particularly recreational reading materials, would include for instance accelerating their development, providing up to date information about their production and ensuring that they are affordable and readily available.

Whānau access to written Māori texts

In 1995, 174 parents and caregivers of children from five kura and three immersion units provided information relating to their homes' access to Māori print resources (Hohepa & Smith, 1996). This occurred as part of an evaluation of Māori medium language materials produced by Te Pou Taki Kōrero (Learning Media Limited). The main aim of the study, commissioned by the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Implementation Division, was to evaluate the levels of satisfaction teachers experienced with Māori medium series nominated for evaluation. The evaluation involved forty teachers across fifteen schools across the North and South Islands. As a group, the teachers covered all levels of primary (including Māori medium and kura kaupapa Māori) and secondary schooling.

A secondary aim of the study was to find out how these series were being used to facilitate the development and use of Māori language in the homes of students in kura kaupapa Māori and Māori medium settings. Three hundred and nineteen surveys, asking for information about the presence of and uses of the nominated series in the home, and perceptions of their effectiveness, were distributed to children across seven of the participating schools. Just over half of these were completed by parents or caregivers and returned.

Eighty-nine whānau (51%) who returned surveys were unaware that Te Pou Taki Kōrero produced Māori resources. Thirty-one whānau (23.5%) of the kura children and four whānau (9.5%) of immersion unit children owned copies of Te Pou Taki Kōrero series. Of the 174 whānau who returned surveys, a further 50 whānau knew that Te Pou Taki Kōrero produces material but did not own any.

Whānau reported having acquired copies in a range of ways. Some had been given copies by their kōhanga reo (who in some cases had received series from local English medium schools). Some were given copies by whānau members or friends who were teachers. Others had copies that had not been returned to schools. One whānau described how they acquired copies by rather creative, though somewhat dubious, means while one of their members had been working at a school.

The most common use for materials reported by whānau was reading them to children, followed by using them to help children learn to read te reo Māori. The third most common use was to help adults to learn te reo. Other ways the materials were being used were to gain knowledge about history and nature, to learn new vocabulary and to learn about different Māori dialects.

Fifty two (29.9%) of the whānau who returned questionnaires reported that Te Pou Taki Kōrero books were sent to their homes from school. A further sixty-five whānau (37%) responded that books came home, but they were unsure if they were Te Pou Taki Kōrero books. Seventy-five respondents gave information about the ways they thought kura and schools expected them to use the books sent home. Most of the parents believed schools expected the materials to be read by the children to another person, to help their children to learn to read in te reo Māori. A number thought they were expected to read them to children. Just over half thought that the material was also sent home in order to help the adult members of the whānau learn Māori.

Two other uses described in returned surveys were to help parents learn Māori beliefs and practices they did not know, and to bring *“reading Māori into whānau habits for our children”*. Ten parents/caregivers reported using series sent from school to promote the regular use of Māori language in their home.

“...kia whai wā te whānau ki te noho rūmaki i te reo. Tērā pea mō te 5-10 miniti ia pō, aa, ka taea hoki te whakaroa te wā ki te 10-20 miniti,.....A te wā, ka piki mātou ki tēnā taumata ka noho matou i roto i te reo, mai te whitinga o te ra, ki waenganui pō. Ko tēnā te tumanako! Ko tēnā te wawata! (...to make time for our family to be immersed in Māori. Perhaps 5-10 minutes a night, then it could be lengthened to 10-20 minutes..... in time we will reach the stage when we can remain in the [Māori] language from dawn till dark. That is the desire! That is the dream!)

Twenty parents or caregivers requested information about purchasing Māori resources, especially books, and eleven who reported that material was not being sent by the school wrote that they wanted books and tapes to come home with their children.

"I am interested in purchasing any if I can do so through the school to start a library for home study."

"...it would be great to have order system / catalogue / book club available through kura!"

"I would be happier if more books were sent into our homes from school."

Reflected in parent comments were high levels of interest and commitment in terms of their own learning.

"I would be most interested in obtaining books and tapes to educate both myself and enhance my daughter's reo. Because I work nights, ie. 11.00pm - 7.30am I am unable to attend Te Reo classes, therefore with the odd couple of hours I have available at work I would find listening to tapes and reading books most beneficial. Please advise me if this would be available. Kia ora."

Parents' and caregivers' responses provide an indication of the level of concern present amongst such parents to access Māori language materials, not only in order to assist their children's learning, but also to support their own. Having access to Māori language texts carries with it other concerns, particularly so given the indications that they are also seen as a source of cultural as well as linguistic knowledge. While availability and access are obvious considerations in relation to the role print literacy has in language regeneration, the issue of representation, what is represented through, and how Māori are represented in Māori language texts, is arguably even more significant.

REPRESENTATION: NO WAI TE AO, NO HEA NGA KUPU?

For teachers who participated in the evaluation project described above, representation surfaced as a key issue. During teacher interviews, aspects of written Māori language resources produced for Māori language educational settings were identified as potentially problematic. Three of these aspects were to do with: pictorial representation, values and beliefs underlying stories, and stories translated from English into Māori. Critical

comments were made about how 'Māori' was being represented - through illustrations, through story lines and through values and beliefs that stories reflected and expressed.

The majority of these comments came from teachers working in classrooms where te reo Māori was the vehicle or medium of schooling and where most, if not all of the children in their classes identified as Māori. The children were being expected to develop and use Māori in academic ways, to become literate through and in the language of their culture. The educational options the children and their whānau were participating in actively work to avoid the trap of 'cultural silence', the inability to use one's cultural language to understand and to engage in the world around them, referred to in the previous chapter (Freire & Macedo, 1987). Hirini Melbourne views the inability of a colonised culture to present and represent itself in its own language as effectively consigning itself to remain a 'victim' dependent on its perpetrator. In his discussion of Māori literary traditions he states,

[s]o long as Māori can only assert the values and attitudes of their culture in English, they necessarily remain victims of the colonial legacy. Only when Māori writers can rely upon there being a sizeable body of readers in the Māori language will Māori culture truly be able to assert its independence.

(Melbourne, 1991; 129)

Children who are becoming literate in and through te reo Māori as a consequence of educational and other choices their whānau make for them, are part of the body of readers Melbourne identifies as being crucial to the independence of Māori culture and the continued existence of Māori culture and language. This thesis is also concerned with looking at strategies to encourage other members of their whānau to engage with written Māori text as speakers and readers of Māori.

Melbourne's claim also needs to be inverted, in that in order for Māori to become truly literate through and in Māori, what is needed is a sizeable body of literature, written and otherwise, in which Māori can 'read our world and our word' (Freire & Macedo, 1987). From this position, for only the words on paper to be Māori, is not enough. Worlds reflected and expressed through Māori words need to include ones which are recognisably Māori - past, present and future. As children learn the mechanics of reading and writing

in and through te reo Māori, they and many of their whānau also develop cultural, political and historical understandings of what it has meant to be Māori, as well as a vision of what it will mean to be Māori in the future.

Ko wai, na wai, ma wai?

“We’re not all that ugly! And we’re not all that colour!”

“Who’re our artists? We can have a few white and blonde and blue eyed Māori in this. the messages that kids pick up from things like this, because there are plenty of them...”

At a hui on representation, Patricia Grace (1996) described how much care was taken in the process of illustrating her story about a Māori woman elder and a spider “Te Kuia me te Pungāwerewere” to ensure that it was inclusive of the myriad of colours, shapes and sizes Māori children exist as. The illustrations show fair-haired little girls like my daughter, and dark-haired children with chocolate-coloured eyes, much like one of her brothers. Grace, somewhat wryly, observed that the number of mokopuna depicted in the illustrations was also struggled over. In the story, the kuia was visited by ten of her mokopuna and the pungāwerewere was visited by ten of his. Grace described the publisher’s representatives’ view that “families weren’t that big in real life”. As well as Māori children, Māori whānau come in differing shapes and sizes. Grace’s story depicts one way whānau dynamics and child-care arrangements are played out, aspects of which I relate to from memories as a child growing up with lots of cousins. They are no less familiar to me as a parent with four siblings, with a partner who has five. It is not unusual to have up to ten children spending a night in any one of six whānau’ households located in close proximity to each other. It is reflective of a ‘real life’ Māori norm, as is the nuclear household, as is the single parent household, as is the extended household.

Along with perceived ‘authenticity’, economic viability is identified as another key consideration in the illustrations developed for written resources (McLachlan, 1996). Producing books that are saleable, transportable and translatable are concerns for publishers. Illustrators for books produced under contract for classroom use, including those with Māori text, have reported being directed to “put the bus’s steering wheel near

the middle, so it might be on the left or right” (personal communication, see also Garlick, 1998). In relation to how Māori people might be represented pictorially in readings that might be produced with Māori text, McLachlan (1996; 125) made the observation that “[t]he great danger is that in order to travel well the materials will become “culturally inert” promoting dubious brown illustrations”. ‘Generic brown’ is another term that has surfaced in the discussion of material being produced to serve the learning needs of a range of culturally disparate, geographically and linguistically separated groups of children.

Sue McLachlan’s (1996) research focused on the representation of Māori in readers published by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, from 1907 to 1995. She examined illustrations in the ‘Ready to Read’ series and Part I ‘School Journals’ in relation to the construction of children’s conceptualisations of Māori. McLachlan argues that illustrations play an important part in the literacy development of children. At one level children learning to get meaning from the written text use them as a prop as they learn to decode. But, more critical in terms of this discussion, illustrations are identified as being extremely significant in the processes children undergo as they construct meanings about cultural and personal identity. McLachlan’s study examined how and to what extent Māori feature in school text illustrations and how these representations of Māori contribute to the views children in general develop about Māori. How Māori children see (or, as McLachlan observed, do not see) Māori being portrayed in illustrations is important in the development of positive self and group identity. Given findings such as McLachlan’s, Māori children and their whānau need to develop critical ways of ‘reading’ illustrations they are being presented. That is, they need to be able to articulate their views of how Māori are or are not visible in texts they read, be they in English or Māori, and to analyse the ways Māori are presented and represented.

Translating the ‘worlds’ and the ‘words’

“If they’re going to have stories in Māori, they really need to look at what they’re expressing!”

“Māori belief systems or Māori values or Māori ways of looking things aren’t necessarily expressed in the Māori language.”

"I don't like translations of a Pākehā whakaaro and it's just whakamāori....I don't like that because it really loses the wairua of the language, such as this story here, 'Hēki Korukoru'. They use the hēki korukoru, [turkey egg] which is a turkey, the turkey's not even a native bird, you know that's one thing. And at the end, the last part of the story [which] was about this young girl getting called names at school because of freckles on her face okay. And then the last part of the story to round it up, you know the korero awhina a te māmā ki tana kotiro was like ... oku whēua ... ka whatia e te rāakau me te kōhatu, engari kore rawa ahau i whara i a koutou [kupu / kōrero], [the advice of her mother was...my bones...can be broken by sticks and stones, but I cannot be hurt by your words] just like, what's that saying, sticks and stones."

Te wero o te tao e taea te karo, te kī e kore e taea.

The flight of the spear can be parried, what is said cannot.

(Whakatauki)

Studies of contextual influences on children's learning clearly show the negative influences mismatches or discrepancies between instructional materials and methods and those of a child's culture can have on educational outcomes (Cazden, 1988a, 1990; Moll & Greenburg, 1990). This effect also extends to less explicit contextual aspects, such as what is believed and valued (Cazden, 1990, 1994; McNaughton, 1995). In the study being discussed here, teachers argued that care needed to be taken with stories containing implicit, almost taken for granted beliefs or notions, such as notions around the power of words illustrated above. They identified potential for conflict between these un-stated beliefs, and views contained in Māori oral language texts, world views and beliefs. Teachers at a kura identified a new title in one of the series being evaluated as insensitive to beliefs and values of some iwi, in the way it portrayed the mango, or shark, as "the bad guy".

"...He Purapura series, the pakeha name was, the journal itself was called, 'Close Encounters', the story was 'Tutaki Tehura' (Close Encounters) ... the dolphin and the mango (shark)..."

It just went alongside the scientific view of what we see on television about the shark, in their view you know, we know it's a western view, it's a killer shark, it's a man eating

fish. And that goes against, totally against the [beliefs] in some rohe (areas). The shark is a kaitiaki (guardian) of the iwi, and that [story] portrays a bad image..."

For some iwi, the shark is considered a guardian and has a very positive image.

"Kia mate ururoa, kei mate wheke"

Die like a shark, not like an octopus.

(Whakatauki)

They reported that simply translating original stories into Māori without considering the values and beliefs reflected in the story could potentially undermine the Māori knowledge and understandings kura kaupapa Māori and other schools were trying to support and instil in children.

One of the Māori language series being evaluated consisted of translated material. It was perceived as problematic by teachers not only because, as noted earlier, there was the potential to introduce troublesome contrasts in terms of values and beliefs, but also because it potentially undermined the values and beliefs inherent in language, whether it be English or Māori.

Some tensions in relation to this series were also expressed from within the Māori section of Te Pou Taki Kōrero. It was stated that the Māori section did not see one of its functions as that of a translation service (personal communication, 1996). Rather, its preferred kaupapa, or approach, was developing original writings and original writers in te reo Māori, and producing and distributing te reo Māori publications. The view was expressed that the situation where "te reo Māori is a waka for te reo Pākehā is not a desirable one". The Māori section reported that it experienced some pressure from various quarters to translate up to 50% of all Learning Media publications into te reo Māori.

At present, translated materials make up a sizeable amount of Māori language written texts available both commercially and non-commercially. It is argued that for Māori children, as members of a group whose knowledge and interests are often placed secondary to those of the majority group, the development of critical literacy is desired.

That is, having the ability to recognise the social essence of literacy, to understand its fundamentally political nature and to assess the ideology of individual texts. For children whose first or major reading experiences involve Māori language texts, given the situation that many of the texts were originally written using other words in order to represent other worlds, it is essential.

Te reo Māori acting as the vehicle for views that conflicted with those commonly held in Māori worldviews was seen as dangerous by some teachers. When trying to interpret a text, one draws on knowledge and understandings developed for interpreting the world. But text is also instrumental in building understandings and knowledge from which the world is interpreted. In settings, which have as part of their educational mission to help children and their whānau consolidate and validate Māori views of the world, skill in identifying and mediating texts that carry implicit representations of non-Māori worldviews is essential.

Nga kaupapa - topics and story-lines

It should be of little surprise then, that when asked to suggest themes and topics for future publications, the major proportion of teacher suggestions fell under the heading 'kaupapa Māori story-lines'. Teachers wanted writings that reflected and expressed Māori knowledge, Māori practices, Māori beliefs. These also included what are often mis-considered the domains of western knowledge and practices; science, mathematics and technology-related topics. However, there was an emphasis on producing texts and stories focusing on traditional ways of knowing or traditional practices.

"Science,...Māori technologies...how did they know how to raise a wharepuni (house) without the use of levels? ...How did they know female species of plants? ... How did they count in old times, in fives, in tens, ... were the fishing lot counting differently from the bushmen?"

"...stories on te Ao Mārama, Ranginui, Papatuanuku, te tīmatanga...kaupapa Māori stories for emergent readers..... stories on Māori art, string games, tāniko...perhaps a title on Mahi a Rēhia."

Other topics grouped under this heading included Te Ao Ātea (space), Ruaumoko (guardian of earthquakes), current events stories, what is happening in Aotearoa related to Māori development and Māori issues. One secondary school teacher wanted to see more articles on topics for girls and young women, especially in relation to health and adolescence issues, such as smoking. This was echoed by a teacher who wanted to see more stories at all levels on health topics of significance to Māori.

The third most identified area for future publications involved topics that connect with contemporary Māori children's experiences. Teacher suggestions referred to experiences ranging from urban, like flea markets, to rural, like farming life.

"social studies type stories about kōhanga, kuia, nannies, the milkman..."

"topics related to the South Island...farm living, South Island fishing, cows giving birth"

"child-centred topics, ...like 'He Tamaiti Koioio', things that children do and know....Meaningful topics, but books that support kaupapa Māori...stories on holidays"

It has been argued that we will be doing Māori children in kura kaupapa Māori and other Māori medium educational settings a disservice if we restrict them to Māori language texts that always express and reflect Māori cultural, Māori preferred, Māori centred messages and contexts. Equally important is the need to be able to read the world of the 'English' ways, in order to understand them, and even more imperative, in order to 'transform' them. Jenkins (1991; 138) argues that

... in the struggle for critical or 'proper' literacy, is the need to struggle for knowledge and understanding of the language and practices of the coloniser. Māori growth of critical literacy is incomplete without learning both Māori and English literacies.

I think that this is a valid view. If we had a situation where there were adequate quantities of high quality texts available which validate Māori and do so through te reo Māori, 'representation' might be considered less of an issue. Until however, a large body of literature exists for our children and for their whānau to read, that affirms and validates

Māori, and that is available in our language, serious heed should be paid to Patricia Grace's assertion that "books are dangerous" (1985).

Focusing at the level of language regeneration and whānau literacy practices around written Māori text, for the words to be Māori is not enough. Kura kaupapa Māori children need to read all their worlds, Māori and the many other worlds that exist beside, inside, outside and around Māori worlds. There is a place for 'non-kaupapa' texts. The challenge facing our children and whānau is to develop critical ways of reading so that they know how to read and understand the words and the worlds they represent. There is a place for translated material, there is a place for text that reflects and expresses other peoples' worlds and world-views. But these need to be written and produced in addition to original material written firstly in Māori, firstly for Māori, firstly of Māori.

SUMMARY

The introduction of print literacy technology into Māori society during the nineteenth century proved to be a major contributor to the precarious state of Māori language and culture in the twentieth century. Initially carried out through te reo Māori, the substitution of English as the main medium of literacy in schooling and other colonial activities was relatively quick in coming. When coupled with a formal schooling system aimed at the assimilation of Māori values, beliefs and practices, a successful partnership was established. This partnership worked to undermine traditional Māori literacy, its continuity and its development. It was also effective in unlinking Māori language from Māori socialisation practices in many whānau, in some cases over a period spanning only one generation. In doing so, the kind of literacy that many Māori were encouraged and helped to develop at the end of last century and for much of this century has shown itself to be improper, in form and function.

Resistance to colonisation and assimilation has existed within Māori society since early contact. In the last quarter of the twentieth century one of the ways it has been articulated is through the efforts being made to protect and re-energise Māori knowledge, values and

language. As it was a tool for the enervation of Māori language and culture, so is literacy seen as an important tool in the regeneration.

Literacy is elemental to the recently developed schooling settings that use Māori language as the medium of instruction. At present we are faced with critical demands for quality literacy resources in te reo Māori to support teaching and learning in these settings. Kaupapa Māori educational settings have a broader agenda than raising Māori educational achievement and language regeneration. There is also the goal of cultural continuity. For many Māori, cultural transmission and growth has been problematic in the process of whānau socialisation across a number of generations. Sites such as kura kaupapa Māori and kōhanga reo take on a role of cultural socialisation for many of their students and their whānau, and support the re-creation in them of what it means to be Māori (Royal Tangaere & McNaughton, 1994; Ulrich Cloher & Hohepa, 1996).

One of the messages from teachers and parents involved in the evaluation project, around which much of the second part of this chapter is written, is that it is not enough to have substantial amounts of written text available in te reo Māori. It is not enough to make sure that such texts are linguistically correct and appropriate, whether they be original stories or translations from another language. What is also needed is cultural quality control; quality medium - quality message, in terms of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga, as well as the development of critical literacy.

The themes identified above all have bearing on a central issue of this thesis, how reading practices in the home can provide support for a multi-faceted agenda that encompasses education, language and culture. In examination of the significance of literacy practices in the home for language regeneration, the next chapter focuses more specifically on an area that has come to be known as 'family literacy'. It begins by outlining the importance given to literacy practices in the home for language as well as literacy development. Following a brief overview of approaches to family literacy research pertaining to descriptions of family literacy practices, relationships with school and the emergence of intergenerational literacy programmes, particularly as they pertain to 'minority language families', are discussed.