

He whānau reo Māori: Me pēwhea rā?

A literature review prepared for Te Mātāwai

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1

Summary of key findings

This review of literature provides a summary of some of the issues impacting on whānau who are choosing to raise their tamariki in te reo Māori. The review focuses on literature that was produced from approximately 2004, and is directly focused on the experiences of Māori who attempted to include te reo Māori as their main language of the home. This report has been sectioned into three main parts, including factors relevant to parents and caregiver, factors relevant to children, and some general themes that might be relevant for whānau.

Within the section related to mātua, the literature demonstrates that if te reo Māori is to be a language of intergenerational transmission, parents (and adults within the household) must be committed to Māori language acquisition and use, and persistent in reinstating that language is to be used as the main language of the home. Findings also indicate that parents have lower levels of Māori language use prior to the birth of a child. Parents who are attempting to raise Māori speaking children may struggle if they themselves have a limited grasp of te reo. Challenges arise after children are born, as parents report having less time and resources to attend classes. Strategies need to be adapted to ensure that parents are supported to attain te reo prior to the arrival of the child. However, as the child provides motivation and a domain for use, it is not surprising that te reo use increases in homes with children.

Literature indicated that the need for strategies to be multigenerational in their focus is key given that many whānau have extended whānau living with them (including kaumātua/grandparents). Kaumātua can support the language aspirations of the whānau, particularly when the whānau are clear about their goals and consistent in their review of how these are managed and sustained over time.

The issues surrounding one parent holding most of the language transmission responsibilities also needs to be addressed. Wāhine Māori tend to have higher levels of language use in the home, and assume language transmitting responsibilities. Therefore, we need strategies in place to adequately support mothers who are undertaking these additional contributions to te reo revitalisation. We also need strategies to increase the gender discrepancies that have been growing over time. Whānau who are on the way to increasing their reo Māori capacities are encouraged to create survival phrases, gradually adding as they go on.

A key consideration in this study is the desire of whānau to provide an opportunity for future generations to understand and use te reo Māori. The motivation to ensure that future generations are not inhibited through a lack of linguistic or cultural understanding is clearly central for many. The findings also indicated that in some situations, whānau need further support to grow their understanding of how to increase te reo proficiency, and also some of the wider politics surrounding the urgency of language revitalisation.

Language use between siblings, and between parents is another significant point of discussion within literature. Fostering language between parents and caregivers may stem the decline of Māori language use amongst adolescence. Language in the home decreases as children become adolescence. Some of the causes for this are discussed.

We understand that children speaking te reo is a positive step away from language endangerment. Factors supporting language retention of children include the provision of quality Māori medium education, from kōhanga reo, through to wharekura. Māori medium education supports that language of the home, and vice versa. However, one without the other can raise issues for the child's experience of education. Amongst many other factors, Māori medium education affords whānau another domain to use te reo, and also helps to increase the access that the whānau have to an authentic language community. Language communities are highly necessary if children and whānau are to see their efforts to use te reo Māori overtime, as these communities give additional meaning to language use.

The perceptions that Māori children and their parents have towards te reo are largely related to the wider social context. Environments that are enabling and encouraging of Māori cultural identities, te reo and culturally appropriate ways of being and thriving are vital for supporting language revitalisation. Addressing racism and its drivers will have a lasting impact on the acquisition and use of te reo Māori for current and future generations of speakers.

Additional factors that we can consider focusing on are the access that whānau have to te reo Māori options within the space of technology. Technology is developing exponentially, and our ability to engage in te reo needs to happen across technological spheres.

Whānau need to be explicit about their goals for te reo Māori use in the home, and communicate these goals. Furthermore, making a plan of how they might achieve their language goals in the home and updating this plan as the needs and demands of the whānau change is helpful. In order to action these plans, whānau need to be empowered to:

- › access to resources that will improve te reo in the home (including programmes that promote te reo Māori proficiency amongst adults that work with whānau schedules);
- › support for the sole language provider of the home to continue in their role;
- › encourage the use of intra-generational Māori language use amongst adults in the home;
- › access to quality Māori medium education;
- › access to quality reo Māori resources, including media and technology; and
- › access Māori language communities (including te reo Māori employment).

2

Ko ngā mātua – focus on the adult

The relationship that parents have with te reo

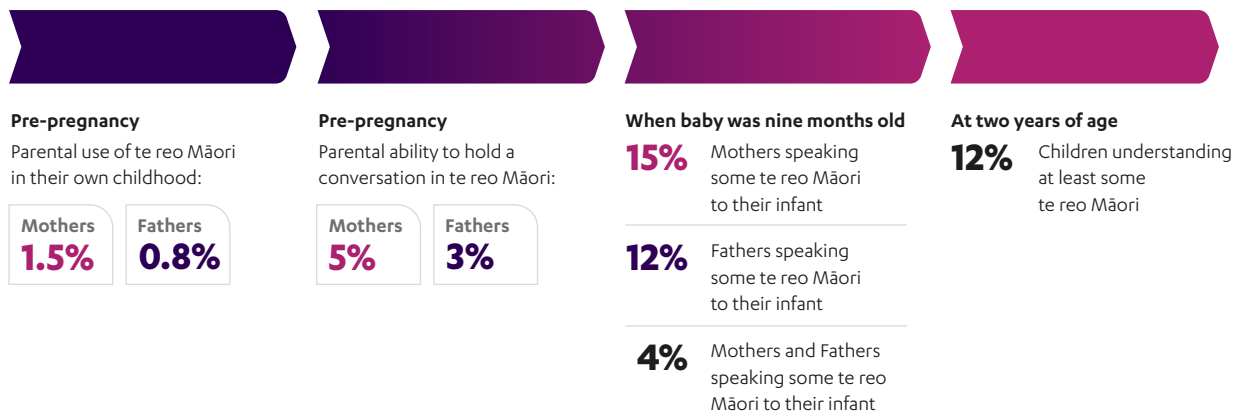
The relationship that adults, who are caregivers or parents, have with te reo Māori is critical for fostering te reo amongst whānau. Part of parents' decisions to learn and use te reo Māori within the home is reliant on their social environment. When parents decide to use te reo Māori amongst themselves, and eventually with their children, this has a positive impact on the whānau.

Authors have noted that “a revitalised home-family-neighbourhood community function must become rewarding and satisfying, even before parents have children and much before those children are sent off to school” (Ormsby-Teki et al., 2011, p. 48). Therefore, fostering a desire to attain and use te reo Māori prior to having children is a crucial step in achieving the overall goal of intergenerational language use. Furthermore, the role that parents play considerably impacts on the language used within the home, as parents are usually dominant language transmitters and power holders. “The parental role or adult role is vital in intergenerational transmission of the language. The home is the place where a child is primarily socialised, it is where the child acquires their first language. The home is where the language revitalization focus needs to be” (Pohe, 2013).

The findings below surrounding the use of te reo Māori by individuals in the Growing Up in New Zealand study demonstrate that the use of te reo Māori amongst parents prior to the birth of their child is substantially lower than it is for parents whose child is 9 months or older; see figure below.

This study involves researchers “following the development of approximately 7000 children, from before their birth in New Zealand in 2009 and 2010. There are over 1500 children in the Growing Up in New Zealand study that are identified (by their parents) as Māori” (Growing Up, 2015, p. 2). What the findings below demonstrate is that the language use by parents improves over time, but mothers' language use is more frequent than that of fathers'. At age 9 months, “15% (over 970) of the Growing Up in New Zealand children had some te reo Māori spoken to them by their mother, and 7% of children had some te reo Māori spoken to them by their father. There were 4% of children who had some te reo Māori spoken to them by both their mother and their father in infancy.”

Figure 1: Findings related to parents' language use from Growing Up (2015, p. 3)



Parents, grandparents and their relationships with their tamariki and mokopuna

Focusing on te reo o te kāinga is somewhat more complex in the case of te reo given that the make-up of the family in the home often includes families who do not strictly include two parents and their children (Ormsby-Teki et al., 2011, Statistics NZ, 2014). Over a third of tamariki Māori in the Growing Up in NZ study were living with extended whānau (Reese et al., 2018). These authors indicate that in our current day context “it is rare for New Zealand parents to be fluent speakers of te reo Māori, and even rarer for parents to speak to their children solely or primarily in te reo Māori in the home” (Reese, 2018, p. 360). Given these assertions, it is vital that policy makers and educators understand the conditions in which the intergenerational transmission of te reo occurs, and how the government can support whānau to sustain intergenerational language use given the colonial context in which the language is surviving.

While we know that whānau make up in the homes often consists of extended whānau, as well as children in the home, the literature tends to focus on the relationship that is held between parents and their children, as opposed to caregivers in a wider sense. This literature review does not intend to diminish the role of caregivers, which might include members of the wider whānau; rather, this section focuses on what the literature focuses on, which happens to be the parent/child relationship. The wider roles played by caregivers, in particular grandparents who are reo Māori speaking, are critical for developing an environment where te reo Māori is normalised. An additional observation from this literature review was that very few parents in the studies were people with te reo Māori as their first language.

There is a specific emphasis on the importance of the relationship that is held between grandparents and their mokopuna. “Barriers that might otherwise have been present in other relationships dissipated in the relationship between grandparents and mokopuna. The understanding of intergenerational roles in maintaining and regenerating reo to enable mokopuna to become reo speakers was evident and actively nurtured. The power relations (between parents, parents and siblings and between siblings) did not operate with grandparents and grandchildren.” (Ormsby-Teki et al., 2011, p. 102–103).

The relationship that is held between grandparents and their mokopuna can also be immensely healing for kaumātua who may hold trauma associated with speaking te reo Māori (Te Huia, Ahu, Muller, Fox, 2020). There is a very real awareness that whānau have about the losses that have occurred that resulted in reduced numbers of Māori language speakers (Waitangi Tribunal, 1986; Albury, 2018). The historical

“During the time that this generation of kaumātua were going through State education, Māori children were generally defined as ‘retarded’ based on Western models of developmental psychology with the blame being squarely located on ‘traditional’ Māori culture.

HOKOWHITU ET AL., 2020, P. 3

relationship that we have with te reo Māori is one that is deeply personal. Whānau are consistently attempting to reduce the pain and challenges that future generations experience through giving them the gift of their ancestral language (Bright et al., 2015; Jeurrisen, 2015; Morrison & Morrison, 2017; Muller, 2016; Peters, 2014; Rātima, 2013; Rātima & Papesch, 2014; Te Huia, 2022).

We are aware of some of the histories that impact on the experiences of kaumātua, many of which happened during their time in state education. “During the time that this generation of kaumātua were going through State education, Māori children were generally defined as ‘retarded’ based on Western models of developmental psychology with the blame being squarely located on ‘traditional’ Māori culture. That is, State policy was hegemonic in that it purposefully discouraged Māori children from practising and valuing their Indigenous language and culture, whilst actively promoting the dominant non-Indigenous culture as superior” (Hokowhitu et al., 2020, p. 3). Intergenerational language transmission between kaumātua and their mokopuna provides space to redefine the value of te reo Māori for both generations.

Hokowhitu et al. (2020) indicate that many adults, including kaumātua, learn te reo Māori for the purposes of connecting with their own identities and strengthening the cultural identities of their children and grandchildren. Furthermore, research conducted relating to kaumātua participating in cultural continuity, including the passing on of mātauranga Māori, results in positive health and wellbeing outcomes for the kaumātua themselves. Therefore, the connectedness that can be created between kaumātua and their mokopuna through the goals of intergenerational language transmission have multiple benefits. As kaumātua are positioned as carriers of mātauranga, their pursuit of cultural knowledge is seen as perpetuating/improving future generations. Hokowhitu et al. further note that kōrero tuku iho centres on the concept of ako, a relationship of mutual learning, particularly between kaumātua and mokopuna; this concept can be utilised for grandparents to teach their grandchildren.

The relationships that caregivers, including both parents and grandparents, have with their tamariki/mokopuna, and the inclusion of te reo Māori in that relationship is vital for growing te reo normalisation in the home (Pihama et al., 2019; Reese et al., 2018; Royal Tangaere, 2012; Te Rito, 2008; Waitangi Tribunal, 2013). The numerous benefits that can come from intergenerational communication far exceed the purely linguistic benefits, demonstrating the need to extend the opportunities that support interactions between grandparents and their mokopuna (Lewis, 2007; Nock, 2010; Ofahengaue Vakalahi, & Taiapa, 2013; Ormsby-Teki et al., 2011; Peters, 2014).

Within our literature review, it was clear that language planners focused on raising the Māori language skills of the parents as opposed to focusing on the skills of the child (Bright, Hotere, -Barnes & Hutchings, 2015; Chrisp, 2005; Hohepa, 2006; King & Cunningham, 2017; Lewis, 2007; Pohe, 2012). When parents have the language proficiency needed to carry conversations needed for daily communication, the child is then able to learn from their parent’s language use.

The Te Kupenga study (Statistics NZ, 2013) findings demonstrated that the amount of Māori used at home by those who could speak te reo very well/well was most prominently used with pre-school aged children (48.1%) followed by primary school aged children (40.9%) followed by secondary school children (38.2%). These results follow established patterns of language behaviours since the 2001 Health of the Māori language survey. What these statistics demonstrate

is that there are deterrents to using te reo Māori with older children. These are likely to be environmental, and also reflect the autonomy that young people have in determining the language of use between household members.

Parents' consistent use of te reo Māori creates a Māori language domain that is not tied to a specific place or situation. Rather, the relationship itself acts to prompt Māori language use between the tamaiti and their caregiver. What we see across studies is that many parents (and grandparents) choose to learn te reo Māori for the specific purpose of being able to transmit our ancestral language to their children. Literature across multiple studies demonstrated the need for consistency in reo Māori use in order to create and sustain a language domain (Bright, Hotare-Barnes, & Hutchings, 2015; Bright, Hunia, & Huria, 2019; Hutchings et al., 2017; Muller, M., 2016, Ofahengaue Vakalahi, & Taiapa, 2013; Ratima, 2013, Royal Tangaere, 2012, Te Huia, 2013).

Situations where one parent is the sole language provider

Research indicated that on many occasions, there was only one adult in the home who was the sole language provider (Hunia, 2016, King & Cunningham, 2017; Peters, 2014; Te Huia et al., 2016). Furthermore, studies demonstrated that women tend to have higher reo Māori abilities than men, and therefore, the language use responsibilities often land with women to be the dominant language domain between the parent and the child (Growing Up, 2015; Statistics NZ, 2013). Mothers were often noted as either the sole or dominant Māori speaking adult in the home (Bauer, 2008; Hutchings et. al, 2017; King & Cunningham, 2017; Lewis, 2007). Bauer (2008) notes that "it is the women who are likely to be the primary transmitters of language, it is clearly much harder for a woman to maintain a Māori-speaking environment at home for children if she has a partner who does not speak te reo" (p. 11). This finding demonstrates that mothers are in need of support to continue the role that they currently play in homes. We also need to better understand some of the barriers that prevent fathers from having a greater role transmitting te reo Māori to their tamariki.

Part of the issue is likely to surround the dominant societal assumption that assigns child-rearing responsibilities to the mother, while the father is seen to have a more indirect role. This notion is not one that derives from Māori cultural practices; rather, it is part of the colonial context which includes notions of patriarchy and the diminished role of fathers as primary caregivers. Some of the structures in place for both parents to have time off work during those early months and years are also likely to impact on the language relationship between parent and child. If men are not afforded time away from work during these critical days and months, there is potential for the language related responsibilities to fall upon the person who has the most contact with the child, that being the mother in many instances.

King & Cunningham (2017) utilised data from the 2013 census to explore the intergenerational language transmission of te reo Māori and Sāmoan in Aotearoa New Zealand. The data set includes reported speakers of te reo Māori and Sāmoan aged 2–18. This study reported that mothers are more likely to be the agents of intergenerational language transmission: many more Māori-speaking children (49%) live with a Māori-speaking mother than with a Māori-speaking father (24%). Within this study, 67% of children who are speakers of te reo Māori live in a household with at least one adult speaker of te reo, and are thus recipients of intergenerational language transmission. Māori-speaking adults living with children are more likely to use the language with younger children (aged

under 6), which is consistent with the findings of the Manawa ū ki te reo Māori study (Te Huia et al., 2020).

The findings from King and Cunningham (2017) concluded that it is easier to raise children to speak the language with more than one adult speaker of te reo Māori in the home. Having multiple whānau members who can reinforce language use is important for creating and sustaining language norms that are put in place from the 'top down', where the adults in the home create the environment for language behaviours and expectations. Hunia (2016) further indicated that syntax as well as vocabulary is impacted by a predominantly English language environment.

Similarly, the Growing up in New Zealand longitudinal study demonstrated three predictors for Māori vocabulary across children in the study. They found that "Māori children, children of mothers with higher levels of education, and children whose mothers were born in New Zealand had higher Māori vocabularies" (Reese et al., 2018, p. 351). While the Te Kupenga study indicated that socio-economic status was not a predictor for Māori language use, the findings of the Growing Up study indicate that education levels do matter in the context of intergenerational language transmission.

Results from multiple studies indicate that mothers have an important role in the revitalisation of te reo Māori (Hunia; 2016; King, Cunningham, 2017; Lewis, 2007; Ratima & Papesch, 2014; Royal Tangaere, 2012). Mothers have demonstrated that intergenerational transmission can occur, even when they are the sole adult language speaker of a household. However, the weight that is commonly assigned to mothers to be the keepers and sole transmitters of te reo needs to be shared. Strategies need to be put in place to ensure that the role of fathers as language providers becomes a reality. This will involve understanding more about how Māori speaking parental relationships are formed, and how these relationships can be fostered to support the growth of Māori speaking whānau.

Language proficiency related to children

The language proficiency of parents and caregivers is a considerable factor as to the extent to which te reo is spoken in the home as the normal language of communication across a range of contexts. As many parents are second language learners, they are often in the process of learning te reo Māori alongside their children (Hutchings, et al., 2017). The limited ability to communicate in te reo has been an issue for some parents as they sometimes have a smaller pool of phrases and vocabulary to draw from when communicating with their children. These issues tended to have a considerable impact on some parents' long-term ability to sustain motivation to use te reo over time (Muller, 2016). On some occasions, the limited ability to use te reo was seen as a self-perceived limitation, as opposed to the perception that others might have about another's ability to use te reo. For instance, some parents were harsh critiques of their own language abilities, which in turn meant that they lacked confidence to use the Māori language that they did have available to them.

Bright, Hunia and Huria (2018) note a few aspects that are key for language transmission to occur in the home – language acquisition (the learning of te reo through both formal and informal means); language use (speaking, hearing, reading, and writing te reo within a home contexts); and language corpus (having enough vocabulary, orthography, grammar, to enable Māori language use to occur in the home).

Part of the challenge associated with proficiency is that parents would switch to English to communicate with children when they did not have vocabulary or grammatical knowledge available to them to communicate, or when the parent was tired or emotionally stressed (Muller, 2016). Being able to communicate across situations was a considerable challenge (Lewis, 2007). Each time that a person switches from Māori to English, a threat is placed on the language domain. Maintaining a home where te reo Māori is the dominant language is a sizeable challenge for second language speaking parents. Furthermore, challenges arose as the child's own desire to express their range of curiosities expanded. The parent is constantly needing to keep up with their child's language development, which is particularly challenging for parents with very low levels of proficiency (Hutchings, 2017). On multiple occasions, authors highlighted the challenges associated with being a parent who is a second language learner, in part due to the added stressors of parenthood coinciding with the stress of learning a second language (Peters, 2014). One of the central challenges for improving bilingualism of adults is the *whakamā* that they experience as adult learners of our ancestral language (Pohe, 2013; Rātima & May, 2011; Te Huia, 2022). The affordances given to children who are learners of te reo are perhaps more appropriate for meeting the needs of a person learning a new skill for the first time. For instance: "When children learn a language they do not have the expectations of competency incumbent upon adults, adults feel they should already know how. As children, mistakes are expected and indulged, children are not normally self-conscious. When an adult makes mistakes the embarrassment can inhibit the learning process, sometimes even causing the learner to give up" (Pohe, 2013, p. 79).

Furthermore, the social contexts in which Māori language is developed amongst adults must be reinforced by their social groups. As Bauer (2008) notes, if a Māori speaker can speak te reo, but has no one to speak it with, then they don't speak te reo. Caregivers need to be supported to find, be immersed in and grow their language communities. "If the Māori language is to survive as a living language then we need to develop more adult Māori language speaking communities. No matter how one analyses the problem it is adults who must commit to learning and speaking the language if it is to become a living language" (Pohe, 2013, p. 131–132).

One aspect to note is that high proficiency in a language does not necessarily equate to language use in the home between generations. Lewis (2007) found that although fluent speakers of te reo are already in a position where they have the skills to transmit language in the home, proficiency of adults (parents and caregivers) alone does not mean that the language will be used.

Language use across generations

It is a well stated assumption (Fishman, 1989) that it takes one generation to lose a language and three to return it to a normalised state of use. What this literature review found was that many of the participants who are taking part in studies relating to te reo Māori use in the home are the first generation to reinstate te reo Māori use between generations. Table 1 below demonstrates some of the observations made from existing texts.

Table 1: Generations of language learners

GENERATION	INSIGHTS RELATING TO THIS GROUP OF LANGUAGE SPEAKERS
Generation 1	Parents tend to be second language learners. Some of these individuals were first language speakers ^[1] , but who did not speak directly to these individuals resulting in this group needing to re-learn te reo Māori outside of the parent/child relationship. Gen 1 learners/speakers in this group occupied one of the following: A) Parent learns te reo prior to children, B) parent learns te reo while their child is also learning (mainly those with children enrolled in Māori medium education), C) Child becomes proficient in te reo through Māori medium education, and parent attempts to support child through learning some basics.
Generation 2	Child is raised by Gen 1 speaker, often supported by Māori medium education. Parents struggle to maintain reo Māori use when there is limited proficiency, and when the language community is low. Therefore, Gen 2 is reliant upon the Māori language that is available to the parent, as well as those who use te reo Māori outside of the parent/child relationship (such as other proficient whānau members – or those associated with education).
Generation 3	Further studies required; however, some readings (Muller, 2016; Hunia, 2016) indicated that the child of generation 3 was at an advantage as there are multiple generations who were able to support the normalised use of te reo Māori.

We know that the intergenerational language use of te reo Māori is tied to acts of reclamation. What we see is that those who know more Māori speak more Māori than those with less proficiency. “Te reo Māori as the first language is also associated with greater use of it. Of those with te reo as their first language, 79 percent spoke at least some at home, and 82 percent spoke at least some outside the home. For those with English as a first language, the proportion was 33 percent in each” (Statistics NZ, 2014, p. 14). These findings indicate that for those in Generation 2, the likelihood of intergenerational language transmission has the ability to increase. However, we also know that other factors can have an impact on the extent to which this occurs.

Muller’s (2016) PhD thesis provides in-depth analysis of eight whānau who have successfully raised their tamariki to have te reo Māori as their first language. These whānau were interviewed for Muller’s research project, and include four with two reo speaking parents and four with one reo speaking parent. Her research focuses on qualitative findings regarding the strategies employed by these whānau, as well as their motivations for wanting their tamariki to be first language speakers of te reo Māori.

[1] This phrasing “first language speaker” is used in the statistics presented by Stats NZ (2014, p. 14).

A consistent theme that runs through this research is the desire of parents and caregivers to support the cultural and linguistic growth of their tamariki/mokopuna, which differs from their own experiences as second language learners. Parents do not want their children to suffer the cultural and linguistic disconnect they themselves experienced as children. She emphasises how caregivers who are determined to see te reo Māori revitalised have intrinsic motivation to transmit Māori to their children as their first language. This reading is highly relevant to whānau who are considering making their home a Māori language domain as it examines successful strategies employed by these whānau to achieve this outcome. One issue that parents in Muller's (2016) study demonstrated was that as second language learners, some individuals may experience feelings of whakamā which can prevent them from using the language they do know.

Parents who have low levels of proficiency can still include te reo Māori in their home. Authors have suggested that parents consolidate "survival phrases" which can be thought of as essential phrases that a family can build upon as they master each one (Bright, Hunia & Huria, 2018). In two-parent households, there are several configurations that can support intergenerational language transmission. These include: when both parents are fluent, they can create an immersion home environment; where one is fluent, they can use the one-parent-one-language approach; and when neither parent is fluent in the heritage language, an adult-learning model assumes children will receive input from other members of the family and community.

Parents and caregivers who are raising children in te reo where neither parent is fully proficient in te reo may need to apply strategies to include the reo Māori that they are familiar with. Peters (2014) refers to a process of raising "balanced bilinguals": "Successful intergenerational transmission in the home is very difficult to achieve where parents and/or guardians are not themselves native speakers of the language being transmitted and/or where there are both external and internal pressures that militate against its transmission, such as children's preference for the dominant language. For this reason, it is important that indigenous or minority language families are provided with advice and guidance on how to raise and nurture their children as balanced bilinguals, especially where only one parent or guardian is able to speak the language in question" (p. 52). Therefore, perhaps further research is needed to identify what raising "balanced bilinguals" might look like for parents who are in the process of acquiring te reo for the purpose of intergenerational transmission.

Parents' motivations to use te reo

Motivations to use te reo Māori were closely tied to cultural identity, and issues of cultural reclamation and the desire to provide opportunities for language use that they were not afforded as children. Cultural connectedness has also been a considerable link between parental (and in many cases grandparent) motivations for learning and using te reo with their tamariki (Chrisp, 2005, King, 2009, Morrison & Morrison, 2017; Olsen-Reeder, 2022; Pihama et al., 2019; Pohe, 2013, Rātima, 2011, Ratima, & Papesch, 2014; Te Huia, 2013; Te Huia et al., 2020). We can see with the results from the national study, Te Kupenga. "Māori who feel it is very important to be involved in Māori culture are more likely to speak te reo Māori very well, well, or fairly well, than those who feel culture is less important. Half of the 124,000 Māori who said they felt it was very important to be involved in Māori culture spoke te reo very well, well, or fairly well, compared with 22 percent of those who felt it was quite important and 11 percent

who felt it was somewhat important” (Statistics NZ, 2014, p. 14). These results indicate that the factors that contribute to creating a positive cultural identity have a direct relationship with Māori language attainment.

Hutchings’ (2017) comprehensive report was produced by a large team from NZCER and Victoria University, contracted by the Māori Language Commission. In total, 665 pou reo (defined in this paper as community language leaders), caregivers and tamariki, from nine different parts of Aotearoa, were interviewed regarding the health of te reo in their homes and communities. The report emphasises that first language learners are much more likely to continue to use te reo, which may motivate whānau to continue in their efforts to establish the home as a Māori language domain.

Rolleston (2015) indicated that the five most prominent motivations of participants in the study included 1) te hono atu ki te ao Māori, 2) te whakawhanake i a ia anō 3) Mō ngā tamariki mokopuna 4) He whānau reo Māori nōna 5) Te matenga o tētahi whanaunga/hoa^[2]. The desire to have te reo Māori speaking children is clearly a motivator, and also having Māori speaking whānau will motivate and enable the behaviour (as seen in Huria, 2016). In her study, King (2009) provides four broad categories that capture the motivations of new learners becoming fluent speakers, which include: a quasi-religious worldview, New Age humanism, connection with ancestors and Māori cultural heritage, and connection with a kaupapa Māori philosophy.

Many studies indicated that the bulk of Māori speakers in the parenting and teaching generation are second language learners, not native speakers (King, 2009; Bauer, 2008; Growing Up, 2015; Ormsby-Teki et al., 2011). However, these individuals are dedicated to transitioning into becoming fluent Māori speakers and are a vital group for transitioning whānau from English speaking to Māori speaking across generations.

Of interest, King (2009) notes that some newly-fluent adult speakers of te reo Māori appear to lack urgency and appreciation of their role in transmitting te reo Māori. This finding was shared by other authors (Chrisp, 2005; Lewis, 2007), and was slightly surprising, given that these learners themselves are likely to have learned to reo under conditions of urgency. Lewis (2007) indicated that in some instances, participants in the study shared a belief that the revitalisation of te reo Māori was important; however, they themselves did not engage in actions to improve their language proficiency. This finding was also common amongst other readings (see Hutchings et al. (2017; Lewis, 2007; Olsen-Reeder, 2022; Reese et al. 2018; Statistics NZ, 2014).

Figure 2: A relationship between principles, practice and intended outcomes.



[2] This thesis was written in te reo Māori.

What these findings suggest is the link between the agreement in principle, that te reo Māori is of value, is then matched with the practices that create the intended outcome. When individuals are not clear about what is required to attain their desired language proficiency, it is possible that the motivation to engage in language practices is diminished.

An additional point observed by various authors (Hutchings, 2017; Statistics NZ, 2013; King & Cunningham, 2017) was that there is a group of parents who can use te reo Māori, but choose to speak in English. The data does not differentiate between individuals whose first language is te reo, and those who are second language learners, which makes it difficult to know what the differing reasons are for the choice to use English between the two groups of speakers.

Language attitudes and awareness of parents

The choice to be Māori language speaking in the home requires those who occupy the home to agree. There are multiple ways in which language attitudes shape the language of the home. Lewis' (2007) paper reports on the results from the author's research into a marae-based Māori revitalisation strategy at Whakamārama marae. This research indicated that the reo Māori speaking environment in the home could be negatively impacted when non-reo Māori speaking whānau were not equally invested in the desire for the home to become a Māori language speaking domain. Furthermore, findings across multiple studies demonstrated that a spouse could impact on the decision of a person to want to learn te reo, as well as their decision to enforce the use of te reo Māori in the home with their children.

Across multiple studies, participants had other competing priorities, which impacted on their availability to learn te reo. Furthermore, if the social surroundings that members are part of (through employment or other social groups) are unsupportive of te reo Māori, these attitudes can impact on te reo of the home.

The awareness that parents/caregivers have about how second languages are learned and transmitted is also a point that needs improvement. Chrisp (2005) indicates that most participants did not recognise that their own language development would exponentially contribute to the language acquisition of their children. Providing support through educational awareness about how languages are attained, transmitted, and the importance of the role of te reo in the home might improve parents' use of te reo.

Language use between parents

The relationship that parents establish amongst themselves is also important for establishing language norms in the home. "All adults are going to establish relationships and power dynamics in the home with their children. If those are set up through one language, it makes sense to infer that is going to be as difficult as it is across spousal relationships" (Olsen-Reeder, 2022, p. 174). These observations follow the results of Te Kupenga, which indicate that amongst Māori who report being able to communicate very well/well, only 26.5% of respondents use te reo Māori within the relationship "all of the time/mostly/equally with English" (Statistics NZ, 2013). Olsen-Reeder (2022) further indicates that intragenerational transmission is significantly under explored, though its consequences are significant. He states: "If children are not observing their parents or grandparents talking Māori to each other, it makes sense to infer

that they will be less likely to do the same when they reach that same age” (Olsen-Reeder, 2022, p. 185).

Furthermore, multiple research suggests that children are much more likely to choose to speak te reo in the home if the language is being reinforced by both parents as opposed to one parent (Bright, Hunia & Huria, 2018; Muller, 2016; King & Cunningham, 2017; Lewis, 2007; Te Huia, 2013), which is referred to as the full-immersion or the two-parent-one-language approach.

Resourcing constraints for parents

Some of the challenges for parents who are the first generation of language learners is finding time to actively improve, as well as committing to social occasions where te reo Māori is used (Morrison & Morrison, 2017; Ormsby-Teki, Timutimu et al., 2011; Te Huia et al., 2020). The additional pressures associated with resourcing (such as the costs associated with learning te reo, including time away from work, or home activities) were considerably significant challenges for whānau becoming reo Māori speaking (Bright, et al., 2015; Lewis, 2007 Morrison & Morrison, 2017; Ormsby-Teki et al., 2011; Peters, 2014 Pohe, 2012; Royal Tangaere, 2012; White & Rewi, 2014). Ormsby et al. (2011) indicated their study with whānau from Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi that the pressures associated with everyday life had a negative impact on whānau language use as well as the availability of time to commit to learning te reo.

Childcare has been noted as a considerable challenge for parents who are not bilingual but who have aspirations to have te reo Māori as the dominant language between parents and child (Te Huia et al., 2020; Peters, 2014). For instance, Peters (2014) notes: “the participants made reference to a range of competing activities that occupied their time (e.g. tangihanga) and indicated that the provision of free childcare during language sessions would be of considerable assistance” (p. 63).

3

Tamariki – focus on the child

The findings of this literature review indicate that children are a considerable factor for Māori language use in the home. Households who have tamariki in their home are considerably more likely to use te reo Māori than in households who do not. Statistics New Zealand (2014) found that “46 percent of Māori with children in their household spoke some te reo Māori inside the home compared with 23 percent of those without children in the home”, while “78 percent of those whose children had been enrolled in kura kaupapa spoke at least some te reo Māori at home, including 35 percent who spoke it equally with another language or more often” p. 6).

Children provide motivation and domains for language acquisition and use

The literature indicates that there is a clear relationship between the presence of children and te reo Māori use in the home. Caregivers who choose to raise their children in te reo are making a deliberate choice about the cultural identities that are accessible to their children. This point is reiterated by Peters (2014) who indicates: “Whatever their own experiences, almost all of them want their children and grandchildren to be fluent speakers of the language, believing that this will give them confidence and a genuine sense of identity and belonging. Although the majority are committed to using te reo Māori as much as possible at home, especially when speaking to their children and grandchildren, most experience difficulties in doing so” (p. i) What we know is that parents and caregivers are commonly motivated to use te reo with their children. The child also provides a language domain for the adult. Some of the challenges alluded to by Peters (2014) are previously listed in the previous section.

Part of why children are so crucial in the role of revitalisation is because they support the adults’ motivation for use, particularly during the child’s early years, as well as providing the adult with someone who they can practise using the language with without being overly consumed by their language errors. “When children are being spoken to, many speakers will choose to use Māori. This can be a proficiency factor – adults feel more comfortable using the Māori they know to children. This is also possibly related to an understanding of intergenerational transmission, and the idea that children need to speak and hear Māori. This seems like a positive move for language movement in the home, as it is the space in which intergenerational transmission occurs” (Olsen-Reeder, 2022, p. 182).

Language use of children a positive sign – he tohu o te reo e ora tonu ana

When considering the wider context for the role of children in language revitalisation globally, it is the transmission of the language to children that is often seen as a considerable factor that indicates the overall health of the language. We see that a language being acquired by children is one of the key distinctions between an endangered language and a language in danger (Drude, 2003).

Our goal as individuals invested in Māori language revitalisation is to shift te reo Māori from being in a situation of endangerment to being safe. At a global level, efforts to revitalise languages all centre around the acquisition and use of the target language by the children within that language group.

Table 2: Unesco’s (Durde, 2003, p. 9) descriptions of the degree of endangerment

DEGREE OF ENDANGERMENT	GRADE	SPEAKER POPULATION
Safe	5	The language is used by all ages, from children up.
Unsafe	4	The language is used by some children in all domains; it is used by all children in limited domains.
Definitively endangered	3	The language is used mostly by the parental generation and up.
Severely endangered	2	The language is used mostly by the grandparental generation and up.
Critically endangered	1	The language is used by very few speakers, mostly of great-grandparental generation.
Extinct	0	There are no speakers.

Drude (2003) also consider within the context of what it means to have a language in a “safe” state, when they refer to: “Stable yet threatened: The language is spoken in most contexts by all generations with unbroken intergenerational transmission, yet multilingualism in the native language and one or more dominant language(s) has usurped certain important communication contexts. Note that multilingualism alone is not necessarily a threat to languages” (p. 7) Given that the context of colonialism is not showing signs of drastically reducing here in Aotearoa, even if we are to achieve the aspirational state of grade 5 – Language safety; we will indefinitely need to constantly monitor how language is being transmitted and sustained to ensure the ongoing safety of te reo.

While this literature review does not specifically explore the historical factors that have led to our current state of te reo Māori use, it is useful to briefly note the impact of kōhanga reo, and its considerable contributions to stemming language decline. The WAI262 report notes: “Most significantly, perhaps, 1982 saw the advent of the kōhanga reo (or language nest) movement for Māori preschoolers. Its philosophy centred around kaupapa and tikanga Māori, as well as whānau involvement – in particular through the teaching of tamariki by their grandparents. The first kōhanga reo opened in Wainuiomata in April 1982. With some support from the Māori education Foundation and the Department

of Māori Affairs, numbers rose rapidly, and by 1985 there were over 6,000 children attending 416 kōhanga reo” (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, p. 61). Without the support of kōhanga reo, Te Ataarangi, and Kura Kaupapa (Māori and ā-iwi), te reo would be in a much more precarious situation. The intentions of Kōhanga in their earlier days were not to function as merely childcare with capitalist drivers to improve participation in the workforce, but more as a means of offering whānau the opportunity to participate in their children’s learning of te reo, and to learn alongside them (Tāwhirirangi, 2014).

Some of the challenges that authors observed in research with whānau Māori was that children’s language capabilities in te reo began overtaking that of their caregivers at a young age in cases where Māori is the caregivers’ second language (Bright et al., 2015; Hohepa, 2006; King & Cunningham, Ormsby-Teki, 2011, Te Huia et al., 2016; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2008). What these findings demonstrate is that parents need support to keep up with their child’s language development. They also need practical ways of engaging in te reo Māori that keeps them ahead of their child’s language development.

Perceptions of children towards te reo

Some of the challenges for children include the impact of the ways in which te reo is presented to them. “...children may confront diverse language issues, such as the promotion of mainstream language ideologies and preferential treatment for those for whom a mainstream language is the dominant one” (Peters, 2014, p. 33). Multiple authors have noted that the monolingual nature of New Zealand, and the negative attitudes/racism enacted toward Māori have a severely detrimental impact on the choice that adults and children make to learn and use te reo (Bauer, 2008; Lewis, 2007; Muller, 2016; Olsen-Reeder, 2022; Te Huia, 2022; Te Huia, et al., 2016). Negative attitudes founded on racism and white supremacy have deep colonial roots (Jackson, 2019), and continue to be an issue for the uptake and use of te reo Māori.

Children who learn te reo through their most important social bonds have a deeper appreciation for the language (Lewis, 2007). The author also indicates that intergenerational transmission results in higher levels of proficiency than what can be attained through educational settings, due to the amount of time spent at home.

The 2013 Census indicated that there were 40,263 children aged 2–18 in Aotearoa who could converse in te reo Māori about everyday things (Statistics NZ, 2013). King and Cunningham’s (2017) analysis of this data indicated that of the 40,263 children who could speak Māori, 67% of these children (totalling 26,970) lived in homes with an adult who could speak Māori. This data does not indicate the percentage of those adults who could speak Māori who actively use Māori in the home with their tamariki. What the literature review indicated is that there are multiple factors that contribute to a child becoming Māori language speaking. Contextual factors predominantly involved Māori language exposure in the home, (by a parent, or adult caregiver as well as amongst siblings), and outside of the home (predominantly focusing on school and social engagements, including kapa haka). Findings indicate that there are currently a need to improve whānau access to communities who enforce te reo Māori outside of the home (Ormsby-Teki et al., 2011; Peters, 2014; Statistics New Zealand, 2014). It is only by having a language community outside the home that whānau are able to engage authentically in te reo, also having their decisions to raise their children Māori speaking positively reinforced (Bauer, 2008; King & Cunningham, 2017; Muller, 2016; Te Huia, 2013; Te Huia et al., 2016).

“If young children understand te reo Māori but do not perceive te reo as having high social status, they may choose to respond to Māori with English despite having accurate comprehension of the reo Māori being spoken to them.”

MULLER, 2016; STATISTICS NZ, 2014

If the goal of 1 million individuals who can understand basic reo Māori, and 150,000 who can use it across contexts is to be achieved, then we need to seriously consider a) how to retain the current levels of children who can communicate in te reo Māori to a functional degree of interaction, and b) how we foster an increase in children whose first language is te reo Māori.

It is important that parents who have intentions for intergenerational language understand that adults need to model language behaviours. Te reo Māori cannot be solely a language that is directed towards children, but not spoken amongst ourselves as adults and parents, particularly when we have the language abilities to be speaking te reo. “If children are spoken to in Māori, and expected to engage in the language, but adults are communicating English, the child will inevitably adopt the understanding that adults do not speak Māori to each other, and therefore the language is not something worth valuing in adult life later on. Intragenerational transmission, the visible exchange of languages between generations, is just as important as intergenerational transmission” (Olsen-Reeder, 2022, p. 183). Hunia (2016) also noted that children who do not hear Māori being spoken among adults may also reach the conclusion that te reo is for babies. The association between te reo being a ‘babies language’ will likely deter older children from speaking te reo if they themselves are wanting to be viewed by others as mature, more like adults who are modelling behaviours.

The language of the home includes the language that happens between generations, including amongst children. Authors further indicate that older siblings choosing to speak in English is likely to influence younger children’s language choices towards using English (Hunia, 2016). The impact on of older siblings on the language behaviours of younger siblings is considerable (Bright, et al., 2019; Hunia, 2016; Ratima & Papesch, 2014). If young children understand te reo Māori but do not perceive te reo as having high social status, they may choose to respond to Māori with English despite having accurate comprehension of the reo Māori being spoken to them. Children commonly choose to use or respond in English despite being bilingual, particularly as they grow into adolescence due to factors related to the perceived social capital of English (Muller, 2016; Statistics NZ, 2014).

In addition, King and Cunningham (2017) highlight that under a quarter of Māori-speaking children live with two Māori-speaking adults. This is a proportionately very low number. Furthermore, they note that large numbers of Māori-speaking children do not live with Māori-speaking adults because of language revitalisation efforts largely focussing on children learning Māori through educational environments. Efforts are required to increase the language capabilities amongst both parents or caregivers in the home in order to secure the home as a Māori language domain more completely. The role of education is to support language acquisition that takes place in the home as opposed to being the central source.

Further to the point of child and parent language use, Bright, Hunia and Huria (2019) indicate that children are more likely to speak te reo if both of their parents also speak te reo both to the child, and to each other. Furthermore, children are much more likely to actively use te reo when they have parents who also use the language with the child. These findings are likely to be related to Hunia’s (2016) findings that indicated evidence that some infants show a preference for features of infant directed talk, including high pitch. This tells us that using Māori infant directed talk behaviours may signal a socialisation mechanism for tuning infants to te reo Māori. A central finding of this study

includes understanding that the more that adults that speak the minority language to a child, the more likely it is the child will productively use that language.

Chrisp (2005) summarises data gathered through qualitative research undertaken by Te Puni Kōkiri. The research participants were fifty Māori parents across four communities, who participated in eight focus groups over a two-month period. They were asked questions about their knowledge and use of Māori in family situations. This study examines many real-life examples of reo Māori use within whānau, and the strategies and challenges these whānau have experienced on their language journeys. Chrisp (2005) indicates that children who are socialised through a language by their caregivers inherit the identity and social paradigms associated with the language and culture. Some children of participants in this study resisted their efforts to speak Māori in domestic situations, preferring to use English. This study was conducted nearly 20 years ago; it would be interesting to note whether a similar set of findings would be observed today.

The importance of a language community

Language communities are crucial for creating spaces where te reo Māori can be used authentically, outside of the classroom, or confinement of the home. Houia-Roberts (2004) indicates that “children may learn Maori, but the community at large ensures that there are very few domains in which they can actually use it” (p. 18). Creating specific contexts where whānau can actively engage in te reo Māori is therefore of high importance. Peters (2014) supports this point: “Planned activities which aim to increase the number of functions for which an endangered language can be used and the number of domains in which it is used are generally referred to as ‘usage planning’” (p. 46–47). Creating a usage plan that includes contact with others who do not regularly reside in the home also acts to extend the domains of language use.

What the literature indicates is that the collective role of adults, whānau and reo Māori communities is crucial to embedding te reo Māori as a normalised language of communication. “Language use by adults is a key success factor in language revitalization as it is the use of the language in a range of contexts that normalises it. Children cannot lead this process. Language maintenance is the use of the language by its communities of speakers” (Pohe, 2013, p. 133). Hunia (2016) found that using te reo Māori in many diverse contexts, both in and out of the home, motivated her primary case study participant to actively use te reo in order to participate within a range of settings. Furthermore, she demonstrated that Māori language acquisition happens in tandem with Māori culture acquisition. These results indicate that the importance of the community helps to enforce te reo as a normalised language of communication, and also provides context for tikanga and Māori cultural values to be modelled, practised and normalised.

Because of the prevalence and persistence of English in the lives of children, language communities where te reo Māori is the only language permitted are crucial for creating a space where te reo is seen as normal. Muller (2016) summarises the Māori language’s diminished status through discriminatory language policies and subsequent work to revitalise the language within communities of speakers. She also adds that the role of community can provide a place where te reo is seen positively amongst social ingroups who are respected by the target language speakers.

Activities that increase te reo use between parent and child

Some critical success factors for intergenerational language transmission are: making parents aware of strategies that will help them learn Māori; motivating them to continue; and supporting efforts to use Māori at home (Lewis, 2007). Part of this strategy involves thinking about the range of skills that the whānau are trying to nurture, and providing specific strategies for each of these skills. Secondly, each of these strategies needs to include aspects that are independent and interdependent in order to maximise the outcomes for language acquisition, use and normalisation within whānau relationships.

Some suggestions put forward by Muller (2016) for whānau who are wanting to become reo Māori speaking include: joining online groups/forums with other parents on similar journeys; caregivers continually learning and increasing their vocabulary by attending courses/programmes; discouraging use of English by utilising the minimal grasp strategy (pretending not to understand, responding in target language); expressed guess strategy, where the parent rephrases the child's speech into the target language, and expects the child to confirm they are correct; limiting access to English media, including TV and online; having quick access to a dictionary app. With this said, many studies indicated a lack of Māori medium resources as a direct barrier for children being raised in Māori speaking homes. (Bright, et al., 2019; Chrisp, 2005; Hutchings et al., 2017; Morrison, & Morrison, 2017; Muller, 2016). Additional targeted support is needed to ensure that parents have access to these resources so that they can be shared with their Māori speaking children.

Table 3: Focus areas for whānau increasing te reo in the home

FOCUS AREA	LEARNING OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
Reading	Reo objectives: Increase corpus, vocabulary, phrases, verbalisation of sounds. Social objectives: improve connection between adult and child; solidify connection between te reo and time spent with trusted adult.	Picture books. More complex reading (Kotahi rau pukapuka etc). Improved vocabulary recognition, which can then be recalled in writing and speaking activities.
Writing	Improve the output of adults – low stress activity. Some of the drawbacks include lack of feedback, errors can go unchecked. Children's literacy can improve with guided writing – copying texts.	Writing a journal, emails, text messages, letters. Writing out the lyrics to songs, or audio materials where there is an ability to control the speed.
Listening	Improve audio language recognition.	Listening and watching targeted TV programmes, or online programmes that can be accessed on digital devices. Reo Māori audio books.
Speaking	Improved language output – use of te reo Māori in ordinary daily contexts.	Beginning with set phrases, increasing these phrases incrementally. Use of strategies to improve. Waiata – singing, listening, karakia, mihimihi.

Hohepa, May and McCarty (2006) describe research about biliteracy in the home, and how the use of Māori picture books in particular can increase the amount of reo Māori spoken in the home. Their qualitative research focussed on five families with a new entrant-aged child who attended kura kaupapa, and whose language proficiency outstripped that of their parents. Adults and children interacting through reading reo Māori books together is an effective learning context for adult learners of Māori as well as providing opportunities for the child to proliferate their own expertise as Māori speakers. The researchers note in their study of parents who deliberately read books in te reo Māori to their young children that they “found marked increases in Māori language use by parents. Specific strategies that increase the use of Māori language within the home increase the effectiveness of Māori language regeneration education programmes and initiatives” (p. 301).

One of the benefits of reading that is led by adults, and that adults can draw on their own literacy expertise by accessing English/Māori dictionaries to support the language development of their bilingual children. This paper is particularly relevant to whānau where parents have lower language proficiency than their children but who wish to support their children’s bilingual skills. They note: “Indigenous language regeneration can be enhanced if second language learning family members are able to participate in indigenous language events with children in the home, even if the children are more fluent in the indigenous language than they are” (p. 296). These include waiata and mihimihī which may be rote learned and utilised in contexts outside of the home.

Some of the challenges for parents include the dominance of English in books, TV, media and finding Māori equivalents or replacements for these that tamariki enjoy. In Muller’s (2016) research, many parents had to create their own by translating English resources.

Morrison & Morrison’s (2017) book series, including Māori at Home, is extremely relevant for whānau wanting to use te reo Māori in the home, as it contains many useful phrases and vocabulary lists for specific situations, such as meal times, going to the supermarket, talking about time and numbers, birthdays, and many more contexts.

The importance of technology

Keegan, & Cunliffe (2014) consider the relationships between young people, technology and te reo Māori. They argue that technology is an important domain of use for te reo Māori because young people use technology in so many facets of their lives. For intergenerational language transmission to be effective, that is, for young people to not only learn, but choose to use te reo, they must see Māori as a living, modern language. Because technology platforms, such as social media, are predominantly English language domains, these authors indicate that young people are less likely to value Māori, and more likely to view it as separate from their everyday lives, which are more and more being lived online.

The arguments put forward here are both about the status of te reo, as well as the functional ability for rangatahi (and older users who are familiar with technology) to engage with te reo through technology. Rangatahi use of technology is high and permeates all aspects of their lives. English may therefore be seen as a modern, technological language whereas Māori may be seen as an old-fashioned, archaic or rural language, and used less by rangatahi as a result. The chapter concludes with a strong recommendation for language

planning, at both governmental and tribal levels, to consider how Māori language can be more successfully used and integrated in technology, particularly in regard to young people, who use technology the most.

Intergenerational language transmission occurs at home, but without technology being Māori language domains, young people may learn the language without having cause to use the language online and therefore in their everyday lives. There is a tendency for tools and software to be used in educational settings, rather than in the home. With the current tools and mass of speakers, it is not possible for a Māori speaker to conduct all online activities in te reo. However, there are a number of resources that are available to users, which could be better communicated with Māori language learners and users.

Formal Education – The importance of Māori medium education

The history of Māori involvement in mainstream education has had a direct detrimental impact on intergenerational use. Houia-Roberts (2004, citing May, 2001) indicates that 96.6 percent of children attending Native Schools spoke only te reo Māori in their homes. The WAI2336 report indicated that the lack of Māori children enrolled in Māori medium education is a direct threat to te reo. The report indicates, “Between 2002 and 2011, the estimated number of children in final year ECE immersion fell by 26 percent from 3,204 to 2,384 children” (p. 66). Furthermore, the report indicates that “the shrinking supply from ECE immersion was threatening to fall below the capacity of Māori-medium school education, whose intake fell slowly over the decade, by 7 percent between 2002 and 2011. The decline in fluent te reo speakers amongst young Māori children, taken together with the inevitable loss of older native speakers, threatens the long-term sustainability of te reo Māori itself” (Waitangi Tribunal, 2013, p. 39). These findings alone indicate that if intergenerational transmission in the home is to take place, urgent and drastic measures need to take place in the education sector to ensure that whānau have access to quality reo Māori ECE, whether this is in the form of kōhanga, or teacher-led initiatives such as puna reo.

Teacher education is equally important as parent-led education. Māori medium and English medium teachers are likely to be second language learners given the relatively small pool of first language speaking Māori. Houis-Roberts (2004) highlights that “many children learn Maori as a second language in school settings where teachers may themselves be second language learners and may actually transmit errors which are attributable to interlingual interference” (p. 135). Opportunities for professional development must be given to kaiako given that they are, in many cases, the core adults within a child’s life responsible for transmitting te reo.

Findings from Te Kupenga indicate that tamariki who are enrolled in Māori-medium education speak te reo Māori more than those not enrolled in Māori-medium. This finding is clearly not surprising. We might also assume that even if two parents are Māori speaking, and they use te reo Māori with their child, it is the pervasiveness of English in mainstream education which has a detrimental impact on Māori language use. Te Kupenga results also indicated that “children who had been enrolled in Māori-medium education have higher rates of using the language at home” (p. 6) Furthermore, “of those who had children who had been enrolled in kura kaupapa, 78 percent spoke at least some te reo in the home, including 35 percent who spoke the language equally or more. The proportions were similar for those with children enrolled in kōhanga reo: 70 percent spoke at least some te reo at home, including 25 percent who spoke

it equally or more” (p. 19). These figures indicate a slight decline in the rates of te reo in the home between tamariki attending kura (78%) and kōhanga (70%). The considerations for whānau enrolling their tamaiti into Māori medium kura are likely more complex (fewer kura than kōhanga available, expectations of whānau to be reo Māori speaking likely higher also), impacting on these results.

It is not to say that only children who are enrolled in kura come from homes where te reo is spoken. Te Kupenga results further indicated that “the majority (62 percent) of Māori whose children had not been enrolled in any Māori-medium education spoke no te reo at home, while 33 percent spoke some and 5 percent spoke it equally or more” (Statistics NZ, 2014, p. 19). Finding ways to support these whānau who are limited in their options for sending tamariki to kura, but who have aspirations to become Māori speaking kāinga, are also necessary.

Kura provide many opportunities to whānau to increase the number of domains where te reo is used outside of the home. “To cluster domains around the out of school lives of children who attend kura kaupapa Māori may be the most effective in the long term. Thus, for example, kapa haka, summer and winter sports, after school Oscar programmes all run in te reo are extremely important supports to the home environment” (Peters, 2014, p. 47). However, what we found in the Kura Whānau Reo study with parents who were acquiring te reo to keep up with their children in te reo Māori was that prior to being language learners themselves, they would actively avoid participating in school events, to the point where school pick-ups and drop offs were anxiety provoking for non-Māori speaking parents and whānau (Te Huia, Muller, & Waapu, 2016). Ways to increase participation of whānau who were learning te reo is important for the growth of the education and language of their child.

Jeurisen’s (2015) case study followed the language learning journeys of six female students who were attempting to learn NCEA Level 1 Māori via correspondence in 2015. None of them had reo-speaking whānau at home, although some had extended whānau who they could occasionally converse with. Ultimately, this made learning te reo very difficult, especially without a face to face teacher. The results indicated that five out of six students had very supportive immediate family, who were keen to support the aspirations of their tamariki to learn te reo. At the same time, knowledge of their parents’ regrets around not learning Māori themselves was a motivating factor for several of these students. While intergenerational language transmission was not possible in these homes due to parents’ lack of language competence, their support and positive attitude towards te reo Māori influenced these students’ choices to pursue te reo Māori through their schooling.

Morrison and Morrison (2017) note that there is an expectation that many whānau who enrol their children in Māori medium education are also engaged with upskilling their own language abilities. This assertion follows the understanding that all children in the kura interact with one another. Children who are not exposed to te reo Māori at home have an increased chance of bringing English into the kura, which is a domain reserved for te reo. Muller (2016) notes that enrolling children in immersion educational environments is crucial for providing children with an opportunity to be socialised in te reo. This is especially so if only one parent in the home speaks Māori. The challenges for these whānau include having a limited number of contexts outside of the home/immediate family where te reo Māori is the norm. Furthermore, this group of participants had little contact with other reo-speaking whānau.

4

Whānau

Strategies that can be useful – Establishing dedicated language domains: Times, places, or people

Whānau support for te reo included a shared set of goals for te reo Māori. “The relationship between parents and children was a further prime indicator of the efficacy of language use and advancement within the home. When all individuals within the whānau supported one another (to achieve the common goals set by the whānau), significant progress was made. Positive whānau interaction meant that individuals in the whānau could engage easily with the strategies being implemented” (Ormsby, et al., 2011, p. 102). Creating opportunities and set domains where the whānau uses te reo Māori outside of the home also helps to improve language normalisation. Creating set times, location, and people, which are considered Māori language domains, means that the brain is primed to use te reo Māori in those contexts.

Whānau created usage plan: Committing to the plan

A few studies focus on the importance of creating Māori language plans for the home. Bright, Hunia, & Huria (2019) provide a comprehensive overview of strategies that have proven successful in language regeneration in the home. These observations are made in their literature review, which was compiled with an emphasis on language regeneration of heritage languages at a micro level: what occurs in families and communities. Literature pertaining to te reo Māori as well as other language communities, which have experienced language revival around the world, were included in this review. It also provides a number of templates and practical suggestions to support whānau and communities to come up with their own language plans going forward. A few of these suggestions include joining an online group. For instance, they recommend “Hei Reo Whānau”, a Facebook group with around 11,000 members, which exists to support whānau who want to speak te reo in the home. As Facebook user numbers have been steadily decreasing, other platforms are likely to be of interest.

Authors indicate that explicit language planning is useful for all whānau wanting to shift to using te reo Māori in the home (Bright et al., 2017; Bright et al., 2019; Lewis, 2007; Morrison & Morrison, 2017; Ormsby-Teki et al, 2011, Te Huia et al., 2016; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2008). Ideally this planning will occur before children are born, and/or to coincide with life stages such as adolescence. It is my observation that language plans need to be both long-term and short-term. Regularly assessing the plan, and analysing whether the objectives are being met, will help keep the plan alive and relevant to the whānau needs and aspirations.

Bright et al. (2019) indicate that language planning should include acknowledgement of family members' current language abilities and consider other speakers in the community who can support the whānau, as well as the role that formal education might play in language development. Language plans should also include specific activities, domains and approaches for whānau to use on a day to day basis. Once a plan is made, whānau members (particularly those residing in the same home) will need to mutually commit to making the home a Māori language domain. Finally, the presence of a pou reo is vital to shifting language norms within the home. This term was coined by Te Ataarangi (Muller, 2016) and has been highly recommended across studies (Bright, et al., 2019; Hutchings et al., 2017; Ormsby-Teki et al., 2011; Peters, 2014; Pohe, 2013; Te Huia et al., 2016).

While the increased use of English is touched on above, this point reiterates some of the ways in which whānau can reduce the chances of English dominance with adolescence. Muller (2016) notes that when children reach adolescence, they meet with greater English-language influences. She found that their desire to use more English was mitigated by: having the home as a reo Maori domain; a tuakana-teina relationship, where adolescents used te reo Maori with younger siblings; immersion language camps with peers, which may prompt children to see value in the language outside bounds of school and family; weekend wānanga facilitated by grandparents; whole whanau attending wananga reo" (p. 33). She further suggests that whānau "include setting family goals and milestones; having language play with children while adults receive lessons; using CD copies of phrases and words; and regular mentoring by phone, mail, or in person" (p. 34).

Factors that whānau need to be aware of and plan for

Other factors that whānau need to be aware of are both the differences in opinions surrounding the value of te reo Māori both outside, and sometimes with the whānau. Given that many whānau members have suffered from the negative impacts of racism and assimilation pressures, results indicated that not all whānau understand the desires of some caregivers to raise their children in te reo Māori. These attitudes can have a direct impact on the types of relationships that can occur within whānau, particularly in situations where reo Māori speaking whānau may opt to isolate themselves away from others to prevent negative attitudes towards te reo coming through to the child (Te Huia et al., 2020).

An additional point made was that whānau often have English speaking whānau members in the home, there is a very real sense of needing to accommodate English speaking whānau members, this impacts on the ability to maintain the home as a Māori only domain (Bright, et al., 2017; Olsen-Reeder; 2012; Peters, 2014; Te Huia et al., 2016).

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