

Languages in contact I

Creating new words for Maori

MIHI

Tōku reo, tōku ohooho,
Tōku reo, tōku mapihi maurea,
Tōku reo, tōku whakakai marihi!

Tēnā koutou katoa kua tae mai nei i tēnei ahiahi ki te whakanui i te Tau o te Reo Māori, ā, ki te whakarongo anō hoki ki ēnei pitopito kōrero. I tēnei tau, ka hoki aku mahara ki ōku kaiako reo Māori o ngā tau kua pahure ake nei. Ko te tuatahi, ko Pita McLean. Whai muri atu ko Wiremu Parker, ko Ruka Broughton anō hoki. E kore e taea e te kupu te whakapuaki tāku mihi ki a rātou mō te taonga kua whakatōkia ki roto tonu o tōku ngākau, o tōku hinengaro. He mihi aroha anō hoki ki a koe Winifred (Bauer), tōku hoa kōrero i te ahiahi nei, nāu au i arahi ki tētahi paku mārama ki ngā āhuatanga o te wetewete i te reo Māori.

. Ka huri atu āku mihi ki a Tīmoti Kāretu, me Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, mō ā rātou mahi ki te whakapakari i te reo. Me te mihi anō hoki ki ngā kaiako reo Māori o konei, o Te Whare Wānanga o Te Ūpoko o te Ika ā Maui, ā, ki a rātou mā e whakapau kaha i ngā kōhanga reo, i ngā kura kaupapa Māori, i ngā karaihe reo rua, karaihe reo Māori hei reo tuarua huri katoa i Aotearoa nei. Ki a koutou katoa e takakawe ki te ako i te reo rangatira nei hei reo kōrero i ā koutou nā korikoringa, tēnā koutou. "Ka ora te reo ki te kōrerotia".

I greet those who support the year of the Maori language, a treasure that marks our country as unique in the world. I express my gratitude to those teachers who instilled deep within me a love for the Maori language and an appreciation of the benefits of developing more than one way of treading my path through this life. And greetings too to all those who are expending their energy to ensure that Maori remains a language spoken in our community, as a means of enriching us all. The language will survive if it is spoken.

MARY BOYCE

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The following article is based on a seminar presented at the Stout Research Centre on the 14 June, the first of two seminars looking at the contact between languages of Maori and New Zealand English. In this seminar Mary Boyce discussed the effects on Maori language of this contact. In the second seminar Winifred Bauer looked at issues surrounding the use of Maori words in English – an article based on this seminar is on page 19.

OUTLINE

I will begin with a few words on language change, and a little background to the contact between Maori and English. Then to illustrate the effects of this contact on Maori, I will concentrate on describing some of the processes used to create new words in Maori, both in the early phases of contact with English, and in the contemporary context.

LANGUAGES CHANGE OVER TIME

All languages change. It is essential that they do. This constant process adapts languages over time to their changing environment. A language changes in many ways, for example, the phonology or sound system changes, the morphology and syntax change, and new words are constantly added to the language, as older ones fall from use. While the speakers of a language may be largely unaware of these as they happen, the change can nevertheless be quite rapid.

A recent local example is provided by the film clips from the war years which are currently being broadcast on television as part of our commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the ending of World War Two. All of us here will have noted the differences between the speech on those clips and that

typical of contemporary New Zealand film and broadcasting. New Zealand English has obviously undergone change in that fifty year period.

Languages change from within responding to their environment and to external influences. These changes can be clearly demonstrated when diverse languages come into contact within a single territory.

LANGUAGES IN CONTACT

When languages come into contact they usually compete with one another, especially when they share a common territory, such as is the case with Maori and English in New Zealand. In such contexts, it is common for one language to dominate and the other to decline. When the contact takes place between a world language and that of an indigenous linguistic minority, it is usually the case that, over time, the former dominates, and the latter declines. This may result in the total loss of the lesser used language.

If we consider briefly the history of contact between Maori and English we can clearly see the common pattern. Maori was the sole language of New Zealand prior to contact with Europeans some two hundred years ago. While there were regional differences in Maori, it was essentially a single language, mutually intelligible amongst speakers from various parts of the country. In the early post-contact period, Maori and European who interacted with each other tended to be bilingual, with Europeans learning and using Maori to serve their purposes, and Maori learning and using English to serve theirs. As time passed, the situation changed, with the pattern becoming one of Maori being bilingual, but most Pakeha settlers remaining monolingual in English. This signals the early stages of the dominance of English in certain domains.

More recently, the pattern has become one in which most Maori are monolingual in English, and of course the overwhelming majority of Pakeha are the same. It is unlikely that there are now any adults who are monolingual in Maori. Today, those who were raised with Maori as their first or dominant language tend to be fifty years of age and older. While there are no accurate figures available, it has been estimated by the Maori Language Commission that there are now only 50,000 speakers of Maori with native-like fluency, and perhaps just a further 150,000 who speak Maori comfortably as a second language.

In the past two decades we have witnessed extensive efforts to halt the decline in the use of Maori. The past decade has seen the advent of immersion

education in Maori, starting with kohanga reo at pre-school level, and progressing to kura kaupapa Maori at primary, and more recently, secondary school level. We now have a new generation with proficiency in Maori. We have yet to see whether, as adults, they will be instrumental in reversing the trend of declining use of Maori by raising their own children as speakers of the language.

LEXICAL CHANGE

One obvious way in which a language changes is in the addition of new vocabulary to meet new developments in its environment. A language can use a number of different strategies to make new words, and I will be discussing some of these now as we look at words added to Maori after contact.

STRATEGIES FOR ADDING VOCABULARY

Any language has at its disposal a number of ways of adding new words to its vocabulary pool. These include the compounding of already existing items; the addition of new forms of old words using the usual derivational processes of the language, the borrowing of words from other languages, the broadening of the meaning of existing words to accommodate new ideas, the narrowing of meanings, shifts in the meaning of words, and the creation of new words from within the resources of the language. Maori has used all of these processes, but the most frequently used has been that of borrowing from English, changing the sounds of the words to Maori ones. This has proven to be problematic over time, leading to a recent shift away from this method of adding new vocabulary items.

BORROWING

Perhaps the most well known strategy for adding new vocabulary is to borrow words from another language. English does this all the time, and so does Maori. We are all aware of examples where Maori has borrowed from English, and where New Zealand English has done the same from Maori. Take for example the words Maori, marae, mana and kiwi, all of which are now part of New Zealand English. You may also use words such as 'taiho', for 'wait (a minute)', which comes from the Maori word taihoa, with a similar meaning. In this case the final vowel sound has been dropped on its acceptance into New Zealand English.

Many words have similarly been borrowed from English into Maori by the process of transliteration in which the word from the donor language is recoded using appropriate sounds from the receiving

language. Those chosen most closely approximate the sounds (not the spelling) in the original word. Table 1 gives some examples, taken from the appendix to Williams' dictionary, which focus on the transliteration of consonants.

LOANWORD	ENGLISH SOURCE
<i>eka</i>	acre
<i>hāpa</i>	harp
<i>huka</i>	sugar
<i>iari</i>	yard
<i>kau</i>	cow
<i>kororia</i>	glory
<i>minita</i>	minister
<i>miraka</i>	milk
<i>oati</i>	oath
<i>pāmu</i>	farm
<i>pata</i>	butter
<i>pepa</i>	paper
<i>rāhi</i>	rice
<i>tiokarete</i>	chocolate
<i>tōtiti</i>	sausage

To understand how the Maori forms have come about it is useful to know a little about the structure of a syllable in Maori. These have the form (C)V(V). In other words, each syllable must have at least one vowel, it may optionally have a second, it may begin with a consonant, but it cannot end with one. Acceptable syllable shapes are: V (eg: *a*); CV (eg: *pa*); VV (eg: *ai*); CVV (eg: *pai*). Two Maori phonemes are realised by digraphs, that is a single consonant sound is written as a combination of two letters; these are *ng* and *wh*. So *ngā* (meaning 'the', plural) is a monosyllabic word with the shape CV and, *whare* (meaning 'house') is comprised of two syllables as follows: CV + CV (*wha+re*)

A close examination of the loanword examples will show that the word is reworked within the sound system of Maori, with a native phoneme similar in voicing, manner, or place of articulation chosen in place of the foreign one. For example, in Maori there is no voiced/voiceless contrast such as provided by the English phonemes /p/ and /b/. These both tend to be rendered with a Maori /p/ (eg: *pata*, 'butter', *pepa*, 'paper').

Where there is a consonant cluster in the English word, this can either be separated by inserting a vowel between the consonants (eg: *kororia*, 'glory'), or by reducing the cluster to a single consonant (eg: *minita*, 'minister'). Where the English word ends in a consonant, a final vowel is added in the Maori loanword (eg: *hāpa*, 'harp'). There is not necessarily

a one-to-one correspondence between particular Maori and English phonemes, with the same English phoneme being represented by more than one Maori phoneme on different occasions (eg: *huka*, 'sugar' and *tōtiti*, 'sausage').

Sometimes the origin of loanwords is less direct, as shown in the examples in Table 2, also taken from the appendix to Williams' dictionary. In these cases the loanword has been formed from an idea or word associated with the meaning in Maori, but not directly transliterated from the English equivalent.

<i>hitimi</i>	marble	from 'hit me'
<i>mā</i>	draughts (game)	said to be from 'move'
<i>paikaraihe</i>	binoculars	from 'spy glasses'
<i>parai</i>	fry, frying pan	word used for both the action and the utensil
<i>tāriana</i>	stallion	but also 'boar' by extension of meaning
<i>tipatipa</i>	hoe	from the description of the action of the hoe, 'chip, chip'
<i>tīwī</i>	television	from the English abbreviation 'TV'
<i>tīwi</i>	dividend	from 'divvy'

It is only possible to mention these few features of the process of transliterating consonants today; a full description is beyond the scope of this talk, as is the transliteration of vowels which is more complicated still.

While English has been the major source of loanwords, other languages have also been a source, as shown in Table 3.

WORD	MEANING	SOURCE
<i>mīere</i>	honey	from French, 'miele'
<i>nākahi</i>	serpent	from Hebrew, 'nagash'
<i>Witwi</i>	French person	from French 'oui, oui'
<i>pikipō</i>	Catholic	from latin, 'episcopus'
<i>ture</i>	law	from Hebrew 'torah', via Tahitian

Examples from Williams, 1971

The final example in Table 3, the word *ture*, was borrowed into Maori from Tahitian, from the Hebrew 'torah'. A direct transliteration would have yielded the form *tora*. However, the vowel sounds were altered on assimilating this item into the sound system of Maori to avoid what Williams refers to as 'unpleasant suggestions'; the word *tora* in Maori means 'be erect'. This example suggests the many influences that can affect the borrowing process, in this case the attitude of missionaries who were 'out-

siders' to the group influencing the form used by 'insiders', those to whom the language belongs.

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH TRANSLITERATION

Transliteration has been a popular and a productive process for adding new vocabulary to Maori. Once transliterated these items operate as native words, taking the usual range of affixes. However, there are also problems associated with transliteration. One of these is the proportion of words created using this process. If there are too many, and few words added through other methods of word creation, the danger is that Maori becomes overloaded with English derivations to the extent that its uniqueness is compromised.

Another related difficulty is the replacement of native words with loanwords. There are many instances of borrowings into Maori from English where there was already a native word available, for example, the loanwords *wini* for *hau* or 'wind', and *mikirapu* for 'mixed up' or 'mixed together', when native words such as *hanumi*, *whakaranu* and *pōrahurahu* express the same ideas.

Another result of a proliferation of transliterations is the appearance of words which are not fully assimilated into the sound system of Maori, but which retain features of the English one. For exam-

ple, the loanword for 'television' can be heard being pronounced as *tīvī* rather than *tīwī*. Another example is the word for 'gumboot', transliterated as *kamuputu* but heard as *kamputu*, without a vowel added to break up the consonant cluster. In the word *swingi* from the English word 'swing' we see both of these phenomena appearing: the use of a consonant cluster, plus the addition of a foreign phoneme. In addition, there is a native word, *moari*, which might have been used.

Still another device is the use of English words, totally unassimilated to the sound system of Maori, but with its affixes added, for example *rubbishngia* - the English word 'rubbish' with the passive suffix *-ngia* added to it. Collectively, examples such

as these provide a warning of the encroachment of English into the essential nature of Maori. The question must then be asked: at what point does Maori become so loaded with influence from English that it becomes 'Minglish' and no longer Maori?

CREATING FROM WITHIN

Concerns at the 'anglicisation' of Maori have been expressed for many years, with a letter on this topic to the editor of one of the Maori newspapers appearing as early as the 1920s. The concern has grown more acute recently, with a parallel rejection of transliterated loanwords by many younger speakers. The contemporary emphasis is on exploiting other means of creating vocabulary, with a particular regard for creation from within the resources of Maori. Let us now turn to some of the modern work in this area, concentrating on the vocabulary generation principles used by the Maori Language Commission.

MAKING NEW WORDS

The Commission uses a range of devices in creating new words. It finds existing words which are suitable equivalents, and matches them with the ideas needing translation. In some cases these involve an extension of the meaning of the word, or the narrowing of its meaning in certain contexts. In other

TABLE 4: USE OF EXISTING WORDS IN MODERN CONTEXTS

EXISTING WORD	EXISTING MEANING	NEW USE
<i>whakapae</i>	contend, accuse	hypothesise
<i>tuha</i>	spit out, expectorate	eject
<i>rangahau</i>	search out	research
<i>nahanaha</i>	well arranged, in good order	systematic
<i>taunaha</i>	bespeak	liabilities (in accounting)

TABLE 5: EXAMPLES OF WORD CREATION USING COMPOUNDING

SOURCE WORDS	COMPOUND	MEANING
<i>waka</i> , 'vehicle' + <i>pana</i> , 'drive away, expel'	<i>wakapana</i> ,	bulldozer
<i>tohu</i> , 'sign' + <i>hono</i> , 'join'	<i>tohuhono</i> ,	hyphen
<i>roro</i> , 'brain' + <i>hiko</i> , 'electricity'	<i>rorohiko</i> ,	computer
<i>hau</i> , 'strike, smite' + <i>rewa</i> , 'be elevated, high up'	<i>haurewa</i> ,	chip (in golf)

TABLE 6: EXAMPLES OF WORD CREATION USING DERIVATIONAL PROCESSES

EXISTING WORD AND AFFIX	NEW WORD	NEW USE
<i>whai</i> , 'pursue' + <i>-ngā</i> (nominalising suffix)	<i>whaingā</i>	objective
<i>tono</i> , 'request, demand' + <i>kai-</i> (agentive prefix)	<i>kaitono</i>	applicant, claimant
<i>ripa</i> , 'row, line' + <i>whaka-</i> (causative prefix)	<i>whakaripa</i>	tabulate (in wordprocessing)
<i>pū</i> - 'origin, source, base', (used as a prefix), gives:		
<i>pū</i> - + <i>ngao</i> , 'strength'	<i>pūngao</i>	energy
<i>pū</i> - + <i>hiko</i> , 'electricity'	<i>pūhiko</i>	battery

cases a word which has fallen out of common use is revived, and assigned a meaning similar to its original one. Examples of these processes are given in Table 4.

It should be noted that the use of these processes is not restricted to the vocabulary generated recently by the Maori Language Commission. Examples of these and others can be found in words coined in earlier times. Timoti Kāretu gave us one such example in his presentation last week: the general word *inoi*, meaning 'ask for, beg' has become narrowed in meaning to 'pray' since its use for that idea in translations of the Bible.

Another process used is the bringing together of two existing words to make a new compound form, as in the examples in Table 5.

A further process which uses existing words makes the new items by adding affixes in ways not previously exploited by the language. Existing affixes are added to existing words, but in new combinations.

In creating new technical words the Commission frequently employs a process of finding a new base form, derived from an abbreviated compound, which is further shortened and then used as a prefix. This process enables the creation of terms with similarity in their form to indicate their relationship to each other, but which are not too cumbersome.

Take for example the words for certain substances. The new base form *konu-* was formed by abbreviating the phrase *konga-ā-nuku*, or 'fragment of the earth'. *Ko* and *nu* were taken from the beginning of the content words in the phrase, combined to make a new base, and then prefixed to words descriptive of the distinctive features of each substance, as shown in Table 6.

TABLE 7: NAMES FOR SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE	NEW WORD	DERIVATION <i>konu+</i>
aluminium	<i>konumohe</i>	<i>mohe</i> , 'soft, yielding'
mercury	<i>konuoi</i>	<i>oi</i> , 'move continuously'
sodium	<i>konutai</i>	<i>tai</i> , 'of the sea'
magnesium	<i>konuhina</i>	<i>hina</i> , 'shine with a pale light'
uranium	<i>konupiere</i>	<i>piere</i> , 'fissure, cleft'

MONTHS

Until recently, the words most commonly used in Maori for the names of the months of the year were loanwords from English, taking the form of transliterations, as can be seen in Table 8. In a departure from their usual policy of not trying to replace loanwords with words of Maori origin, the Maori Language Commission proposed alternatives to

these, suggesting a return to use of the names from the traditional Maori calendar.

TABLE 8: NAMES FOR THE MONTHS OF THE YEAR

ENGLISH	LOANWORD	NEW WORD
January	Hānuere	Kohi-tātea
February	Pepuere	Hui-tanguru
March	Māehe	Poutū-te-rangi
April	Āperira	Paenga-whāwhā
May	Mei	Haratua
June	Hune	Pipiri
July	Hūrae	Hōngongoi
August	Ākuhata	Here-turi-kōkā
September	Hepetema	Mahuru
October	Oketopa	Whiringa-ā-nuku
November	Nōema	Whiringa-ā-rangi
December	Tihema	Hakihea

There was initially some resistance to this because the phases of the Maori calendar do not coincide exactly with those of the western one. However, objections seem to have died down in recent times, and these are gaining acceptance. Perhaps this is due to their wide dissemination through education, and broadcasting. Even recalcitrant second language learners like me – those who enjoy the lighter learning burden and convenience of quick access to, and productive use of, the loanword variants – are beginning to use the alternatives from the traditional calendar.

DAYS

New names for the days of the week have recently been added by the Maori Language Commission. These are an interesting group in that they replace transliterations of English with those that are generated from within the resources of Maori, but are based on the ideas underlying the English words:

TABLE 9: NAMES FOR THE DAYS OF THE WEEK

ENGLISH	LOANWORD	NEW WORD
Monday	Mane	Rāhina
Tuesday	Tūrei	Rātū
Wednesday	Wenerei	Rāapa
Thursday	Taite	Rāpare
Friday	Paraire	Rāmere
Saturday	Rāhoroi	-
Sunday	Rātapu	-

The derivation of these words was explained in the Maori Language Commission newsletter, *He Muka*. In former times, Monday was the day devoted to the moon. In generating the new word for Monday, the Commission revived an old Maori word for the moon, *māhina*. To this was added the Maori

word for day, *rā*, and the *mā*- of *māhina* was dropped to shorten it, giving *Rāhina* for Monday. Tuesday celebrated the planet Mars. The Maori name for it is that of the god of war, *Tūmatauenga*, and thus the new word is based on an abbreviation of *Tūmatauenga* added to *rā* - giving *Rātū* for Tuesday. Wednesday celebrated Mercury, which is known as *Apārangi* in Maori. Hence *Rāapa*, using the same process of shortening the word and adding *rā*- as a prefix. Likewise Thursday, for Jupiter, known in Maori as *Pareārau* gives us *Rāpare*, and Friday, for Venus, or *Meremere* in Maori, gives us *Rāmere*. New names for Saturday and Sunday were not created since the words in common usage for these days were not transliterations from English as the others were. Saturday is made up of the word *rā* meaning 'day', and *horo* meaning 'wash'. Sunday is *rā*, this time prefixed to *tapu*, the word for 'sacred' or 'holy'. Time will tell whether these new names will be accepted and used by speakers of Maori as have the words for the months.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I should mention that the new words coined by the Maori Language Commission, the older words revived for modern use, and the alternatives

used by some speakers to replace loanwords are not always well received by fluent speakers of the language. For some speakers there will always be a significant difference between *miraka* and *waiū*, with one okay for adding to a cup of tea, and the other not. Some will continue to use the loanword *tīni* for 'change', in spite of the native words available.

And around the country new words will be coined by speakers in local contexts as and when needed and will be used there, in spite of access to more widespread alternatives through contact with speakers from other areas or transmission by television and radio. This diversity, this creativity, will itself contribute to language change, and if it facilitates the daily use of Maori, will assist the language to survive.

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