

# Understanding the use of Māori and English in dual language picturebooks.

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Children's picturebooks are often underestimated, but some bilingual picturebooks disrupt the status quo and promote an alternative language hierarchy.

# Ngā Reo (language) in Aotearoa

- Three official languages
- English (de facto)
- Te Reo Māori (1987)
- New Zealand Sign Language (2006)



# The Linguistic Landscapes of Picturebooks

- Linguistic landscape is a term used to describe the (usually visual) presence of different languages in public spaces (Landry & Bourhis, 1997).
- In my work with picturebooks I use this term to describe the space occupied by languages within a book.



# Ethnolinguistic vitality

- Landry and Bourhis (1997) argue that the presence of a language within a linguistic landscape has a positive effect on the social identity and ethnolinguistic vitality of a language community



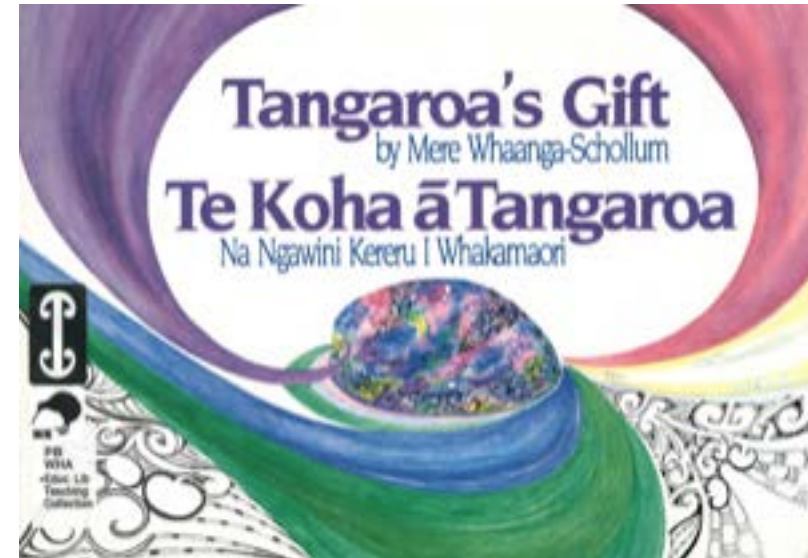
# Dual Language picturebooks

- Ethnolinguistic vitality
  - Informative and symbolic functions
- The way in which languages are presented in bilingual children's books may encourage readers to value a language, or perhaps use this language more frequently, thus positively affecting its vitality.



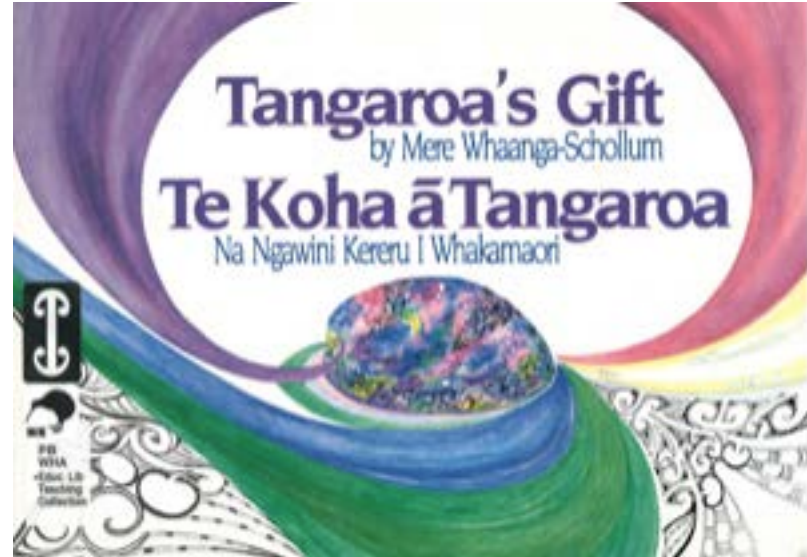
# Method

- which language is presented first,
- which language uses a bigger font, and
- which language presents more information.
- Assumptions
  - Left dominant
  - Top dominant
  - Larger dominant



# *Tangaroa's Gift*

- English and Māori titles are both given on the front cover
  - English first
  - Māori larger
- The author and translator are also both given in the same sized font.
- In the body of the book, Māori is presented on the verso (left hand) and English on the recto (or right hand) page.

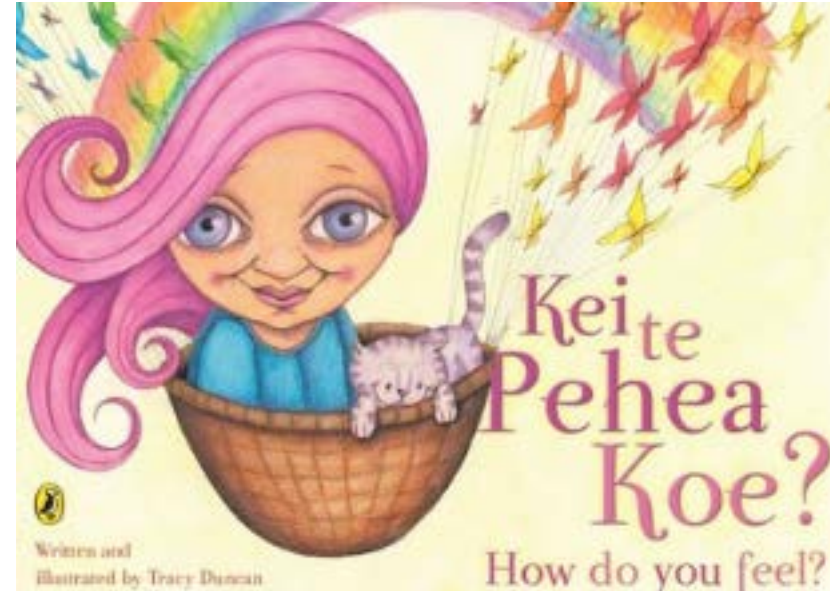


Whaanga- Schollum, M. Kereru, N.  
(1990). *Tangaroa's Gift. Te Koha a  
Tangaroa*. Auckland: Ashton Scholastic.



# Kei te pēhea koe?

- On the cover Māori title is first and bigger font
- In the body Māori text is first and same sized font
- Pronunciation guide indicates pedagogic intent



Duncan, T. (2008). *Kei te pēhea koe? How do you feel?* North Shore: Puffin.

# *Kākāhu. Getting Dressed*

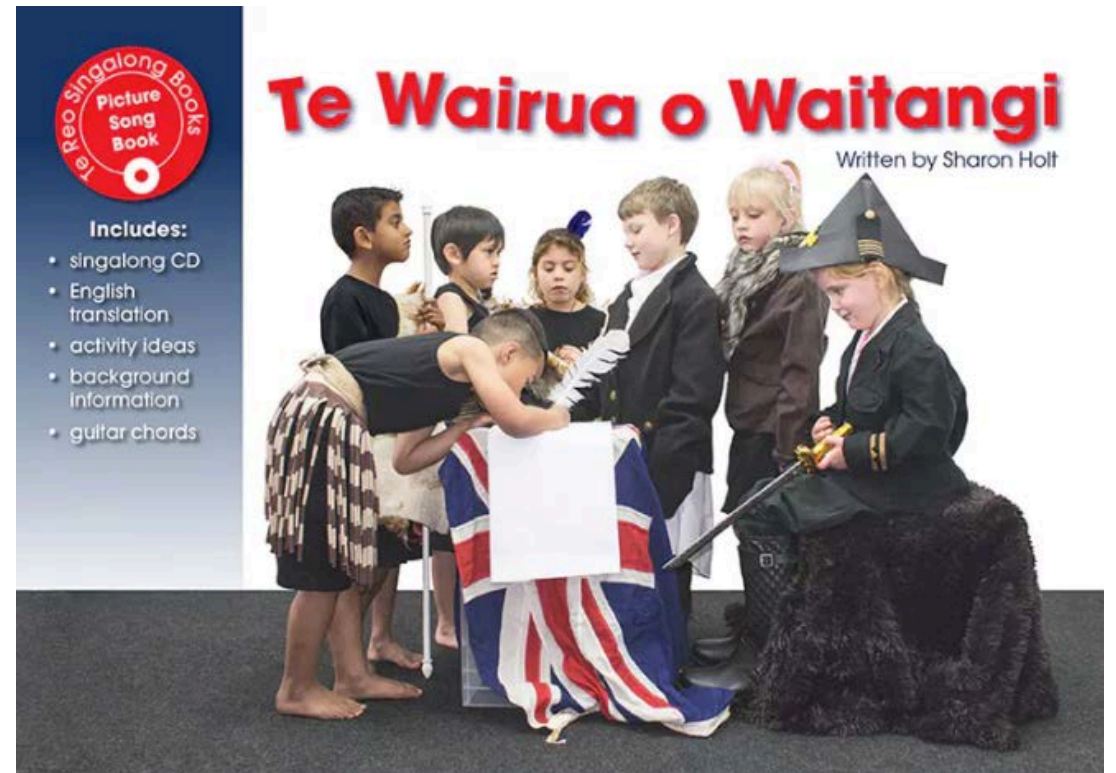
- The title (Kākahu) is much larger than the English (Getting Dressed).
- In the body of the book, Māori is privileged in several ways.
  - Māori is given first on the page, with English underneath;
  - Māori is presented in a much larger font size than English; and
  - Māori is given in a bold typeface, whereas English is given in normal typeface.



Brown, K. & Parkinson, K. (2015). *Kākahu. Getting Dressed*. Dunedin: Reo Pepi.

# *Te Wairua o Waitangi*

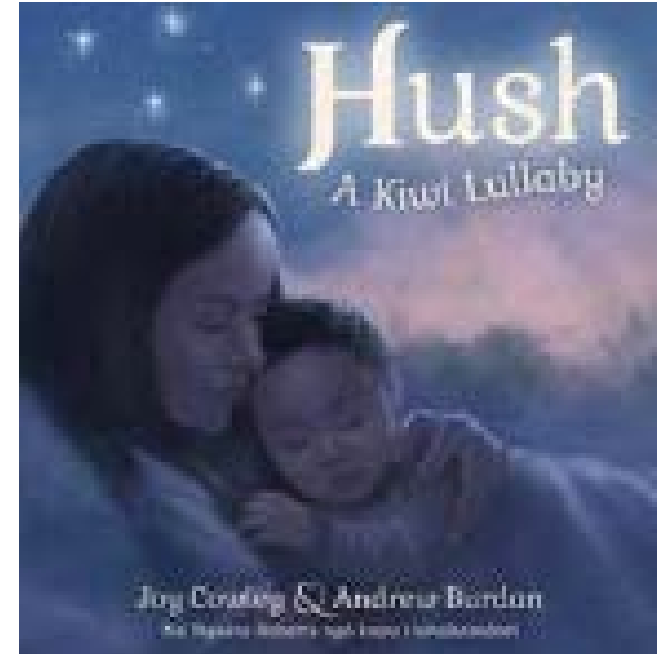
- A brightly coloured title in Te Reo Māori only.
- In the body of the book, only Te Reo Māori is used.
- At the back of the book, the lyrics for the song are given in Māori only with guitar chords.
- The picturebook includes a CD recording of the song, which also features a title in Māori and not English.



Holt, S. (2016). *Te Wairua o Waitangi*. Hamilton: Te Reo Singalong.

# *Hush. A Kiwi Lullaby*

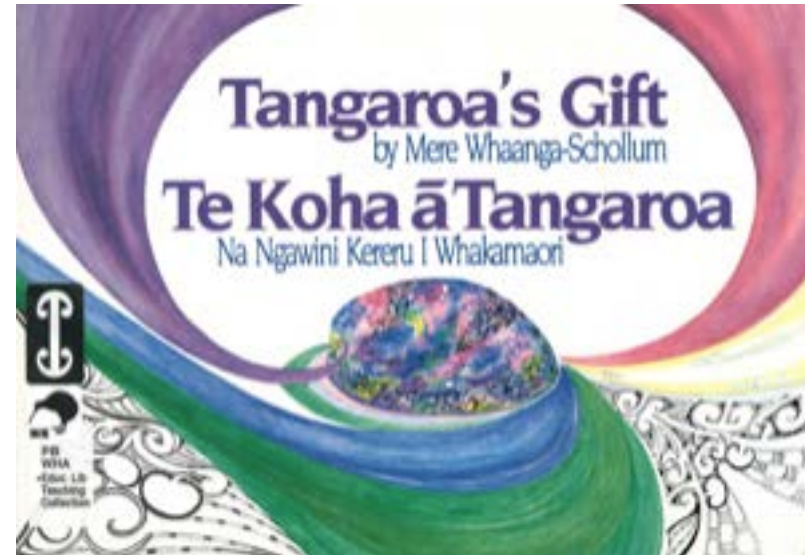
- On the cover there is a large English title, but no Māori title is given.
- The name of the translator on the front cover using a Māori phrase 'Nā Ngāire Roberts ngā kupu i whakamāori'.
- The first 23 pages give the English text surrounded by the richly coloured illustrations
- The Māori translation is given separately in the last 7 pages use pale monochromatic versions of the early illustrations.



Cowley, J. Roberts, N., & Burden, A. (2016). *Hush. A Kiwi Lullaby*. Auckland: Scholastic.

# Changing attitudes

- Children and adults reading and listening to these books will see, albeit subconsciously, which language is being given higher status.
- In this way, new language attitudes are being formed and this may result in the adjustment of existing language hierarchies.



Children's picturebooks are powerful little things, eh.

# References

- Daly, N. (2018). Children's picture books disrupting language hierarchies. *The Conversation*. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/how-childrens-picturebooks-can-disrupt-existing-language-hierarchies-96275>
- Landry, R. & Bourhis, R. Y. (1997). Linguistic landscape and ethnolinguistic vitality. An empirical study. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 16(1): 23-49.