

Teaching Māori in English-medium schools in New Zealand: Teacher responses to aspects of the curriculum guidelines for *te reo Māori* in English-medium school settings

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Abstract

Opinions are divided about how the content of language courses should be specified and whether educational authorities should include specifications/ suggestions about language content in national curriculum documents. Issues associated with language content are, however, not ones that can be avoided, particularly as teachers are expected to prepare students for national examinations at the upper levels of schooling and these examinations are necessarily predicated on general expectations about proficiency achievements and more specific expectations about the types of language with which students will be familiar. In this article, we explore the complex nature of some of the issues involved and the ways in which the New Zealand Ministry of Education has sought/ is seeking to resolve them in the case of the curriculum for Māori in English-medium schools. We also report on the responses of a sample of teachers of Māori in secondary schools in New Zealand to the omission of language examples from the final version of the curriculum guidelines document.

Introduction

Prior to 2009, the New Zealand Ministry of Education published only one curriculum document (referred to as a syllabus) that was directly concerned with Māori and that that was considered appropriate for use in English-medium school contexts. That document, *Tihē Mauri Ora!*, first appeared in 1990 and was intended for use with students from the beginning of schooling (age 5+) through to Form 2 (age 12+). With reference to that document, Crombie, Johnson and Te Kanawa (2001, p. 2) have made the following observation:

The writers were presented . . . with an extremely difficult task. First, there are no specific minimum requirements in relation to the teaching of Māori language and culture in mainstream schools in New Zealand. Secondly, the background of children in relation to knowledge and understanding of Māori language and culture differs considerably as does that of their teachers. Finally, the educational contexts in which children are introduced to Māori language and culture vary widely: from mainstream classes in which the predominant language is English, through bilingual (Māori and English) classes to, more recently, Māori immersion educational settings. In each of these settings, the cultural and linguistic expectations are very different. . . . In this context, it is not surprising that the aims, and the majority of the objectives, are expressed in very general terms.

The newly released curriculum guidelines document goes some way towards resolving these issues. It is intended for use in relation to the teaching of Māori as a school subject, to be applicable throughout schooling (from Years 1 – 13) and to be used in English-medium school settings only. In relation to the last of these, it is important to note that the reference to English-medium schooling is intended to refer

to school settings in which English (rather than Māori) is the usual medium of instruction. It is not intended to refer to the medium in which Māori is taught. Indeed, the preferred approach, as stated in the curriculum guidelines document itself, is one that is based on communicative language teaching (CLT). The implication is, therefore, that English will not be the primary medium of instruction in the case of the teaching of *te reo Māori*. Indeed, teachers are advised that “*te reo Māori* [should be] used as much as possible in the learning environment” (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009a, p. 24).

It is made clear in the curriculum guidelines document that although each of the Achievement Objectives (AOs) is introduced at one of the eight curriculum levels (and is a primary focus at that level), the expectation is not that all of the language that could be associated with that AO will be introduced at that level. Once AOs have been introduced, the intention is that they should be recycled (for revision and extension) on an ongoing basis. Thus, the language associated with a particular AO at the point where it is first introduced will be ‘simpler’ than that with which it is later associated. *Table 1* below illustrates, with reference to German, the language with which a particular AO might be associated when it is first introduced (level 1) and the language with which it might be associated when it is recycled at a higher level (level 2) - see Bruce and Whaanga, 2002 (pp. 9 & 11).

Table 1: *The recycling of AOs illustrated with reference to German (levels 1 & 2)*

Achievement Objective	Suggested structures: Curriculum level 1	Example: Curriculum level 1
Recognise, express and enquire about location . (Recycle at Levels 2 & 5)	<i>location e.g. hier, dort, da</i>	Wo ist das Buch? Hier.
	Suggested structures: Curriculum level 2	<i>Examples: Curriculum level 2</i>
	<i>location (locative prepositions only with dative singular of the definite article)</i>	Wo ist das Buch? Unter dem Tisch.
	<i>where you live (e.g. wohnen (in))</i>	Wo wohnst du? Ich wohne in Auckland.

The fact that AOs are introduced and then recycled means that decisions need to be made about the type of language the AOs will be associated with at different curriculum levels. There is a range of critical issues associated with who should make these decisions (decisions about *what* to teach), how they should be made, and how they relate to decisions about methodology (*how* to teach). Leaving such decisions to individual teachers may be consistent with their need to be responsive to the needs of particular learners and groups of learners. However, making decisions of this type is a complex matter. Furthermore, unless there is some consistency in the decision-making, learners who, for example, move from one school to another will be likely to experience difficulties. In addition, the decisions that teachers make at lower levels will inevitably have an impact at higher levels when students take national examinations, examinations that are necessarily predicated on general expectations about proficiency achievements and more specific expectations about the types of language with which students will be familiar. The situation becomes even more complex when we add to the mix the need to take account of much more than grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation (e.g. politeness conventions and the structure of written genres). In attempting to address issues such as these, the curriculum

writers included in early drafts of the curriculum guidelines a range of suggestions in the form of examples and language notes (associated with the AOs) and language focus summaries (associated with each of the eight curriculum levels). These were omitted from the final version of the document. However, teachers have been provided with an online 'grammar progression' and invited to provide feedback. Before discussing in more detail some of the issues associated with language content as they relate to the curriculum guidelines for Māori in the New Zealand curriculum, it is important to consider some of the ways in which these issues have been addressed in literature on language teaching and learning more generally.

Review of selected literature on curriculum, syllabus and course content in the case of additional languages

Issues associated with curriculum and curriculum content

The terms 'curriculum' and 'syllabus' are typically used in rather different ways in the context of different educational systems. Thus, for example, in the context of the North American educational system, the term 'syllabus' is rarely used, the term 'curriculum' being used *either* to cover all aspects of the design of language programmes, including programme content (that is, what is taught) *or* to refer exclusively to programme content. In the British educational system, and in educational systems modelled on it, the term 'curriculum' may be used *either* to refer to all aspects of language programmes, including their content (that is, in a way that encompasses syllabus) *or* all aspects of language programmes with the exception of their content (for which the term 'syllabus' is reserved). Confusion and uncertainty surrounding what is intended by use of the term 'curriculum' is particularly evident in the area of language education. This confusion and uncertainty appear to relate, in part, to publications that have emerged from the Council of Europe since the mid-1970s and, in particular, to aspects of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 1) makes the following claim:

[It] provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. The description also covers the cultural context in which language is set. The Framework also defines levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis [emphasis added].

Although the CEFR was designed for use within Europe and, in particular, aims to "facilitate the mutual recognition of qualifications gained in different learning contexts, and accordingly will aid European mobility" (p. 1), it is now having considerable influence in countries outside of Europe (including New Zealand). It is therefore interesting to note what it has to say on issues associated with curriculum, syllabus and course content. Thus, for example, it is noted in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 141) that:

Authorities, when drawing up curricular guidelines or formulating syllabuses, may concentrate on the specification of learning objectives. In doing so, they may specify only higher-level objectives . . . They are not obliged, although

they *may* wish to do so, to specify, in detail the vocabulary, grammar and function/notional repertoires which will enable learners to perform . . . tasks and treat . . . themes. They are not obliged, but *may* wish, to lay down guidelines or make suggestions as to the classroom methods to be employed and the stages through which learners are expected to progress [emphasis added].

This statement provides ‘authorities’ (presumably including Ministries of Education) with a justification for almost any approach to the language curriculum. If they decide to focus only on ‘higher level objectives’ (e.g. the type of objectives that may be associated with general levels of language proficiency), if they decide not to specify (in detail or otherwise) the types of language that learners are expected to be able to recognise and use at different educational stages, then who will be responsible for making decisions about more specific learning objectives and their realization? The answer to this question is provided in the CEFR (p. 141):

Textbook writers and course designers . . . are obliged to make concrete, detailed decisions on the selection and ordering of texts, activities, vocabulary and grammar to be presented to the learner. They are expected to provide detailed instructions for the classroom and/or individual tasks and activities to be undertaken by learners in response to the material presented.

Those who design textbooks and courses may (or may not) include practicing language teachers with expertise in pedagogically relevant ways of describing the target language. As is noted in the CEFR (Council of Europe, p. 141), “[their] products greatly influence the learning/teaching process”. What others might play a role in deciding what aspects of the target language learners are expected to master? According to the CEFR (p. 141), these others will include:

Those concerned with examinations and qualifications [who] will have to consider which learning parameters are relevant to the qualifications concerned, and the level required. They will have to make concrete decisions on which particular tasks and activities to include, which themes to handle, which formulae, idioms and lexical items to require candidates to recognize or recall, what sociocultural knowledge and skills to test, etc.

So far as the New Zealand school system is concerned, the upper levels of the curriculum are associated with national examinations, the prescriptions for these examinations being determined by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). Presumably, therefore, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority is expected either to (a) establish learning parameters for its examinations, or (b) respond to those learning parameters that have been established elsewhere. If the latter is the case, these learning parameters would need to have been firmly established. Thus far, most of them have not been. One of the reasons for this may be that it is considered best to leave language teachers free to make these decisions about learning parameters for themselves in the light of the needs to their students. However, responsiveness to the needs of students should not entail specifying the content of curriculum levels differently in the case of different students/ groups of students. It may, however, relate to the time taken to cover curriculum levels and/ or the teaching methodologies and materials used. It may relate to decisions about the integration of material associated with different levels. Thus, for example, teachers may decide to

extend students who are working mainly at a lower level by including some of the material that would generally be associated with a higher level, material that can be revisited again later.

We have seen that the CEFR makes reference to the roles of authorities, textbook and course designers and those concerned with examinations and qualifications. What, then, is the role of language teachers? So far as the writers of the CEFR (p. 141) are concerned:

Teachers are generally called upon to respect any official guidelines, use textbooks and course materials (which they may or may not be in a position to analyse, evaluate, select and supplement), devise and administer tests and prepare pupils and students for qualifying examinations.

All of this raises important issues relating to responsibility and consistency. If, in the absence of specific guidelines on content, authorities rely on textbook designers, course designers and examination bodies to determine the content of language programmes, how can they be sure that that content will be appropriate, particularly in a context where teachers may not be in a position to “analyse, evaluate, select and supplement”? If, on the other hand, they decide to make many of these decisions themselves, in consultation with teachers, they will need to take account of all of the relevant factors, including debates surrounding the ways in which content is specified.

Issues associated with syllabus and syllabus content

In the 1950s and 1960s, linguistic structuralism was a significant factor in the development of second/ foreign language syllabuses in which language structures, particularly syntactic structures, were central (structural syllabuses). However, as the influence of structuralism waned, as linguists and applied linguists became increasingly aware of the fact that much of what is communicated is not directly encoded in language, as the concept of ‘communicative competence/s’ developed (see, for example, Hymes, 1971), the relevance of syllabuses that were almost entirely based on linguistic structures was increasingly subject to challenge.

One of the first coherent challenges to the concept of language syllabuses that focused almost exclusively on linguistic structures was launched from within the Council of Europe. Wilkins (1976) argued in favour of what he referred to as a ‘notional syllabus’ which, he maintained, was superior to a structural syllabus in that it started from/ focused on meaning rather than form. The major categorizing principles of such syllabuses were *functions* (e.g. greetings, threats, warnings), *notions* (which can relate to (a) meanings that can be conveyed structurally (e.g. past time), (b) meanings that are conveyed lexically (e.g. family membership), or (c) meanings that can be conveyed through a combination of vocabulary and structure), and *modal meanings* (e.g. perspectives such as possibility and probability that can be conveyed in a range of ways). Clearly, this sort of organization is predicated on the assumption that (a) there will not be a strict separation of vocabulary and form and pedagogically oriented language descriptions, and (b) different ways of expressing the same/ similar functions, notions and modal meanings will be highlighted. All of this has implications in terms of the providing teachers with a meaning-based system of content-based decision-making.

Although there are some problems associated with functional specification (see, for example, Crombie, 1988), “many practitioners find it . . . advantageous to go from meaning to form” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 116). This is the approach that underpins Council of Europe publications such as *Threshold 1990* (van Ek & Trim, [1991a]/ 1998a), *Waystage 1990* (van Ek & Trim, [1991b]/ 1998b) and *Vantage* (van Ek & Trim, [1997]/2001) which include specifications relating to the teaching of English “that [start] from a systematic classification of communicative functions and of notions, divided into general and specific, and secondarily [deal] with forms, lexical and grammatical, as their exponents” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 116). Thus, where Achievement Objectives are specified in terms of communicative tasks (as they are in the case of the curriculum guidelines for Māori), “analysis of the functions, notions, grammar and vocabulary necessary to perform the communicative tasks . . . could be part of the process of developing new sets of language specifications” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 33). This is, of course, not all that is required. Other aspects of linguistic skills and knowledge need to be accommodated (e.g. phonology and orthography) as do aspects of sociolinguistic skills and knowledge (e.g. rules of politeness) and pragmatic skills and knowledge (e.g. the ability to structure complete texts of different kinds according to accepted conventions.)

Among the many other approaches to designing language syllabuses are, for example, approaches that prioritize culture (*the cultural syllabus* – see, for example, the discussion in Stern, 1992), situations (*the situational syllabus* - see, for example, the discussion in Ur, 2000, p. 178; Wilkins, 1976, p.16), subject content (*the content syllabus* - see, for example, the discussion in Eskey, 1997), vocabulary (*the lexical syllabus* - see, for example, the discussion in Sinclair & Renouf, 1988; Willis, 1990), tasks (*the task-based syllabus* - see, for example, the discussion in Gaffield-Vile, 1996; Nunan, 2004) and topics (*the topic-based syllabus* - see, for example, the discussion in Bourke, 2006). The fact is, however, that most current approaches to language syllabus design are multi-dimensional, with different aspects of content being likely to be given different degrees of priority depending on the nature of the learning programme, the needs/interests of the learners and the stage of learning. Thus, for example, it is noted in the CEFR (Council of Europe, p. 168) that whereas “language teaching in schools has to a large extent tended to stress objectives concerned with either the individual’s *general competence* (especially at primary school level) or *communicative language competence* (particularly for those aged between 11 and 16)”, courses designed for working adults may “formulate objectives in terms of specific *language activities* or functional ability in a particular *domain*”.

The certainties that accompanied the design of language syllabuses in the heyday of linguistic structuralism have long gone. The issues that need to be addressed in designing contemporary language syllabuses are complex ones. Factors that impact on syllabus content are often now seen as overlapping with those that impact on materials and methodology. The fact remains, however, that complex though these issues are, they need to be addressed. Within the context of a national curriculum framework that provides Achievement Objectives, they need to be addressed in ways that ensure some consistency of interpretation of these objectives. Otherwise, there is little or no point in providing them in the first place. As Brumfit (1980, p. 3) stressed three decades ago:

A syllabus is a way of describing something that must be learnt for pedagogic purposes, and the chief characteristic of an educational institution is its

focusing function; that is, an educational institution acts as a physical and temporal focus for learning. The limitations in time and place provide the major differences between formal and informal learning: there is an implicit promise in setting up an educational institution to use procedures that will in some sense be more efficient than the more or less random ones of informal learning in the world outside. And a syllabus is a statement of efficient learning.

Examples, notes and language focus points included in early versions of the *te reo Māori* curriculum guidelines document

The New Zealand Ministry of Education curriculum guidelines document for Māori in English-medium schooling includes each of the following:

- an initial section dealing with, among other things, reasons for learning te reo Māori, what is involved in communicative language teaching, community involvement in the teaching and learning process, approaches to assessment and the structure of the New Zealand curriculum with its eight levels;
- four proficiency target statements, each one associated with two of the eight levels of the curriculum;
- achievement objectives for each of the eight curriculum levels, expressed in terms of communicative outcomes rather than specific linguistic realizations (e.g. communicate about likes and dislikes, giving reasons where appropriate) accompanied by *language modes* (reading, writing, listening, viewing, presenting), *suggested socio-cultural aspects*, *suggested text-types*, *topics*, and *learning and assessment activities*.

In early versions of the guidelines document, each of the Achievement Objectives (AOs) was accompanied by examples of the type of language that that might be associated with its realization at the level at which it was introduced.¹ There were also notes focusing on particular aspects of language and, at the end of each level, an indication of the overall suggested language focus points for that level. Thus, for example, at curriculum level 6, the following examples were associated with the achievement objective *Give and follow instructions*:

Kia pai te tunu i ngā whāngai i a ia ā te rima karaka ***kei*** matekai ia.
Kaua e wareware ki te waea mai ā te waru karaka. ***Kaua e*** kaipaipa.
Kaua e noho ki runga i te tēpu.

Included in the suggested language focus list for curriculum level 6, were:

Use of *kaua e . . .* in the context of negation;
Use of *kia* in imperative constructions.

Associated with the AO *greet, farewell and thank people and respond the greetings and thanks* (appearing at level 1) were the following examples and notes (see *Table 1*):

Table 1: Examples and notes accompanying one of the AOs appearing at level 1 (greet, farewell and thank people and respond the greetings and thanks) in an early version of the curriculum guidelines document

	Examples	Notes
Greetings	Kia ora. Tēnā koe. Tēnā kōrua. Tēnā koutou. Tēnā koe e koro. Tēnā koe e Tio. Tēnā koe e Te Ika. Tēnā koe Aroha. Tēnā koe Lee. Tēnā koe Sylvia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the inclusion of singular, dual and plural in Examples 2 – 4. Note that ‘e’ is used with names and terms of address except where (a) the name is not a Māori name, or (b) where the name has three or more morae (A mora is a bit like a syllable. Consists of either a single short vowel or a consonant followed by a short vowel.)
Farewells	Ka kite anō. Ka kite i a koe. Ka kite i a kōrua. Ka kite i a koutou. Noho mai rā.	
Thanks	Kia ora. Ka nui ngā mihi ki a koe. Ka nui ngā mihi ki a kōrua. Ka nui ngā mihi ki a koutou.	

Examples and notes that accompanied one of the AOs introduced at level 2 (communicate about relationships between people) are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Examples and notes accompanying one of the AOs appearing at level 2 (communicate about relationships between people) in an early version of the curriculum guidelines document

Examples	Notes
<p>Grandparents A: Ko wai mā ō tīpuna? B: Ko Kohu rāua ko Whiti.</p> <p>Uncles and aunts A: Ko wai mā ō mātua kēkē? B: Ko Poia rātou ko Pare ko Hone.</p> <p>Siblings of the same gender A: Tokohia ō tēina? (younger siblings) B1: Tokowhā aku tēina. (plural) B2: Kotahi taku teina. (singular)</p> <p>A: Tokohia ō tuākana? (older siblings) B1: Tokowhā aku tuākana. (plural) B2: Kotahi taku tuakana. (singular)</p> <p>Siblings of a different gender A: Tokohia ō tungāne? (brothers of a female) B1: Tokorima aku tungāne. (plural) B2: Kotahi taku tungāne. (singular)</p> <p>A: Tokohia ō tuāhine? (sisters of a male) B1: Tokorima aku tuāhine. (plural) B2: Kotahi taku tuahine. (singular)</p> <p>Relationship questions with negative response A: Tokohia ō tēina? (younger siblings) B: Kāore aku tēina.</p> <p>A: Tokohia ō tuākana? (older siblings) B: Kāore aku tuākana.</p> <p>A: Tokohia ō tungāne? (brothers of a female) B: Kāore aku tungāne.</p> <p>A: Tokohia ō tuāhine? (sisters of a male) B: Kāore aku tuāhine.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tō becomes ō for plural. Mā also indicates plural. toko- is used for counting human individuals with the numeral rua – iwa, and with hia indicating the question form. aku indicates plural. In the case of names for relatives (e.g. teina (sg.); tēina (pl.)), the vowel is lengthened to indicate plural. Note that the vowel is not lengthened to indicate plural in the case of tungāne. Plural is marked in the determiner preceding it. Answering in the negative involves the plural form.

The examples and notes included in early versions of the curriculum document did not focus exclusively on vocabulary, grammar and grammatical meanings. Also included were idiomatic expressions and discourse markers. Thus, the following examples and notes (see *Table 3*) accompanied one of the AOs that appeared at level 8 (*present an argument or point of view, with reasons*).

Table 3: Examples and notes accompanying one of the AOs appearing at level 8 (*present an argument or point of view, with reasons*) in an early version of the curriculum guidelines document

Examples	Notes
<p><i>Tēnā whakarongo mai ki tāku kōrero.</i></p> <p><i>Nā, whakarongo mai ki āku kōrero.</i></p> <p><i>Tuatahi, he ātaahua te ia o te reo Māori, nā te mea, ka āhei te tangata ki te rongō i te mauri o ngā kupu.</i></p> <p><i>Nā reira, kei te tika tāku kōrero.</i></p> <p><i>Heoi anō, me whakapono mai ki tāku kōrero. E kī mai te kōrero:</i></p> <p><i>‘Tā te tamariki, tāna mahi, he wāwāhi tahā’</i></p> <p><i>E ai ki te pepeha:</i></p> <p><i>‘Waikato taniwha rau, he piko he taniwha, he piko he taniwha’</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the idiomatic introduction. firstly, secondly etc. therefore: conclusion/ summary. introducing concluding remarks proverbial saying used to support the argument proverbial saying to refer to iwi.

Associating the AOs with examples and providing notes, as is done in the New Zealand curriculum guidelines for French and German (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2002a & b) has a number of potential advantages. These examples and notes can be related *directly* to particular AOs (so that the focus is primarily on the role they play in conveying particular types of meaning) and can be designed in such a way as to focus attention *only* on that information that is likely to be most useful at a particular stage in relation to lesson planning.

At the end of each curriculum level, a summary of suggested language focus points was included. Thus, for example, the language recommended for focus in connection with the AOs introduced at level 1 were as indicated in *Table 4* below.

Table 4: Language focus points associated with the AOs introduced at level 1) in an early version of the curriculum guidelines document

Suggested language focus	Some suggested vocabulary	Notes
Affirmative	<i>Āe</i>	
Articles definite indefinite demonstrative (close to speaker) interrogative determiner	<i>te</i> (singular); <i>ngā</i> (plural) <i>he</i> <i>tēnei</i> (singular); <i>ēnei</i> (plural) <i>tēhea</i> (singular)	In response to a question involving the singular/plural demonstrative for location near the speaker (e.g. <i>tēnei/ēnei</i>), teachers should accept a noun group such as ‘ <i>he pene</i> ’ (meaning ‘a pen’, ‘pens’) as an appropriate reply at this level.
Declarative form with rising intonation for question	<i>Kei . . . ?</i>	
Locative Nouns	<i>runga, muri, mua, raro, roto</i>	
Negation	<i>kāore/ kāo</i>	

Table 4 (cont.): Language focus points associated with the AOs introduced at level 1) in an early version of the curriculum guidelines document

Suggested language focus	Some suggested vocabulary	Notes
Nouns classroom objects days of the week months tribes parts of the marae personal names names of people special occasions	<i>tēpu, tūru, pene, pene rākau, rūri . . .</i> <i>Mane, Tūrei, Wenerei . . .</i> <i>Hānuere, Pēpuere, Māehe . . .</i> <i>Ngāti Porou, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāpuhi . .</i> <i>wharenuī, wharekai, marae ātea,</i> <i>marae . . .</i> <i>Tio, Aroha, Te Ika, Lee, Sylvia . . .</i> <i>koro, kui, tama, hine . . . (with ‘e’)</i> <i>rā whānau, Kirihimete . . .</i>	The terms for days and months in Māori vary according to the system. For example, there are three possible ways of referring to months: using a set of terms borrowed from English; using a set of traditional terms; and using a set of terms based on numbers. Some learners may find dates too difficult at this level. Teachers should therefore feel free to deal with dates (including birthdays) at a higher level if they believe this to be appropriate for a particular group of students.
Particles	<i>e (+ names)</i>	
Possessive Pronouns neutral: first, second, third person	<i>taku, tō, tana (singular); aku, ō, ana (plural)</i>	The ‘neutral’ form of the possessive pronouns is selected because it can be used for both <i>a</i> -category and <i>o</i> -category possession.
Prepositions location	<i>kei . . .</i> <i>i . . .</i>	
Pronouns - subject singular: (first person) singular (first person, third person) dual (second person) plural (second person)	<i>au, ahau</i> <i>koe, ia</i> <i>kōrua</i> <i>koutou</i>	In English, a gender distinction is made between ‘he’ and ‘she’. In Māori, however, this distinction is not made in the personal pronoun form ‘ <i>ia</i> ’ (he/she) where gender is normally elicited from the context.
Question forms	<i>Ko te aha . . . ?</i> <i>Ko wai . . . ?</i> <i>He aha . . . ?</i> <i>Nō hea . . . ?</i> <i>Kei hea . . . ?</i> <i>E hia . . . ?</i> <i>Kei te pēhea . . . ?</i>	
Verbs – imperative forms	<i>E tū. E noho.</i> <i>Haere mai. Haere atu.</i> <i>Whakarongo. Pānui mai. Titiro mai.</i> <i>Titiro atu. Hoihoi. Turituri.</i>	
Other Cardinal numbers 1 . . . 9 10 11 . . . 19 20, 30 21 . . . 31 (not including 30) Ordinal numbers 1 . . . 9 10 . . . 31	<i>tahi, rua, toru, whā, rima, ono, whitu,</i> <i>waru, iwa</i> <i>tekau</i> <i>tekau mā tahi . . . tekau mā iwa</i> <i>e rua tekau, e toru tekau</i> <i>e rua tekau mā tahi . . . e rua tekau mā iwa . . .</i> <i>e toru tekau mā tahi</i> <i>tuatahi, tuarua . . . tuaiwa,</i> <i>tekau, tekau mā tahi . . .</i>	Often referred to as ‘basic numbers’ Formula is ‘ <i>tekau mā X</i> ’, where X is one of the basic numbers. <i>Mā</i> can never be omitted here. Formula is ‘ <i>e X tekau</i> ’, where X is one of the basic numbers from <i>rua</i> (2) to <i>iwa</i> (9). Formula is ‘ <i>e X tekau mā Y</i> ’, where X ranges from <i>rua</i> (2) to <i>iwa</i> (9), and Y from <i>tahi</i> (1) to <i>iwa</i> (9). <i>Mā</i> can never be omitted but ‘ <i>e</i> ’ is frequently left out. Ordinal numbers 1-9: prefix <i>tua</i> -plus basic number. Ordinal numbers: 10-31 no prefix. The formula here is exactly the same as that used for cardinal numbers from 10 onwards.

The grammar progression resource

As indicated by Crombie and Whaanga (2006, p.53), an early version of the curriculum guidelines document was trialled. The trials included:

- written questionnaires for teachers;
- semi-structured interviews with teachers;
- classroom-based observation schedules; and
- questionnaires for facilitators.

Following the trials, the Ministry's curriculum review group made a number of recommendations. These included:

- to avoid any possibility that they would be interpreted as a listing of expected lesson content, the number of examples should be reduced;
- examples should be accompanied by English translations.

Because "the trials indicated that teachers were interested in understanding more about the Māori language" the principal writers recommended that "the language notes that appeared in the draft version of the curriculum document be retained" (see Crombie & Whaanga, p. 54).

When the final version of the curriculum guidelines document appeared, a few very general language indicators were included. These were associated with what are referred to as 'language modes' (*whakarongo* (listening); *pānui* (reading); *mātakitaki* (viewing); *kōrero* (speaking); *tuhituhi* (writing); *whakaatu* (presenting)). Thus, for example, associated with *whakarongo* at curriculum level 5 is "distinguish between past and present actions and states". All other language indicators (which had been presented as suggestions only) had been removed. This appeared to be a very significant omission, particularly in view of the fact that many of the teachers consulted had responded positively to them and in view also of the following point made by Bruce and Whaanga (2002, p. 13):

For many languages, particularly those languages that are used widely internationally, the resources that are available to curriculum developers are vast. Not only is there a wide range of approaches to the pedagogic description of these languages, but there are also many existing curriculum and syllabus documents and many teaching resources of various kinds. In the case of te reo Māori, there are considerably fewer resources. . . . For example, in the case of English, curriculum developers who need to determine exactly how a particular structure works or exactly what the differences are between the contexts in which one structure rather than another can be used, can consult a wide range of resource materials.

However, even though the language focus sections were removed from the curriculum guidelines document itself, the Ministry of Education, as indicated earlier, released a 'grammar progression' (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009b). It is noted in the introduction to that grammar progression that "[at] levels 1 and 2, some items are best treated as 'unanalysed chunks'. This is certainly consistent with the approach adopted in the curriculum guidelines document. However, the examples provided in the grammar progression raise issues of some significance. These examples are (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009b, ¶2):

Kia ora' is one way of saying hello or thank you. (It is in the form of a verb phrase, literally meaning 'be well', with the elements 'kia' verb particle and 'ora' verb, but do your particular learners need to know that at this stage?)
'Kei te pēhea koe?' is a common part of a greeting routine – you tend to ask how someone is when you greet them. (It is in the form of a Verbal Sentence made up of a Predicate and Subject. The predicate is in the form of a verb phrase and the subject is in the form of a noun phrase etc but is this information appropriate for your learners at this level?)

The answer to the questions asked in the two extracts above is surely '*Certainly not*'. However, if the same question were to be asked with reference to higher levels, the answer should, we believe, be very similar – '*Almost certainly not*'. The aim in teaching *te reo Māori* in schools is to produce students with proficiency (specified in different ways at different curriculum levels) in speaking, listening, reading and writing. It is not to produce language analysts. It does not follow from this that it is never appropriate to discuss *te reo Māori* in analytical terms. There is no doubt that certain types of 'knowledge *about* language' can benefit language learners. However, presenting language rules *explicitly* is not generally now regarded as a useful way of teaching learners to use a language, particularly where a communicative approach is recommended (as it is in the case of the *te reo Māori* curriculum guidelines). The teacher's task is to present rules and constraints² *implicitly*, that is, to provide learners with contextualized samples of language in ways that will encourage them to notice those similarities and differences that will lead them towards awareness of rules and constraints.³ Thus, so far as the principal writers were concerned, reference in the curriculum guidelines document to the fact that students in the early stages of learning will often treat segments of language as 'unanalyzed chunks' was intended to indicate that all that is sometimes necessary is that they should associate *whole utterances* (e.g. *Haere atu*) with 'global meanings' (e.g. *Go away*). At later stages, they will begin to realize that parts of these utterances have particular meanings, that, for example, *atu* has the specific meaning of 'in a direction away from the speaker'. Unfortunately, the extracts from the grammar progression resource quoted above give the impression that providing explicit detailed grammatical rules is a necessary part of teaching higher level learners to use the language. Furthermore, it seems to conflict with the following advice that appears later in the introduction to the grammar progression resource: *Introduce grammar in 'context'. This is a key way to achieving understanding.*

Further extracts from the introduction to the grammar progression resource are provided below (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009b, ¶4):

The references given here are for the teacher. They provide explanations for aspects of the grammar of Māori written for adults. *In most cases* teachers will not show their learners the reference books. Nor will they *necessarily* use the technical language used in the books. [Italics added]

The extract above implies that there are occasions on which it might be appropriate for teachers of *te reo Māori* to show learners the reference books to which reference is made in the grammar progression resource and even to use the technical language that appears in them. Certainly, there are occasions on which it may be appropriate to teach learners *about* *te reo Māori*. However, the danger is that the extract above will be interpreted as having some direct bearing on teaching learners *to use* *te reo Māori*.

This danger is reinforced by advice such as the following (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009b, ¶5):

The teacher can explain the basic shape of a phrase in Māori, and then explain the different types of phrases (for example, noun phrases, verb phrases, prepositional phrases) and the parts they have, and the types of words that can fit into each part. *Then* the learners can experiment with making their own phrases to express their own meanings [Italics added].

The danger is that the extract above could be read as signalling that learners require *explicit* grammatical explanation prior to/ in order to be able to experiment with creating their own meanings.

The following extract of the grammar progression is also potentially confusing/misleading (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009b, ¶9):

The grammar progression is presented with the needs of secondary school teachers and learners in mind. Younger learners are likely to progress more slowly through the levels, partly because of their level of conceptual development, but also because they may not spend as much time on *te reo Māori* each week in their primary or intermediate school settings.

In common with all other New Zealand Ministry of Education curriculum guidelines documents, the curriculum guidelines document relating to *te reo Māori* has eight attainment levels. The achievement objectives remain the same irrespective of the age of learners and of the time it takes them to complete each level. Therefore, a grammar progression that relates to the curriculum document and to the achievement objectives it contains should be the same irrespective of the age of the learners or of the amount of time it takes them to complete each level. This is surely an assumption that is built into the New Zealand Curriculum Framework overall.

At the end of the introduction, the grammar progression provides a list of references (Bauer, 1997; Harlow, 2001; Head, 1989; Te Taura Whiri, 1999), followed by grammar progression tables, one for each two levels of the curriculum. Each of the tables is preceded by a summary. The following extract from the summary that precedes the table relating to curriculum levels 1 & 2 reinforces the impression that teachers are actually expected to teach grammar rules explicitly:

At levels 1 and 2 - introduce basic ideas about the structure of words, phrases and sentences in Māori. Add to this 'unanalysed chunks', or formulaic and routine ways of expressing particular meanings – for example, simple greeting and leave-taking routines - without analysing their structure.

The tables provide information about the structure of *te reo Māori*, generally (but not always), accompanied by an indication of where in the resource materials recommended further information is to be found. Thus for example, for information about non-past progressive (with *ka* + verb and *kei te* + verb), progressive aspect (with *e* + verb + *ana*), simple past tense (with *i* + verb) and perfect aspect (with *kua* + verb), readers are directed to sections headed 'verb phrases' and 'verbal particles' in Harlow (2001, pp, 108 & 51 – 64).

It is difficult to see how all of the information referred to above can be motivated by the achievement objectives that appear at levels 1 & 2 of the curriculum guidelines document.⁴ Thus, for example, it is not until curriculum levels 3 and 5 that the following achievement objectives (referring to past time) occur:

- 3.5 Communicate about immediate past activities;
- 5.1 Communicate about past activities and events;
- 5.5 Communicate about present and past states, feelings and opinions.

In connection with this, it is important to note that users are invited to provide feedback about the grammar progression. Issues such as this may be resolved in that process of consultation.

Before considering why The New Zealand Ministry of Education may have decided to exclude all language indicators from its curriculum guidelines for *te reo Māori* in English-medium settings, it is important to give careful consideration to some critical developments in the area of the design of language curricula and language syllabuses.

Responses of a sample of teachers to the New Zealand Ministry of Education's curriculum guidelines for *te reo Māori* in English-medium school settings

In 2009, a questionnaire-based survey of a sample of teachers of *te reo Māori* in English-medium secondary school settings was conducted as part of the doctoral research of one of the authors of this paper. The primary aim of the survey was to investigate the backgrounds, attitudes and practices of a sample of teachers of Māori in mainstream school settings, the main focus being on language background, teaching qualifications and teaching experience, and attitudes, beliefs and practices relating to curriculum documentation, teaching resources and pedagogic approaches. The questionnaire contained 42 questions. The questionnaires were mailed to 50% of those New Zealand English-medium schools that offer *te reo Māori* as a school subject and were also made available at a meeting of the Tainui Teachers' Association. Thirty-two (32) completed questionnaires were returned in the first round. In terms of age range, 2 of the respondents were 30 or under, 8 were between 31 and 40, 10 between 41 and 50, 9 between 51 and 60 and 3 over 60. Twenty eight (28) indicated that their first language was English, 8 that it was *te reo Māori*. Sixty five per cent (65%) indicated that they had a qualification that was specific to the teaching of *te reo Māori*. In this section, we report on responses to that part of the questionnaire that related to responses the Ministry of Education's curriculum guidelines document for the teaching and learning of *te reo Māori* in English-medium school settings.

Asked whether they had received a copy of the final draft version of the Ministry of Education's curriculum guidelines for the teaching and learning of *te reo Māori*, 27 indicated that they had, 3 that they had not and 2 that they could not remember.⁵ Asked whether they had completed the questionnaire that accompanied that draft version, only 12 indicated that they had. When those who had completed the questionnaire were asked whether they believed that the questions included in that questionnaire were the right ones (i.e. the questions that needed to be asked), 4 reported believing that the questions asked were the right ones, 7 that they were not and 1 that only some of them were.

Asked whether they believed that the document would be useful to them in planning *te reo Māori* programmes in their school, 28 responded. Of these, 17 indicated that it would, 9 that it would be useful to some extent and 2 that it would not be useful at all.

It was noted in connection with the next question that the final version of the curriculum document did not provide examples of the type of language that could be associated with each of the achievement objectives (AOs). An indication of the type of guidance that might have been provided (taken from an early version of the curriculum document) was provided (see *Table 5* below).

Table 5: An indicator of the type of examples that were provided in an early version of the curriculum document

AO	Examples
1.1 Greet, farewell and thank people and respond to greetings and thanks	<p>Formal greetings: <i>Tēnā koe/kōrua/koutou.</i> <i>Tēnā kōrua, e hoa mā; Tēnā koutou, tamariki mā.</i></p> <p>Informal greeting: <i>Kia ora.</i></p> <p>Informal farewells: <i>Ka kite anō; Hei konei rā, Hei konā rā, Noho ake rā.</i></p> <p>Formal farewells: <i>E noho rā; Haere rā; Hei konā rā</i> (phone).</p> <p>Informal thanks: <i>Tēnā koe; Kia ora.</i></p> <p>Formal thanks: <i>Ngā mihi nui ki a koe/kōrua/koutou.</i></p> <p>Terms of address: <i>E kui, e koro, e tama, e kare, e hika, e mara, e hine, e hoa</i></p>

Survey participants were asked to indicate whether they believed that examples of this type would have been useful. Thirty (31) of the 32 participants responded to this question, with 30 indicating that they believed that examples of this type would have been useful and 1 that they would not.

As a preamble to the next question, it was indicated that even more detail could have been provided, the example below (also taken from an earlier version of the curriculum document) was provided (see *Table 6* below).

Table 6: An indicator of the more detailed type of examples that were provided in an early version of the curriculum document

AO	Suggested structures	Examples
1.5 Recognise, express and enquire about location	<p><i>Location</i></p> <p>Past location: using 'i' preposition to mark tense.</p> <p>Present location using 'kei' preposition to mark tense.</p> <p><i>Interrogative forms</i></p> <p>Past tense: using 'i' preposition to mark tense with question form 'w/hea'.</p> <p>Present tense: Using 'kei' preposition to mark tense with question form 'w/hea'.</p>	<p>Location</p> <p>Past location <i>I runga i te whare; I roto i te whare; I muri i te whare; I mua i te whare.</i></p> <p>Present location <i>Kei runga i te whare; Kei roto i te whare; Kei muri i te whare; Kei mua i te whare.</i></p> <p>Interrogative forms</p> <p>Past tense <i>I w/hea te ngeru?</i></p> <p>Present tense <i>Kei w/hea te ngeru?</i></p>

Survey participants were asked to indicate whether they believed that examples of this type would have been useful. This time, 30 of the 32 participants responded, with 29 indicating that they believed that examples of this type would have been useful, and 1 that they would not.

The curriculum guidelines for the teaching and learning of *te reo Māori* in English-medium schools recommend a communicative approach. Asked to select, from a list of possible options, one or more of their preferred approaches, 22 (69%) selected *communicative*, with a surprisingly high number (18/56%) selecting *grammar translation*. Clearly, some of the survey participants selected both of these categories. Even so, when asked to indicate which of a number of areas they felt they needed to know more about, only 17 (53%) selected teaching methodologies.

Conclusion

The certainties that accompanied the teaching of modern languages in the heyday of linguistic structuralism are long gone. In the context of the uncertainty and disagreement that have characterized much that has been written about the teaching and learning of languages over the past few decades, it is extremely difficult to provide effective guidance at a national level. This difficulty is compounded by the need to ensure that any guidelines that are provided are open to similar types of interpretation by examination authorities, course designers, materials writers, teachers, and those who provide supplementary resources of various kinds. These problems are unlikely to be resolved in the absence of *specific agreement* about how decisions are to be made about the language content associated with different curriculum levels and about how these decisions can best be articulated so as to make them directly relevant to the pedagogic contexts in which teachers are operating. In the context of the teaching and learning of languages, decisions about *what* to teach cannot be divorced from decisions about *how* to teach. It is the *integration* of Achievement Objectives, language content, topics, texts types, modes, socio-cultural themes, and learning and assessment activities that breathes life into a language programme. In producing a curriculum guidelines document for *te reo Māori* in English-medium schools, the New Zealand Ministry of Education began a process that will necessarily involve many years of discussion and experimentation if it is to be of genuine usefulness to teachers and learners.

Endnotes

1. Arguably, it would have been better had there also been examples of the language that might be associated with each of these AOs when it was recycled at a higher levels.
2. The term ‘constraints’ is intended to refer here to social and cultural constraints such as the use of certain politeness forms in certain circumstances.
3. An example of this is provided in the article by Johnson and Nock that also appears in this issue.
4. These are as follows:
 - 1.1 Greet, farewell, and thank people and respond to greetings and acknowledgments;
 - 1.2 Introduce themselves and others and respond to introductions;
 - 1.3 Communicate about number, using days of the week, months, and dates;
 - 1.4 Communicate about personal information, such as name, parents’ and grandparents’ names, iwi, hapū, mountain, and river or home town and place of family origin;
 - 1.5 Communicate about location;
 - 1.6 Understand and use a range of politeness conventions (for example, ways of

- acknowledging people, expressing regret, and complimenting people;
- 1.7 Use and respond to simple classroom language (including asking for the word to express something in Māori);
 - 2.1 Communicate about relationships between people;
 - 2.2 Communicate about ownership;
 - 2.3 Communicate about likes and dislikes, giving reasons where appropriate;
 - 2.4 Communicate about time, weather and seasons;
 - 2.5 Communicate about physical characteristics, personality and feelings.
5. It may be that some of these teachers did not receive a copy because they were not distributed by heads of department.

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