
Bilingual Education in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Richard Hill

Contents

Introduction	2
Early Developments	3
Pacific Islands (Pasifika) Background	4
Major Contributions	4
Māori	4
Pasifika Bilingual Programs	6
Work in Progress	7
Māori	7
Pasifika	10
Problems and Difficulties	11
Māori	11
Pasifika	12
Future Directions	13
Pasifika	13
Māori	14
Cross-References	15
References	15

Abstract

Bilingual education in the context of New Zealand is now over 30 years old. The two largest linguistic minority groups involved in this type of education – the Indigenous Māori and Pasifika peoples of Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islands and Niuean and Tokelauan backgrounds – have made many gains but have struggled

R. Hill (✉)

Faculty of Education, University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand

e-mail: rihara@waikato.ac.nz

in a national context where minority languages have low status. Māori bilingual programs are well established and have made a significant contribution towards reducing Māori language shift that in the 1970s looked to be beyond regeneration. Pasifika bilingual education by contrast is not widely available and not well resourced by the New Zealand government. Both forms continue to need support and a renewed focus at local and national levels.

This chapter provides an overview of past development of Māori and Pasifika bilingual education and present progress. For Māori, the issues relate primarily to how to boost language regeneration, particularly between the generations. Gaining greater support for immersion programs and further strengthening bilingual education pedagogies, particularly relating to achieving biliteracy objectives, are key. In the context of Pasifika, extending government and local support would not only safeguard the languages but has the potential to counteract long-established patterns of low Pasifika student achievement in mainstream/English-medium schooling contexts. Finally, the future of both forms of bilingual education can be safeguarded if they are encompassed within a national languages policy that ensures minority language development in the predominantly English monolingual national context of New Zealand.

Keywords

Maori medium • bilingual • Pasifika • immersion • indigenous

Introduction

Aotearoa/New Zealand has two main bilingual education contexts, Māori and Pasifika.¹ Both forms involve minority groups; the Māori language is the Indigenous language of Aotearoa/New Zealand, while the languages of the Pasifika people were brought to this country from the islands of Polynesia from the 1960s onwards. Both forms seek to safeguard the languages for future generations and ensure educational success of their children. However, they differ in the status their languages have in New Zealand society and the extent of language shift they have suffered. Since the Māori language is the Indigenous language, it enjoys greater state support. However, the forces of colonialism have impacted negatively upon the language and there has been more significant language shift to English as a first (and often only) language among Māori. In contrast, Pasifika languages are still spoken by a higher percentage of Pasifika people, but because the languages have been brought to New Zealand, they receive less government and local support. As such, the continued nurturing of bilingual education provisions in Aotearoa/New Zealand is necessary to secure the future of these languages and the academic achievement of their children.

¹Pasifika is the term used to describe Pacific people living in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Early Developments

Bilingual education in Aotearoa/New Zealand commenced in the form of recognized programs in the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, the conditions that led to the need for a formal intervention were 150 years in the making, having occurred through the processes of colonization. Prior to European migration, Aotearoa/New Zealand had been the homeland of the Māori people for around 800 years (King 2003). The first British contact occurred in 1769 with Captain James Cook's arrival, which was followed by a gradual settlement of Pākehā (Europeans) to the 1830s and rapid settlement thereafter. During this early period, the Pākehā missionaries who came as part of the settlement process taught the Māori people using Māori translations of the Bible, in which Māori eagerly engaged. Seventy years after Cook's arrival in 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi was signed between the British Crown and representatives of the Māori people, which brought Māori under the control of Britain (New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2014). The signing of the Treaty of Waitangi represented a significant event, after which the face of the New Zealand was transformed, including the patterns of language use.

The first attempts at manipulating Māori language speaking in Aotearoa/New Zealand occurred with the passing of the Education Ordinance (1847) and Native Schools Act (1867). The Education Ordinance created four principles for mission schools including the need for schools to teach religious instruction and industrial training, compulsory inspection, and the need for schools to solely use the English language for instruction. Schools were also required to be inspected by government-appointed inspectors. The Native Schools Act (1867) extended the early act by providing £7,000 for schools. In return, communities were expected to supply the land for the school, assist in the building costs, and provide a portion of the teacher's salary (New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2014).

These early attempts to undermine Māori language use by Pākehā administrators were largely unsuccessful. However, by the turn of the twentieth century, signs of Māori language shift were appearing, and by 1930, 10 % of the Māori population no longer spoke Māori in their homes. Four decades later in the 1970s, 74 % of Māori were no longer able to speak the Māori language.

The period from the late 1970s to the 1980s was thus an important time for Māori. As minority groups around the world were becoming increasingly less tolerant of their marginalized positions and the concomitant loss of their language, Māori were also becoming actively vocal on the political stage (Spolsky 2005). Groups such as the *Ngā Tamatoa* organization of young Māori university students started to challenge non-Māori laws and to push for equal rights for Māori (Benton 1981). This activism and increasing societal awareness led to important initiatives that promoted the Māori language, the most significant being when Māori representatives lodged a claim for the Māori language with the Waitangi Tribunal, the court that considers historical injustices against Māori tribes. The Tribunal ruled that the Māori language is a *taonga* (treasure) and therefore had the right of protection under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi (Waitangi Tribunal 1986; May 2010). This resulted in the Māori

language being made an official language in 1987. A second important initiative of this time was the emergence of kohanga reo (preschool language nests) in 1982 and kura kaupapa (Māori immersion elementary schools) in 1985.

Pacific Islands (Pasifika) Background

The same language-related pressures that Māori historically experienced were also a feature of the Pacific Islands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The church played a significant role in bringing education to Pacific communities. However, this European influence often constructed the Pacific Islands' languages as a deficit, and English language was promoted for use in education (Lotherington 2008). New Zealand's formal relationship with the Pacific Islands nations occurred early in the twentieth century, with Western Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau becoming New Zealand territories. Since the 1960s, however, control has been returned, though Aotearoa/New Zealand still contributes to the governance of some Pacific nations, including the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau. The people of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau also enjoy dual citizenship in New Zealand.

The migration of Pasifika communities to Aotearoa/New Zealand commenced after the Second World War and peaked during the 1960s and 1970s when New Zealand's manufacturing and service sectors were rapidly expanding (Peddie 2005). These new immigrants, who were seeking higher living standards than their home countries could offer, took up low-paid, semi-skilled jobs in New Zealand's largest cities of Auckland and Wellington. However, they struggled to survive in the low-wage, high-cost-of-living environment, and since this period, their position in New Zealand society has not improved to a significant extent. While there are signs of an improvement in the economic stability of younger Pasifika people, across the areas of education, health, and economic status, issues remain.

In 2013, the Pasifika community forms a significant section of the New Zealand community. After the European (2,969,391) Indigenous Māori (598,602) and Chinese (163,101) populations, Samoan (144,138), Cook Islands Māori (61,839), Tongan (60,366), Niuean (23,883), Tokelauan (7,176), and Fijian (14,445) are the largest groups (Statistics New Zealand 2014). Collectively, Pasifika groups make up 7.4 % of the New Zealand population. While Samoa, Cook Islands Māori, Tonga, Niue, Tokelau, and Fiji are described under the Pasifika umbrella, language and cultural differences variously suggest that they should not be treated as a homogeneous group.

Major Contributions

Māori

Māori began experimenting with bilingual education in the late 1970s in small rural schools such as Rūātoki (Benton 1981). However a more significant move occurred in 1982 after a series of meetings of elders, called *Hui kaumātua* (meeting of elders),

Table 1 Number and percentage of Māori students involved in Māori bilingual programs in Aotearoa/New Zealand in 2013

Māori language instruction level and percentage of Māori language instruction	Titles	Number of Māori students	Percentage of the total population of Māori students
1 (81–100 %)	Māori-medium programs	11,930	6.8
2 (51–80 %)		4,945	2.8
3 (31–50 %)	Māori language in English medium	4,261	2.4
4a (12–30 %)		4,024	2.3
4b (>3 h per week)		13,374	7.6
5 (<3 h per week)		31,068	18.0
	Total	69,602	39.9

Source: New Zealand Ministry of Education (2015)

were held around Aotearoa/New Zealand to discuss Māori language loss (Jenkins and Ka'a 1994). This led to the opening of the first kohanga reo near Wellington, a Māori immersion preschool program where fluent Māori speakers, usually grandparents, taught Māori language and culture to children and assisted parents to learn the Māori language alongside their children. Importantly, this was an exercise of Māori *tino rangatiratanga*, or self-determination. It was a Māori initiative that was controlled and funded by Māori without state influence (Hohepa et al. 1992).

The growth of kohanga reo was brisk, with more than 400 kohanga reo opening in the first 6 years (Jenkins and Ka'a 1994). This led to a pipeline effect, with kura kaupapa Māori elementary schools emerging from 1985, the growth of partial and total immersion programs, and, more recently, wharekura (secondary schools) and wānanga (tertiary education providers). Today, students are able to study through the medium of Māori from preschool to tertiary education.

The first Māori bilingual programs were set up either completely independently of the New Zealand Ministry of Education (kura kaupapa Māori) or within the existing education legislation of mainstream English programs (immersion and bilingual programs). This was to change with the passing of the Education Act (1989) when kura kaupapa were given formal status under the principles of the Te Aho Matua document and were provided full funding in the same way as other New Zealand schools. Today, all Māori bilingual programs are state-funded, free forms of education open to all New Zealand students. They are divided into five levels according to the quantity of target language instruction (see Table 1). Level 1 programs with 81–100 % Māori instruction include kura kaupapa Māori, immersion, and kura-a-iwi (tribal schools). These programs share many characteristics; kura kaupapa base their learning programs on the principles of the Te Aho Matua document and are supported by the Māori organization *Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa*. Kura-a-iwi (literally meaning “school of tribes”), as the name suggests, are special character schools that align their programs to a particular Māori tribe. Immersion programs are schools or units within English-medium primary schools where students are taught predominantly through the Māori

language (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2014a). Level 2–5 programs are also collectively referred to as bilingual programs because they offer specialized instruction in Māori within English-medium schools (Ministry of Education 2015).

Since 2013, the Ministry of Education has altered the titles used to describe Māori language education programs. Whereas prior to 2013, all bilingual schools were termed *Māori-medium*, today this title is confined to Level 1–2 programs (50 % instruction or above in Māori), while Levels 3–5 are now referred to as *Māori language in English-medium* programs. Programs with over 50 % Māori language instruction (Māori-medium) are expected to lead to high levels of Māori language fluency and those below the 50 % threshold act more as cultural immersion programs rather than bilingual programs per se. This distinction also accords with the international literature on bilingual education suggesting that a 50 % minimum threshold in the target language is necessary for effective bilingual instruction (May et al. 2004).

Twenty percent (9,020) of the Māori preschool population was enrolled in Level 1 early childhood programs in 2013. At the elementary and secondary school levels, 40 % of Māori students were in some form of Māori bilingual education (see Table 1). However, most were enrolled in Levels 4b and 5 programs that provide minimal Māori language exposure. Students enrolled in Level 1 programs, the most effective form in New Zealand, numbered 12,028 students or 6.8 % of the Māori student population.

The language teaching arrangements in Māori-bilingual programs can be divided into two forms, those that instruct the curriculum predominantly through the Māori language and those that do not. Level 1 programs tend to be the only form which offer a genuine bilingual learning context. They instruct students solely through the medium of the Māori language across all of the curriculum subjects for at least the first 4 years of elementary school and often 6 years. At this point, English language instruction is introduced for between 1.5 and 4 h per week, but its implementation is carefully arranged to prevent English from permeating the Māori immersion environment by housing the programs in separate classrooms and employing separate teachers. By contrast, Level 2–5 programs predominantly teach curriculum content through the English language, with Māori language content occurring incidentally. As a consequence, their graduates seldom develop high levels of bilingual proficiency.

Pasifika Bilingual Programs

Like Māori-bilingual programs, Pasifika programs are divided into five immersion levels according to the quantity of target language instruction. However, unlike Māori programs, they do not receive additional funding and language resources as bilingual schools. Pasifika bilingual education first appeared in Aotearoa/New Zealand in 1987 during the period of the rapid expansion of Māori bilingual programs. The first two Pasifika bilingual programs were Samoan, which opened at Clydemore and Richmond Road schools in Auckland. Since then, there

has been an expansion of predominantly Samoan language programs, while programs for other Pasifika groups have struggled to establish themselves.

In 2013, Level 1 preschool programs (81–100 % immersion) enrolled between 9 % and 14 % of all Pasifika students in Samoan, Tongan, Niuean, or Tokelauan programs. Cook Islands Māori enrolled 3.1 %. At elementary and secondary school level (see Table 2), support for bilingual education was significantly lower, with no programs having enrolments that exceeded 3 % of the Pasifika student population. The Samoan community were the best supported with 12 programs at Level 1 (464 students), 13 at Level 2 (604 students), and 27 at Levels 3 and 4 (1,276 students). The Tongan language was not represented in Level 1 programs but had three programs at Level 2 (162 students) and five programs at Levels 3 and 4. Cook Islands Māori bilingual education was taught in one program at Level 2 (12 students) and three programs at Levels 3 and 4 (87 students). Only one program taught the Niuean language (79 students) at Level 4 (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2014b).

These statistics paint a bleak picture for Pasifika language maintenance, particularly as a high percentage of families opt out of bilingual programs when they transition from preschool to elementary school. The lack of Level 1 and 2 programs across the range of Pasifika languages, other than Samoan, is also an issue. This means that in a predominantly English speaking Aotearoa/New Zealand, Pasifika communities will need to increasingly rely on their homes and families to maintain their languages. Unfortunately, a growing number of New Zealand-born second-generation Pasifika children are not being exposed to their languages, which will inevitably lead Pasifika groups to occupy the same situation as Māori had in the 1970s, fighting to bridge a language intergenerational gap in the community (McCaffery and McFall-McCaffery 2010).

Work in Progress

Māori

Thirty years since the first examples of bilingual education in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Māori bilingual education is well established. A new Māori-medium curriculum document, called *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2008), is currently being implemented in Level 1 programs. Unlike the first Māori-medium documents that appeared in the 1990s, it is not a translation of the mainstream (English-medium) curriculum documents, having been written in conjunction with a group of Māori educators. The number of teaching resources has also improved considerably in recent years. There is now a wide range of children's graded readers, teacher curriculum resources, dictionaries and websites (see for example, New Zealand Ministry of Education 2014c) dedicated to Māori-bilingual students.

There are also positive signs that Māori bilingual education is raising Māori school achievement levels. Murray (2007) and Wang and Harkess (2007) provide

Table 2 Number and percent of Pasifika students of the total Pasifika student population learning Pacific languages in New Zealand schools in 2013

Pasifika languages represented in bilingual programs	Number and percentage of Pasifika students in Level 1 (81–100 %)		Number and percentage of Pasifika students in Level 2 (51–80 %)		Number and percentage of Pasifika students in Level 3 (31–50 %)		Number and percentage of Pasifika students in Level 4 (12–30 %)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Samoan	464	1.4	604	1.8	407	1.2	869	2.6
Cook Islands Māori	0	–	12	0.1	1	0.009	86	0.82
Tongan	0	–	162	0.93	173	1.0	181	1.04
Niuean	0	–	0	–	0	–	79	2.0
Tokelauan	0	–	0	–	0	–	0	–
Total	464	1.4	778	2.8	581	2.2	1,215	6.46

Source: New Zealand Ministry of Education (2014b)

high school examination data showing the positive Māori and English literacy achievement results of Māori-bilingual students in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) that all New Zealand students study towards in grades 11–13 (15–18 years). Murray's comparison of Māori-medium (Level 1) students and bilingual students (Levels 2–4) in 2005 found that 90 % of both groups met the English literacy requirements for NCEA Level 1 in grade 11. The majority of grade 11–13 students of both groups also gained credits in Māori, English, and mathematics. Wang and Harkess (2007) compared year 11–13 Māori-bilingual student achievement with Māori students in English-medium schools over a 3-year period from 2004 to 2006. They found that Māori-bilingual students were more likely to pass NCEA at each level than their peers in English-medium schools and were more likely to meet the University Entrance requirements by the end of Grade 13. This aligns to findings of research into effective bilingual education (for example, Thomas and Collier 2002).

Other positive changes have occurred in the attitudes of New Zealanders towards the Māori language. Three surveys conducted by the Ministry of Māori Social Development in 2000, 2003, and 2006, each with 1,500 participants, found that Māori respondents' attitudes to Māori being spoken in public places and at work increased from 68 % in 2000 to 94 % in 2006, while attitudes of non-Māori also rose from 40 % in 2000 to 80 % in 2006 (Te Puni Kokiri 2006).

The treatment of English language in Level 1 Māori-medium schools is another area where positive changes have occurred in recent years. In its early years of development, Level 1 programs, including kura kaupapa and total immersion programs in mainstream (English-medium) schools, pursued a Māori language revitalization aim which translated into providing early and maximum exposure to Māori language with no thought towards English instruction. English language instruction during this period was viewed as a barrier towards Māori language revitalization, having been the language that displaced the Māori language. If English lessons did occur, they were implemented at the end of elementary school, by separate teachers, in separate rooms, and sometimes were required to be conducted outside the school grounds. English learning, it was felt, would be naturally acquired by students in the English-speaking environment outside school. In this sense, Māori-medium schools were designed as Māori language safe havens (May and Hill 2005).

Since this early period of development, and often as a result of parental pressure, there are signs of a change regarding the place of English language instruction in Level 1 Māori-medium programs. The hours of English instruction have started to increase, and for the first time, schools must show the English language progress of students as outlined in the Māori curriculum. There are positive academic signs in schools that embrace a biliteracy principle (Hill 2011). However, the position of the English language is still sometimes at odds with the objective of achieving bilingual and biliteracy aims. Some elementary schools continue to expose their students to as little as 1.5 h of English instruction per week for solely the final 2 years (grades 7–8) of elementary school, which translates to a 98 % Māori language instructional environment. The marginalized position of English also conflicts with a growing amount of New Zealand research drawing attention to the issue (Berryman and

Glynn 2003; Hill 2011; Tamati 2011; Hill and May 2013) and international research promoting a softening of the rigid separation of languages via approaches such as translanguaging (García 2009).

An analysis of the history of the Māori community's attempts to regenerate the Māori language provides some light on schools' reluctance to bring English and Māori closer together. Schools have been fighting to reclaim Māori language speaking contexts for more than 30 years and continue to be the key places where Māori language exposure can be controlled. As such, schools' reluctance to include English is understandable, particularly as English is the language of status in the wider New Zealand community and the language students predominantly use when they are outside the school gates. However, further experimentation with methods such as translanguaging is required to support the only New Zealand research in this area to date by Lowman et al. (2007), which found positive biliteracy effects in grade 7 and 8 for partial immersion (Level 2) students when they were exposed to translanguaging techniques. Further investigations in New Zealand research would help to clarify this issue, and it may be that translanguaging could become a new tool for deepening students' knowledge of both Māori and English.

Pasifika

There has been little progress made in Pasifika bilingual education in recent years. In fact, there has been a reduction of educational services to support Pasifika bilingual education. One lost opportunity to assist not only Pasifika languages but also the other languages of New Zealand occurred in the early 1990s when the government attempted to establish a national languages framework. In 1990, Jeffrey Waite was commissioned to gather New Zealanders' views about their language needs from which he wrote a discussion document. The document, called *Aotearo* (Waite 1992), brought the languages of Aotearoa/New Zealand under the key areas, including Māori language revitalization, ESL (child and adult), first language maintenance, adult literacy, and international languages expansion. It was a progressive document at the time that reflected a positive view about maintaining and nurturing languages and literacy across the population, including bilingual education. Unfortunately, it was never developed further because of a change of government and the subsequent cancellation of the project (Peddie 2003). This legislation represented a significant move that could have had a positive impact on languages in Aotearoa/New Zealand particularly for Pasifika communities. While the development of language policy lost momentum for a time, there have been a number of independent initiatives that adds momentum for new legislation to be passed. The New Zealand Human Rights Commission (2008) developed a proposed national languages policy that represents a move in the right direction. This includes the provisions to safeguard the Māori language, Cook Islands Māori, Niuean, Tokelauan, and other Pacific languages; the encouragement of people living in Aotearoa/New Zealand to learn languages; and for immigrant families to be supported in maintaining their languages. Finally, it provides English language learning

opportunities for new migrants and refugees and makes language interpreters available in all public agencies (Royal Society of New Zealand 2013).

Problems and Difficulties

Both Māori and Pasifika language educators face significant issues in safeguarding their languages in a context where English is the dominant language and minority languages have low status. The issues for Māori and Pasifika communities are slightly different, however.

Māori

While Māori bilingual education has been successful in slowing Māori language loss, the percentage of students enrolling in Level 1 programs is only 6.8 % (11,930) of the total Māori student population attending school in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Indeed this low percentage is insufficient to regenerate the Māori language to pre-1970s levels. Level 2–5 programs educate 33 % (57,672) of Māori students, most of whom are enrolled in Level 5 programs offering minimal Māori language instruction. This means that the majority of students within Māori-bilingual programs contribute minimally to the health of the Māori language.

In the wider community, the number of people who speak Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the size of the pool of highly fluent speakers have also been dropping. The latest New Zealand Census in 2013 revealed that 21.3 % (125,352) of New Zealanders are able to “hold a conversation about a lot of things” in Māori which is 4.8 % lower than the 2006 Census results. Furthermore, the same Census shows that the most fluent speakers of Māori are now aged over 65 years (Statistics New Zealand 2014). This means that the highly fluent speakers who are now Māori elders are not being replaced by younger generations with similar fluency levels.

Reestablishing the Māori language in the home is one area that has been less successful in the Māori regeneration effort. The issue of home language maintenance was explored in the report, *Te Reo Mauriora*, by a group of Māori language experts brought together by the New Zealand government to report on the health of the Māori language and ways forward (Reedy et al. 2011). The report’s key recommendation concerned the need to decentralize the Māori language management model that has previously given responsibility for Māori language planning to the Ministry of Education. The new model would thereby give greater powers to Māori tribes for the health of their language and to facilitating a focus on family intergenerational transmission alongside education.

A final issue the Māori-bilingual sector faces is maintaining a pool of highly fluent Māori speaking teaching staff. There has been an historic shortage of suitably qualified staff for Level 1 programs in particular, as they have heavily relied on teachers who are second language speakers of the Māori language, most of whom

have learned the Māori language as adults. Because of the low Māori teacher supply, a moratorium on processing applications for new kura kaupapa Māori was called in 1999 (Te Moni, personal Communication, October 7, 2014). Since this halt, additional schools have been opened but there remains a teacher shortage that is not monitored closely by the Ministry of Education. If numbers of teachers were to increase, not only would it support Level 1 Māori-medium programs but could potentially support the schools working at Level 2 which currently do not provide significant levels of Māori instruction. However, the key issue of the level of fluency among teachers in the current programs remains unclear.

Pasifika

The bilingual education needs of Pasifika students living in Aotearoa/New Zealand requires urgent support as there are signs that not only are these languages unstable in Aotearoa/New Zealand but also in some of the Pacific Islands nations. For example, the New Zealand population of Cook Islands Māori speakers is now larger than those living in the Cook Islands, yet few Cook Islands children grow up learning their language. In Tokelau also, the population is 1,200, yet 7,000 Tokelauans live in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Human Rights Commission 2012).

Within Aotearoa/New Zealand, Pasifika language shift is already having an effect on New Zealand-born Pasifika people (Bell et al. 2000). The 2013 national census revealed that the overall number of Pasifika languages speakers continues to decline. Few New Zealand-born Niueans, Tokelauan, and Cook Islands Māori learn to speak their languages, and most do not have access to Level 1 bilingual programs, as discussed previously. McCaffery and McFall-McCaffery (2010) estimate that while 50 % of Pasifika people still speak their languages, the percentage of New Zealand-born Pasifika people will now be closer to 25 %.

An impediment to extending support for Pasifika bilingual programs in New Zealand concerns its funding. Since 2008, the New Zealand government ceased publishing graded school readers and support materials in the Pasifika languages. This marked a change in government perceptions, favoring a more hands-off approach to funding Pasifika bilingual programs. A Radio New Zealand interview with the then Minister of Education, Hekia Parata, illustrates the Government's position regarding Pasifika bilingual education:

The first responsibility is that these communities are themselves interested in and engaged with our own languages and are speaking them in the homes and in informal community situations. Schools can support that work, but should not be the main carriers of it. (Parata 2013)

The Minister's perspective reflects a home/community responsibility model to Pasifika language maintenance. Of particular concern is a failure of the government to acknowledge the benefits that bilingual education could provide Pasifika students. Instead, the government focus has been on English language attainment, with no link

to existing Pasifika languages, which is reflected in the most recent Pacific Education plan (see May 2010; New Zealand Ministry of Education 2012).

The most recent 2013–2017 Pacific Education plan offers rhetorical support for Pasifika languages by stating that it aims for students to be “secure and confident in their identities, languages and cultures.” However, it then limits bilingual education support to early childhood programs. The sole reference to Pasifika languages in elementary and high schools is in relation to support for English language acquisition. This reflects a transitional view of bilingual education where students’ first languages are seen solely as mechanisms towards learning English (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2012). The consequence of the New Zealand government’s stance, according to Harvey (2014) is clear:

What we see is those children leaving New Zealand schools with only one language effectively and that’s English. And that’s enormously inefficient for an education system to be drawing in children that have bilingual capabilities and turning them out monolingual. (p. 1)

This subtractive position of the New Zealand government towards Pasifika bilingual programs also contradicts international research showing transitional programs to be ineffective at raising academic outcomes of minority students (for example, Thomas and Collier 2002) and New Zealand evidence demonstrating the positive effects of well-managed high-level bilingual programs (see McCaffery and Tuafuti 2003; Hill 2011).

Future Directions

Pasifika

The subtractive position adopted towards Pasifika bilingual education needs to change to an additive view that acknowledges the place of minority and Indigenous languages for supporting school achievement (Glynn 2003). The situation highlights a contradiction in current policy views between Pasifika and Māori bilingual education, as discussed in the last section. On the one hand, Māori bilingual education is acknowledged as a means of supporting Māori language development and student attainment, yet, on the other, Pasifika bilingual education is ignored. While the status of the two forms differ, with the Māori model involving the Indigenous language and Pasifika languages having been imported, there remains a strong argument for Pasifika bilingual education to be supported by the New Zealand state. Not only are Pasifika groups citizens of Aotearoa/New Zealand, with a shared history and important place in this country, but as discussed in the previous section, there is significant research demonstrating the advantages of additive bilingual education on student achievement in mainstream English-medium programs. In the context of New Zealand, Pasifika students are among the lowest performing groups, as evident in international studies such as Progress in International Literacy Achievement (PIRLS) and Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Organisation

for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] 2014; Mullis et al. 2012). There is thus a strong case for bilingual education as a means of lifting Pasifika attainment, rather than the current focus on English language attainment in mainstream English-medium programs.

Māori

Thirty years since the first students entered kohanga reo, a new generation of parents is sending their children to these schools to ensure that momentum for language regeneration is not lost. The first kohanga reo and bilingual education parents were the pioneers of Māori bilingual education. Being educated in these environments has meant that their children have been sheltered from the issues of language revitalization and have benefitted from their parents' ambitions. However, they may not have the same level of commitment to Māori bilingual education as their parents.

As such, a new threshold needs to be crossed to increase the momentum that was generated when kohanga reo first appeared in the 1980s. This must include having strategies to encourage families to commit to more intensive immersion programs that lead to high Māori fluency levels. Schools must continue to raise their standards. Those Level 2–4 programs that do not live up to their Māori language instructional levels must build their programs to a level that will enable students to emerge as fully bilingual and biliterate. This will require teachers to build their personal Māori language competencies in order to enable them to teach bilingually. Schools will also need to ensure that their programs provide academic benefits in both languages without compromising either of them.

To be successful, greater government engagement and monitoring of progress is required to ensure that Māori-medium schools reach high levels of student achievement. This has implications for teacher training. Greater numbers of qualified teachers who are highly fluent Māori speakers and knowledgeable about bilingual teaching pedagogies are required (May et al. 2004). The change in the governmental approach towards a more decentralized model that gives more control to the tribes will form a new stage in Māori language development. At this early stage, prior to its full implementation, its potential is not clear. However, the challenge of language regeneration will remain significant, as most contexts which have embarked on the path to language regeneration have had variable success (Spolsky 2005).

This discussion regarding Māori and Pasifika bilingual education in Aotearoa/New Zealand demonstrates the significant gains but also the issues that minority communities continue to experience because of past colonization processes. The Māori people were colonized much earlier and suffered more severe language and resource losses but have made significant gains despite this. Pasifika people were also a colonized group, but more so in their own countries. As groups who migrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand, they do not share the same rights as the Indigenous Māori people but should still have the right to learn through their languages. As it has been discussed, investing in bilingual education not only helps nurture languages, it can also promote the academic achievement of students.

Overall, this chapter has highlighted the need to protect, maintain, and expand the educational provision of Māori-medium education, along with bilingual programs for other languages, as a key means of safeguarding them. This can occur through the implementation of a national languages policy, as argued by Waite (1990) and the Royal Society of New Zealand (2013). Not only would this help to safeguard the future of bilingual education in this country, it would assist in moving New Zealand towards becoming a more pluralistic and multicultural nation in the twenty-first century.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Biliteracy and Multiliteracy in Bilingual Education](#)
- ▶ [Translanguaging in Bilingual Education](#)
- ▶ [Bilingual Education: What the Research Tells Us](#)
- ▶ [Language Rights and Bilingual Education](#)

References

- Bell, A., Davis, K., & Starks, D. (2000). *Languages of the Manukau region: A pilot study of use, maintenance and educational dimensions of languages in South Auckland: A report to the Woolf Fisher Research Centre*. Auckland: Woolf Fisher Research Centre, University of Waikato.
- Benton, R. (1981). *The flight of the Amokura: Oceanic languages and formal education in the South Pacific*. Wellington/New Zealand: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Berryman, M., & Glynn, T. (2003). *Transition from Māori to English: A community approach*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Chichester/West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Glynn, T. (2003). Responding to language diversity: A way forward for New Zealand education. In R. Barnard & T. Glynn (Eds.), *Bilingual children's language and literacy development* (pp. 273–281). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Harvey, S. (2014). *Pasifika kids lose language at school*. Radio New Zealand, Wellington.
- Hill, R. (2011). Rethinking English in Māori-medium education. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 14(6), 719–732.
- Hill, R., & May, S. (2013). Balancing the languages in Māori-medium education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In D. Gorter, V. Genotz, & J. Cenoz (Eds.), *Minority languages and multilingual education: Bridging the local with the global* (pp. 159–176). New York: Springer.
- Hohepa, M., Smith, G., Smith, L., & McNaughton, S. (1992). Te Kohanga Reo Hei Tikanga Ako i Te Reo Māori: Te kohanga reo as a context for language learning. *Educational Psychology*, 12, 333–346.
- Human Rights Commission. (2012). *Te Waka Reo: Languages in Aotearoa 2004–2011*. Auckland: Human Rights Commission.
- Jenkins, K., & Ka'a, T. (1994). Māori education: A cultural experience and dilemma for the state – a new direction for Māori society. In E. Coxon, K. Jenkins, J. Marshall, & L. Massey (Eds.), *The politics of learning and teaching in Aotearoa – New Zealand* (pp. 148–179). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- King, M. (2003). *The Penguin history of New Zealand*. Auckland: Penguin.

- Lotherington, H. (2008). Bilingual education in the South Pacific. In J. Cummins & N. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Bilingual education* (2nd ed., Vol. 5, pp. 267–280). New York: Springer.
- Lowman, C., Fitzgerald, T., Rapira, P., & Clark, R. (2007). First language literacy skill transfer in a second language learning environment: Strategies for biliteracy. *Set*, 2, 24–28.
- May, S. (2010). Aotearoa/New Zealand. In J. Fishman & O. Garcia (Eds.), *Handbook of language and ethnic identity: Disciplinary and regional perspectives* (Vol. 1, pp. 501–518). New York: Oxford University Press.
- May, S., & Hill, R. (2005). Māori-Medium education: Current issues and challenges. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 8(5), 377–403.
- May, S., Hill, R., & Tiakiwai, S. (2004). *Bilingual/Immersion education: Indicators of good practice. Final report to the Ministry of Education*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- McCaffery, J., & McFall-McCaffery, J. (2010). O Tatou Ō Aga'I I Fea'Oku Tau Ō Ki Fe?/Where are we heading?: Pacific languages in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Alter Native: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 6(2), 86–121.
- McCaffery, J., & Tuafuti, P. (2003). Samoan children's Bilngual language and literacy development. In R. Barnard & T. Glynn (Eds.), *Bilingual children's language and literacy development* (pp. 80–107). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Ministry of Education. (2015). *Māori language in education* (2015th ed.). New Zealand: Ministry of Education.
- Mullis, I., Martin, M., Foy, P., & Drucker, K. (2012). *PIRLS 2011 international results in reading*. Chestnut Hill: TIMSS & PIRLS.
- Murray, S. (2007). *Achievement at Māori Medium and Bilingual Schools*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- New Zealand Human Rights Commission. (2008). *Languages in Aotearoa New Zealand, Te Waka Reo Statement on Language Policy*. Wellington: Human Rights Commission.
- New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage. (2014). Te Ara: Encyclopedia of New Zealand. <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en>
- New Zealand Ministry of Education. (2008). *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- New Zealand Ministry of Education. (2012). *Pasifika education plan*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- New Zealand Ministry of Education. (2014a). Glossary. <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/>
- New Zealand Ministry of Education. (2014b). Statistics: Pasifika language in education. http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/pasifika_education/schooling2/6044
- New Zealand Ministry of Education. (2014c). Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI). <http://www.tki.org.nz/>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]. (2014). *PISA 2012 results in focus*. Paris: OECD.
- Parata, H. (2013). *Community involvement key to saving Pasifika languages*. Radio New Zealand, Wellington.
- Peddie, R. (2003). Languages in New Zealand: Population, politics and policy. In R. Barnard & T. Glynn (Eds.), *Bilingual children's language and literacy development*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Peddie, R. (2005). Planning for the future? Languages policy in New Zealand. In A. Bell, R. Harlow, & D. Starks (Eds.), *Languages of New Zealand* (pp. 30–58). Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Reedy, T., Dewes, C., Maxwell, K., O'Regan, H., Papa, P., Shortland, R., et al. (2011). *Te Reo Mauriora: Te arotakenga o te rāngai reo Māori me te rautaki reo Māori. Review of the Māori language sector and the Māori language strategy*. Wellington: Te Puni Kokiri.
- Royal Society of New Zealand. (2013). *Languages of Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 1–8). Wellington: Royal Society of New Zealand.
- Spolsky, B. (2005). Maori lost and regained. In A. Bell, R. Harlow, & D. Starks (Eds.), *Languages of New Zealand* (pp. 67–85). Wellington: Victoria University Press.

- Statistics New Zealand. (2014). Census. <http://www.stats.govt.nz/census.aspx>
- Tamati, T. (2011). The trans-acquisitional approach: A bridge to English in Kura Kaupapa Māori. *Pacific-Asian Education*, 23(1), 91–102.
- Te Puni Kokiri. (2006). *Ngā Waiaro atu ki te Reo Māori. Attitudes Toward the Māori Language*. Wellington: Te Puni Kokiri.
- Thomas, W., & Collier, V. (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement*. Washington, DC: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.
- Waitangi Tribunal. (1986). *Findings of the Waitangi Tribunal Relating to Te Reo Māori and a claim lodged by Huirangi Waikerepumau and Ngā Kaiwhakapumau i te Reo Incorporated Society (Wellington Board of Māori Language)*. Wellington/New Zealand: Government Printer.
- Waite, J. (1992). *Aotearoa: Speaking for ourselves. Part A: The overview*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Wang, H., & Harkess, C. (2007). *Senior Secondary Students' Achievement at Māori-Medium Schools 2004–2006*, Ministry of Education.