

Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau: The need for consolidation and national implementation

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ABSTRACT

This paper comprises three sections: an introductory section which provides an historical context to the project Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau; a descriptive section which briefly outlines the project and its evaluation; and a final section which discusses national implementation of the scheme and the need for its consolidation.

Te Taitokerau - Te Hiku o te Ika nui a Maui
Ko to reo he mana - he wehi - he ihi - he wairua
whangaia a tatou tamariki mokopuna i te taonga tupuna riei
Kia tupu ai ratou i roto i te korowai o te reo a o tatou
matua tupuna.

Ko te timatanga o te kauri rangatira
Ko te kakano nohinohi.
Paki Para

We wish to acknowledge the support, encouragement and manaakitanga of our whanau and kaumatua - without their guidance and commitment there would have been no project. Ko koutou te tauihu o tenei waka.

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Introduction

In a recent series of articles, edited by Bernard Spolsky (1986), a number of contributors with Third World field experience have noted the way in which the use of a former colonial language as a substitute for a mother tongue in education has 'reproduced inequality', 'prevented the attainment of high levels of bi-lingualism', 'stunted cognitive growth ... and creativity in children' and resulted in 'the atrophy of indigenous cultures'. Their observations provide an appropriate context in which to understand the cultural contradiction that most Maori students today who choose to learn their native tongue - te reo Maori - learn it at 'school', in 'classrooms', through 'textbooks', and then only as a second language to a modern metropolitan English.

The fullness of this cultural contradiction is realized only when we appreciate that this state of affairs is a contemporary expression of a 'colonising' process which has encouraged Maori people

'to believe in a new order of things based on their participation in their own cultural oppression' (Smith, 1986:3). The pakeha 'School' has acted as an agent of assimilation functioning 'to reproduce pakeha culture at the expense of Maori culture' (Walker, 1987). For over a century the education system in New Zealand has favoured the development of pakeha skills of reading and writing in the English language to the exclusion and detriment of Maori language and culture. The effects of such ethnocentrism on Maori people have been disastrous. As Professor Mead (1983:339) remarks: 'A reality we must face is that after some 140 years of a very grim struggle by Maori society to survive as a group we face cultural defeat'. There has been something of a shift in educational research in New Zealand focussing on Maori policy, mostly brought about by Maori educationalists. To a large extent this shift is part of a historical reversal of a set of deep-seated attitudes which typified the paternalistic and 'colonising' ethos of a set of 'euro-centric' institutions which originated with European settlement in New Zealand. In educational policy and research this reversal can be seen in the relatively recent move from 'deficit' views and theories of cultural deprivation which problematised 'the Maori', 'the Maori child', 'family' or 'cultural background' as explanations of failure within the education system, to one which recognises the 'hostility' of the education system to the interests of Maori children and its responsibility for failure in terms of almost any measure of educational achievement. Smith (1986:2) writes:

Educational research examined a range of variables which focussed attention on the Maori individual and his or her lifestyle. Large families, poor health, low socio-economic status, lack of enriching experiences, lack of parental interest and linguistic deprivation were all 'tested' as possible explanations for Maori failure.

She indicates that the educational research paradigm was grounded in the ideology of the dominant culture which defined what was to count as valid knowledge and research.

Benton's (1988) summary of available research and information for the Royal Commission on Social Policy bears out the Waitangi Tribunal's finding that the education system itself is at the source of the problem concerning the relatively poor scholastic achievements and low retention rates of Maori children. The Tribunal (Durie et al, 1986) has no hesitation in pinpointing the responsibility for this state of affairs: a monolingual and monocultural education system has denigrated and downgraded te reo Maori (as a spoken language), Maori culture and knowledge with disastrous consequences for the cultural survival of Maori people, and in particular for the self-esteem and self-respect of generations of Maori children.

The claim that the education system has failed Maori children was promulgated at the Maori Educational Development Conference at Ngaruawahia in 1984 and again at a hui organised by the New Zealand Educational Institute in 1985. The claim was recently echoed in a passionate plea by Mr Jack Ennis (1987:21), a senior departmental officer: 'after a lifetime of teaching, lecturing and working as a Departmental inspector I categorically blame the Education Department and its education system for the continued mass failure of Maori children'. We do not wish to detract from the force of Jack Ennis' statement but similar criticisms have emerged concerning the whole range of euro-centric (pakeha) institutions and systems which comprise much of the infrastructure of New Zealand society including the state agencies responsible for health, social welfare, unemployment, justice, the penal system as well as education.

When Hobson uttered 'He iwi tahi tatou' ('We are now one people') to each of the Maori chiefs as they signed the Treaty of Waitangi, he can not have been unaware of different tribal identities and locations, although he may have been ignorant of the fact that the category 'Maori' emerged relatively late in contact history (the 1830's). As Salmond (1983:317) writes:

there is no evidence that the inhabitants of the various islands of New Zealand, although they knew of one another, conceived of themselves in any sense as a single group before the Europeans arrived. The paradox of the category "Maori" is that the event which constituted it - the arrival of the European - has been seen by Europeans as the beginning of its destruction.

Hobson's utterance to the chiefs is highly symbolic as the first official Statement of a nascent liberal assimilationist ideology aimed at creating a Nation-state where one culture and language was dominant.

In less than 180 years of European contact with the metropolitan language, English, *te reo Maori* has suffered a massive devolution. Developments affecting the ecology of *te reo Maori* have included the introduction of a new *lingua franca*, and its selection as the official language; the introduction of new media, especially writing and print technologies; the introduction of 'hostile' education policies; and the sanctioning of foreign naming practices. Accordingly, *te reo Maori* has endured a dramatic reduction in the size of its speech community and profound changes in its language structures, domains and functions.

Salmond (1983:312) informs us 'there were no agreed rankings in ... [the] first exchanges' between Maori and pakeha. Very soon, however, in the recorded accounts of both missionaries and, later anthropologists, assumptions of Western cognitive superiority surface with a vengeance. The 'savage' is a slave to the impulse of his will, has only blind superstition in contrast to the reason and knowledge of the 'man of civilized habits'. 'Savage thinking is debased and unreliable' and the Maori language is considered an imperfect vehicle for thought. (See Salmond 1983;1985). The same ethnocentric assumptions of Western cognitive (and linguistic) superiority, in large measure, still prevail today. Sadly, such assumptions have been taken on board by many Maori parents as a result of attending a monocultural and monolingual educational system and these negative attitudes and stereotypes toward their own culture and language are then passed on to their children.

Only 2500 candidates out of about 50,000 fifteen year olds who sit for School Certificate elect to take Maori as a School Certificate Examination subject. The discriminatory effects of this examination are well known (see Walker, 1987:190). Its scaling system has operated to give high pass rates in foreign languages and abysmally low pass rates in Maori. There is a bias toward pakeha skills of literacy at the expense of a preference in Maori society for a characteristically oral mode of expression.

Oral Maori has been a component of the School Certificate Examination Maori for little over a decade. While nominally worth 15 percent of the paper until 1985, its effective weight has been calculated at around 9 percent. The overwhelming emphasis in the School Certificate Examination Maori on skills of writing and reading is, therefore, deemed by many as inappropriate in cultural terms and as reflecting pakeha educational values rather than Maori ones. *Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau* project, as part of general development work being undertaken by the Department of Education since 1984, was designed to investigate the feasibility and reliability of teacher-based assessment in Oral Maori and alternative forms of moderation between schools. The project involved all Northland schools, pupils who would be candidates for School Certificate Maori in 1987 and their teachers.

The Maori Language Syllabus Committee, in their report of 12 August 1986, expressed reservations concerning mark adjustments and distribution policies of the School Certificate Examinations Board, despite the raising of the median for Maori to 52 (same as English) and reporting in grades. The Board asked the Committee to consider the possibility of a criterion-based achievement system, total internal assessment and reporting oral and written components separately. A school survey carried out by the department in March 1985 had received almost total support for increasing the weighting for the oral component from 1.5 to 25 percent, and there was substantial support for increasing marks allotted to oral Maori still further. Many teachers of Maori look to the prospect of a full paper in oral Maori based on an internally assessed criterion-based system. In October 1985 an interim amendment to School Certificate Maori increased the oral Component from 15 to 25 percent. The Department subsequently decided to undertake 'development work'. This work has included: definition of criteria (in Maori) for assessment; the establishment of training for assessors; a redesign of the oral test; the appointment of three moderators to monitor standards; and the exploration of means by which teachers may become

more involved in the assessment process. It is with this last objective that Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau Project was primarily concerned.

Evaluation and description of project

'Ko te reo te mauri o te mana Maori'

(Maori language is the life force and the power pervading all things Maori)

Sir James Henare

The evaluators (Professor James Marshall and Dr. Michael Peters) were approached in March 1987 to conduct an evaluation of the project. Specifically the Department of Education (Qualifications and Assessment Directorate) wanted to gain information on:

- the effectiveness of assessor training;
- the reliability of teacher assessment;
- the practicality of 'clustering' candidates at central venues and the effects of such movement on student performance;
- the appropriate forms of moderation.

In the research proposal submitted, the evaluators noted that they had developed a general model and theory of evaluation. Both the model and the theory emphasise the role of the evaluator as *educator* within a learning community (comprising the major stakeholders). This educative approach to evaluation seemed ideally suited to the demands of the project, it being an educational project carried out within an educational milieu. The approach also appeared consonant with Maori values, emphasising as it does a community learning/action perspective.

At that time we defined evaluation as: 'the systematic community learning ... process for the collaborative review, improvement and development of policies, programmes and practices.' (Marshall & Peters, 1985;284). We elaborated ten defining characteristics of the ideal learning community, beginning with the characteristic of dialogue which bears a central relation of the other nine characteristics: the learning community as collaborative, praxical, problem focussed; reflective, reflex-ive, normative, fallibilistic, creative-transformive, and emancipatory. These characteristics comprise, essentially, an empowerment styled evaluation encouraging partnership, decision-making, development of community evaluation and research skills, and the eventual 'writing out' of the evaluator as an 'expert' in any sense of the word. More recently and primarily as a result of reflecting on the nature of Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau we have had cause to revise our earlier stipulative definition.

What was needed, we believe on reflection, is a notion of empowerment, encompassing our earlier notion of education, but concentrating more upon the ability of project participants - those being evaluated in mutual cooperation with - evaluators - to define their problems, to refine their experiences and practices, and to take control of the changes in their practices (and their outcomes) so that they - the participants in the community - 'are properly in control of their lives (Marshall and Peters, 1988:5).

We argued, at a later stage, that it is not enough that the evaluator should have sound knowledge and that this should be applied to the evaluation but, rather, that information and skills required by the community ought to be made available and research disseminated so that it improves and/or legitimates practices immediately.

Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau Project and its evaluation fulfilled Stokes' (1985) criteria. It was collaborative and people-intensive, involving both consultation with Maori researchers, kaumatua and the wider community, and Maori/Pakeha cooperation. It was problem-focussed, strategic and action-oriented, options being presented in policy formulations. It was concerned with an identified important research priority - the preservation of oral Maori (the Tai Tokerau dialect) and re-



education of the young in their language and culture. Finally, it was empowering for teachers of Maori language in Tai Tokerau, developing an awareness amongst the team of assessors as a self-conscious collective unity- whanau - that they could reflect on their own practices and act in the good service of their children. The theme of teacher-as-researcher was an important thread in the evaluation from its near beginnings. This theme was important first in the sense of empowerment, which for the researcher/evaluator implies a role of educator, transmitting the necessary research skills and conceptualisations to participants so as to provide on-going evaluation tied to identified needs. It also suggested a way of overcoming some of the problems surrounding the non-Maori status of researchers.

Early in the evaluation process it was seen to be important to view the research 'problem' within the wider context. Indeed, as a result of reflection upon previous evaluations the researchers had developed a practical, analytical tool for developing, analysing and criticising programmes and policies.

The 'received' or official definition of the problem (as provided by those responsible for the School Certificate Examination) was to increase both the proportion of the oral component and teacher involvement in the assessment process, while maintaining the precision of assessment that typifies the School Certificate examination as a whole. Our problem, as evaluators, was determined to be:

How to conduct the oral interview in School Certificate Maori so that Maori knowledge and cultural norms are adhered to, it is seen as legitimate by Maori people, and it accords with the standards of precision that typify the examination.

The major educational problem for the evaluators was the promotion of a concept of biculturalism that is empowering.

An Evaluability Assessment was completed in May 1987. It provided a general orientation to the evaluators and established relevant background to the project. Further, it helped establish an initial agreement with the project team and participants on areas of collaboration and reported on preliminary meetings. Finally it clarified both project parameters and presuppositions and the criteria of the evaluation. During May and June 1987 the evaluators produced a background paper (Peters and Marshall, 1987) on oral testing and related research, tracing out the implications for School Certificate Oral Maori. It briefly surveyed the movement towards tests of communication, and the range of specifically oral tests available, making some detailed comparison between the assessment approach in oral Maori and that of the 'proficiency' school in the United States. It also emphasised the importance of the non-verbal aspects of oral Maori. The paper ended with a series of recommendations which the Advisory Committee for the Teaching of the Maori Language endorsed.

Consultation and evaluation processes were at the heart of the project. A great deal of groundwork was carried out by departmental officers (Mr Monte Ohia and Mr Robert Shaw) before the research contract was let. Evaluators liaised with a number of groups, including kaumatua and kuia of te Tai Tokerau (this process was initiated by Mr Dave Para, a native speaker of Tai Tokerau and Moderator for the project). The evaluation process was conceived as a series of iterative feedback cycles designed to gain information from certain sources at various stages of the project and make it available to project participants in a systematic form (Peters, Marshall and Shaw, 1986). Questionnaires were given to assessors and to candidates at the beginning of the first assessment week (21-26 June 1987). Assessors were asked to comment on the present format of the oral test (interview) and its future form. Candidates were questioned concerning: their preferences of the location; the situation of the interview; the effects on them of moving to an assessment venue; and the things they 'liked/did not like' about the assessment process. Questions to assessors were given in an open-ended format, allowing for fuller statements. Much of this information, recording the assessors' reflections on their own practices and their relation to wider issues, formed the first practical embodiment of the teacher-as-researcher theme.

The questionnaire elicited a great deal of pertinent data, and statements of opinion from assessors which revealed deeply held beliefs concerning the bias toward writing and reading at the expense of a traditional oral emphasis in School Certificate Maori, and the form that an oral assessment should take:

'Ko te kai nga rangatira he korero. At least fifty percent of the School Certificate paper should be oral. From time immemorial Maori has been a spoken language. The written component has been imposed by the-European...'

'I regard whakatau as part of the oral interview as foremost, and regard the mihi between candidate and assessor as a high point of motivation between the two. Under the Maori philosophy of greeting and getting to know one another p the personal contact by mihi-hongi and whariru, clear the way for interaction between the two...'

'Assessors should be reminded that criteria for assessing is kaupapa Maori... 'The language should be assessed in all forms. E.g. whaikorero, waiata, waiata a ringa, karakia, pakiwaiatara, haka, poi, korororero, whakapapa. All students are involved in all these areas. After all, the elders and kuia of the community began their learning (formally) in these areas. Korororero should include whanau, rohe, pikitia'.

'The overall project was most rewarding and beneficial. Most candidates settled down rather quickly in this relaxed situation ... An improvement having some of our elders there ... they were very supportive and concerned for the benefit of our children ... they too were very much involved'.

'The use of 'body language' could be accepted as a legitimate part of the evaluation process, as no Maori ever speaks without 'flashing eyes' waving hands, gestures, smiles, 'hiko' 'whakatuma' te mea, te mea! Again training sessions to determine areas of use of body language to be assessed to achieve comparability of results'.

Assessors began to articulate their own feelings and thoughts, discussing them with each other and developing their own collective philosophy of assessment which was motivated by Maori values and perspectives in the combined areas of teaching/learning and assessment. The candidates' comments and observations were also revealing:

'I liked the relaxed atmosphere of the Marae which lent itself to the reassuring and supportive relationship between the student and the interviewer. I enjoy listening to the whaikorero and the waiata and the wisdom of elders. I particularly liked the wairua of the day'.

'I enjoyed the opportunity to express feelings using the Maori language which I have long regarded as a second language'.

'What I liked best about being interviewed was that it gave me more confidence towards my Maori language and the understanding towards Maori things'.

A set of crucial variables revolving around Maori values and concerning the interview emerged from the questionnaire results: the Maori 'atmosphere' and feeling that predominated; the preference for marae-based assessment and the involvement of kaumatua and kuia; singing together and meeting; 'getting to know' others; 'talking Maori' and learning Maoritanga in a culturally appropriate and supportive environment; 'good kai'; arid, not least, the overwhelming support given to the assessors who were held in high regard.

The evaluation findings were presented to the Department of Education under five headings. We present a non-technical account here, unfettered by the very detailed backing given in the appendices to the Report (Marshall and Peters, 1987).

Effectiveness of Assessor Training

By the end of the project this whanau was professionally competent, committed and Empowered. (The Tai Tokerau assessor's group had, by the end of the project, made their own official

representations to departmental officers on a number of issues and written to the Prime Minister and Minister of Education, the four Maori Members of Parliament, and Mr Matui Rata, leader of Mana Motuhake). This very positive outcome was not, however, the result of the initial training hui. Whilst the conception of the training process was in line with the best second language training programmes overseas the quality of the resources, and the time devoted to training, were not.

Reliability of Teacher Assessment

Essentially the statistical model adopted (on the advice of Mr David Hughes, Education Department, University of Canterbury) is to be found in Swaminathan, et. al. (1974). Classical test theory is rejected on the basis of its applicability to a criterion-referenced system. Reliability is 'defined as a measure of agreement, over and above that occurring by chance, between decisions made about candidates' performances in accordance with pre-established criteria. Swaminathan et. al. (1974) note that the reliability factor (kappa) is a measure of the reliability of the entire decision-making process.

Results from the first assessment weeks indicated a kappa figure of .2 (approximately) on a -1, +1 scale. This figure was commendable in view of the open-textured nature of the interview format, the range of situational intervening extra-linguistic variables intruding into the assessment process, the 'newness' of the team, the novelty of experiment, and the initial inexperience of some younger teachers as assessors.

The reliability figure of .5 for the second assessment period indicated the Professional commitment of the whanau, the success of training achieved during assessment week, and the effectiveness of the moderation procedures.

Practicalities of Moving Candidates

The evaluators supported 'clustering' (i.e. the grouping of students from different schools at central venues) in principle, as candidates and assessors were generally positive towards it, claiming it had a number of advantages. These included its participatory and people-intensive nature involving the community at many different levels. Also, it was a lived example of Maori beliefs, customs, knowledge and values. It provided students with the valuable opportunity to mix with elders, and their teachers in different lights; it provided a culturally appropriate context for the assessment of Maori communication. It allowed teachers to gain a regional perspective of themselves and their students. Moreover, it was practically efficient. Last, it has a large 'backwash effect' on the professional development of teachers, and the education of students in matters Maori, providing important opportunities for oral Maori language reproduction.

The Appropriate Forms of Moderation

The evaluators stated that the moderation procedures in place by the end of the second assessment period meet the need for the maintenance of standards in oral Maori assessment and the problems of comparability between schools.

The notion of moderation arrived at by the end of the second assessment period was based on a rejection of the view of moderation as a narrow technical (statistical) adjustment, rather it elaborated a view which tied moderation firmly into wider educational processes and purposes. The wider view of moderation advocated is based on the following set of principles:

the principle of integration, where moderation is explicitly tied to educational processes and purposes, and viewed as a strategic learning system designed to provide feedback information to teachers/assessors;

the principle of democratisation which emphasises the involvement and participation of all teachers in the assessment process and moderation system, and the increasing involvement of the Maori community;

the principle of diffusion of curriculum effects and professional development of teachers, which provides a measure of the success of moderation in terms of the 'backwash' effects and sees consistency of decision-making in assessment as a reflection or symptom of the successful application of these combined principles.

At a practical level moderation ought to consist of a set of inter-related practices, including: a training programme, with opportunities for continued support for young and inexperienced teacher/assessors; moderation visits to schools to help with in-school assessment and evaluation programmes; two assessment periods where there are opportunities for 'on the job' training and discussion; a daily evaluation meeting during assessment weeks, where assessors can isolate intervening variables intruding into the assessment process in particular cases; a resolution procedure used both to identify major grade shifts between teachers and assessors and to seek their resolution through dialogue and discussion. It is recognised that not all disagreement will be eliminated in this way as it is possible that there will be cases where a teacher's and an assessor's grades will differ on defensible grounds. These test cases ought to be recorded, along with the grounds offered by teachers and assessors involved for the grades allocated. In special cases the moderator has the last resort of deciding to conduct a further conclusive interview. Further thought and research should be directed towards a form of national (ie inter-regional) moderation.

- **Costs**

For such a people-intensive activity, the evaluators noted, the costs must be very minor.

The response from participants and members of the Maori community have been extremely supportive of the scheme as it has developed. Mrs Kath Sarich, teacher of Maori, assessor and kuia of the assessment whanau was to write:

the full impact and the spin-offs from the project is only coming into fruition now, where te reo (the language) is operating effectively in its most natural setting, in the homes and on the marae (and school halis) where the girls, along with the women and kuia may be heard in the karanga, the call of welcome to manuhiri (visitors). Here also, the boys, men and kaumatua, take their rightful places on the taumata korero (oratory platform).

Teachers/assessors themselves, by the end of the evaluation, were totally committed to the new form of assessment in oral Maori. As a Maori language group, they lobbied for its continuance and national implementation, writing to the Minister of Education and to Maori members of parliament. They expressed the view that the new scheme was a significant step toward restoring the Maori oral tradition to its rightful place at the centre of Maori culture and raising the status of oral Maori in the curriculum of the senior school (see Appendix 1).

Mr. Paul Rosanowski, one of the two (pakeha) representatives of Maori on the now defunct School Certificate Examination Board, was invited to Whangarei to witness first-hand the assessment scheme in operation during the October assessment period. He presented a highly favourable report to the Board, emphasising the scheme's uniqueness, its cultural 'richness' and its (unexpected) beneficial curriculum effects.

Partly as a result of the development and evaluation process, the number of candidates electing to take Oral Maori as a School Certificate subject increased from 161 candidates in 1987 to 264 candidates in 1988 - an increase of approximately 60 percent. The scheme has operated successfully for two years. While staff changes have occurred in the original members of the assessment whanau, the scheme is firmly in place and operating smoothly. Further, there is a policy proposal in the current budget round of the Department of Education to implement this new form of oral assessment on a national basis. At the national hui of Oral Maori assessors held at Palmerston North Teachers College in February 1989, Teo Rea O Te Tai Tokerau came in for a great deal of discussion and was given universal support.

The need for consolidation

While the new form of oral assessment replaces the traditional form of assessment this year, the Department has given no guarantees concerning its continuance in years to come or its introduction to other tribal areas in New Zealand. The concession to continue with the new form of assessment this year was a hard won battle - a result of constant lobbying and activities (i.e. seminars to various interest groups, conferences). In this the backing and participation of kuamatua and kuia has been crucial. Consolidation of the gains made in Tai Tokerau through the development and introduction of the new form of assessment is urgently required. Such consolidation could take a variety of forms: the adoption of the evaluators' eight recommendations including the introduction of a full paper in oral Maori; national implementation of the new form of assessment; and greater administrative and school support for teachers of Maori in Tai Tokerau. We discuss each of these requirements in turn.

Successful consolidation rests partly on the adoption of the following recommendations originally proposed by the evaluators:

1. Assessment should not be based upon a single testing procedure.
2. The oral interview should further emphasise communication.
3. Maori values in the related areas of learning, assessment and evaluation should be identified and formulated into principles for the conduct of the oral interview and the provision of parameters for assessment in the oral interview.
4. Oral Maori should be assessed by oral interview with a combination of internal and external assessment.
5. There should be further controlled testing alternative and specifically Maori speech forms and experimentation with and styles for the conduct of oral Maori assessment.
6. The basis for these should be the customs and dialect of tribal areas.
7. Teacher training and the training of existing teachers of Maori should reflect the significance and centrality of the oral tradition in Maori culture, communication and knowledge.
8. A full paper in School Certificate Oral Maori should be introduced immediately.

Recommendations 3,5,7 and 8 provide the basis for related activity by the Department of Education to consolidate developments of Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau.

The Department of Education is currently developing a proposal for national implementation of the new form of assessment for School Certificate Oral Maori before the next budgetary cycle begins. Its proposal is likely to resemble the one floated unsuccessfully last year. We confine our comments here to the 1987 proposal put forward by the department, which calls for the recognition of tribal dialects in the examining process and the establishment of a partnership with tribes for the purposes of assessment.

Under the heading 'Rights and Tribal Responsibility' the proposal looks to a model of partnership where assessment of School Certificate Maori becomes a joint responsibility of tribal runanga and the Department of Education.

Benefits include the strengthening of tribes by bringing a focus on the language, building links between the department and tribes, and - perhaps most significantly - taking a step towards re-establishing for Maori and traditional relationships between teenagers and kuamatua. (Department of Education, 1987:2)

The new form of assessment, it is said, will be improved if the following features are established:

- a. candidates and their teachers are brought together in centres for SC oral Maori assessment;
- b. two assessment periods are established. One in August and one in the first week of November;
- c. all fifth form teachers are trained as assessors;
- d. visiting moderators oversee the training and assessments in centres;

- e. assessment areas are where possible based upon tribal districts;
- f. allowance is made for dialectical differences. This involves the production of a series of SC test instruments and has implications for the training of assessors;
- g. kaumatua have a role in the assessment process. Particularly, kaumatua are involved in endorsing the dialect examined and have access to assessment centres;
- h. assessment centres be marae wherever possible;
- i. each candidate is assessed twice in the November assessment period;
- j. the candidate's teacher and an external assessor make the assessment;
- k. the method of assessment is based upon criteria;
- l. reporting is by descriptive criteria in Maori .

The proposal then discusses the principles and importance of 'clustering' and moderation before scheduling national implementation in three one-year steps: in 1988 Tai Tokerau is to use the new approach, and Tainui, te Tairāwhiti, and the South Island undergo a trial year; in 1989 te Tai Tokerau and the 1988 trial regions are to use the new approach, with all other regions or districts trialling the new approach; in 1990 all regions or districts are scheduled to use the new approach. The scheduling is now a year behind should the proposal be accepted and, therefore, 1991 will be the end of the implementation process.

A regional implementation schedule for first year regions incorporates departmental selection of a Team Leader, Moderator (a formal appointment), Community Liaison Coordinator, and Technical or Evaluation team. Consultation held with teachers and elders (as two separate operations) would help decide the region's adoption of the 'new' approach, the geographic region involved the dialect as it will appear in a draft oral interview schedule, and the Administrator/Coordinator.

In the second and subsequent years regions will be controlled by an advisory committee which is later to become a 50:50 controlling body comprising local Maori and departmental representatives. It is envisaged that in third and subsequent years this group will make all appointments, except for the moderator, which will remain a formal departmental appointment. The proposal recognises the importance of a dialect-based School 'certificate Oral Maori (all decisions on dialect must be taken by the local people), and indicates that a formative evaluation of the implementation would be valuable.

Finally, the departmental paper addresses itself to longer-term decision-making:

The department's intention is to bring the administrative and professional structure of Maori assessment and moderation to a point where head office involvement is phased out. Control of the system will be handed over to appropriate local Maori authorities and the moderation system should be self-correcting between regions and within regions.

At present it is desirable to place in the tribal regions the precursors of a structure which will become in turn an advisory group, a 50:50 controlling body with the department (HO coordination), and then a local Maori control authority with a moderation system to operate between regions.

There is no doubt that this policy initiative of the Department of Education in planning a devolution of control to Maori authorities is a welcome move. The model of partnership advocated is one which has a potentially valuable application in other areas of Maori and pakeha education, and, more widely, in matters of Maori affairs across Government departments.

In an earlier paper (Peters and Marshall, 1988) submitted to the Royal Commission on Social Policy we argued that this policy initiative will be successful if and only if there are a series of concomitant moves (1988, 49f):

First, the department must move quickly to increase the status of oral Maori within the School Certificate system. This means the introduction of a full paper in oral Maori as soon as possible, with

the necessary provision of training and resources. Without this move the notion of Maori control of the teaching/learning of Maori language and assessment in the senior school system can only be viewed as palliative.

Second, issues discussed under 'longer term decision-making' need to be addressed more clearly and earlier in the devolution process. In other words, the department ought to look to the possibility of establishing a 50:50 controlling body in the various regions as they introduce the 'new approach' and not as a second separate process occurring after the scheme is running.

Third, a national inter-regional steering committee, comprising tribal and departmental representatives, ought to be set up as soon as possible to allow full consultation with Maori people of intended changes. This committee should have the authority to indicate broader policy developments in oral Maori education in the senior school and to make decisions concerning appointments. Such a committee may become the precursor of the national moderation body.

Fourth, both the project - Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau - and its evaluation highlight the need 'for a national language policy which accords special status to Maori language, whilst recognising other non-English community languages, and presses for their support in terms of rational and coherent planning. The Department of Education would seem to be the most appropriate Government agency to provide the leadership required here.

We have no reason to believe the department will substantially change the basis for its 1989 policy proposal. Consolidation of the historically important changes made in Tai Tokerau and the benefits that have accrued depend heavily upon a national implementation of the new form of assessment.

It is, however, crucial that the implementation process in other tribal areas is not driven from Head Office, or imposed in any way. The implementation process must be seen in developmental terms, that is, each of the tribal districts must be allowed to develop their own approaches within the most general of guidelines. The empowerment process and extra curricula effects evident in Te Rea O Te Tai Tokerau came about, in large part, because teachers of Maori developed their own collective responses to issues.

Finally, consolidation depends upon providing the appropriate administrative and school support for teachers of Maori in Tai Tokerau. Teachers of Maori in Tai Tokerau are (the only?) genuine bicultural (and bilingual) actors i.e. members of both pakeha and Maori institutions. They are, therefore, in a pivotal role in the development of closer links between the Maori community (marae) and the school. They tend to take a pastoral responsibility for all Maori students in the school (and for so-called discipline problems!).

At present, the new form of assessment requires that they be away from school for 12 days per year (5 days in both June and October, and a 2 day training hui held at the beginning of the year). Teacher release days are provided by the department. Nevertheless, some principals in Tai Tokerau have expressed their reservation at teachers being away for this period of time. They have construed this not as a criticism of the scheme or the project, indeed a number expressly wrote letters of support, but as an administrative need to be addressed by the department

In reality, the problem is that there are too few teachers of Maori in Tai Tokerau schools. Most schools have only one teacher of Maori, one or two have t two teachers, some schools have no teachers of Maori! In terms of equity criteria where Maori teachers were provided for on the basis of the proportion of Maori students in the school population, the number of Maori teachers ought to be increased by a factor of 10 from 15 to 150. Even on the grounds that Maori is now an official language of New Zealand under the Maori Language Act 1987 and should enjoy equal status with English, the number of teachers of Maori ought to be substantially increased.

We are, of course, talking not only about numbers but also about attitudes – and especially those of senior pakeha school administrators and executives, who mostly operate on one set of cultural assumptions.

It is difficult at this time to anticipate the likely effects of Tomorrow's Schools on Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau, its national implementation or on future projects of a similar nature yet the moves to greater community control and participation as part of the current reforms of educational administration in New Zealand would seem to augur well for the new assessment scheme in oral Maori, as would the national move away from norm-referenced examinations to a form of criterion-base assessment. (A bright spot in an otherwise unfortunate set of developments for Maori - see Graham Smith's contribution this issue). The establishment of a local Tai Tokerau trust to administer and organise the new assessment scheme would, perhaps, confirm the Department of Education's willingness to devolve resources and administrative power to the community level.

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Appendix I

The letter below, addressed to the Rt. Hon. Mr. Lange was written by members of the Tai Tokerau assessment whanau in October, 1987. It was first discussed and drafted at a meeting in Whangarei following the second assessment week (1987) and the successful conclusion of Te Reo O Te Tai Tokerau Project.

Kerikeri
PO Box 92
KERIKERI

14 October 1987

The Rt Hon Mr David Lange
Prime Minister of NZ
and Minister of Education
House of Representatives
PB WELLINGTON

Dear Sir

HUTIA TE RITO O TE HARAKEKE
KEI HEA TE KOMAKO E KO
UIA MAI KI A AU: HE AHA TE MEA NUI
MAKU E KI ATU:
HE TANGATA! HE TANGATA! HE TANGATA!

We, the teachers of the Maori language in Tai Tokerau (Northland) this year, have participated in a one-year pilot programme conducted by the Department of Education (TE REO O TE TAI TOKERAU) designed to investigate the feasibility of teacher-based assessment in School Certificate Oral Maori.

Te Reo o te Tai Tokerau Project has been an overwhelming success, not only in terms of the reliability of assessment, but also in terms of the professional development of teachers, the fairness and equity of assessment, community involvement and the degree of consultation with Maori people. It has been a totally enriching experience for all groups involved, both Maori and Pakeha, and serves as a genuine bi-cultural model of partnership.

Te Reo o te Tai Tokerau Project has given us the promise, both of restoring the Maori oral tradition to its rightful place, at the centre of Maori culture, and of raising the significance and status of oral Maori in the curriculum of the senior school - a development potentially as significant as Kohanga Reo in the junior school.

We, the undersigned, ask for your support and encouragement for this project. We ask for its continuance in Tai Tokerau next year, in replacement of the School Certificate oral examination. We also seek approval to upgrade the marks allocated to at least 50% oral, and 50% written.

We strongly support the Department of Education's efforts to extend this type of programme to the Tainui, Tai Rawhiti regions and the South Island, next year.

Kati nei ra:

TUANGIA TE URURUA
KIA TUPU WHAKARITORITO AI
TE TUPU O TE HARAKEKE

Kia ora mai ano

Na:

AG (Oneroa) Stewart
Co-ordinator
Te Reo o te Tai Tokerau

Nga kaiako:

Mrs Whena Pink	Te Kao Area School, Te Kao
Mrs Pare Nathan	Kaitaia College, Kaitaia
Mrs Patsy Shaw	Taipa Area School, Taipa
Mr Wiremu McMath	Panguru Area School, Panguru
Mrs Pani Hauraki	Broadwood Area School, Broadwood
Mr Kahu Waititi	Opononi Area School, Opononi
Mrs Ipu Absolum	Northland College, Okaihau
Mrs Kataraina Sarich	Okaihau College, Okaihau
Mr George Wynyard	Bay of Islands College, Kawakawa
Mrs Rehi Rihari	Tikipunga High School, Whangarei
Mr Peter Wensor	Kama High School, Kamo
Mrs Ella Spring	Whangarei Girls' High School, Whangarei
Mr Tupu Williams	Whangarei Boys' High School, Whangarei
Mrs Takiri Pumipi	Ruawai College, Ruawai
Mrs Betty Farr	Rodney College, Wellsford

Copies to: The Hon Karo Wetere, The Hon Peter Tapsell, Dr BC Gregory,
The Hon Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, Mr Matiu Rata,
Mr Phillip Capper (PPTA), Maryan Street (PPTA), Mr Ra Kohere,
Mr Greg Taylor