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English and Māori Lexicon in Contact in New Zealand

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When different languages meet, that is, come in contact, and 'live' together for a considerable period of time, they willy-nilly begin to make their influences felt on each other in more than one way.

In this article, or rather a miscellany, a brief sketch will be made of some aspects of English as it found its way into Māori — how it fared in the language indigenous to Aotearoa (New Zealand) and vice versa.

English is an official language of New Zealand, and Māori is treated as a semi-official language. English is spoken by the majority of the population, whereas Māori is a minority language spoken by optimistically estimated tens of thousands of people who are most of them just semi-speakers of Māori.

Records of the Māori language written by white English-speaking people in their vernacular tongue, illustrating what they encountered in Aotearoa, were practically nil or very scarce and rather desultory in the earliest period of English-Māori contact. A systematic way to reduce the native language to writing was yet to be attempted. Later, unlike these 'wayfarers', there came people in a more or less banded group, specifically Captain Cook and his crew and companions who collected some of what drew their attention — Māori social life, native flora and fauna. They gave English names to some of the places they discovered or visited. In the 19th century, a useful system of spelling Māori, akin to the system currently in use, was devised mostly by missionaries and Māori specialists.

Interestingly enough, I have encountered two pieces of literature de-

scribed in English showing how Hawaiian and Māori people cemented in the oral tradition. One concerns Hawaiian. There is a story going about — a story which is considered apocryphal — that the native messengers reported when Captain Cook's party approached the island of Oahu in 1778, that 'their skin is loose and folding; their heads are angular; fire and smoke issue from their mouths; they have openings in the sides of their bodies into which they thrust their hands and draw out iron, beads, nails, and other treasures and their speech is unintelligible. This is the way they speak: *a hikapalale, hikapalale, hioluai, oalaki, walawalaki waiki, pohā*'.

The interesting thing about this is that in describing English, Hawaiian people unwittingly gave away the vocal setup of their own language (Alexander 1899).

We have a story in the same vein in New Zealand. Curnow et al. (2002) relate this story:

In Aotearoa or New Zealand the adoption of words from English into Māori and vice versa has expanded the lexical bank of both languages. With Māori the process probably began from the earliest contact with non-Polynesian people. The detailed traditional account published in *Te Pipiwharaurora* in 1911 by Mohi Tūrei of the visit of some Europeans to fish off the coast of Tolaga Bay on the East Coast suggests that borrowing of words began with the very first contact between Māori and Europeans. Tūrei, an acknowledged Ngati Porou authority on traditional lore in the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries wrote that this first encounter happened a long time before Captain Cook's visit to the East Coast in 1769.

Tūrei's account includes the words of two chants used by the foreigners to lift the anchor of their boat and to row away. These words had been remembered in the Māori phonological form by the Māori fishermen, who had observed at close quarters the foreigners fishing. The rowing chant included what Tūrei considered to be the origin of the word 'Pakeha':

*Pakepakeha pakepakeha
Hoihoihii hoihoihii
Hihihiihiihii*

The site of this encounter was named Tolaga Bay by Captain James Cook, a borrowing from *taraki* (a land breeze / northerly breeze). In some newspapers we see this re-borrowed back into Māori as *Toreka Pei, Toracape, Tarakipei* and *Taraka*.

Here we see *Pakepakeha* (a partially reduplicated form of *pakeha*). Linguist Burchfield says that this word is pronounced [pa:keha:, pa:kiha:] by white New Zealanders, adding that this everyday NZ word is unknown in the UK. *The Reed Pocket Dictionary of New Zealand English (RPDNZE)* gives [*pah-ke-hah* or *parkee-are*]. The meaning of this word is variously given. *Hoihoihii* reminds us of English *Ahoy! Ship! Hiihii* is presumably *Shipship*(?).¹

In contemporary English, borrowings from Māori are pronounced by native English-speaking people usually along English phonetic lines, although newly published English-Māori dictionaries encourage those people to pronounce Māori more or less as the natives do.

kiwi [ki:wi:] (a flightless native bird) ⇒ [kiwi]
waihine [wa:hi:ni:] (women) {plural} ⇒ [wa:hine] or more simply
[wa:hine]
moko [moukou] (facial or body tattoo) ⇒ [moko]

Henceforth, Māori of English stock or transliteration (whakawhititanga-kupu) of English to Māori, and English of Māori stock will be referred to as ME and EM respectively, if need be. Used singly, E is English, and M is Māori. With some lexicon, English is solely or predominantly employed, while with some, hybridized forms are employed, with people who want to stick to their guns inclined toward a Māori-only principle.

EM: *gooree* or *goori* [goo-ree] (*The New Zealand Pocket Oxford Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (NZPOD2)) also *goory*.— M: *kurī* (a native dog, mongrel, also an unpopular person).

EM: *tutu* also *toot* [tu-tu/toot]. A large shrub whose pulpy black berries contain poisonous seeds, and whose leaves can poison stock (RPDNZE). In this dictionary, the original Māori word *kurī* [ku-ree] is also entered.

Here are a couple of words that require cautious reading. The English word *book* is *pukapuka* in Māori. The form *puka* easily leads us to associate it with English *book*. However, M: *pukapuka* is a rangiora shrub. *Brachyglottis repanda*: this shrub has white undersides to its leaves, so the word is also used for book, letter, paper (the leaves of the rangiora were used for writing on in the early days of Pakeha settlement), lungs (*Concise Māori Dictionary (CMD)*).

Māori *kete* is a basket, kit, hand-bag usually made by New Zealand flax. The word may easily be taken as a borrowing from English *kit* or vice versa. English *kit* refers to articles, equipment, etc. for a specific purpose (first-aid-kit) or a set of parts needed to assemble furniture or model, etc. This word is also equalized as Māori *kete* (Anglicized form, perhaps influenced by *kitbag*). A *kitbag* is usually a large, cylindrical bag used for a soldier's or traveller's kit (*NZPOD*).

ME: *miraka* is from E: *milk*. Linguist Mary Boyce says that 'For some speakers there will always be a significant difference between *miraka* and M: *waiū* (breast milk), with one okay for adding to a cup of tea, and the other not'. (Garlick 1998)

In this connection it will be noted that in Hawaiian, *waiū* is used for *milk* whether it concerns the breast or the cup. E.g. *E'olu'olu'oe i wāhi waiū* (= Please a little milk).

ME: *Kiritimiti* is from E: *Christmas*. English has 24 consonant phonemes and 11 vowel phonemes plus several diphthongs. Māori has fewer phonemes usually transcribed as /a, e, i, o, u/ and /p, t, k, m, n, ŋ, f, h, r, w/. The number of Māori vowel phonemes is rather disputable. Some claim the number is 10, transcribing them as /a, e, i, o, u/ (short) and /ā, ē, ī, ō, ū/ (long). Short and long vowels are phonemically distinct. Other scholars, meanwhile, claim that the number is five/a, e, i, o, u/ (short), therefore /aa, ee, ii, oo, uu/ are, albeit they are long, are a sequence of two (near-)identical short vowels. In this miscellany, long vowels are transcribed with a macron placed on the vowel letters of the corresponding short vowels.

The phonemes showing consonants in E: *Christmas* are /k, r, s, t, m, s/. In Māori the corresponding letters are *k, r, t, m, t*. *s* is absent, because

Māori has no /s/. Compared with English words, letters showing vowels and consonants are much fewer. There are no set rules to determine which English sound is changed to which Māori sound. One notable phenomenon is that English sibilants like [s, z, ʃ, ʒ] are usually rendered as [h], as Moore (1890) writes: 'I've never heard a Māori pronounce our sibilants, and I was informed by Judge Maning that only one tribe could be taught to utter them. "You give me one herring," said a Māori to me at the Hot Lakes. For a time I was nonplussed but a colonial interpreted it to me "you give me one shilling".' (Smyth 1946)

English-speaking people are likely to apply [w] to the Māori *wh* sound which is currently pronounced more or less like English [f], though Māori /wh/ is varied. A boy brings a lunch for another boy named Te Wharewhiti to hand it to him. A school teacher says to this boy, 'That is not Worrie, that is Whare. Now give him his lunch and I don't want to hear him being called Worrie ever again'. (*Te tina a Te Wharewhiti*, Te Mātāwai Tuatoru.) [f] for *wh* is an impossible sound to the English ear: besides M: *whare* is popularly pronounced as [fari:] in New Zealand. Cf. M: *whare* [fare].

Māori words so far discussed show that the final syllable or mora end with a vowel — i.e., the syllable is open. A syllable or mora that ends with a consonant cluster is called a closed syllable. Māori words may end with a consonant only in very casual speech. For this reason, when English words are transliterated to Māori words, the latter are paragogic word-finally and epenthetic word-medially. Typical of these words are *miraka* and *pīriti* (= bridge). Some words have forms that do not follow this rule. For example, *punu* (= spoon), *tiriti* (= street). English [s] which forms a consonant cluster — here [sp] and [st] — is either ignored or elided. Nor is it substituted with a different consonant (e.g. *hupunu?*).

E: *wool* — M: *wīru*. It may sound strange that no word of Māori origin seems to exist in Māori to refer to 'wool', despite the fact that wool is a chief product of this country.

E: *spoon* is ME: *pune* or *punu* as already mentioned. We have M: *kono*,

which means bend, curve, loop, knot, etc.

E: *aircraft* — M: *wakarererangii* (vehicle + fly + sky) or *manu rererangi* (manu = bird). Apparently no ME: aircraft carrier in Māori is 'kawe rererangi' (kawe = carry). *The Reed Dictionary of Modern Māori*, 2nd ed. (RDMM2) lists ME: *aropereina*.

E: *June* — ME: *Iune* — M: *Pipiri*. In Māori, the calendar month of June is to some tribes the first month of the year. In New Zealand, a 'down under' country from Britain, June is rather a cold season. Best (1922) writes:

Kua piri nga mea katoa i te whenua, me te tangata.
(All things on earth cohere owing to the cold; likewise man.)

The name of the first month, *Pipiri*, is that of a star, or rather, two stars. *Pipiri* is one of the symbols of the New Year and of early winter.

E: *Monday* — ME: *Mane* — M: *Rātahi* or *Rāhina*. *Rātahi* means 'day one', i.e., the first day (of the week). In Hawaiian Monday is *Pōakahī* (night + first), showing that the lunar calendar comes first to 'ancient' Polynesian people. The word *hina* in M: *Rāhina* is, according to Best, 'the name of the moon god of Babylonia. . . (and) the moon goddess of ancient Egypt occupied exactly the same position'. As noted earlier, Māori [h] is usually substituted for [s].

EM: *Māori*. This word is fully anglicized. It is usually pronounced [mauri] or [mau(ə)ri]. Māori spell and pronounce this word Māori [ma:ori]. In this connection, Mr Hideo Okada supplied me with the following piece of information:

Webster's New World Dictionary of American English, 3rd College Edition (WNWD) gives ma'ō-rē, mou'rē, also māōrē, and LPD2 has [mauri] as well as the original [maori]. The first pronunciation given in WNWD [ma-o-ri] is along the same lines as your argument, and essentially the same as LPD2's English pronunciation. If we compare this with the original pronunciation mentioned in LPD2, it sounds very similar to the original pronunciation. Therefore, it can be as-

sumed that these were heard through an English speaker's ears and transcribed as such.

The other day, Māori treasures from the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tangarewa were shown to the public at the Tokyo National Museum at Ueno, Tokyo. The title of this exhibition in Japanese was 「マーオリ——楽園の神々——」。 This 「マーオリ」 was more faithful to the original Māori pronunciation, though we are used to 「マオリ」 with a short [a].

There is a short word in Māori which is similar in spelling to *Māori* — *mauri*. This word has quite different meanings. Most symbolic of these is 'life principle'.

The *mauri* symbolizes active sign of life and one can talk about *mauri* as something separate from the body. The *mauri* becomes an attribute of the self, something to nurture, to protect, to think about. The self and the *mauri* are one. If there is something wrong with the *mauri*, the person is not well. When the person is physically and socially well, the *mauri* is in a state of balance, described as *mauri tau* (the *mauri* is at peace). (Mead 2003)

This word is used in the exclamation to avert evil after a sneeze: *Tihei mauri ora*. It is also a term to draw attention to oneself when wishing to speak — a formulaic beginning of a speech. The idiom is variously translated as (1) 'the breath or sneeze of life', 'behold I live', 'listen I speak'. (Tauroa 1994) (2) A variety of totara timber, dark in colour and light in weight, valued for making canoes. (3) The moon on the 27th day.

A couple of words given below are hybridized forms of ME: and M:

ME: *pene* + M: *rākau* (pencil) (*pene* = pen + *rākau* = tree)

ME: *pepa* + M: *takai* (*pepa* = paper + *takai* = wrap)

M: *pouaka* + ME: *poutapeta* (P. O. Box). Another kind of box is solely in Māori.

M: *pouaka* + M: *motuhake* (box + special). This is also termed *Private Bag* in New Zealand — a collection point for the mail intended for any large organization (RPDNZE). A post box or letter box we see on the streets is *Pouaka Poutapeta* in Māori.

A more or less similar universal line of thinking runs through the following English and Māori lexicon, no matter whether they are the products of 'calquing' or not:

E: *writing pad* — M: *tuataka tuhi* (heap up/hoard + write)
 E: *song bird* — M: *manu waiata* (bird + song)
 E: *sunbeam* — M: *hihi o te rā* (ray of the sun)

There are words in Māori — mostly things, animate or otherwise, in natural New Zealand, which have their counterparts in English:

M: *pounamu* — E: New Zealand *green stone*
 M: *rimu* — E: *red pine*
 M: *weka* — E: *wood hen*

Some Māori vocabulary have undergone a semantic shift — that is, their meanings have either narrowed or amplified or they are being used to adapt themselves to a new environment or living needs. Relating to the word *umu* or *imu*, Bawden (1987) is here quoted in part:

Māori food, according to Monneron, was on the whole very miserable. Their main diet was the fern root which grew in great quantity, and which was prepared by being warmed by fire, beaten, then used as bread. They also had quantities of fish. To cook this, a hole was dug in the ground, half-filled with stones, and a fire lit on top. When the stones were sufficiently heated, the fish well-enveloped in leaves, were laid on them. Soil was then used to cover the hāngi until the food was cooked.

So *umu* or *imu* is an 'earth oven'. The word *hāngi* is also used, which may refer to the oven and to the meal cooked in a manner given. The word *umu* is the name for an electrically handled modern home appliance you can find in the kitchen used for cooking food.

Finally, Māori vocabulary that refers to products modern technology has developed will be surveyed. We have chosen computer language to see how Māori is coping with it.

computer ⇒ *rorohiko* (brain + electricity)

cancel ⇒ *whakakore* (*whaka-* = cause ~ to vb. + *kore* = zero/nothing)
ROM ⇒ *mahara pīwai* (remember + continuously/permanently)
cursor ⇒ *kaitiri* (*kai-* {agent noun} + *tiri* = place one by one). Also *pehu* (spear/dart)

It may be noticed that contrary to our expectations, Māori coin words where we expect transliterations from English.²⁾

EDITOR'S NOTES

This is the late Professor Abe's posthumous paper. Grateful thanks are due to Hiroko Saito and Naoko Hamakura who read through the paper, corrected typographical errors, and supplemented left-out reference information.

NOTES

- 1) Tūrei's account appears in *Ngā Kōrero a Reweti Kohere Mā* (= *The Writings of Reweti Kohere* and others) as *He waka Pakepakeha* (= White people's ships). This book, including Tūrei's account, is written in Māori throughout.
- 2) In this miscellany, grammatical aspects of English and Māori in contact have not been described, our primary concern being restricted to the lexicon.

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