The Role of Libraries and Archives in the Preservation and Revitalisation of Indigenous Knowledge: The case of revitalisation of te reo Māori.

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Abstract:
This paper discusses the role of libraries and archives in New Zealand in the revitalisation of te reo Māori. It represents the preliminary stage of a proposed study that will look at the wider issue of the role of libraries and archives in the preservation and transmission of Indigenous knowledges, particularly mātauranga Māori.

The paper begins with a discussion of the current status of holdings of Māori language material in our libraries and archives, and how well, or how badly, we promote and facilitate access to those materials. I go on to discuss whether the materials themselves have value for the revitalisation of te reo, and whether current access to them is adequate.

The paper concludes with a preliminary analysis of the following questions:

- Are the materials currently held of intrinsic value to the revitalisation of te reo?
- Is current access to and promotion of these materials adequate?
- What can libraries/archives do to enhance both the value of materials, and access to them?
- Is there a particular type of library/archive that is better suited to the role of supporting the struggle to revitalise te reo?
Introduction
There has been a regular stream of literature since the early 1990’s, exploring issues around Māori services in libraries. However, in all the contributions to the discussion on Māori services te reo seems to get less attention than other factors. Library responses in many areas have improved considerably, especially since Te Ara Tika, but te reo still seems to have less of a focus. Bilingual signs are more prevalent, and some library catalogues now have bilingual interfaces, with others in planning, but anecdotal evidence suggests there has been little progress in the area of bilingual staff or even low-level Māori language competence amongst library staff. This raises the question of the responsibility libraries and archives have to ensure their holdings of Māori language materials are more than just cultural artefacts, but representations of a living language.

Setting the context
This paper is largely an opinion piece on my perception of the role of libraries and archives in regard to holdings of Māori language material. It is therefore important that my relationship to the topic is made manifest. It is also appropriate to discuss the paradigms surrounding Western academic thought and how they impact on the Western library tradition. Both these things influence the topic under discussion.

My relationship to the topic
My interest in the topic stems from a long-term interest in te reo Māori, including time as a lecturer in Māori language. I am Pākehā, but learnt the Māori language as an adult. I had studied French at school, and began my university studies intending a degree in French and English. After a time, I realised that I had a desire to know and understand the language of Aotearoa. I began with the intention of completing a minor in Māori Studies, but was so captivated by both the language and the culture that I changed to a Māori Studies major, and later completed a Masters’ degree in Māori Studies. After completing my studies at the University of Waikato, I was fortunate to obtain a position as a lecturer at the University of Otago.

While lecturing in te reo, I began studying linguistics and became interested in the area of language revitalisation and language planning. I recently changed my profession to become a Māori Resources librarian at the University of Otago library, where I retain my strong interest in te reo me ngā tikanga o te ao Māori, and more particularly language revitalisation.

The Western research paradigm, libraries and Indigenous thought
The basis of the scientific pursuit of knowledge in the Western academy is to create order out of chaos, by understanding and explaining how and why things are as they are. This is achieved through a process of observation, the promulgation and testing of theories to explain observed phenomena, and reporting of results to, and acceptance by, the body of scientific opinion. The process of developing and testing theories relies upon knowledge of what has been done by others in the field, both to gain ideas for study, and to give validity to new ideas. It is in this area that libraries play the major role in scholarly research. It is the library that collects, organises, stores and allows retrieval of, work that has gone before.
Radford (1998) discusses the traditional view of the Western library as a place that imposes order, “the ultimate realization of a place where each item within it has a fixed place and stands in an a priori relationship with every other item” (p. 617-8). Western knowledge is also divided into packages called disciplines.

The very nature of the classical Western library depends on order, where “the librarian’s domain is that of the creation and maintenance of order, and the library user represents a threat to that order”. (Radford, 1998:619). This creates a barrier even for users familiar with the Western paradigms of knowledge. For those, the Other\textsuperscript{2}, whose knowledge processes follow different paradigms, the traditionally structured Western library becomes almost completely inaccessible. The division of knowledge into disciplines in Western science is at complete odds with the Indigenous view of knowledge as holistic and inter-related, and it is this disciplinary division which forms the basis of library classification systems.

**LIS literature**

The following discussion centres on articles appearing over the last 10 – 15 years concerning issues relating to Māori services and Māori collections in New Zealand libraries and archives.

Campbell (2004) discusses making services at Wellington City Libraries more relevant to the needs of Māori. The Library conducted branch staff visits, focus groups and a questionnaire and discovered that the over-riding theme of responses was that of customer care. Fletcher (2004) reports on developments at Tairawhiti Polytech library as a result of interviews of Māori staff and students from various departments. Haneta Pierce (2003) reports on hui held by Christchurch City Libraries to seek Māori views on library services. Responses at Christchurch City included the provision of a community space, employing a Māori speaker, developing separate Māori collections, and installing artwork. Szekely & Walker (2001) similarly reported on initiatives at Manukau City Libraries.

Earlier, Jane McRae (1990) had advocated that libraries should reflect the cultures of both Māori and Pakeha, and Williams (1991) looked at ways NZ libraries provide reference services to Māori and suggested areas in which service could be enhanced. In 1990, Archifacts published an interview between Cushla Parekowhai and Rangitunoa Black, Māori Specialist at Auckland Public Library. Parekowhai explored many aspects of the position of Māori staff working in libraries. Black suggested ways to strengthen and develop relationships with Māori users including employing more Māori librarians, and providing better spaces. Parekowhai also discussed with Black some alternate ways to present material, for example whakapapa read onto tape to produce talking manuscripts. Black also strongly advocated more use of te reo. (Parekowhai & Black 1990). All these ideas were to be echoed later in the Te Ara Tika project report.

The 1994 publication *Ka Mahi Tonu* (Garraway & Szekely, 1994) looked at bicultural services in New Zealand libraries. Beginning with a proposal for bicultural development by Dick Grace, it included a record of bicultural activities from 1992 – 1994, gathered through an ad-hoc survey sent to members of the New Zealand Library and Information
association (NZLIA, now LIANZA), and a time-line of significant bicultural achievements from the same period.

The most comprehensive work exploring Māori library and information needs was the series that began with a commission from NZLIA for a research report into biculturalism. What became the Te Ara Tika project began with a research report by Tui MacDonald (1993) which provided a comprehensive literature review, and gave the results of a survey of public librarians. This initial report was followed by a series of hui around the country to gauge Māori attitudes to, and aspirations for, library and information services. The resultant report (Szekely 1997a) was supplemented with a resource kit (Szekely 1997b) which included the full hui transcripts and a scoping paper by Kathy Irwin on the methodology (Irwin, 1997), including a treatise on hui as a research tool. The main report highlighted many suggestions for improvement, including suggestions under the following headings:

- Māori staffing
- Māori libraries
- Intellectual property issues
- The appropriateness of Māori information being available in libraries
- Promotion and taking the library out to the community
- Māori resources
- Māori language resources
- Māori studies in tertiary institutions
- The need for more material written by Māori
- The need for specialist Māori expertise
- Traditional means of storing and disseminating knowledge

In reference to Māori resources and Māori language resources Szekely noted that “Māori language resources were mentioned specifically in relation to the needs of kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa, schools and tertiary studies”. He further notes “It was widely acknowledged that there is a general lack of Māori language material available in published print form” (p51). Language issues also arose in other connections, such as the need for Māori speaking staff, the need to make manuscripts in Māori more readily available, as well as naming in Māori and bi-lingual signage. There was also a feeling that librarians in general should at least be able to pronounce Māori words correctly and use Māori greetings. Another strong theme of the report is for separate Māori collections to be developed.

In 1995, Te Rōpū Whakahau published He Puna Taunaki: te reo Māori in libraries as a language resource for librarians, which is now available freely on the web. Compiled by Hinureina Mangan and Chris Szekely He Puna Taunaki includes a pronunciation guide, bilingual signs and a bilingual signs word list as well as a general resource list. In the introduction, Mangan and Szekely (1995) discuss the long-term acknowledgment by the library profession that Māori have specific information resource requirements. They observe, however, that “it is mainly in the last decade that te reo Māori has been recognised as an important component of these needs” (web page 01). They also discuss the following reasons why it is important to recognise te reo:
New Zealand is the only place it is spoken

Te reo enhances cultural identity

In the same year as the Te Ara Tika project report, Szekely & Weatherall (1997), in a discussion on access issues, historical context and relevance to current Māori needs of heritage material, especially in te reo, noted the difficulties associated with the lack of Māori language knowledge amongst staff.

In three articles in 2004, Anna Stevens (2004a,b, c) directly addresses the issue of Māori language in libraries. In the first, in New Zealand Libraries, Stevens asks how staff can effectively respond to inquiries such as “Are you Te Kaitiaki Pukapuka?” without some knowledge of te reo. Stevens also provides a number of arguments for bilingual services, and discusses various levels of fluency appropriate to different situations. She also reports on the results of “an informal survey of bilingual staffing amongst New Zealand’s largest public libraries”(Stevens 2004a, p371). She found libraries in the larger population centres most likely to provide bilingual service, and that at least half the responding libraries were taking some steps to encourage bilingualism. However, the most common response to a question about the numbers of fluent staff was “one or none”, and where there were bilingual staff, the ratio was about one in 10 - 15 (p373).

In an article in Library Life, entitled ‘Kōrero te reo Māori! . . do we have to?’ Stevens (2004c) discusses te reo as an official language and to what extent it should be used in libraries. In another article, published in the same volume, Stevens (2004b) asks how many Māori-English bilingual librarians there are. Results of the informal survey are again discussed, and Stevens goes on to discuss ways of encouraging the development of bilingualism amongst staff.

Most of the literature looks at a broad range of options for improving the accessibility of libraries to Māori patrons. Only a few mention te reo in any detail, and those focus more on the desirability of bilingual staff, bilingual naming and bilingual signage to enhance the environment for Māori users.

**Methodologies**

As mentioned above, the primary intention of this paper is as an opinion piece, and to tease out ideas for further study. The methodology used for data collection for this preliminary inquiry was not intended to be scientific or comprehensive. Rather, the aim was to provide indicative data on Māori language holdings. Data was gathered using Māori language limitation fields in the catalogues or databases for each collection sampled to give a very crude count of items held. I recognise that this is not an exhaustive method, nor is the extent or level of Māori language occurring in many entries entirely clear without further investigation. The large number of results made it impossible in the time available to further analyse the content of the material. It does, however, give an indication of holdings. Collections chosen were:

- One large metropolitan library (Christchurch City Libraries)
- One academic library (University of Otago)
- One district library (Tasman Districts)
- One heritage collection of manuscripts and archives (Hocken)
The National Library of New Zealand, as a statutory deposit library.

Māori language material in New Zealand libraries and archives
In this section, I present a historical background of recording and collecting material in the Māori language, and then report on the indicative findings concerning the current status.

Historical background
Many early researchers into Māori language and culture were gentlemen of means who explored and collected knowledge as a hobby. The writers of travellers' tales were Victorian men, and they interpreted what they saw through their own cultural background. Other collectors, for example Elsdon Best, were trained ethnographers, but they, too, were heavily influenced by the cultural context from which they came. Thus much of what has been collected from the 19th century concerns men's business, as that was the area in which these collectors moved. From the point of view of historical or ethnographic study this can be problematic. However, it is not such a problem when materials are considered for their value as examples of te reo.

Collectors such as George Grey, T. M. Hocken, William Williams collected material from a motivation of philanthropy. They wished to preserve what they could in the belief that Māori knowledge would disappear if not collected. These collections are very eclectic, and provide good examples of language because of their eclectic nature. As with the material collected by amateur ethnographers and travellers, these latter collections are heavily weighted to male writers, but the range of topics and styles make them valuable language material. Some of this early material was published in the Journal of the Polynesian Society, Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, Dominion monographs, and later in Māori Purposes Fund publications. Much is still in manuscript form, however. In the early 20th century a small number of Māori scribes, such as Henare Potae, Nepia Pohuhu and Te Whatahoro Jury recorded notebooks of material in the Māori language.

A note on orthographic development
When first contact was made between Māori and Pākehā, te reo Māori was a purely oral language. Although there were convention for conveying language over distance and other time, there was nothing equating to the symbolic representation of sounds of a written orthography. Like many other languages around the world, Māori was committed to writing using a set of symbols developed for another language and another culture. One of the earlier attempts at recording Māori was by Dr John Savage, in 1807. Savage, like many others of the time, wrote Māori as it sounded to him, and in relation to the sounds of English, with the result that often only the writer understood what the symbols were intended to represent.

William Kendall published a book in 1815 entitled He Korao no New Zealand. This also represented Māori sounds inconsistently. Three years later the first attempt was made to develop a truly representational orthography. Two Māori men travelled to England,
and met with Professor Samuel Lee, Professor of Arabic at Cambridge University, to develop an orthography and grammar. This work was left incomplete due to ill health.

In 1820 Kendall accompanied two Māori to England, again to meet with Professor Lee. This led to the publication of *A Grammar and Vocabulary of the Language of New Zealand*, compiled by Lee (1820). The orthography Lee used became known as the Lee/Kendall orthography, and was in general use for ten years. The Lee/Kendall orthography continued to use both *d* and *r* where the present-day orthography uses only *r*. Use of *h* was inconsistent and there was no representation or the sound represented in modern orthography by *wh*

In 1830, the Reverend William Yates printed five hundred copies of a book of selected Gospels. Other than showing no distinction between the voiced and unvoiced bi-labial glide (*w* and *wh*), and no overt marking of vowel length, Yates’ orthography was the same as that used in the present day. There was a period of some debate over the representation of the unvoiced sound in the early 1840’s, the Mangungu press having adopted the *wh* representation in 1840, but by 1845 the *wh* was widely used.

**Early Printing in Māori**

Alongside the development of orthographic conventions and grammatical description, the use of the print medium was also developing. Yates travelled to Sydney in 1830 to print his Gospels, all printing being done there or in England until the first successful press was established in the Bay of Islands in 1835. Most of the printing from this press was in Māori, but done by Missionaries and for the purposes of religious instruction.

In late 1834 William Colenso, missionary and competent printer, arrived in the Bay of Islands, bringing a full-scale press with him, which he set up at the Church Mission in Paihia. The press was operating successfully by January 1835. The Wesleyan Rev. Woon, also an experienced printer, established a press on the Hokianga in 1836. In 1858, the Austrian Emperor presented a press and type to the Māori of Ngāruawāhia. This was the first time that Māori was printed by Māori, for Māori. Predictably, then, the press was used not for religious purposes, but political, as *Te Hokioi* newspaper, the organ of Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, was printed there.

There were a total of twenty-five periodicals produced during the nineteenth century, according to Williams’ Bibliography (Williams, 1975), and five of these were run by the Māori themselves.

**Shift to English**

By 1920, some Māori had begun to question the place of the Māori language. Although most Māori were still living in homogeneous communities and Māori continued to be the primary medium of communication amongst Māori, English had become the language of commerce. Sir Apirana Ngata, a Māori MP of the time, was not alone in advocating the teaching of English in Māori schools. In some schools, the speaking of Māori was rigorously punished. The removal of Māori as a medium of instruction, combined with the dislocation of traditional language communities by urban drifts after World War II, led
to a drastic decline in the Māori speaking population, and therefore the production of written Māori.

**Revival**

By the 1950’s the tide had again turned, and there was increasing pressure to make the teaching of Māori language once again a part of our education system, starting with a course at the University of Auckland. In 1960, the Department of Education began publishing a journal in Māori, however this was primarily aimed at school pupils who were already fluent in the language. The teaching of Māori did not begin to filter down to primary level until the 1970s, starting with Forms 1 and 2. 1974 saw the first publication of *Te Tautoko*, a journal targeted at the school learner of Māori. Since the early 1970’s, more and more material is being published in Māori, although the majority of reading material is aimed at children and coming from just a few publishing houses.

**Current status of holdings**

Table 1 presents the results of a crude interrogation of catalogues and databases from the sample of libraries and archives. To simplify the search process, the search was limited to two searches: books and journals, for the metropolitan, district, academic and National Library. For the heritage collection all record types were included. The National Archives were to have been included in the study, but there is no way to limit for language in their on-line database. The results are predictable in that the highest numbers come from the National Library. This is to be expected as this is a statutory deposit library for the nation. It is also predictable that an academic library would have higher holdings than a public library, with the existence of Māori Studies as an academic discipline. I was a little surprised at the close correlation between the metropolitan and academic library periodical holdings. However, given that a great number of Māori language periodicals are popular magazines rather than academic this is perhaps not so surprising.

**Table 1: Holdings of material in containing *te reo Māori*³**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library type</th>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Journals</th>
<th>Total holdings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>1397</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td>32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage Collection</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>93**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Library (Wellington Collections)</td>
<td>2327</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2417</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes on the catalogue/database functions
• Although not possible to search for books and periodicals separately in the district library OPAC, its records clearly indicated whether items were children’s, adult’s fiction or non-fiction without needing to go to further details.
• It is not intuitively easy to find the database for the Hocken Collections (Hakena) from the University of Otago library homepage.
• The National Library catalogue allows a range of limits to be placed on collections, for example lending collections only, regional collections, Wellington only.
• The district library catalogue, was the only catalogue in the sample which allowed further categorisation of results without going to the detailed record for each item

Promotion and facilitation of access
As noted above, in the sample study, other than in the district library catalogue, it was not possible to further categorise results without going to the detailed record for each item. This is a serious barrier to the user looking for material in Māori of a specific nature, but not necessarily a specific subject matter. Many libraries, public and academic, now have separate Māori Resource collections. These, though, are still arranged in accordance with library subject classification schemes, so that materials in the Māori language are not shelved together. Many public libraries have a separate Māori language section within their children’s collection, but the same is not true of adult material.

Value of the material held in our libraries for Māori language revitalisation
It is a well-accepted tenet of language acquisition in the Western world that language learning beyond the basic level can be greatly enhanced by exposure to a wide range of written material. This is the reason that literacy is a staple of our education system. Since the middle of the 19th century, te reo has been a written as well as an oral language. Despite the zeal of some purists who would like to see the language remain in the oral domain, literacy is as essential for the survival and revival of Māori as for any other language in the current world.

There is no doubt in my mind that the early material in Māori held in our libraries and archives is as rich a source of language for the more advanced learner as any that could be produced. There are difficulties for the novice, however, especially with the very earliest material, because of the unsettled nature of early orthographic conventions.

Adequacy of access
Access to Māori material in general will improve significantly with the gradual integration of the newly approved Māori Subject Headings into catalogues and databases. There is still a need, however, to improve awareness of, and access to, material written in Māori.
Alongside the issue of effective cataloguing and OPAC design to facilitative identification of materials is the need to make the older examples of te reo more accessible. Many exciting projects have come to light recently.

- The New Zealand Digital Library collection of Nūpepa Māori provides a rich source of Māori language material in a readily accessible format. These newspapers can be browsed by publication or date, or searched for particular themes, names, and events. Some are bilingual, which is very useful for the novice reader of older Māori although caution should be exercised if using the translations for historical research as the Māori and English do not always say exactly the same thing.

- The New Zealand Electronic Text Centre has also digitised some volumes in Māori.

- Auckland City Libraries are very open to sharing their heritage collections by providing photocopies to other libraries. The Hocken Collections have recently acquired copies of the Grey Collection of papers and letters.

There is, however, a lot that could be done to make the treasure chests of language and knowledge held in archives and heritage collections more accessible. Photocopying and microforming has been used in the past, but requires multiple copies to be made. Although more costly in setting up, the more economical option in terms of breadth of exposure is digitisation. The drawback is this. Costs can be quite accurately and equitably distributed when items are copied or microformed, but not so easily with digitisation. It is to be hoped that the National Digitisation Strategy will address this issue.

**Conclusions**

The above discussion has provided a background to the development of written Māori, and the collection of material in Māori in the 19th and early 20th centuries. I have discussed the current status of holdings of Māori language materials, based on a simple sample survey of selected libraries and archives and my own personal knowledge and experience. I have shown that there is material available in Māori, in our libraries, and attempted to answer the following questions:

**Are the materials currently held of intrinsic value to the revitalisation of te reo?**

Examples of modern Māori, especially written for children is well represented in our public libraries. However, material for adult readers, especially readers proficient in the language, is not so prevalent.

Written material is a valuable source for learners, and for speakers of te reo who want to deepen or broaden their exposure to the language. A very good source of such material exists in manuscripts and archives, but these are not readily accessible to users. The most effective and cost efficient way to make this material widely available while preserving the delicate heritage nature of the originals is through digitisation. All

**Is current access to and promotion of these materials adequate?**

Very little seems to be happening in terms of active promotion of materials held in our libraries as aids in the revitalisation of te reo. This would be particularly valuable in the case of manuscript material because there is little public awareness of just what is there and the databases are of little practical help in making that known. The heritage nature
of these materials also makes it more difficult to provide good access, although some good work has been done producing photocopies, microforms and digital repositories.

**What can libraries/archives do to enhance both the value of materials, and access to them?**
Our nation’s holders of heritage collections need to be more proactive in seeking ways to make the material they hold more accessible. This requires improved physical access, by providing alternative access copies, as well as improving indexing.

**Is there a particular type of library/archive that is better suited to the role of supporting the struggle to revitalise te reo?**
At present the institutions which hold these materials are in the best position to take action to improve access. It is hoped the National digital Strategy will help both in providing guidelines and with grants-in-aid. He long-term aim, though, should be for all libraries to be able to provide access in some form to a selection of written Māori in a variety of genre, dialects and ages.

**Bibliography**


Kendall, Thomas (1815). *A Korao no New Zealand*. Sydney: G Howe


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1 Some of the material in this paper has been drawn from a Literature review prepared for the Victoria University of Wellington, Master of Library and Information Studies paper INFO528.

2 Radford (1998) uses the term ‘the other’ to describe the library user in general (p. 621). Here, however, I use the term Other, as does Smith, to denote Indigenous peoples.

3 Notes to table 1
* 25 children’s books
** this figure is deceptive as most hits represent a collection of items