

# Wellington Working Papers in Linguistics

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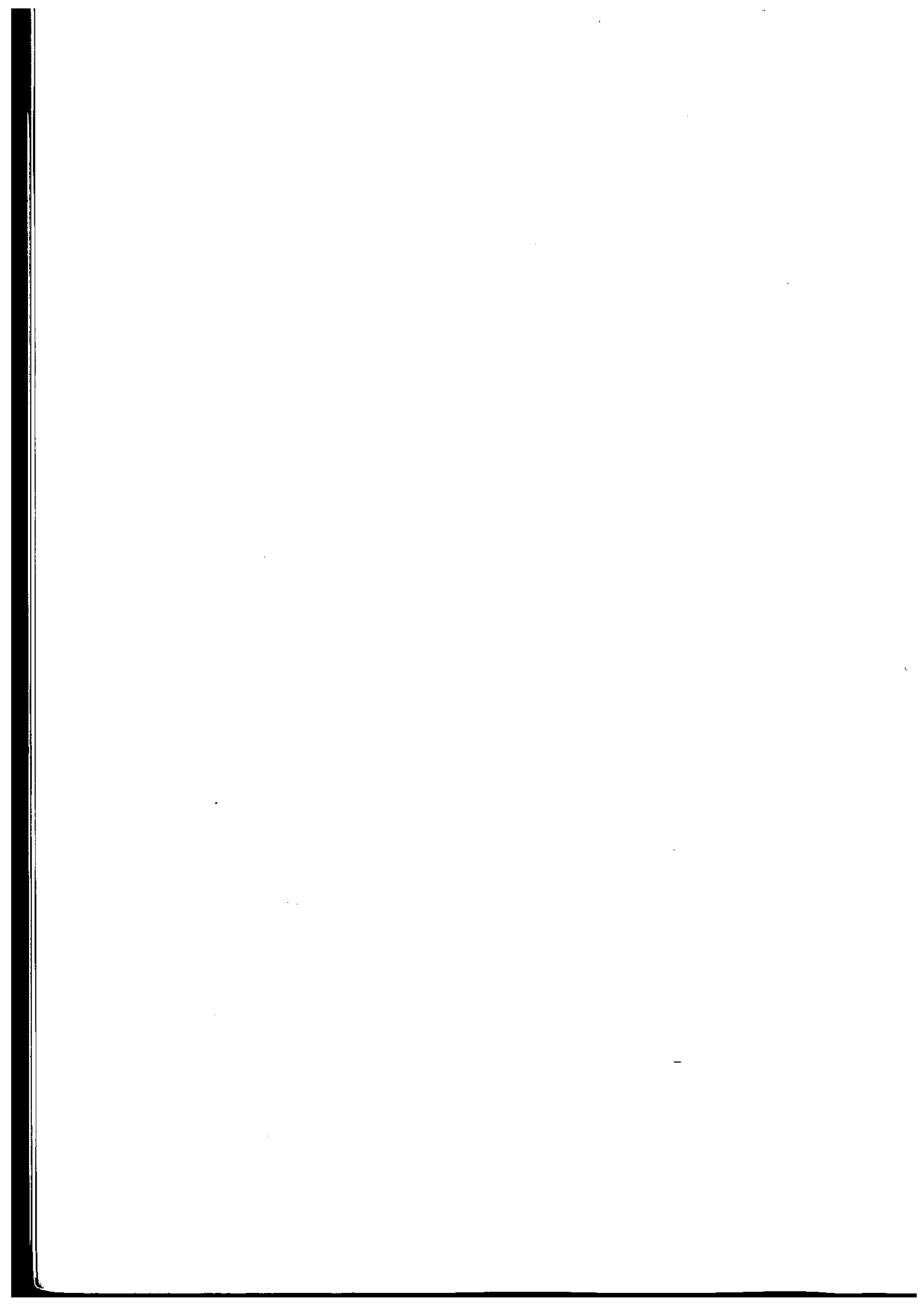
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## The Wellington Tongan community: prospects for language maintenance<sup>1</sup>

'Anahina 'Aipolo and Janet Holmes

### Abstract

The Tongan community in New Zealand is a relatively recent immigrant group. A questionnaire was used to collect data on language proficiency, language use, and attitudes to Tongan from a sample of 100 Tongans in Wellington. The results provide a profile of a closely knit community, fluent in Tongan and English, yet with a high level of Tongan language maintenance at present. Tongan is their preferred language in a range of domains. Even at work and in shops Tongans generally use Tongan to each other, regardless of the presence of non-Tongan speakers and the particular setting of the interaction. Attitudes to Tongan are generally very positive.

There are also signs of incipient shift, however. Proficiency in English is increasing; younger people tend to code-switch when they meet; and few are aware of the dangers of language loss, despite the evident example of the Maori language. Nevertheless the situation is currently one where language shift has not yet proceeded very far, and if steps are taken soon, conscious efforts to maintain Tongan have a good chance of success.

### Introduction

Tongan is the language of a small minority of relatively recent immigrants to New Zealand from the Kingdom of Tonga. Most arrived in New Zealand during the past 25 years. Though large scale labour migration did not begin till 1964, it then increased rapidly, and by 1974 the number of Tongans arriving in New Zealand seeking temporary work reached as many as 5000 (de Bres and Campbell 1975: 1). The 1986 Census of New Zealand residents identified 7218 Tongan migrants, roughly evenly distributed by sex. The figure for self-identified Tongans (i.e. including those born in New Zealand) is 9228, and consideration of those who identified with more than one ethnic group suggests that the total size of the New Zealand Tongan population is probably closer to 11,000.

For most immigrant groups in New Zealand, especially the earlier European settlers such as the Dutch (Kroef 1977) the Yugoslavs (Stoffel 1982), and the Poles (Surup 1985), English has gradually displaced the ethnic mother-tongue in all but the most domestic domains. It is generally recognized that minority groups in New Zealand suffer language loss over a period of about three generations, a pattern which is only too familiar internationally (cf Fishman 1980). Though the pattern of language shift to English, often by the second generation in New Zealand, but certainly by the third, has been widely noted (eg Jakich 1987, Kroef 1977, Stoffel 1982, Surup 1985, Wee 1974), there are few detailed published studies of the process. Nor is there much information about the domains of use of minority languages other than Maori (Benton 1987). This paper attempts to fill part of this gap by describing the language competence and use patterns of the Tongan community in Wellington, as well as examining the prospects for Tongan language maintenance in New Zealand.

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<sup>1</sup> We would like to acknowledge the contribution of Victoria University's Internal Grants Committee to the resources needed to complete this project.

## How the data was collected

The information on the use of Tongan in New Zealand which is provided in this paper was collected by interviewing a random sample of 100 Tongan people from the Tongan community in Wellington ('Aipolo 1989).

### Selecting informants

As others have found when collecting data on minority language speakers, the first problem is to define the sampling universe (Linguistic Minorities Project 1985: 162-165, Milroy 1987:24). Tongans are distributed throughout the greater Wellington area in a non-random way. They tend to be concentrated in particular suburbs. This means that the electoral register is of no use as a sampling frame. Instead it was decided to adopt the method used by the Linguistic Minorities Project (1985) in Britain and use community lists.

A random sample of 100 Tongan adults (49 women and 51 men) was selected for interview from as complete a list as could be compiled of Tongan adults in Wellington. The list drew on the membership list of the nine churches that Wellington Tongans attend. Since almost all Tongans are practising church-goers, this proved a very satisfactory method of obtaining a representative list of 443 adult Wellington Tongans.<sup>2</sup> Since intermarriage with other ethnic groups has been found to contribute to language shift (eg. Benton 1981, Clyne 1985, Gal 1980, Kuo 1978), the list included Tongans who had married outside of the Tongan community and their adult children, but excluded their non-Tongan spouses.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that it should not be assumed that community lists of this kind will automatically be made available to researchers. 'Anahina' Aipolo is an active member of the Wellington Tongan community and a practising member of one of the churches. As a result she was trusted and her minister was willing to vouch for her. For her part, she guaranteed the anonymity of those she interviewed.

### The questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed in order to obtain comparable data from all respondents on the following: (i) demographic information (ii) language proficiency, (iii) language use in different domains, (iv) attitudes to the Tongan language. The questions selected for inclusion were drawn from a range of sources (eg Adlam 1987, Fishman et. al. 1971, LMP 1985), as well as the intuitions of the interviewer.

The first section of the questionnaire (Social Background) asked for demographic data about informants and their spouses. It covered sex, age, birthplace, citizenship, religion, countries lived in and duration of stay in each, occupation, duration of residence in Wellington, kind of secondary school attended, and amount of education.

The second section (Language Ability) required respondents to evaluate their level of proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing Tongan, and English, and their ability to understand and speak other languages. In questions relating to Tongan language proficiency a distinction was made between 'formal or chiefly' Tongan, and 'informal or everyday' Tongan. The chiefly variety is confined to special occasions where either the King or a noble or chief is present. Though some familiarity with this variety is a necessary component of Tongan people's language proficiency, and it is taught in secondary school, opportunities to hear it are not common even in Tonga,

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<sup>2</sup> This number was subsequently reduced to 411 because one church leader was not prepared to provide the names of his church members.

and rarer still is the chance to speak this variety, since only a few (predominantly men) are elected to speak on formal occasions

The third section (Language Use) first asked informants about the language(s) they used for particular speech functions (such as 'count silently to yourself', 'dream', 'say free prayers' and 'sing'; then about the language(s) used in a number of basic settings (home, church, work, shops, and at a Tongan function) with a range of participants; and finally about the language(s) they generally wrote to people in, and read in. A couple of questions on code-switching behaviour were also included in this section.

The final section (Attitudes) of the questionnaire focussed on attitudes to language. Informants were first asked about their desire to improve their English and Tongan language abilities. This was followed by an open-ended question seeking respondents' opinions of the Tongan language. Then they were presented with twelve statements about the Tongan language, some focussing on more expressive aspects (eg 'Tongan is a beautiful language', 'I do not like the Tongan language'), others involving judgments about the utilitarian value of the Tongan language (eg 'Learning Tongan will be useful to our children', 'Learning Tongan takes time that children should use to learn English'). Informants were asked to respond on a Likert-type scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

The questionnaire was translated into Tongan, and carefully checked (including a back-translation) by two respected elders of the Tongan community, one a pastor of one of the large Tongan churches, and the other the president of the Wellington Tongan community.

### **Collecting the data**

Though the data-collection instrument was a questionnaire which in principle could have been filled in by informants on their own, in practice 'Anahina was almost always present when it was filled in.<sup>3</sup> This meant that she could clarify any problems which arose and ensure that questions were fully understood. In many cases she used the questionnaire as an interview schedule, filling it in herself on the basis of the answers given her by her interviewee. Wherever possible she recorded the interview so that she could note any interesting comments the questions generated.

### **A profile of the Wellington Tongan community**

Tongan adults in New Zealand are predominantly a first generation immigrant community. Consequently the majority of the respondents (96%) in this survey were born in Tonga, and had lived there for a substantial period. Most had lived in Wellington for less than a decade. Wellington Tongans are also a young population. Almost three quarters of the sample were aged between 20 and 40. Just over half (54%) were married.

As is typical of first generation immigrants, most of the respondents were working in lower status occupations, such as cleaners, labourers, kitchen hands, etc. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the sample for education and occupation, using a 6 point-scale for each.<sup>4</sup> The table makes it clear that the occupations of the 70 respondents who

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<sup>3</sup> In a very few cases people discussed the questions with her, but preferred to fill it in themselves later.

<sup>4</sup> The occupational scale is derived from the Elley-Irving (1985) socio-economic index which categorises New Zealand occupations into six groups on the basis of social status.

answered this question (some of the 4 housewives and 29 unemployed people did not wish to answer it) are relatively depressed in relation to the overall educational level of the group. Over half the Tongan sample were working in jobs categorised in the two lowest status levels. This is twice as many as for the male New Zealand population as a whole (Elley and Irving 1985: 117).

By contrast the levels of education reported in the Tongan sample paralleled those of the total New Zealand population (New Zealand Census 1986). The majority reported at least three years secondary education, 19% had progressed as far as School Certificate (roughly equivalent to GCSE), and a further 17% had gained, or were in the process of obtaining, tertiary qualifications. Thus despite the fact that the pattern of their educational qualifications resembled that of the New Zealand population, there were twice as many Tongans as New Zealanders in the two lowest status occupational groups.

**TABLE 1**

**Distribution of Tongan sample by occupation and education**

| Occupational category | %  | Educational level       | %  |
|-----------------------|----|-------------------------|----|
| 1 eg. accountant      | 3  | 1 (tertiary)            | 17 |
| 2 eg. engineer        | 6  | 2 (6th form qual)       | 9  |
| 3 eg. nurse           | 23 | 3 (School Cert)         | 19 |
| 4 eg. printer         | 17 | 4 (Higher Leaving qual) | 24 |
| 5 eg. housekeeper     | 21 | 5 (3 yrs secondary)     | 23 |
| 6 eg. labourer        | 30 | 6 (primary)             | 8  |
| N = 70                |    | N = 100                 |    |

**Language proficiency**

**Tongan language proficiency**

In view of their predominantly first generation status in New Zealand, it is not surprising, that the level of language proficiency in 'everyday' or informal Tongan was reported as high. All but two respondents (who were in fact second-generation Tongans) were fluent speakers of the Tongan language.

Lack of continued contact with Tonga was reflected, however, in reported proficiency in the 'chiefly' or formal variety of Tongan. In Tonga 'chiefly' Tongan is taught regularly throughout secondary schooling, and ability to understand it and write it is widespread. In New Zealand only 74% of the sample reported they could understand 'chiefly' or formal Tongan, while just over half (56%) reported they could speak the chiefly Tongan variety confidently, a marked difference from the 98% who reported they could speak everyday Tongan fluently. (See table 2).

**English language proficiency**

The degree of English proficiency reported by respondents generally reflected the amount of time they had been in New Zealand and their level of education.

**TABLE 2**  
**Reported spoken language proficiency of Tongan sample**

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|                 | Everyday<br>Tongan | 'Chiefly'<br>Tongan | English |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------|
| 1 (fluent)      | 98                 | 56                  | 60      |
| 2 (some)        | 1                  | 33                  | 35      |
| 3 (very little) | 1                  | 11                  | 5       |

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English is a compulsory subject in Tongan schools and at secondary school level the official policy is to use English as the medium of instruction, though, as Spolsky, Englebrecht and Ortiz (1983: 460) point out 'this policy is more honoured in the breach than the observance, teachers preferring ..... to teach all subjects except English in Tongan'. In practice, teachers provide material and notes in English, but they are explained and discussed in Tongan. Nevertheless, all respondents had some ability to speak, read and write English before coming to New Zealand. Naturally, exposure to English in monolingual New Zealand had improved their abilities in spoken English in particular. Most respondents reported better skills in spoken than in written English. Those who had been in New Zealand for more than ten years reported that they could participate in all, or almost all, conversations in English. Those with more than three years secondary education reported the highest levels of skill in reading and writing English.

It is interesting to note that the speaker's level of education did not correlate with preferred language in interaction, as one might expect. As will become apparent in the next section, respondents overwhelmingly reported that they used Tongan as first choice in any situation where their addressee was Tongan, regardless of level of education. Although they could generally assume English competence in their addressees, more highly educated Tongans did not choose to use English to other Tongans, a pattern which has been reported for other immigrant groups such as the Dutch (Kroef 1977) and the Dalmatians (Stoffel 1982). Shared ethnicity, rather than educational level was the best predictor of language choice for the Tongans in this sample.

The language proficiency responses showed that most Tongans consider themselves fluent in both Tongan and English. A third of the sample also reported some proficiency in a third language, with Samoan the most widely known. The Tongan community is clearly one with rich linguistic resources.

### Patterns of language use

In general, this first generation minority group uses Tongan wherever possible within the predominantly English-speaking city in which they live. English is the language of the government, the schools, the courts, and the media. With the exception of some use of Maori (in bilingual schooling and, when requested, in court) communication in all these contexts is predominantly in English.<sup>5</sup> Opportunities for using Tongan are therefore restricted. Nevertheless, the responses to the questionnaire identified a

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<sup>5</sup> The Access Radio station provides one hour of Tongan news and music per week.

number of domains and speech functions where Tongan New Zealanders consistently reported use of Tongan. It was also possible from the patterns of responses to see signs of incipient language shift to English.

#### Language use for different speech functions

Respondents were first asked about the language(s) they used for a range of 'inner' and personal or expressive speech functions (Fishman 1965: 427). It was expected that these would be the areas most resistant to language shift, and the responses certainly provided support for this view. A majority of informants reported that they used Tongan for almost all of the functions cited, as table 3 demonstrates.<sup>6</sup>

TABLE 3  
Languages used for 'inner' and personal functions

|              | T(ongan) | E(nglish) | Both T and E |
|--------------|----------|-----------|--------------|
|              | %        | %         | %            |
| Counting     | 80       | 11        | 8            |
| Thinking     | 86       | 10        | 4            |
| Dreaming     | 88       | 8         | 4            |
| Swearing     | 69       | 22        | 7            |
| Free prayers | 81       | 9         | 8            |
| Set prayers  | 85       | 11        | 3            |
| Diary        | 64       | 27        | 9            |
| Shoplist     | 51       | 38        | 11           |
| Telling time | 62       | 28        | 10           |
| Singing      | 62       | 10        | 25           |

The table also shows, however, that for every function at least 8% of respondents reported using English rather than Tongan, and that this percentage rose to 22% for swearing, 27% for writing in a diary, 28% for telling the time, and a high of 38% for shopping lists. The latter three are non-traditional activities for Tongans. In Tonga, people do not generally keep diaries or use written shopping lists. Nor is it necessary or usual to tell the time with the precision used by New Zealanders, except while working in schools or offices. These habits are evidence of adaptations to Western

<sup>6</sup> There is a variety of reasons why responses do not add up to 100%. Sometimes the responses included combinations of other languages (eg Tokelauan, Samoan) with Tongan. Some questions were not relevant to all respondents: eg some said they did not dream, others did not keep a diary etc.

culture. Moreover English is the language of the shops and the products on the shopping list. Use of English for this function by a large number of informants is not then very surprising. On the contrary, the preference for Tongan by 51% indicates a strong commitment to Tongan language use.

Other functions for which English was used reflect functions for which Tongan was felt to be inappropriate or functions where even in Tonga other languages are used. The lower percentage of respondents using Tongan for swearing, for instance, compared to other functions, is almost certainly a reflection and natural extension of the brother/sister taboo system in Tonga. Swearing is generally frowned upon and it is taboo in Tongan culture for a man to swear in the presence of his sister, or for a woman to swear in front of her brother. Respondents reported that swearing in English did not sound or feel so bad (see Kuo 1974:132).

The range of languages in which respondents reported singing probably reflects the relatively young age of the community. Even in Tonga, however, singing in languages other than Tongan is common. The radio station in Tonga plays music from other Pacific Islands as well as songs in English in its programme. Younger Tongans tend to prefer songs in English, or a variety of songs from different countries, rather than exclusively Tongan songs.

The overall pattern illustrated in table 3 demonstrates that Tongan is still preferred for most personal and inner speech functions by the majority of this predominantly first generation group. Though there is evidence for all functions that some Tongans use English, the areas where English usage is highest are at present easily accounted for, and do not suggest that language shift is yet a serious problem in this community.

#### **Language use in different domains**

Overall the Tongans in this survey reported a high use of Tongan in all the domains investigated *provided their addressees were Tongan speakers*. At home, at work, at church, at Tongan social events, and even in shops, Tongans reported using Tongan to addressees who could understand the language. The progress of language shift is particularly evident when two speakers of a minority language use the majority language to each other. The fact that a Tongan addressee was the major influence on language choice augurs well for maintenance. Nevertheless there was some evidence that other factors are also relevant in language choice - factors which may signal the beginnings of language shift.

#### *The influence of setting on language choice*

The settings in which respondents reported most use of Tongan when talking to another Tongan were Tongan social functions, home and church, while the settings in which English was most likely to intrude were in shops and at work, as table 4 demonstrates.

The reasons for the relative amounts of Tongan and English in different settings are not difficult to surmise. They could be described in terms of the relative influence of the dominant culture. The ordering reflects the degree of 'palangi'<sup>7</sup> influence in different settings. Conversely, one could characterise the settings in terms of differing degrees of Tongan control, including, evidently, determination of the appropriate choice of language.

At a *Tongan social event*, unlike any other social event in New Zealand society, Tongan is the appropriate language. Tongan was preferred for all types of interaction in this setting, including formal speeches. 89% of respondents indicated that they would use Tongan for a formal speech at such a gathering.

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<sup>7</sup> 'Palangi' is the Tongan term for New Zealanders of European descent.

TABLE 4  
Use of Tongan and English in different settings

|                     | Tongan  |      | English |      |
|---------------------|---------|------|---------|------|
|                     | usually | some | usually | some |
|                     | %       | %    | %       | %    |
| Tongan social event | 88      | 6    | 12      | 16   |
| Church              | 88      | 7    | 13      | 17   |
| Home                | 87      | 11   | 12      | 25   |
| Shops               | 79      | 11   | 20      | 13   |
| Work                | 60      | 31   | 22      | 29   |

*Church* too can be defined as a Tongan setting when services are held for the Tongan community using the Tongan language. As mentioned above, almost all Tongans belong to some religious denomination, and most of the Wellington churches which have Tongan members hold regular services in Tongan for the community. These gatherings also provide opportunities for social interaction in Tongan between community members, both after the service and in church-related activities (Tu'uinukuafe 1987: 134). It is clear that the religious domain, like other domains associated with formal ritual, tends to be one where indigenous threatened languages have been maintained longest (cf Gal 1980, Benton 1981, Dorian 1981). It is interesting to find that it appears to be equally relevant to language maintenance among some immigrant groups (Clyne 1985, Psomiades and Scourby 1982).

In the *home* the majority of respondents reported using Tongan most of the time, though here the specific addressee began to have more influence - a point which will be discussed further below. As New Zealand born Tongan children begin school, for example, some English begins to infiltrate the home setting. And certain topics precipitate the use of English words and phrases when they involve English-associated activities, objects and issues. Nevertheless, in general, Tongan was reported as the normal language of the home, and there was little evidence of the marked shift to English that Jamieson (1980) reports among Wellington Cook Island Maori families, for instance.

Even in *shops* - settings defined by the wider society as ones where English is the appropriate language - most Tongans nevertheless use Tongan to other Tongans if they meet there. In this setting, however, the influence of the English-speaking norm is evident. 33% of informants reported using English to fellow Tongans in this setting, and about a quarter commented that they tended to switch between English and Tongan at the shops.

Finally one might have expected *work* to be a setting which favoured the use of English, but in fact a majority of the working respondents (60%) said that they generally used Tongan with other Tongans at their work-places. Varying amounts of English were also reported by about half of the sample, but, as a prestige language for Tongans, it tends to signal social distance (see Gumperz and Hernandez-Chavez 1972). So, in general, Tongans preferred to use Tongan at work whenever possible. The fact that it was often possible is due to the fact, mentioned earlier, that most Tongans are

employed in relatively low status jobs where they work with other Tongans. This point is discussed further below.

*The influence of the addressee on language choice*

Within different settings there was evidence that the addressee had an important influence, not only on choice of language but, more interestingly, on the amount of English introduced or the amount of code-switching reported. Table 5 summarises the relative amounts of each language used to a range of people.

**TABLE 5**  
**Use of Tongan and English to different addressees**

|                         | Tongan  |      | English |      |
|-------------------------|---------|------|---------|------|
|                         | usually | some | usually | some |
|                         | %       | %    | %       | %    |
| Grandparents            | 97      | 1    | 1       | 6    |
| Spouse                  | 78      | 13   | 22      | 13   |
| Children                | 82      | 12   | 17      | 17   |
| Other people's children | 85      | 12   | 9       | 30   |
| Fellow-workers          | 67      | 30   | 22      | 28   |
| Friends                 | 97      | 3    | 4       | 24   |

Almost all informants reported using only Tongan to their *grandparents* regardless of where they were talking to each other. In all settings, because of their known preference for and competence in Tongan, people would address them in Tongan. English was consciously avoided in such interactions.

Between *spouses*, Tongan was the norm in all settings, except in cases where respondents were married to non-Tongans (20% of married informants). While Tongan predominated at Tongan social gatherings, in other settings such as the home and in shops, respondents reported using English or the spouse's first language to their non-Tongan spouses. Hence the high figure for those who usually used English to their spouses. Marriage outside the Tongan community is an obvious and important factor accounting for a decrease in the use of Tongan in the family. Further evidence for this comes from reported language use to relatives. While, in general, Tongan was used to relatives beyond the nuclear family, for the eleven respondents married to non-Tongan speaking spouses, it was generally necessary to use the 'other' language (English, Samoan, Tokelauan) especially with in-laws.

Parents reported using mainly Tongan to their *children* in all settings, including the home. Only in shops was there any noticeable increase in the amount of English used to children, and even there Tongan was used by the majority of respondents. The relatively high figure (17%) for those who usually used English to their children reflects the intrusion of English into the home where one spouse was a Palangi New Zealander.

The language used to children in the home is a crucial indicator of future language proficiency. Benton's (1979) study of the Maori community, as well as research on other New Zealand minority groups that have begun to shift to English, such as the Tokelau community (Jamieson 1980: 104), show that mothers in particular play a

crucial role in minority group language maintenance. The fact that Tongan mothers report high use of Tongan to their children suggests that at least at present the language is being maintained in the home.

People reported they were more likely to use some English to *other people's children* than to their own - particularly in less formal settings. 38 respondents said they would use some English to children visiting their homes, for instance. New Zealand-born Tongan school-children, with English-speaking school-friends, are very fluent in English. 'Anahina has noticed that even when addressed in Tongan some of them reply in English. While older people persist in using Tongan, younger Tongans tend to switch to English in such interactions. Interestingly, however, if an interlocutor insisted on using Tongan, the children would generally switch to Tongan too.

As mentioned above the kind of work people did affected their opportunities to use Tongan to *fellow-workers* 'on the job'. Working as a cleaner, kitchen hand, or labourer, provided greater opportunities to use Tongan than an office job or a service job such as shop-assistant. In low-status jobs Tongans were generally working with other Tongans rather than interacting with the English-speaking majority group. As has been shown elsewhere (see Milroy 1980, Nicholls 1980, Bell 1984), the addressees in interaction can be major influences on linguistic change. Working with other Tongans meant it was possible for many Tongans to use Tongan at work, thus extending the domains in which Tongan was appropriate.

It was interesting to find that even those employed in higher status jobs, such as nurse, secretary, engineer or teacher, would use Tongan to another Tongan wherever possible. The fact that those in higher status occupational groups used less Tongan reflected fewer opportunities to use it in the work domain, rather than the influence of the setting itself. Shared ethnicity appears to be a more important factor in predicting language usage for this first generation group, than the participants' occupation alone.

Tongan was the main language used to other Tongan *friends* by 97% of the respondents, regardless of setting. This very high figure reflects the importance of Tongan as a language of solidarity and in-group identity for the community. All respondents, for instance, said they would usually use Tongan to their friends in their homes.

In general Tongans do not regard it as rude to talk to each other in Tongan when non-Tongan speaking friends or family are present. When Tongans talk, they continue comfortably in their own language even in the presence of people who cannot follow their conversation.<sup>8</sup> This contrasts sharply with the norms described in situations where one language is in the process of displacing another. In East Sutherland (Dorian 1981), in Oberwart (Gal 1979) and in Maori communities (Benton 1981), for instance, especially in informal interaction, monolingual majority language speakers exercise an over-riding influence on appropriate language choice. In the Tongan sample, by contrast, 58% of the respondents reported that they would continue to use Tongan when non-Tongans were present.

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<sup>8</sup> This practice of not addressing all participants in a situation at the same time is also reflected in the common Tongan practice of eliciting information about someone from a friend rather than directly from the person concerned, even if that person is present. To ask a person directly for their name, where they come from, and other personal questions is regarded as rude.

This, however, was one of the questions where answers revealed signs of changing norms which may ultimately result in language shift to English. There was some evidence that non-Tongan speaking participants were increasingly influencing language choice. 42 informants indicated that Tongans were feeling pressure to shift to English in such a context. 26 informants reported that they would switch to English when non-Tongans were present. The remaining 16 indicated they would use both languages, or at least explain to non-Tongan speakers what was being discussed. Exposure to palangi norms in this area is obviously having an effect.

### Use of both Tongan and English

A study of code-switching behaviour among Tongans will require a different approach than a questionnaire. Self-report data can only be suggestive in this area. Nevertheless, the responses do usefully identify areas where English is infiltrating domains where formerly only Tongan was considered appropriate.

Switching between Tongan and English was reported as least likely to grandparents and older parents. The 25 respondents who reported using both Tongan and English when they talked to their parents were mainly in their teens or early twenties.

Even among older Tongans in informal interaction, however, it was evident that English words or phrases were sometimes used, especially in settings such as shops, or in discussing particularly English-associated topics - such as education, New Zealand politics and rugby. When asked specifically about the use of English words and phrases in their Tongan, a majority of the respondents (60%) reported some use of English - especially when they talked to their friends.

Young people reported that in casual interactions they would regularly use both English and Tongan. Though it was not the direct focus of study in this research, as a member of the Tongan community, 'Anahina had herself noted the emergence of what could be considered a code-switching style (cf. Appel and Muysken 1987: 116ff, Gumperz and Hernandez-Chavez 1972, Milroy 1987: 186) used by Tongans in their teens or early twenties. They tend to switch from Tongan to English freely when they talk with each other, but they go to great lengths to use only Tongan throughout a conversation with other Tongans (and especially Tongan elders), who do not belong to their in-group. Tongan serves as a language of solidarity for the community as a whole, but within the community it seems that a code-switching style may serve as a signal of in-group identity for young Tongans (cf Scotton, 1988: 322).

This code-switching in conversations between young Tongans outside the home is also an interesting indicator of incipient shift. It seems likely that among first-generation immigrants, the patterns of language use of the teenage and young twenties age-group should be regarded as important signs of the beginnings of language shift.

Differences in the extent to which English is used alongside or within Tongan by different age-groups, corresponds to differences in attitude to the use of English to fellow Tongans. While few overtly endorse the use of English in Tongan contexts, older people consider that Tongans who use English to fellow Tongans are pretentious. 'Anahina noted a number of instances where too much English in a Tongan context was frowned upon or ridiculed. People are described by older Tongans as 'fie palangi' (wanting to be European), if they use too much English. However, people are not always aware of their own language behaviour. One informant expressed her disgust with Tongans who used incomplete sentences and slang rather than 'proper' Tongan. She was one of the earliest Tongan settlers in New Zealand and she said she felt despair that Tongans were increasingly moving away from 'proper' Tongan behaviour and adopting 'palangi' ways. Ironically even she, in her usage, provided evidence of the extent of the threat to Tongan from English. During the course of the interview, which

was conducted at her work-place in Tongan, she unconsciously used a number of English words and phrases.

Indeed this pattern was observed in several other interviews, suggesting that at least in this area of code-switching behaviour, self-report data is likely to be conservative, reflecting Tongans' overall perceptions of normal and appropriate usage rather than giving an accurate picture of the reality. Respondents would say that they never used a mixture of English and Tongan when they conversed with other Tongans, but would unconsciously throw in a few English words during the conversation. For example, 'Na'e ha'u e ta'ahine 'o ... talamai 'e ia koe *first time* 'ene sio 'ene fanongo 'oku ou lea faka-Palangi'.

This respondent was quoting a New Zealander telling her that the occasion being discussed was the first time she had heard the respondent speaking in English. She was just one of many Tongans in the sample who unconsciously used English words in their Tongan during the course of the interview.

### Attitudes to Tongan

A range of data was collected on attitudes to Tongan. We will focus here, however, on attitudes which relate to the issue of Tongan language maintenance.

A number of studies of New Zealand minority groups, such as the Samoan community (Fairbairn-Dunlop 1984), the Dutch (Kroef 1977, van Schie 1987), and the Dalmatian community (Stoffel 1982), have demonstrated that in New Zealand, as elsewhere, the attitude of the minority group to the ethnic language is a crucial factor in accounting for the rate of shift to English. Where language is considered a core cultural value, ie. it is regarded as crucial to the speakers' cultural identity (Clyne, 1985:199, Smolicz 1985), people are more likely to maintain it, despite the pressures of the majority group and its culture. On the other hand, where minority group members want to be speedily assimilated to the new culture, and they regard their language as inhibiting their progress towards this goal, then they are likely to shift as fast as possible to the language of the adopted country. This is what has happened in the case of the Dutch and the Dalmatian communities in New Zealand.

It seems that those whose culture is most similar to that of the majority group are most likely to regard speedy assimilation as desirable. Clyne (1985), in his study of minority groups in Australia, reports that ethnic groups whose cultural value systems and patterns of speech behaviour deviate most from those of the host country are most likely to regard language maintenance as important. This may account for the difference between groups like the Dutch in New Zealand, who assimilated quickly and within three generations had completely shifted to English, compared to the Samoan community, who are at present managing to maintain the Samoan language and their distinctive culture (Fairbairn-Dunlop 1984).

On this basis, it appears that positive attitudes to language maintenance and a strong desire to retain a minority language and culture are important factors if there is to be any hope avoiding rapid language shift to English in New Zealand.

There was strong evidence both from responses to the open question asking people's opinion about the Tongan language, and from the responses to statements about the language, that in general Tongans feel very positive about their language and regard it as an important component of Tongan identity. Figure 1 shows that almost 90% of respondents strongly agreed with positive statements about the language while over 70%

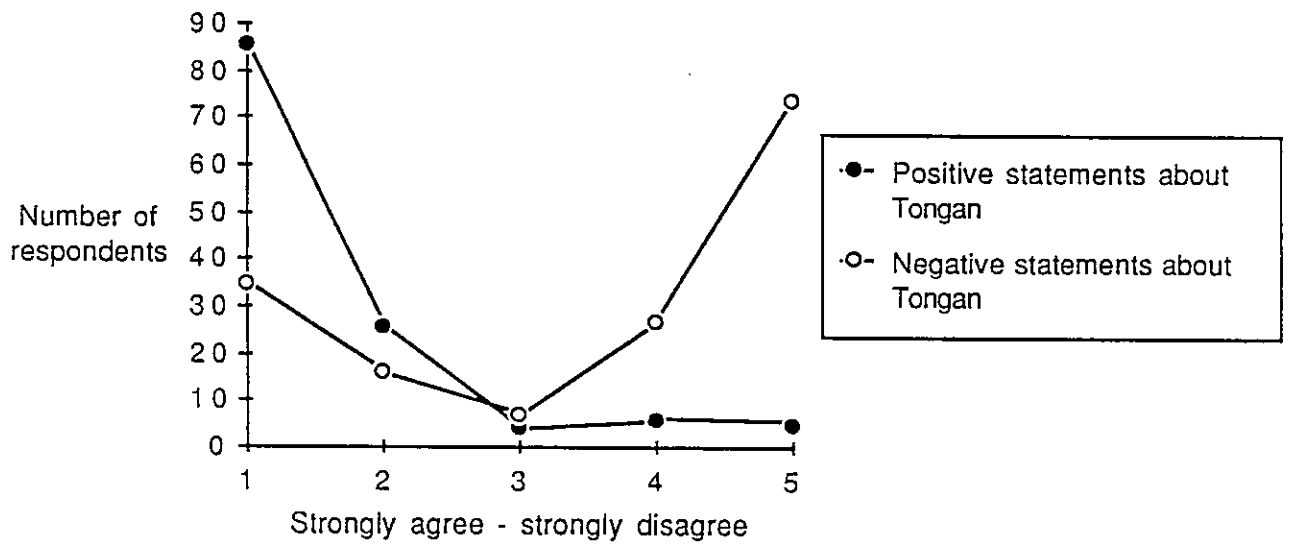


Figure 1 Attitudes to Tongan



disagreed strongly with statements such as those which claimed Tongan was not useful or that learning it was a waste of time.<sup>9</sup>

The responses provided an overwhelmingly positive vote for the aesthetic and expressive characteristics of the language. 85% of the sample strongly agreed that Tongan is a beautiful language, and 86% strongly agreed they were proud of it. In discussion people described it as 'romantic', 'noble' and 'emotional'. Responses also indicated that over 90% considered that all Tongans should know Tongan and regarded language maintenance as important. 'Any Tongan should be able to use Tongan, no matter where they are, because it is a mark of our identity' said one respondent, while another commented 'we should be very careful that we continue to use Tongan because it's vital for the preservation of our culture'.

In addition to a high rating for its role as a marker of Tongan identity, the majority of respondents considered Tongan a useful language, and thought it necessary for all Tongans to know it. 83%, for instance, strongly agreed, and a further 13% agreed with the statement that Tongan people need to know the Tongan language. Some pointed to the need for Tongan when new immigrants arrived, for instance, or when phoning relatives in Tonga, or for reading letters from relatives in Tonga or writing to them.

A few respondents thought differently, however. 8%, for instance, considered Tongan was not essential to Tongans in New Zealand. These respondents commented that they had come to New Zealand to find work. Since Tongan is a minority language in New Zealand, it is intrinsically less useful than English in obtaining a job, and so they did not see that they could rate it as a useful language for Tongans in New Zealand. A similar small percentage of respondents suggested that learning Tongan takes time that children should use to learn English. They could not see why Tongan should be taught to children, when in all contexts they were surrounded by English.

Another factor which emerged in the discussion of attitudes to Tongan was the fact that knowledge of Tongan tended to be taken for granted and not regarded as much of an achievement by children. A child's proficiency in English, on the other hand, was regarded with pride. This kind of attitude may in time undermine the maintenance of Tongan. A contrasting attitude, but one which is just as unhelpful to language maintenance efforts, was the view that it was natural for New Zealand-born Tongan children to be better at English than Tongan.

Some respondents were actively in favour of Tongan language maintenance, and aware of the possibility of language loss. These parents are deliberately choosing to use Tongan to their children for this reason. Their responses to the attitude question reflected this awareness (eg 'Tongan should be maintained and taught to the children or else it will have the same fate as the Maori language'). However, they were not a majority. Most respondents, though they expressed positive attitudes to Tongan, were as yet generally unaware of any real threat to its survival.

### **Is Tongan language maintenance a real possibility?**

The patterns of language proficiency, use, and attitudes of the Wellington Tongan community which have been described, suggest that Tongan language maintenance is by no means impossible.

1. The very high levels of linguistic ability in Tongan reported by this first generation group provide a firm basis for passing the language on to their New Zealand-born children.

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<sup>9</sup> This figure was constructed with the help of Miriam Meyerhoff.

2. The number of domains in which the Tongan speech community consider Tongan an appropriate language to use provide better opportunities for using the language than are often available to immigrant groups.
3. Attitudes to the language are generally positive, and knowledge of Tongan is regarded by most as an important component of Tongan identity.

Though many Tongans take it for granted that their children will speak Tongan, others are more aware of the possibility of language loss. As a result two Tongan kindergartens have been established in the Wellington area, and there have been attempts to introduce Tongan language classes for children during the school holidays.

Tongans live in close proximity, a factor which has been shown to support language maintenance among Samoans in New Zealand (Fairbairn-Dunlop 1984). Proximity provides greater opportunities for interaction in Tongan. Notices appear in Tongan on the community notice board and even in local newspapers. The community organises regular social and sporting events which provide further opportunities for using Tongan. There are two Tongan rugby clubs in the Wellington area, for instance, and these clubs, as well as the various youth groups, hold dances, where Tongans from around Wellington can meet each other. Moreover, Tongan males are organised into kava (drinking) clubs throughout Wellington, where they gather around a bowl of kava and discuss various topics of interest in Tongan. These activities and organisations provide regular opportunities for Tongans to use their language in addition to the opportunities they take within the other institutional domains investigated in this survey.

One further factor that contributes to the maintenance of the language is the continued contact between Tongans in Tonga and New Zealand. Fairbairn-Dunlop (1984) points to the steady inflow of migrants from Samoa as a factor contributing to the maintenance of Samoan in Wellington, for example, while Stoffel (1981: 54) refers to the lack of such regular new linguistic input as a factor contributing to language shift among Dalmatian New Zealand immigrants. While the numbers are not large, there is still regular linguistic input from Tonga in New Zealand at present. As well as phone calls and letters, Tongans make regular visits back and forth, and receive numerous visitors. There are also regular new immigrants who, at least when they first arrive, stay with Tongans already living in New Zealand. The need to maintain Tongan is thus evident to the community.

## Conclusion

Benton's work has shown (Benton 1970, 1979, 1981) that positive attitudes alone are not enough to maintain a minority language in New Zealand. A core of proficient speakers, opportunities to use the language in a range of contexts, and strong determination to maintain it in an overwhelmingly monolingual country, are other essential ingredients. This paper has suggested that at present these ingredients are present in the Wellington Tongan speech community. They offer some hope that Tongan may be maintained for a little longer than the languages of European immigrants to New Zealand which have generally completely disappeared in at most three and sometimes as little as two generations.

Wellington Tongan adults are fluent and proficient speakers of their language, and they use it in a wider number of domains than might be expected in an English-dominated country. Tongan is used in church services; it is used at work whenever Tongans work together as many of them do. And it is used between Tongans quite naturally whenever they meet, whatever the setting. Shared ethnicity strongly favours Tongan language use.

In a monolingual society, the home is the crucial domain for nurturing immigrant group minority languages. If parents do not encourage their children to speak the minority language, then it will certainly be lost. Moreover, despite the existence of two kindergartens, there are effectively at present no other contexts in which Tongan children can learn their language. The fact that Tongan parents reported using mostly Tongan to their children suggests that language shift to English has not yet begun on any major scale.

Hence despite some signs of erosion in the form of the infiltration of English into Tongan domains, and the linguistically debilitating effects of marriage with non-Tongans, it seems possible that Tongan will be maintained in the immediate future. Its long term prospects in New Zealand, however, will almost certainly depend on positive formal community language initiatives, such as the introduction of more bilingual pre-schools, and perhaps even bilingual primary schooling - both possible as a result of educational reforms recently initiated in the New Zealand education system. Certainly Tongan language maintenance would be a real possibility if all Tongans felt as strongly as the person who told 'Anahina,

'Tongan is a vulnerable language, and if we're not careful to teach our language to our children here then there's a danger of losing it. In other words, if we do not love our language, our language won't love us'.

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## Sri Lankans and Sinhala language maintenance in New Zealand<sup>1</sup>

Nicola Daly

### Abstract

This paper reports the findings of a survey of language maintenance and shift in a small Sinhalese speech community in New Zealand. The model of ethnolinguistic vitality proposed by Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977) is used to investigate factors contributing to language maintenance and shift. Although each family is different, the community as a whole has a reasonable level of ethnolinguistic vitality, and a number of factors conducive to language maintenance are identified. Despite this, there is also some evidence of language loss of Sinhala among the children of this community. It seems possible that this may be due to the multi-ethnic nature of Sri Lankan society and the existence of a distinct Sri Lankan variety of English, which may act as a badge of identity as well as a cohesive force in the immigrant Sri Lankan community.

### Introduction

One of the most valuable recent contributions to the study of language maintenance and shift is the concept of ethnolinguistic vitality outlined by Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977). They use the concept to predict language maintenance and shift. High vitality, it is proposed will result in language maintenance, while low vitality will result in language shift. The model presupposes language use in the home as the bare minimum for language maintenance.

Ethnolinguistic vitality involves three distinct factors: status, demographic support, and institutional support. Appel and Muysken (1987) add a fourth factor, cultural similarity, first identified by Clyne (1982).

#### Status

Status includes the economic, social, socio-historical and language status of the minority language community. In groups with low economic status there is often a shift towards the majority language, which is associated with academic achievement and economic progress. A group's social status is often closely aligned to their economic status. Thus a group with a low economic status will often have a low 'self' esteem which in turn may lead to language shift. Conversely high self esteem is more likely to support language maintenance. A group which has had to defend its ethnic identity or independence is likely to be more unified, and this too is likely to favour language maintenance. A language with the status of a language of international communication will be easier to maintain. (Appel and Muysken 1987).

It is also worth noting that in communities where bi- or multi-lingualism are normal (eg Sorensen 1972), a minority group may find it easier to maintain their language. On the other hand, where monolingualism is the norm, as in New Zealand, language maintenance may be more difficult.

#### Demographic support

Demographic factors involve the numbers and distribution of members of a linguistic minority. When a linguistic minority is small or decreasing, the result is often less use

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<sup>1</sup> This research was undertaken as part of the course requirements for BA Honours in Linguistics. I would like to express appreciation to all those who kindly responded to my questions and to Ryan, Wendy, Jane and Janet for support and guidance in completing this paper.

of the minority language leading to language shift. Size is not independent of other factors, however. Where members of a small minority live close together and interact frequently, there is more chance of successful language maintenance than for a larger group who are widely spread and who have little to do with one another.

This concept has been formalised in the notion of 'social networks'. Downes (1984) explains social networks as a way of representing an individual's pattern of social transactions within a community. Networks may be more or less dense; they may be uniplex or multiplex. A network could be described as dense if members of an individual's network are also in touch with each other, it may be described as multiplex if individuals are linked in social networks on more than one level, for example by kinship, employment and neighbourhood. 'Intuitively', Downes writes, 'the more dense and multiplex a network is, the more social cohesion one would expect' (1984: 97). And correspondingly the more language maintenance one would expect.

The relevance of this factor is apparent in Fairbairn-Dunlop's (1984) study of the Wellington Samoan community. She identifies the concentrated settlements of families in certain areas and the pattern of extended family living which have resulted from chain migration, as factors enabling families to establish a social network which increases the opportunities for speaking Samoan, and reduces the number of occasions when English must be used.

Exogamy or marriage outside the community is another factor relevant in accounting for language shift. In mixed marriages it is the most prestigious language which generally gets passed on to the children (Appel and Muysken 1987: 35). For example in a household survey in several Oklahoma Cherokee communities it was found that in every family where a Cherokee speaker was married to a non-Cherokee speaker the children were monolingual speakers of English (Pulte in Appel and Muysken 1987). Kuo's (1978) Singapore data led him to hypothesise a link between low population ratio, little intermarriage and mother tongue retention. Rapid language shift among Eastern Pumo Speakers (a native Californian language) has also been attributed to exogamous marriage patterns (McLendon 1978).

Fairbairn-Dunlop (1984) mentions access to the homeland as another relevant demographic factor in the Samoan communities she studied. She writes that 'the promise and actuality of a trip had proven a good incentive for the children to know the language, due to the complete dominance of Samoan in Samoa' (1984: 109).

### **Institutional support**

Institutional support refers to the extent to which the language of a minority group is represented in the various institutions of a nation. Maintenance will obviously be encouraged if a language is used in government, church or cultural institutions. Fairbairn-Dunlop (1984) names the Samoan church as contributing to Samoan language maintenance in New Zealand. Samoans continue their island tradition of living their lives around the church and so the church functions as the focus of a miniature Samoan community. Jamieson (1980) also points out that if an immigrant minority is to be successful in maintaining its language it must have its own social organisations to achieve this.

### **Cultural similarity**

According to Clyne (1982), the more dissimilar a culture is from the majority culture, the more likely it is that the language will be maintained. And vice versa. (See also Jamieson 1980 who proposes a similar concept, social distinctiveness.) Clyne provides a pertinent example from the point of view of this study of Sri Lankans in New Zealand. Among Australian minority immigrant languages, Maltese is structurally the most distant from English, a fact which Clyne considers should favour maintenance. But in fact language shift is very high in the Maltese community. Clyne proposes that this can be explained by the high status of English in Malta at the time when most

Maltese emigrated, and the strong cultural influence of the British in that country. Sri Lanka has also had strong cultural influence from the British as it was a British colony from 1802 to 1948, and English has high status in the country to this day (Fernando 1982).

It has been suggested that these four factors - status, demographic support, institutional support and cultural similarity - are all relevant to an assessment of a community's ethnolinguistic vitality, and that this in turn will determine the likelihood of language maintenance vs language shift. The discussion below will demonstrate that these concepts have all proved useful in describing the Sinhalese language proficiency, use and attitudes of a small New Zealand Sri Lankan community.

## **Sinhala and the Sinhalese community**

### **Sinhalese in Sri Lanka**

The principle nationality of Sri Lanka is the Sinhalese who comprise about three quarters of the population of the island nation just South of India. The Sinhalese are mostly adherents of Buddhism and their language, Sinhala (also known as Sinhalese), is one of the three official language of Sri Lanka, the other two being English and Tamil (Bandaranayake 1978).

Sinhala is spoken by about 11 million people who live mostly in the south and west of the country. It is an Indo-European language descended from Sanskrit and was brought to Sri Lanka by settlers from Northern India in the fifth century B.C. (Katzner 1987). Sinhala is a sub-family of Indo-European called Indo-Aryan which is distinguished from other Indo-European languages by the retention of voiced aspirated stops and the distinction between dental and retroflex stops. The unmarked word order of these languages is Subject, Object, Verb (Cardona 1987), so it is syntactically quite different from English, a factor which Clyne has suggested will favour language maintenance.

During the period that Sri Lanka, then known as Ceylon, was a colony of England, diglossia developed. English was used in the areas of administration, the professions and generally in the intellectual and socially more prestigious domains. The vernaculars, such as Sinhala, were reserved for more personal, less formal domains.

Independence in 1948 led to sweeping political, social and linguistic changes. In 1956 English ceased to be the language of administration and was replaced by Sinhalese, and a restricted use of Tamil. A few years later English also ceased to be the language of education, but despite the change in status of Sinhalese and Tamil in Sri Lanka, English maintained a covert social, cultural and economic value. Indeed for many middle class bilinguals it still has very high prestige, and for these people it is still dominant in the domains of family, friends and Christian religion (Fernando 1982).

### **Selecting the community**

The aim of this study was to examine the extent to which the Sinhalese speech community in a North Island city (which I will call 'Betatown') was maintaining Sinhala, if there were any differences between families in this respect, and to identify possible reasons for language maintenance and/or shift with reference to previous studies of these phenomena. My initial feelings were that exogamy and religion would be important contributors to language shift. I also felt that the official status of English in Sri Lanka might be a relevant factor accounting for rapid language shift.

The reasons that I chose to study the Betatown Sinhalese community were both pragmatic and academic. Firstly my husband is a member of this community, and so I had access as an 'insider' by marriage. Secondly a literature review of language maintenance and shift research in New Zealand revealed that no previous studies of the Sinhalese speech community had been undertaken.

### **The Betatown community**

According to the 1986 census there were 1,017 Sri Lankans in New Zealand. (Department of Statistics, 1986) If we assume roughly the same ethnic proportions as are in Sri Lanka, then there would be approximately 750 Sinhalese among these 1,017 New Zealand Sri Lankans. The total Sinhalese community in Betatown, however, consists of only thirteen families. The parents in ten of these families were interviewed for this study.

The Sinhalese families in Betatown do not live in one neighbourhood but are scattered around the city. All those interviewed were first generation migrants who had been in New Zealand anywhere from 6 months to 21 years. The time that they had been out of Sri Lanka ranged from 3 years to 28 years. The age range of the parents was 35 to 59 and some had children who were born in Sri Lanka. The youngest parents were nearly the same age as children of the older parents, so the age range of parents covered nearly a generation.

The parents in this survey were a highly educated group, most of whom had received some form of tertiary education. Though their occupations range from 1 to 5 on the Elley-Irving socio-economic index (1985), eighty percent of the individuals fell in categories 1, 2 and 3. All of these Sri Lankans came to jobs in New Zealand rather than being involved in a process of chain migration. Consequently, unlike the pattern among many Polynesian communities in New Zealand, none of the families in Betatown are related to one another.

Eighty percent of the participants in this study were Buddhists. They meet for annual religious events and when Buddhist monks visit. Sinhala is not the main medium used at these meetings because there are Buddhists who do not speak Sinhala who also attend these gatherings.

## **Methodology**

### **Developing the questionnaire**

The questionnaire used in this research was a modified and reduced version of the questionnaire developed by 'Anahina 'Aipolo (1989) in her research into language maintenance in the Tongan community in Wellington. The most important modifications were introduced to elicit more specific information relating to language maintenance in the Sinhalese community. For instance, parents were asked to assess their children's ability in Sinhala when they first arrived in New Zealand and their current ability. They were also asked to assess the frequency with which their children used Sinhala in three situations.

It was decided to use English in administering this survey as all participants were completely fluent in both written and spoken English. Neither was translation of the written survey felt to be necessary. The questionnaire was pilot tested with a Sri Lankan male and a European female. The Sri Lankan male was asked to check in particular for the possibility of culturally sensitive questions, and the European female for general format and intelligibility.

### **Selecting informants**

For the purposes of this survey, any family with at least one Sinhalese parent qualified as a member of the Sinhalese speech community. Since I was concerned with language maintenance, I interviewed only people with children. Contact was initially made with members of the community through my parents-in-law. Then a typed letter explaining the purpose of the survey was sent to all prospective participants. Willing participants were asked to inform my parents-in-law, as this was considered to be most convenient and comfortable for participants.

Through my established links with the community I had, to some extent, 'insider' status in this community, even with participants I had not met before administering the survey. This was clearly an advantage, especially in a survey which asked many personal questions about the participants' background and attitudes. I felt that I was trusted and the participants were eager to help me. The only disadvantage of being an insider was one pointed out in Holmes and Bell (1988). Because I already knew something of the interviewees' background it was easy to make assumptions about the answers to some of the survey questions.

### **Administering the survey**

The interview was administered orally by the interviewer but interviewees also had a copy of the survey so that they could read any questions they were unsure of. Notes were made of any relevant comments made during the interview. In eight out of ten cases both parents were interviewed. Covering the questions in the schedule took on average about one hour, but in the free discussion which followed in every case, further pertinent information was often obtained.

## **Results and discussion**

Table 1 (see Appendix) summarises the background of participants and their use of Sinhala and English. Families have been ordered in an approximate implicational scale from those who use Sinhala the most to those who use English the most.

An examination of the children's level of Sinhalese language proficiency represented in table 2 (see Appendix) suggests that Sinhalese is not being well maintained. Of the four families whose children arrived in New Zealand with some ability in Sinhalese, children of three families now have less proficiency. Of the five families whose children were not born in Sri Lanka, three were rated as having no ability at present. Parents may be conservative in their estimates, and it should be noted that there is some language maintenance evident in the proficiency levels recorded in table 2, but overall this Sinhalese community does not seem to be strongly maintaining Sinhala.

A number of different factors contribute to this state of affairs. Following the model outlined above, I will look in turn at the contribution of the language used in the home, status factors, demographic factors, institutional support and cultural similarity.

### **Language of the home**

The questionnaire responses revealed that in general parents' actual use of Sinhala in different situations did not make a great contribution to language maintenance. Column 7 in table 1 (see Appendix) summarises parents' language use with their children. It is clear that no parents used only Sinhala to their children, while some used only English. In such circumstances it is not surprising that the children's Sinhalese proficiency was not high. All but two parents expressed the wish that their children should improve their proficiency in Sinhala. Desire alone, however, is clearly not enough. Parents need to use the language to their children if they are to develop proficiency in it.

Where Sinhala receives some home support, children had some proficiency in Sinhala. Of the six families where Sinhala is used in the home (see table 1, column 10) approximately seventy percent of the children maintain some ability in Sinhala (level 2 or higher on the 1 to 5 ability scale; see table 2). In all six families Sinhala is used, together with English, to all participants and in all settings where it is possible, ie where addressees understand Sinhala. For the Sinhalese in Betatown, then, as for the minority groups surveyed by Jamieson (1980: 107) in Newtown, acquisition of the ethnic language reflects the patterns of language use by parents in the home.

### **Status factors**

The members of the Sri Lankan community interviewed were well educated and had high status jobs - factors which generally contribute to language maintenance in a minority group. But for these informants, these factors also correlate with high proficiency in English, as they are mostly from an era in Sri Lanka when English had a higher status and was more extensively used than at present. It is interesting to note that the children of the only two families who have been out of Sri Lanka for less than ten years (families 1 and 3) have maintained Sinhala to some extent (see table 2 in Appendix), reflecting its wider use in recent times in Sri Lanka. However, the status of Sinhalese as an international language of communication is low - a factor which is not likely to contribute to its maintenance in New Zealand.

The relatively high status of English in Sri Lanka, as in Malta, and the low status of multilingualism in New Zealand means that pragmatically the easiest route for Sinhalese in New Zealand is to quickly become monolingual in English. This route is further favoured by the fact that using only English may not threaten the cultural identity of Sri Lankans, as one might at first suspect. A Sri Lankan variety of English has been described by Fernando (1982), which seems to serve as a badge of identity. That this Sri Lankan variety of English is being used by Sri Lankans in New Zealand is not yet an established fact. However from my informal observations I think that it is. It seems possible then that the existence of this variety may be another factor accelerating language shift to English.

Where children were born outside of Sri Lanka they were less likely to develop ability in Sinhala if they were born in an English-dominant country. Children of families 1, 2, 7, 9 and 10 were all born in countries where English was dominant, and eighty percent of these children had little ability in Sinhala. It seemed that children born in countries where multilingualism was the norm were more likely to know Sinhala. Moreover, where a parent was non-Sinhalese, but bilingual, the likelihood of language maintenance was higher. This suggests that positive attitudes to bilingualism play a part in language maintenance in this community.

Overall attitudes proved an ambivalent factor in predicting language maintenance. There was no strong correlation between high individual positive attitude towards language maintenance and actual language maintenance. (See Jamieson (1980: 108) who also notes the unreliability of attitudes to language maintenance as predictors of language maintenance.)

### **Demographic factors**

Demographic factors which seemed to have some relevance to language maintenance in this community were population proportions, social networks, exogamy, and age of the children on leaving Sri Lanka.

The number of Sri Lankan families in this community is proportionately small, a factor which generally contributes to language shift. On the other hand this results in a high level of social interaction in the community. Though they do not all live in the same neighbourhood, all members of the community know each other, and many get together regularly for social occasions. The crucial question then is which language do they interact in when they meet. The answer appears to be both English and Sinhala due to the many non-Sinhala speakers in the community. The need for a lingua franca among the different Sri Lankan ethnic groups, the high level of proficiency in English of this group, together with what I perceive as their use of a distinctly Sri Lankan variety of English, are factors which seem to favour a greater use of English than is common in first generation minority group interaction. The distinct variety may serve the ethnic identity functions generally served by a minority language, thus making Sinhala maintenance less necessary.

Religion, and particularly Buddhism, is another area of social contact. However, while Buddhist parents tend to use Sinhala and English to their children, it is not the case that Buddhism itself provides a reason for maintaining Sinhala. The Buddhist community in Betatown extends well beyond the Sri Lankan community and encompasses a wide range of people. Not surprisingly, English is the lingua franca of this group.

Fairbairn-Dunlop (1984) mentioned patterns of extended family living as a factor supporting language maintenance in the Wellington Samoan speech community. There is some evidence that this factor is relevant in the Betatown Sri Lankan community too. Of the five families who have a Sinhalese speaking relative in New Zealand, three have the relative living with them in an extended family situation, and the children of these three have a higher ability in Sinhalese than the other two.

Exogamy is an important factor in accounting for patterns of language maintenance and shift among the children in this community. Where one partner is not Sinhalese (families 6, 7, 8 and 10 in table 1), English is plainly dominant in nearly all domains (see table 1). The exception is family 6 where the non-Sinhalese partner is from another Sri Lankan ethnic group and understands Sinhala.

Finally the age of children when they left Sri Lanka is another relevant demographic factor. This age factor has been noted by Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa (in Cummins 1981). They have suggested that children who have a firm grounding in a language tend to maintain it better, and so older immigrant children are more likely to be better speakers of the minority language. The Sri Lankan data supports this observation. The first child of family 6, and all the children of families 3 and 4 left Sri Lanka after they were ten, and these are the children who have the highest level of Sinhala language proficiency.

#### **Institutional support**

As far as I am aware Sinhala is not supported by any institution in New Zealand. It is not used in schools, the Sri Lankan community does not have language nests, and even though many Sri Lankans are Buddhist, Sinhala is not used in Buddhist gatherings as I have already discussed. Moreover English is to this day dominant in the domain of Christian religions in Sri Lanka (Fernando 1982). In other words, Christian religions contribute to the use of English both in Sri Lanka and New Zealand. The survey results reflect this. In one family where both parents are Christian (family 9 in table 1), English is extensively used. Despite the fact that they are both Sinhalese with high Sinhala proficiency, their dominant language with nearly all participants and in all settings is English (see table 1). Predictably their children have no ability in Sinhalese.

However this preference for English may not be solely attributable to membership in a Christian religion. Another possible influence is the fact that the predominant language in the childhood home of the mother of this family was English. The mother's language experience as a child may have influenced her choice of appropriate language to use to her own children - which of course determines the language that her children will learn. There does, however, appear to be some link between Christian religions and a Western outlook which results in the predominance of English in the home. In this sample there was only one family where parents were both Sinhalese and members of Christian religions. It would be interesting to collect more data from families of this kind.

#### **Cultural similarity**

Due to Sri Lanka's long period as a colony of Britain, Sri Lankans are familiar with the culture of England, and have even incorporated some aspects into their own culture. This is the same culture on which the dominant culture of New Zealand is based and so this will be an assistance to Sri Lankans moving to New Zealand. This cultural similarity clearly facilitates language shift to the dominant language.

Moreover the use of English in Sri Lanka in some official contexts further contributes to language shift. The interviewees were well-educated and fluent English speakers. It has been suggested that the general pattern for immigrant groups is one of shift to the language of the dominant group over four generations (Appel and Muysken 1987: 42). In the case of this Sri Lankan community, it seems this pattern may be accelerated because the first generation had a high ability in English when they arrived in New Zealand. This may not be the case for the more recent Sinhalese immigrants who have been brought up in a Sri Lanka where English has a reduced status when compared to former times. Such individuals are not extensively represented in this survey.

## Conclusion

This study was based on interviews with ten Sinhalese families in a New Zealand community to find out whether the community was maintaining Sinhala. I asked about the family's use of Sinhala to discover where, when and how often the language was used, and to find out what factors were contributing to language maintenance and shift. Language shift is clearly the result of many interacting factors and the complexity of the interactions has been demonstrated by the results of this research.

The results revealed a pattern of more rapid language shift than is typical for immigrant communities. Exogamy, the high status of English in Sri Lanka, and its use as a lingua franca amongst Sri Lankans in New Zealand appear to be relevant factors accounting for this shift.

What about language maintenance? Which factors help to maintain Sinhala? Children's Sinhala proficiency was highest in families with the following characteristics: both parents were Sinhalese; the family had left Sri Lanka in the last ten years; both parents were Buddhist; Sinhala predominated in the childhood home of the mother; Sinhala was used (as well as English) in the majority of domains; a Sinhala-speaking relative lived with the family; the children were born in Sri Lanka and lived there till the age of at least ten, or they were born in a country where multilingualism was the norm.

Appel and Muysken (1987) suggest that high ethnolinguistic vitality results in language maintenance. Where the ethnicity of the minority can be expressed through the majority language, however, the pattern they predict may not hold. In other words a community with high ethnolinguistic vitality may nevertheless be characterised by language shift. This survey has indicated relative loss of Sinhala over the two generations in this community. The language they are increasingly using is English, the majority language of New Zealand. I have suggested a number of reasons for the speed of this process, but one possibility which seems likely to be particularly influential, and which has not been extensively discussed in earlier studies, is the use by this community of a Sri Lankan variety of English as their badge of identity. It would be interesting to investigate the use and maintenance of this variety amongst Sri Lankans in New Zealand. It seems very likely that it serves to reduce the importance of Sinhala language maintenance in New Zealand. However, further research is certainly needed before this can be asserted with any certainty. Finally it should be noted that the majority of participants in this survey left Sri Lanka some years ago. In the meantime the status of Sinhala in Sri Lanka has increased and the use of English decreased. It would be very interesting to see if Sinhala is maintained to a greater extent amongst younger, more recent Sri Lankan immigrants to New Zealand.

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## APPENDIX

TABLE 1

| 1         | 2         | 3        | 4                                       | 5                                       | 6                             | 7                               | 8                              | 9                                      | 10                        | 11                        | 12                                       |
|-----------|-----------|----------|---|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Sex       | Ethnicity | Religion | Childhood home lang.<br>Sinhala ability | Childhood home lang.<br>Sinhala ability | Language used with<br>Spouse. | Language used with<br>Children. | Language used with<br>friends. | Language used with<br>Sri Lankan chrn. | Language used at<br>home. | Language used at<br>shop. | Language used at<br>Sri Lankan function. |
| 1.F<br>M  | S<br>S    | B<br>B   | Si<br>Si                                | 5<br>5                                  | S/E                           | S/E                             | S/E                            | S/E                                    | S/E                       | S/E                       | S/E                                      |
| 2.F<br>M  | S<br>S    | B<br>B   | S/E<br>S/E                              | 5<br>4                                  | S/E                           | S/E                             | S/E                            | S/E                                    | S/E                       | S/E                       | S/E                                      |
| 3.F<br>M  | S<br>S    | B<br>B   | S/E<br>Si                               | 5<br>5                                  | S/E                           | S/E                             | S/E                            | S/E                                    | S/E                       | S/E                       | S/E                                      |
| 4.F<br>M  | S<br>S    | B<br>B   | Si<br>Si                                | 5<br>5                                  | S/E                           | S/E                             | S/E                            | E                                      | S/E                       | S/E                       | S/E                                      |
| 5.F<br>M  | S<br>S    | B<br>B   | S/E<br>S/E                              | 5<br>5                                  | S/E                           | S/E                             | S/E                            | E                                      | S/E                       | S/E                       | S/E                                      |
| 6.F<br>M  | S<br>Bu   | B<br>C   | Si<br>E                                 | 5<br>2                                  | S/E                           | E                               | S/E                            | E                                      | S/E                       | S/E                       | S/E                                      |
| 7.F<br>M  | P<br>S    | C<br>B   | E<br>S                                  | 1<br>3                                  | E                             | E                               | S/E                            | E                                      | E                         | E                         | E  |
| 8.F<br>M  | P<br>S    | C<br>B   | E<br>S/E                                | 2<br>3                                  | E                             | E                               | E                              | E                                      | E                         | E                         | E  |
| 9.F<br>M  | S<br>S    | C<br>C   | E<br>S/E                                | 4<br>4                                  | E                             | E                               | E                              | E                                      | E                         | E                         | E  |
| 10.F<br>M | Ch<br>S   | B<br>B   | Ch<br>Si                                | 1<br>4                                  | E                             | E                               | E                              | E                                      | E                         | E                         | E  |

F=female Bu=Burgher B=Budhist  
M=male Ch=Chinese Si=Sinhala  
S=Sinhalese P=Pakeha S/E= Sinhala and English

In column 5 participants were asked to represent their ability in Sinhala on a 1 to 5 ability scale with as no ability, 2 a little ability, 3 ability to get by, 4 reasonably competent and 5 completely fluent.

TABLE 2

|     | Sex and present age | Age when left Sri Lanka. | Sinhala ability when left S.L. | Sinhala ability now | Use of Sinhala. (1-5 frequency scale) | Has Sinhala speaking relative in NZ. (X) | Use of Sinhala with X. (frequency scale) | No of times returned to Sri Lanka. | Children's need to use Sinhala on trips | Parent's desire for children to improve Sinhala. |
|-----|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1.  | M.6.5               | -----                    | -----                          | 2                   | 3                                     | /  | 5  | 1                                  | 5                                       | Y  |
|     | F.3.5               | -----                    | -----                          | 2                   | 2                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
| 2.  | M.17                | 4                        | 1                              | 2                   | 1                                     | /  | 5  | 1                                  | 4                                       | Y  |
|     | M.11                | -----                    | -----                          | 1                   | 1                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
|     | M.9                 | -----                    | -----                          | 1                   | 1                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
| 3.  | F.22                | 19                       | 5                              | 5                   | 3                                     |  | ----                                     | 0                                  | ----                                    | N  |
|     | M.21                | 18                       | 5                              | 5                   | 3                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
| 4.  | F.29                | 14                       | 5                              | 4                   | 3                                     |  | ----                                     | 1                                  | 4                                       | N  |
|     | M.27                | 12                       | 5                              | 4                   | 3                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
| 5.  | M.10                | -----                    | -----                          | 2                   | 2                                     | /  | 4  | 2                                  | 4                                       | Y  |
|     | M.10                | -----                    | -----                          | 2                   | 2                                     |  |  |                                    |   | -  |
| 6.  | M.29                | 10                       | 4                              | 3                   | 2                                     |  | ----                                     | 2                                  | 3                                       | Y  |
|     | M.26                | 7                        | 3                              | 1                   | 1                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
|     | M.25                | 6                        | 3                              | 1                   | 1                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
| 7.  | F.12                | -----                    | -----                          | 1                   | 1                                     | /  | 1  | 2                                  | 1                                       | Y  |
|     | M.9                 | -----                    | -----                          | 1                   | 1                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
|     | M.8                 | -----                    | -----                          | 1                   | 1                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
| 8.  | F.20                | 6.5                      | 5                              | 2                   | 1                                     |  | ----                                     | 2                                  | 3                                       | Y  |
|     | M.18                | 4                        | 3                              | 2                   | 1                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
| 9.  | F.10                | -----                    | -----                          | 1                   | 1                                     | /  | 1  | 10                                 | 1                                       | Y  |
|     | M.5                 | -----                    | -----                          | 1                   | 1                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |
| 10. | F.9                 | -----                    | -----                          | 1                   | 1                                     |  | ----                                     |                                    | ----                                    | Y  |
|     | M.8                 | -----                    | -----                          | 1                   | 1                                     |  |  |                                    |   |  |

## Mixed marriages and language maintenance: some Samoan data<sup>1</sup>

Jane Pilkington

### Abstract

This paper compares the Samoan language proficiency of children from families where both parents are Samoan with the proficiency of children in families where only one parent is Samoan. Mixed marriages where the mother was Samoan were also compared with families with a Samoan father. Part of the research process involved developing a satisfactory questionnaire for use in an interview situation aimed at eliciting data on Samoan language proficiency and use in Wellington. Eleven couples were interviewed. Overall families with two Samoan parents are having more success bringing up children who speak Samoan in a number of domains. Children of inter-ethnic marriages are generally less proficient in Samoan. There was no evidence of a difference where the mother rather than the father was the only Samoan parent. There is some evidence to suggest, however, that awareness of the danger of language loss, coupled with determination and a strong motivation to maintain Samoan, can over-ride the usual linguistic effects of an inter-ethnic marriage.

### Introduction

The Samoan community is one of the larger migrant communities in New Zealand. Mass migration from Western Samoa to New Zealand began after World War II (Pitt and Macpherson 1974:10) and increased markedly between 1951-1976 when the New Zealand Samoan population rose from around 1500 to 30,000 (Fairbairn-Dunlop 1984:100). By 1970 Samoans who had been born in New Zealand rather than immigrant Samoans formed the majority of the community (Pitt and Macpherson 1974:16).

Pitt and Macpherson (1974) provide a very positive picture of the first generation of Samoans in New Zealand using their own resources to adjust to a new situation and new ways, while retaining their individuality. In a later survey concerned with language maintenance among a number of ethnic minorities, Jamieson (1980) surveyed families in the Newtown area of Wellington. She noted that while 91% of the Samoan mothers she interviewed expressed a desire for their children to grow up speaking Samoan, 22% of the Samoan pre-school children in her sample were already on the way to becoming more proficient in English than in Samoan (Jamieson 1980:108).

In research which focussed exclusively on factors affecting language maintenance among Wellington Samoans, Fairbairn-Dunlop (1984) reported that 90% of the children in her sample of 40 families spoke Samoan, and 63% were fluent speakers. Most of these children were born in New Zealand. She concluded that for a variety of reasons the language was being successfully maintained by the families she surveyed. These families used Samoan in the home, for example, and they socialised mainly within the Samoan community. There was a variety of settings, including church, where they could appropriately use Samoan. Local shops, newspapers, and the library printed notices in Samoan. And most importantly Fa'asamoa or Samoan culture was a strong and pervasive influence on the lives of community members.

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<sup>1</sup> This research was undertaken as part of the course requirements for BA Honours in Linguistics. My thanks to the generosity of the respondents, and to Nicola, Wendy and Janet for unfailing patience and assistance.

The children in these studies were all quite young. Gluckman (1987) and Hunkin (1987) discuss the language proficiency of older children, and they present a different view. Gluckman, for instance, argues for the inclusion of Samoan classes in the school curriculum on the grounds that parents who believe that their high school age children can speak Samoan are generally over-rating their children's ability. Many of the children appeared to understand Samoan, but they could not contribute to a simple conversation (Gluckman 1987:113). This view is shared by Kerlake and Kerlake (1987: 145) who note that once children start school parents generally need to actively encourage them to use Samoan, even when the children were quite fluent before starting school.

Hunkin also draws attention to loss of the Samoan language once Samoan children arrive in the school system. Among the New Zealand-born Samoan university students he surveyed, only one was able to speak Samoan fluently. He attributed this to the dominance of English in New Zealand and the monocultural outlook that has been favoured by New Zealand institutions, including the education system (Hunkin 1987: 29-34).

All this research focuses on children whose parents are both first generation Samoan migrants. No one has previously examined the effect of intermarriage on Samoan language maintenance. As I was attending a Samoan language class where many of the class members were Palagi (European) people married to Samoans, I decided to investigate the patterns of language use of these intermarried couples compared to Samoan couples, and to relate these patterns to the language proficiency of their children.

In most immigrant communities it is the mother's use of the language in the home which is regarded as the major influence on language maintenance (eg Clyne 1985, Jamieson 1980). It has been suggested, by contrast, that in Samoan homes it is the father's use of Samoan which is influential. Macpherson (1984:126) has commented, for instance, that language maintenance is more likely in cases of intermarriage where the father is Samoan, while Jamieson (1980:104) noted that Samoan men were stronger users of Samoan at home than Samoan women. It seemed worthwhile, then, to compare the language use patterns, attitudes to language maintenance and children's Samoan proficiency in families where

- a) only the father was Samoan
- b) only the mother was Samoan
- c) both parents were Samoan.

## Method

### The interviewees

I used a network approach to identify couples for interview. I was enrolled in a Samoan language course that was largely attended by Palagi people married to Samoans, and I had worked with several Samoan women over the summer at a supermarket. I had friends who had Samoan contacts, and I also used the Samoan language class at Victoria University as a source of contacts. As a result of following all these leads I secured interviews with 11 couples, aged between 24 and 49, where at least one parent was Samoan born and had left Samoa after the age of ten. In four families the father was Samoan, in three families the mother was Samoan, and there were four families where both parents were Samoan.

Networking meant I had someone to 'vouch for' me before I contacted an interviewee. This turned out to be very important. The extra time it took for my contact to explain who I was to the interviewee and check that they were willing to have me call them was well worthwhile. The responses I received from interviewees who had heard my name before and knew that I was calling were far more enthusiastic and less awkward than

initial phone calls made to people who had never heard of me before. People who been contacted by a friend before I called them made comments such as *I'm looking forward to it*, and *I think this sounds really interesting*. Indeed, in general those who agreed to let me interview them proved to be very helpful and often very interested in what I was doing.

Using knowledgeable contacts proved useful for another reason too. In some cases people were very doubtful that they could help me. One Palagi woman that I interviewed alone, as her husband was overseas at the time, was sure that she had nothing to tell me and that I would really be better talking to a Samoan. She was quite surprised that she had something to say in reply to my questions. Her feeling that she was not a part of the Samoan community was in fact supported by her answers. Her children identified as New Zealanders and her husband was the only member of the family who had any contact with the Samoan community. The information she provided, then, was very relevant, yet she would not have volunteered to be interviewed since she perceived herself as having nothing to offer me. It was only through my contact's awareness of this woman's link with the Samoan community that I made contact with her.

### **The questions and the interview**

The questionnaire used in this survey was a modified and shorter version of that used by 'Anahina 'Aipolo (1989) in her survey of language maintenance in the Wellington Tongan community. (See appendix for questionnaire.) I added questions about the degree of contact the family had with other Samoan people, since this had been identified as an important factor contributing to language maintenance in this community (Fairbairn-Dunlop 1984, Jamieson 1980:108). I also included questions on children's language proficiency, since this was an important variable in my study. On the basis of problems identified by pilot testing, I replaced the attitude statements used by 'Aipolo with more open and direct attitude questions, and where relevant I asked whether the non-Samoan spouse was learning Samoan, since I considered this was a possible indicator of the spouse's attitude to Samoan.

I interviewed couples rather than expecting them to fill in the questionnaire on their own. The Samoan community has a strong oral tradition. Moreover the language of the questionnaire was English but this was not the first language of most of the people I was collecting data from. Hence an interview avoided problems of proficiency in writing English while making it possible to clarify and explain any questions which caused problems. I also felt that people were more likely to provide fuller answers in an interview. This proved to be well-justified especially in relation to a question on whether parents wanted their children to grow up identifying primarily as Samoan or as New Zealanders. The answers to this question provided some complex and fascinating data.

Most interviews took place in interviewees' homes, but four were carried out at the interviewees' work. Where possible I interviewed both parents together and this proved a very successful method of generating interesting discussion on a number of questions. The comments from one would trigger further comments by the other. I taped most interviews, which made the whole process much easier and more relaxed for me, but in a few cases the interviewees preferred me to take notes.

While the my interviewees were very cooperative I did feel a certain awkwardness as an outsider to the Samoan community. When I first approached the Samoan class for help with establishing contacts I was initially met with open hostility. My right as an outsider to ask questions about this community was definitely questioned. When I first asked the women that I worked with if they would be willing to be interviewed and explained what I was doing they reacted with surprise. Why did I want to know about the Samoan community? That a Palagi had any interest in their community was something that all three of them found amusing and odd. However the fact that I was

learning Samoan and had a number of Samoan friends who would vouch for the genuineness of my motives finally guaranteed my acceptance and the cooperation of my interviewees.

## Results

The interviews revealed that, in general, children of inter-ethnic or mixed marriages were using Samoan in far fewer domains than children in families where both parents were Samoan. Only one child from a mixed marriage was using more Samoan than English in any domain, and he was under two years old. His parents had made a conscious decision to use Samoan to this child, and so his older brother and sister (children of an earlier Palagi-Palagi marriage) used some Samoan when speaking to him, and they knew some prayers and songs in Samoan. The other children of mixed marriages were using English exclusively in all domains, except for a little Samoan to greet their Samoan relatives and friends.

By contrast the children of the Samoan couples were using Samoan in all domains. They also used some English in most domains, but overall their parents estimated that they used more Samoan than English. All but one of these children were cared for by their extended family rather than attending a preschool.

### Language of the home

There are a number of reasons which account for the greater use of Samoan by children in families where both parents are Samoan. The most obvious is the language of the home. Where one partner is bilingual and the other monolingual, the language of the home will obviously be determined by the monolingual partner. There were only two partners who knew no Samoan and whose partners therefore had to use English to talk to them. Five of the seven Palagi married to Samoans understood some Samoan and could speak a little Samoan as well. In fact these Palagi spouses were often more proficient in Samoan than their children. They had shown greater interest in learning Samoan than they had in teaching their children the language.

Where parents are able to use Samoan to each other, and choose to do so, the children are exposed to the language and it is the dominant language of the home. Though the couples involved in most of the mixed marriages in this survey could have used Samoan in the home, they rarely chose to do so. It was only in families where both partners were Samoan that this happened. Children in these latter families use Samoan naturally to their parents and grandparents, and (at least before they start school) to each other most of the time.

The patterns of language use in the homes of children of mixed marriages were quite different. Though the Samoan partners reported using Samoan in church and to Samoan friends and work-mates, they used English to their spouses and children, and English was the normal language of communication in the home. Again the one exception was the couple who were deliberately trying to use Samoan with their young son. They use Samoan to each other, and to their youngest son, and both Samoan and English to their older children.

It was interesting to find in this sample that the Samoan women were more fluent in English than the Samoan men. The Samoan wives of Palagi men seemed more proficient English speakers than the Samoan husbands of Palagi women. Among the Samoan couples several commented that the wife was a more proficient English speaker in some areas. This confirms a comment by Jamieson (1980:104) that in her sample Samoan women were more confident than other Island women about working outside the home and that they played 'a more significant role in the initiation of their children into the English speaking world' (1980: 105). On the other hand there was no evidence

in this sample that Samoan fathers were more likely to use Samoan in the home than Samoan mothers, as reported by Jamieson (1980: 104).

#### **Contact with the Samoan community**

There are other factors besides the language of the home which can reinforce or weaken patterns of Samoan language use. One such factor is the amount of contact that the family has with the Samoan community. In families where the children were using Samoan the amount of contact with the Samoan community was very high. These families went to churches where Samoan was used, had Samoan neighbours and mixed with other Samoans at social gatherings.

Among the mixed couples the amount of contact with the Samoan community was much lower, and generally involved only the Samoan partner. The exception to this pattern was once again the Samoan-Palagi couple who had consciously decided to encourage their young son to use Samoan. This family had as much contact with the Samoan community as the Samoan couples did. The husband and wife both had Samoan contacts independently of each other, and their children's contact with Samoans was high, both in English-speaking contexts such as school and sport, and in the Samoan-speaking context of their father's extended family. Even the children of the previous Palagi-Palagi marriage were beginning to speak a little Samoan due to the number of domains they encountered where Samoan was used, and the high number of visitors to their home who used Samoan.

#### **Attitudes to Samoan language maintenance**

There was no distinguishable difference in the attitudes to Samoan language maintenance reported by the Samoan couples compared to the mixed marriage couples. There was, however, a clear correlation in some cases between a high attitude score for a couple, and greater use of Samoan by their children. One Samoan couple who reported very positive attitudes to Samoan, for example, used Samoan more extensively than any other couple, and their eldest child was using Samoan most consistently in the home. This was the only couple who expressed any explicit concern about the possibility of Samoan language loss. Interestingly this couple were also the Samoan couple most proficient in English. This finding supports overseas evidence that minority group language maintenance can have beneficial effects on proficiency in the majority language too (see Cummins 1981).

Another couple with a very positive attitude to Samoan and a correspondingly high level of Samoan language use in the home was the Palagi-Samoan couple mentioned above. This couple seemed to be having a greater degree of success passing the Samoan language on to their children than other couples where one partner was Palagi. Though none of the other couples recorded a negative attitude score, only two other Samoan couples scored as highly as this mixed marriage couple.

In general the attitude scores were not high. It seems likely that the reason for this is not that Samoan is not valued, but rather that proficiency in Samoan is still taken for granted and it has not yet been felt necessary to make any explicit commitment to language maintenance. As the patterns of children's usage reported above suggest, this attitude is unrealistic. If these families are typical, at least in mixed marriages, Samoan is rapidly being lost. People may not be fully aware of this however, and in Samoan-only marriages, the threat of language loss is not at all apparent. Indeed the Samoan couples all seemed puzzled by the attitude questions and they generally gave rather noncommittal responses. These couples were all secure in their ability to speak Samoan. They did not feel the need for a strong explicit commitment to the language. They took its survival for granted. Since they use it to their friends and their children the possibility of language loss probably seems remote.

When asked whether being able to speak Samoan was a good thing for their children, for example, these couples were very much in the dark about what I could be getting at.

Bilinguals don't think that their bilingualism is either an advantage or disadvantage; they simply are bilingual in much the same way as monolinguals are monolingual. Saunders (1982:14) comments that for many bilinguals the question of whether or not bilingualism is an advantage is 'purely academic' as they have no option other than to be bilingual. At this stage these Samoan couples obviously saw no necessity for conscious Samoan maintenance efforts. Indeed they were more concerned that their children should acquire good proficiency in English.

### **Samoan identity**

In general the Samoan-Samoan couples felt their children identified as Samoan and saw this as appropriate. The children of mixed marriages were, however, not surprisingly, much less clear about their identity. The couple who were consciously maintaining Samoan were strongly in favour of their child identifying primarily as a Samoan rather than a New Zealander, but the remaining mixed marriage couples all seemed to feel that because their children were born in New Zealand they were firstly New Zealanders. Grosjean (1982:162-164) writes of the problems that bicultural children often have in retaining their bicultural identity. A strong desire to identify with peers and fear of ridicule often lead children to rebel against the language and culture of their parents. Possibly the Samoan parents in this sample were aware of these problems because they had experienced them themselves on arrival in New Zealand. Perhaps they wished to save their children from such problems by avoiding any emphasis on their Samoan identity.

There was generally a correlation between the lack of emphasis on Samoan identity and lack of proficiency in Samoan. One couple, for instance, reported that their children did not think of themselves as Samoan, but as New Zealanders, and their children's use of Samoan was minimal - the children spoke Samoan only when greeting their grandmother. Other parents felt that their children had mixed feelings about their Samoan identity. One inter-ethnically married couple commented on the problems a dual identity presented for their children. Their eldest child thought of himself as a New Zealander but was upset when his Samoan friends challenged his identity as a 'real Samoan'. This ambivalence was reflected in other aspects of this family's attitudes and behaviour. They said they believed that language maintenance was a good idea, they had a reasonable amount of contact with Samoan speakers, and the Palagi spouse had studied Samoan at the Community Institute for two years, yet they used little Samoan in the home and their children spoke no Samoan.

### **Conclusion**

This survey identified a number of factors which appear to favour language maintenance in the Samoan community. Children are more likely to have developed some proficiency in Samoan when:

1. both parents speak Samoan proficiently
2. the parents use Samoan in a range of domains, and in some domains use only Samoan
3. the family has high levels of contact with Samoan people in a range of domains
4. the parents have strongly positive attitudes towards maintaining the Samoan language

Inter-marriage tends to lead to language loss, though the one inter-married couple who satisfied all four of the conditions described above, demonstrate that inter-marriage need not necessarily result in the loss of Samoan. Only one couple said that they did not wish their children to learn Samoan as children. This couple felt that their children should be old enough to decide for themselves that they wanted to learn to speak Samoan. Every other couple felt that they would like their children to grow up able to speak Samoan, but the problems of raising bilingual children within a mixed marriage in a monolingual society had obviously proved too great. They would have appreciated

more institutional support for Samoan language maintenance, more Samoan pre-schools, for instance, more use of Samoan in school, and more reading material.

The Ministry of Education provides some support for the Samoan language, but most families were not aware of what is available. Even schools are often unaware of the available resources. At the time of writing, for instance, School Publications had just published two new Samoan readers for primary school children who were either learning Samoan or were speakers of Samoan. There is also help available through the Wellington Multicultural Educational Resource Centre for families wanting to maintain Samoan. Home tutors can provide support for parents trying to pass their language on to their children. They establish contact mainly through church groups and regularly visit the home and offer support and advice to the caregivers. They provide a link to language nests when the child reaches preschool age.

In conclusion it is clear from this study that Samoan families where one partner is not Samoan are having markedly less success in raising children able to speak Samoan than families where both partners are Samoan. Though it is possible to overcome the challenges, it takes consciously positive attitudes to Samoan language maintenance, and a determined effort to use Samoan in the home in all interactions. It seems likely that more extensive institutional support would make this task less daunting for a greater number of couples, and at least stave off the language shift to English which is almost inevitable without it.

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## APPENDIX : THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### Background Information

1. Age
2. Place of birth?
3. What countries have you lived in and for what period of time?
4. Occupation?
5. What is your highest level of education?
6. How many children do you have?
7. How old are they?
8. What sexes are they?

### How much do you mix with other Samoan people?

9. Do you get to see members of each of your families often?
10. Are any other members of your family married to Samoans /Palagi people?
11. Do many other Samoan people live near by?

#### *Do you mix with other Samoans*

12. at church?
13. at work?
14. at formal gatherings eg.weddings?
15. at informal social gatherings?
16. Do you often have Samoan visitors to your home?
17. Have you as a couple/family ever visited Samoa?
18. If not would you like to/do you plan to in the future?

### Parent's Language Use

#### *Which languages do you use when you*

19. speak to Samoans at church?
20. speak to Samoans at work?
21. speak to Samoans at formal gatherings?
22. speak to Samoans at informal gatherings?
23. speak to Samoan friends?
24. speak to Samoan relatives?
25. speak to your children?
26. Do you ever get called upon to speak at formal gatherings? If so what language do you use?
27. Do you ever sing to your children in Samoan?
28. Do you scold your children in Samoan?
29. Do you praise your children in Samoan?

### Children's language use

30. Do your children speak Samoan when speaking to you?
31. Do they speak Samoan to one another?
32. Do you hear them talking to themselves in Samoan at all?
33. Do your children attend a preschool group? What language do they use there?
34. Do your children have many Samoan friends?
35. Do they speak Samoan with their Samoan friends?
36. Do your children know any songs/rhymes etc in Samoan?
37. Do your children say their prayers in Samoan?
38. Which languages do they use when they are angry?
39. Which languages do they use to speak to your Samoan friends?
40. Which languages do they use to speak to your Samoan relatives?
41. What language do they use when speaking to their Samoan grandparents?
42. Do you think your children think of themselves as Samoans or New Zealanders or both?

### How would you rate your English?

43. Would you like to be able to speak English better than you do at present ?
44. Would you like to understand English better than you do at present?
45. Would you like to read English better than you do at present?
46. Would you like to write English better than you do at present?
47. Are you making any special effort to achieve this?

How would you rate your Samoan?

48. Would you like to be able to speak Samoan?
49. Would you like to be able to understand more Samoan than you do at present?
50. Are you making any special effort to achieve this?
51. Would you like your children to grow up able to speak Samoan?
52. Would you like them to be able to read and write Samoan?
53. Do you think that being able to speak/read/write Samoan will be useful for them ?

Attitudes

54. Do you think that Samoans in New Zealand have a need for the Samoan language?
55. Do you think that learning Samoan is a good thing for children?
56. Do you think that knowing Samoan in New Zealand is a useful skill to have?
57. Do you think that Samoan should be taught in schools?
58. Do you think that every Samoan should be able to speak Samoan?
59. Do you think that Samoan people should be ashamed of not knowing Samoan?

## Attitudes to Maori and the use of Maori lexical items in English<sup>1</sup>

Wendy Thompson

### Abstract

This paper considers the relationship between the attitudes held by Pakeha women toward the Maori language and their use of Maori lexical items in an English-speaking context. The research is based on two hypotheses. Firstly that Pakeha women who have some familiarity with Maori language and culture would hold more positive attitudes toward the Maori language than Pakeha women with no knowledge of Maori culture. Secondly that positive attitudes towards Maori culture would correlate with the choice of Maori words in appropriate English-speaking contexts. Twenty women, ten non-students and ten students of Maori language, were interviewed. The data collected from these women provided support for the hypotheses.

### Introduction

There have been a number of studies investigating attitudes to New Zealand English (Bayard in press, Huygens and Vaughan 1983, Gordon and Abell in press). There is much less research available on New Zealanders' attitudes to Maori, however (Leek 1989). This paper describes a study which examined Pakeha women's attitudes to Maori, and which attempted to identify features of their behaviour which correlated with these attitudes, including their preference for appropriate Maori words in certain English language contexts.

Studies of majority group attitudes to minority languages elsewhere have generally shown that majority group members tend to downgrade the minority language compared to their own (eg Ryan and Giles 1982, Giles, Rosenthal and Young 1985). Leek (1989) found, however, that, in general, Pakeha New Zealanders were reasonably well disposed towards Maori, and the extension of its use into new domains, provided they were not expected to learn the language themselves. This kind of gap between attitude and commitment has been noted elsewhere (eg Agheyisi and Fishman 1970), and it was one of the issues I decided to explore in this study of Pakeha women's attitudes to Maori.

The specific hypotheses I investigated were:

- 1) that Pakeha women who have some familiarity with Maori language and culture would hold more positive attitudes toward the Maori language than Pakeha women with no knowledge of Maori culture;
- 2) that positive attitudes towards Maori culture would correlate with the choice of Maori words in English-speaking contexts where appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> This research was undertaken as part of the course requirements for BA Honours in Linguistics. I would like to express appreciation to (i) the women respondents who generously contributed time and assistance (ii) Rodger Moore who explained how to work out the figures (iii) Janet, Nicola and Jane for all the support and guidance received during the project.

## Collecting the data

Researchers have used a variety of methods to investigate attitudes to languages. The four most widely used are probably i) participant observation ii) interview iii) experiment iv) questionnaire (see Holmes 1976). Each method offers particular advantages and disadvantages. Participant observation provides a good starting point for research and can be useful in preparing questions for use in interviews and questionnaires, for instance. Interviews ensure that the data can be reliably interpreted and provide opportunities for exploring issues in some depth. Experimentally elicited attitudes such as those collected by researchers using subjective reaction tests (Labov 1966), or the matched guise technique (eg Gardner and Lambert 1972, Giles and Powesland 1975), permit the use of precisely controlled linguistic stimuli, so that the input to which people are reacting as well as their reactions to it can be analysed. The characteristics of different groups of respondents are also generally controlled and systematically varied. Finally, written questionnaires offer the advantage of making it possible to collect responses from large numbers of respondents.

In this study I combined the advantages of the interview with an experimental design. I interviewed my subjects individually, but within the interview I presented carefully designed material for them to respond to, so that their responses could be more reliably compared and analysed.

### The elicitation materials

The interview consisted of three sections

- i) two cloze passages with gaps which in one case could be appropriately filled with Maori words (see Appendix 1);
- ii) a set of eighteen statements (developed from those used by 'Aipolo 1989) to which informants were asked to respond on a scale of agreement-disagreement (see Appendix 2);
- iii) a set of questions on respondents' backgrounds, degree of contact with non-Pakeha people, and language learning experience (see Appendix 3).

As far as I am aware no one has previously used cloze tasks as potential indicators of respondents' attitudes to language. The development of this task was therefore the most challenging component of the methodology. The main problem was to devise a passage where the use of Maori words in English would be considered appropriate.

Deverson (1985) gives some indication of the number and range of Maori words which have been assimilated into New Zealand English in recent years. He describes their occurrence in reports, reviews, letters, and newspaper articles, as well as their increasing use in fictional works (with and without gloss) by both Maori and non-Maori writers.

It is clear that many Maori words have become well established in New Zealand English. The great majority of flora and fauna in New Zealand are known by their Maori names: eg *kiwi*, *tui*, *kowhai*, *rimu*. There are also lexical items for which there are no satisfactory English equivalents: eg *marae*, *hangi*, *tangi*, *aroha*. In addition there are many phrases, including greetings and farewells, which are commonly used both in speech and in writing by many New Zealanders in a wide range of domains.

In selecting appropriate passages for the cloze material, I chose a topic - the tangi - which would permit respondents to use some of the most commonly known Maori words in English: eg *marae*, *mana*, *tangi*, *kai*, *hui*. Newspaper accounts of the deaths of two well known New Zealanders, one Maori, Sir James Henare, the other Pakeha, Sister Mary Leo, at about the time I was developing the tasks provided topical material. I also included opportunities for responses using the place names *Tai Tokerau*, *Poneke*, *Aotearoa*, as well as less well-known but equally appropriate Maori words such as

*wairua* and *urupaa*. Finally in order to allow informants to use a Maori greeting the passages were presented as a letter to a friend, with the letter describing Sir James Henare's tangi addressed to *Mere*, and the one describing Sister Mary Leo's funeral addressed to *Mary*.

In filling in this section respondents could select from suggested (Maori and English) words or use any others they considered appropriate. The gaps to be filled included some simple 'distractors' - words such as determiners, prepositions and conjunctions - used to take the focus off the nouns which were my main interest. As it happened these 'little words' provided the greatest difficulty for informants. They needed reassuring that *and* or *of* were indeed possible and appropriate words to fill some of the gaps. I also had to provide assistance to a couple of informants who had not heard of the people referred to in the passage.

### **The informants**

Two distinctly different groups of women were used for this study. One group comprised ten students from Maori language classes at Victoria University. The other group of ten women were members of the vintage car club in Lower Hutt. These women were contacted using the network approach or 'friend of a friend' technique described by Lesley Milroy (1980).

By interviewing only women I avoided the problems of interpreting any differences between same-sex vs cross-sex interview data. It was also appropriate for me as a Pakeha woman to interview Pakehas, and this had the advantage of avoiding the additional complexities of cross-cultural interviews.

### **Administering the questionnaire**

The majority of the interviews took place in the informant's home (sixteen of the twenty); the remainder took place at Te Herenga Waka Marae. Though not ideal, since it is possible that this setting influenced the students' selection of Maori vs English words, the place of interview was determined by the interviewees' convenience. Interviews took about twenty minutes to complete.

## **Results**

### **Background information**

The informants were all Pakeha women. Where informants had a partner, all but one were Pakeha. The exception was a student with a part-Maori partner. However, only three informants reported no contact at all with non-Pakeha people, and half of the informants had spent time out of New Zealand, ranging from three to twenty years. There was no difference between non-students and students in this respect.

Not surprisingly all the students (who were studying Maori) expressed a desire to master another language. Half the non-students also responded positively on this question. The main reasons given for wishing to learn another language were to gain a better understanding of another culture, to learn Maori language because it is the language of the tangata whenua, or to learn a language of the individual's family - Gaelic, German, and French were mentioned. The main reason given by those who responded negatively to this question was their belief that they were 'too old' to learn another language.

In general, then, most of the informants had experienced contact with another culture and seemed well-disposed towards learning more about other cultures. When one turns to an examination of attitudes to Maori in particular, however, a clear difference emerges between the attitudes of the students involved in Maori language courses and those of the non-students.

### Responses to attitude statements

The informants were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about the Maori language and culture, some of which were positive and some negative. They could also respond with 'don't know'. Table 1 summarises the patterns of responses for students vs non-students to these statements.

**Table 1 Responses to attitude statements**

|                            | Non-students | Students | Total |
|----------------------------|--------------|----------|-------|
| <b>Negative statements</b> | %            | %        | %     |
| AGREE                      | 26.66        | 8.88     | 17.77 |
| DISAGREE                   | 66.67        | 81.0     | 73.83 |
| DON'T KNOW                 | 6.67         | 11.0     | 8.83  |
| <b>Positive statements</b> |              |          |       |
| AGREE                      | 55.55        | 65.55    | 60.55 |
| DISAGREE                   | 34.45        | 20.00    | 27.22 |
| DON'T KNOW                 | 10.00        | 14.45    | 12.22 |

The majority of responses agreed with the positive statements about the Maori language and culture. However this majority comprised two thirds of the students' responses but only just over half the non-students' responses. So students showed a stronger tendency than non-students to agree with positive statements, while one third of non-students disagreed with positive statements, ie 14% more than students.

Similarly while a majority of responses in both groups disagreed with negative statements, more students disagreed with these statements. Conversely three times as many non-students as students agreed with negative statements.

A couple of statements discriminated very clearly between the groups. One was the statement *We are all New Zealanders and there should be no special privileges for any particular group*. Not a single student agreed with this, while 80% of non-students agreed with it. The other discriminating statement was *All people living in NZ should also speak Maori*. Sixty per cent of the students agreed with this, while none of the non-students did. The students' responses thus indicate a positive view of the special rights of Maori as tangata whenua, and positive attitudes to preserving the Maori

language. The non-students on the other hand do not believe in distinctions between New Zealanders and see no reason for everyone to learn Maori (cf Leek 1989).

On the other hand everyone agreed that *Being aware of other people's culture improves understanding between groups*, and all disagreed with the statement that *Teaching Maori language and customs in school is a waste of our children's time*. Overall this reveals a sympathetic orientation to learning about other cultures, and towards Maori culture in particular. It seems then that non-students are generally more sympathetic to the idea of all New Zealanders knowing something about Maori culture than towards the view that all New Zealanders should learn Maori language.

#### Use of Maori words in cloze task.

The average number of Maori words used in the cloze task was four, with a range of 0-12. The students used a total of 62 Maori words while the non-students' total was 20. Table 2 shows the most frequently selected words and how they were distributed.

Table 2 Maori words selected in cloze task

| Maori word | Total | Students | Non-students |
|------------|-------|----------|--------------|
| mana       | 15    | 11       | 4            |
| tangi      | 10    | 5        | 5            |
| whanau     | 9     | 6        | 3            |
| marae      | 8     | 4        | 4            |
| wairua     | 6     | 6        | -            |
| tangata    | 5     | 5        | -            |
| whenua     |       |          |              |

Quite clearly the students used more Maori words than the non-students. In total the students' choices ranged from a minimum of six to a maximum of 17 Maori words, and they included words such as *hapuu* and *urupaa* which demonstrate quite specific knowledge of appropriate Maori items. The non-students used up to four Maori words and all but two (*kai*, *Akarana*) were words from the list in table 2.

#### Relationship between attitudes and choice of lexical items

The pattern of results support the original hypotheses that Pakeha women who have some knowledge of Maori language and other aspects of Maori culture will hold more positive attitudes toward the language than those who do not, and that these positive attitudes towards Maori culture will be reflected in the choice of Maori words in English-speaking contexts where appropriate. The students learning Maori clearly held more positive attitudes towards Maori language and culture than the non-students, and they used more Maori words in the cloze task than the non-students.

Age was not a relevant factor in accounting for different results but informants' reported desire to learn a language other than English did correlate with their attitudes and tendency to use Maori words. Those who reported no desire to learn a language other than English, for instance, scored low on attitudes and used less than three Maori words in the cloze task.

In analysing individual results it is interesting to contrast two particular informants who represented extremes. The first informant I will call Jane. Jane, her partner and her parents were Pakeha. None of them spoke a language other than English. She attended a state school, had no contact with non-Pakeha people and had never been out of New

Zealand. She produced no Maori words and scored the lowest in terms of positive attitudes to Maori. In this sample she stands out because of those features, though in some respects she represents the 'stereotypical' Pakeha New Zealander who has little or no contact with things Maori. In contrast to her is Sarah. Sarah also identified herself, her parents and her partner as Pakeha. She too attended a state school but she differed from Jane on all other features. She had spent some time out of New Zealand. She had some knowledge of languages other than English. She reported regular contact with non-Pakeha people and she scored very high in terms of positive attitudes to Maori language and culture. She also used more than the average number of Maori words. The contrasts between these two informants illustrate the extent to which features tie together in support of the hypotheses.

There was also a correlation between time out of New Zealand and positive attitudes to Maori language and culture. Not surprisingly, travel apparently broadens people's outlooks and develops understanding of other cultures. Of the six informants who spent time out of New Zealand all had positive attitude scores.

## Conclusion

Overall the results support the hypotheses. Pakeha women in regular contact with Maori language or other aspects of culture, or interacting with non-Pakeha people regularly, generally hold more positive attitudes toward the Maori language than those without such characteristics. Women with positive attitudes to Maori select more Maori words in an English-speaking environment where such words are appropriate. This suggests a well-designed cloze task may serve as a quick method of identifying attitudes to Maori language and culture. Though women with no contact with Maori people, language or culture may be sympathetic to the idea that New Zealanders should know something about Maori culture, their attitudes to Maori are less positive overall, and do not extend to any personal commitment to learning Maori.

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## APPENDIX 1

### Cloze task

Fill in the gaps in the two passages below

A list of possible words is provided but these are only suggestions. You may wish to use others which are not listed. That is just fine. You may wish to use the same word twice. That's fine too. You may wish to use more than one word per space. That's also fine.

There are no right or wrong answers. Just write the word you would usually use.

#### **Possible words**

family, spirit, Wellington, mana, Poneke, meetings, whanau, building, cemetery, town, kai, wairua, Northland, prestige, tautoko, locals, tangi, aroha, gathering, food, New Zealand, strength, tangata whenua, support, hui, funeral, standing, student, Sister, Maori Battalion.

#### Passage 1

\_\_\_\_\_ (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Mere,

Last month (April) Sir James Henare passed \_\_\_\_\_. Sir James was a leader among his people and had a great deal of \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ in both the Maori and Pakeha worlds. He was of the Ngaati Hine people, in the north of \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_. His home area Motatau is very near the town of Kawakawa in the Bay of Islands. For the first few days Sir James lay at Otiria marae in Moerewa.

The army offered to assist the \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \_\_\_\_\_ in caring for the thousands of visitors. During this time people came \_\_\_\_\_ pay their respects from throughout \_\_\_\_\_ (5) \_\_\_\_\_ to Sir James and his \_\_\_\_\_ (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (three buses from the capital, \_\_\_\_\_ (7) \_\_\_\_\_, alone).

A \_\_\_\_\_ (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of this size (some 5000 visitors in all) really stretched the local resources so the assistance of \_\_\_\_\_ army was very welcome. The amount of \_\_\_\_\_ (9) \_\_\_\_\_ needed to feed such numbers must have been enormous.

During his lifetime Sir James fought with the \_\_\_\_\_ (10) \_\_\_\_\_ in the 2nd World War. Back home he worked on a number \_\_\_\_\_ committees. Sir James had a special interest in education. It is his \_\_\_\_\_ (11) \_\_\_\_\_ that is heard at the beginning of the Kohanga Reo programme on television. He worked hard to establish the Kohanga units and then to \_\_\_\_\_ (12) \_\_\_\_\_ the work of these Marae-based Kohanga Reo units, that so many are up and running today reflects not only his dedication \_\_\_\_\_ the determination of others also.

A great number of his many and varied achievements are not really widely known but he always worked for \_\_\_\_\_ betterment of Maori-Pakeha relations in the whole community.

His body nows lies at peace at his home \_\_\_\_\_(13)\_\_\_\_\_ which is at the top of a hill at Motatau, but his \_\_\_\_\_(14)\_\_\_\_\_ has gone to sit with his ancestors. He will be sadly missed by all, but hopefully his work will continue.

### Passage 2

\_\_\_\_\_ (15) \_\_\_\_\_ Mary,

Just last weekend on Friday May 5th Dame \_\_\_\_\_ Mary Leo passed away. She was ninety-four years old. She had been in hospital for four years since she broke her pelvis in a \_\_\_\_\_.

Dame Sister Mary Leo had an international reputation as a teacher of music but more specifically as a teacher of \_\_\_\_\_. Among her better know 'stars' is Kiri Te Kanawa. There were literally hundreds of young \_\_\_\_\_ on whose lives Sister had an influence. At the time I met her she was still teaching music at Saint Mary's College \_\_\_\_\_ is in Ponsonby, Auckland. The friend I met her with did not go on to make an international \_\_\_\_\_ from her talent but I am sure she would agree that Sister gave her many skills which have assisted her in dealing with her life since those music school days.

Sister Mary Leo had the ability to bring out from a \_\_\_\_\_ their extraordinary talents, and she did this for many decades. With her, music and religion went hand in hand. At the times \_\_\_\_\_ students were in competition, no matter how big or \_\_\_\_\_, Sister would be there to \_\_\_\_\_(16)\_\_\_\_\_ them and give them that courage they might be lacking.

Although she held a great deal of \_\_\_\_\_(17)\_\_\_\_\_ in the music community she remained a very modest person.

The school (St Marys') is not only a day school but a boarding one also. The nuns take care of the needs of the girls there, though no doubt with so many to feed the boarders assist in the \_\_\_\_\_(18)\_\_\_\_\_ preparation on a daily basis. The buildings at St Mary's school were a mixture of old and new. The new parts being the school proper \_\_\_\_\_ old being the convent for the nuns. Quite close by St Mary's are two other convents. One, St Anne's, has a hostel for young \_\_\_\_\_ when they first come to live in Auckland. This is where I used to stay. The other was the Home of Compassion, if I remember correctly, and only nuns were at this \_\_\_\_\_. Both these places were run by the order Little Sisters of the poor. All the Sisters from these three places used to get together to \_\_\_\_\_ on a regular basis. I don't know what went on during these times but sometimes they were very late and noisy.

I can look \_\_\_\_\_ fondly on those few years I spent at St. Anne's. There were young women there from every walk of life \_\_\_\_\_ somehow we all got along. Sure we had our troubles but we were really one big happy \_\_\_\_\_ (19) \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ (20) \_\_\_\_\_ for Sister (on Monday) was held at St Patrick's Cathedral in Auckland. I am not sure where her body will be laid to rest. I would expect at the \_\_\_\_\_ (21) \_\_\_\_\_ at the convent but we can be sure that with her strong faith her \_\_\_\_\_ (22) \_\_\_\_\_ will sit with those of her ancestors. People came from all over \_\_\_\_\_ (23) \_\_\_\_\_ and some from overseas also to attend the service.



APPENDIX 3Background information

(Tick, circle or fill in as appropriate)

- A. Which age group do you belong to?    0- 25    25 - 40    40 +
- B. Which ethnic group do you belong to?  
     Maori \_\_\_\_\_  
     Other Polynesian (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
     Pakeha \_\_\_\_\_  
     Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Which ethnic group do your parents and partner belong to?  
     Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_ Partner \_\_\_\_\_
- D. How long have you lived in New Zealand? \_\_\_\_\_ years
- E. How long have you spent out of New Zealand? \_\_\_\_\_ years
- F. What type of secondary school(s) did you attend?  
     state school \_\_\_\_\_  
     private school \_\_\_\_\_  
     boarding \_\_\_\_\_
- G. List any languages you know reasonably well \_\_\_\_\_
- H. Were these learnt            i) at home  
   ii) at school  
   iii) other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- I. List any languages known reasonably well by your  
     father \_\_\_\_\_  
     mother \_\_\_\_\_  
     partner \_\_\_\_\_
- J. Are there any contexts in which you mix with non- Pakeha people?  
     \_\_\_\_\_
- K. Would you like to learn another language? \_\_\_\_\_
- L. Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- M. State choice of language \_\_\_\_\_
- N. Why that particular language \_\_\_\_\_  
     \_\_\_\_\_

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