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*Te haerenga mā te huarahi āwhio*

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## *Te haerenga mā te huarahi āwhio*

Richard Benton

Many years ago, while we were working on a learner's dictionary of Māori, my research assistant for the project, Maia Wilcox, and I checked on the word *āwhio*, and found a citation in Williams' Dictionary which we both felt seemed to encapsulate my approach to the work: *Kaua koutou e haere mā tēnā huarahi, engari haere mā te huarahi āwhio* ("Don't go by that road; instead take the winding road"). My own journey through life has followed a similarly tortuous route, with a constant thread supplied by language: the language of people, and, especially in recent years, the language of plants.

I am sure that my initial interest in languages and language maintenance came partly from tales of how my maternal grandfather was brought up by a Gaelic-speaking grandmother (in New Zealand) who would not allow "the devil's language" (English) to be spoken in the house, and my father's lament that the only Irish he learned from his father (who emigrated from Tipperary to the U.S. as a young man) was "slainte", and what sounded to me like "fogga bolla" for "clear the road"! I'm pretty sure the latter phrase was actually "Faig amach as an mbealach" (more accurately translated as "Get out of the way!"). My maternal grandfather had died long before I was born, and my father's father when I was about four years old, so my contact with spoken Gaelic of either variety, apart from those two expressions, was nil until I had a sabbatical in Galway in the 1980s. Despite my being based in the Department of Old Irish, about the only word I picked up from listening to the Irish-language radio there was *agus* ("and"), but one of my sons made quite good progress from assiduously following the lessons on a taped course, and chatting with the staff in Kenny's Bookshop, a Galway institution, which we frequented.

I also listened and sang along with my grandmother's records of Gigli and Caruso singing Italian classics, and Dean Waretini and Ana Hato's Māori songs – "Te Taniwha" was a favourite whose words I memorized completely. I also made a little progress in Spanish, at least in terms of acquiring a basic vocabulary, by studying the language lessons in a tome entitled *The Popular Educator*, and I think my later interest in comparative and historical linguistics had its origins in this period. I acquired an elementary knowledge of Latin through reading the English and Latin texts of the prayers and scriptural readings in my grandmother's daily missal, and noticed how Spanish differed systematically from Latin in the treatment of verb conjugations and nouns. I also discovered that Māori wasn't confined to gramophone records while still in primary school – when visiting the home of one of my best friends, I discovered that they had a Maori-language version of the book of Mormon (the family were actually Catholics, but the father came from Paki Paki, close to the neighbouring largely Mormon settlement of Te Hauke). It dawned on me that here in New Zealand, we actually have our own language, of which my friend's father was a fluent speaker. I was perturbed to find that the New Zealand language

seem to have suffered the same fate as the Irish and Highland Scottish ones, and thought even then that this was a most undesirable state of affairs. On my next visit to the library, I looked for books about te reo Māori, and took out a copy of Williams *First Lessons*. It was above my head, but I never forgot the definition, *Ko*: specific particle.

I never became a fluent speaker of even basic Spanish, but I have developed a good reading knowledge of the language over the years, and an abiding love of Spanish-language lyric poetry. At high school, I got a reasonable grounding in French – enough to build on years later in graduate school in Hawai‘i to score enough in the Graduate Record Exam to satisfy the requirements for reading knowledge in French, and to demonstrate this by wading through Claude Lévi-Strauss’s *Les Structures Élémentaires de la Parenté* and *La Pensée Sauvage* in the original for my social anthropology course, because the English translations had either not been completed, or were not in the University library at the time I needed them. Latin I took to like a duck to water in the third form, and continued with it as a subject throughout my five years of secondary schooling. My formal study of Māori had to wait until I got to University in Auckland – there were few New Zealand schools where it was part of the curriculum at the time.

After getting my Higher School Certificate I went to Ardmore Teachers College, now long closed, but at that time the place where students from rural New Zealand, along with those on the Māori Schools quota and various Pacific Island scholarships were domiciled. It was there that I came into direct contact with people fluent in Māori and Polynesian languages for the first time. I was also able to accumulate four of the nine units which in those days made up a Bachelor’s degree, and earn a “Third Year” scholarship which entitled me to one full-time year at University, with a few weeks practicum at each end, in lieu of a probationary teaching year before obtaining my trained teacher’s certificate. It was the year that Māori language was for the first time accepted for the “language other than English” requirement for a university degree, so I enrolled in Māori I, and took English II, History II at Auckland, and Political Science II extramurally from Victoria. My intention had been to complete my degree the following year with English III, but during the year the curriculum was changed and papers in both Anglo Saxon and Old English made compulsory at that level as well as in the course I was already taking. It sounds incongruous coming from a person who later obtained a PhD in linguistics, but I simply could not endure the thought of another year of Anglo-Saxon as taught at the University of Auckland at that time. Instead, I switched to History and completed the final unit for my degree while teaching at an Auckland primary school the following year.

It was during my full-time university year that I became a Māori language activist. I got to know Pat Hohepa, then tutoring in Māori Studies and later to become the Māori Language Commissioner, and others who were to have a long history in the cause of Māori language revitalization. I owe much to Bruce Biggs, the doyen of Māori language studies, who had struggled for years, against powerful opposition, to have the language and accepted as worthy of recognition for the university’s “other language” requirement. Despite his somewhat laconic and enigmatic style, I found him an inspiring teacher. Essentially, he used the Māori language as a vehicle for giving his students a thorough grounding in the basic

principles of structural linguistics, and this certainly whetted my appetite for learning more about this discipline. Although apart from this introductory year I was never one of Bruce's students, he nonetheless took me under his wing, and was very helpful and supportive in my later endeavours. It was then too that I joined the Polynesian Society, which at that time required new aspirants to be sponsored individually by two existing members in good standing. I regarded it as an honour, but had no premonition that I would become President of that venerable institution 51 years later!

After finishing my degree I secured a one year appointment at Bay of Islands College, where I was made Form Teacher of V Remove, a group of students who had been "removed from the options" for the School Certificate course, and confined to subjects like woodworking and homecraft, along with the compulsory English, which it was my duty to teach them. Māori language was not on the curriculum, but because it was the first language of the majority of my charges, I sought Pat Hohepa's help in remedying this situation by getting him to supply me with multiple copies of the readings for Māori I, which I used for translation exercises and discussion in my classes. I had the backing of Arnold Wilson, the noted sculptor who was head of the Art department, in this enterprise, but was severely reprimanded by the Head of English when she discovered what I was up to: "Māori language is not on the curriculum of this College". I continued discreetly with this activity, nonetheless, along with teaching English poetry (which I had the privilege of studying under Alan Curnow and other luminaries at Auckland), and, late in the year, discovering that my students also would develop a great enthusiasm for Shakespeare.

The following year (1961) I had my de facto immersion course in te reo Māori, first in Te Kao and then at Motatau Māori District High Schools, as teacher responsible for Māori language courses (even then, there was obviously a desperate shortage of teachers). Needless to say, apart from syntactic theory, most of my students had a command of the language far superior to mine, but it was a great learning experience for me nonetheless. After completing a school term at Te Kao (in the Far North) and the rest of the year at Motatau (in the Bay of Islands) I returned to both districts frequently, as several of the Aupouri kaumātua had welcomed my interest in the traditions and genealogies of the iwi, and I had developed strong and enduring friendships with people from several whānau while living in Motatau. The following year I decided to return to University study, and start doing research for an M.A. in History, starting by collecting material for a thesis on the history of the Northern Māori Electorate during the incumbency of the late Tau Henare (1914-1938). This brought me into contact with many Taitokerau kaumātua, including Dame Whina Cooper, who had worked closely with Tau Henare and Sir Apirana Ngata on development projects. I also used some of the information given to me by the Aupouri kaumātua who had befriended me to write "He kōrero mō ngā waka", a narrative about some of the ancestral canoes, which was published as *Te Wharekura* 4 in the new series of bulletins in Māori published by the Schools Publications Branch for secondary schools.

Near the end of the year, to boost my vanishing finances, I got a job as bottle store hand at the Duke of Marlborough Hotel in Russell. One of the hotel staff was originally from Motatau and we used to chat regularly in Māori during breaks.

When the position was about to finish at the end of the tourist season, my mother happened to notice an advertisement for a research scholarship with the Māori Education Foundation, to study and report on the “English language difficulties of Māori children”. I was more interested in finding out how widely Māori was still spoken, but it was a great opportunity nonetheless, and much to my surprise I was awarded the fellowship and launched on my career as a linguistic researcher. I travelled to nearly every Māori School in the North Island (i.e. the schools at that time directly administered by the Māori Schools Service of the Department of Education), and some other primary schools with significant numbers of Māori pupils. This enabled me to meet many teachers who were leaders in Māori education, some, like Hirini (now Sir Hirini) and June Mead, the late Meremere Penfold and her husband Vern, who became life-long friends, along with a few characters like the novelist and educator Sylvia Ashton Warner, who urged me to go to Paris “where every young man should spend some time” (I didn’t get there until I was already in my 40s, to participate in a UNESCO symposium on mother-tongue education.)

I did a great deal of reading on linguistics, sociolinguistics, bilingualism, bilingual education and social psychology, ranging from Charles Hockett, Noam Chomsky, Uriel Weinreich, William Labov, Wallace Lambert, and Joshua Fishman to Basil Bernstein. I spent the entire period of my fellowship on fieldwork, and wrote up my report while working as charge hand in the bottle-store of the Duke of Marlborough Hotel in Russell. The report covered both what the sponsors were interested in (drawn from data on both the teachers’ perceptions and many hours of tape recordings of children’s conversations and story-telling), and my own interest in how te reo Māori was faring (I found that even in many “Anglophone” areas, the children knew a lot more Māori than most teachers realized). I gave a copy of the draft report to a linguist friend who had offered to comment on it in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, and whom I had hoped would zero in on my recommendations for bilingual schooling in the areas which were still predominantly Māori-speaking. However, I had strayed across a trade union boundary, and my reviewer ignored the advocacy of bilingual schooling, and dismissed the report as a largely irrelevant effort “which bears the hallmark of the well-intentioned, enthusiastic and painstaking amateur in linguistic studies” (Walsh 1965: 130). Fortunately, Professor Biggs took a much more benign interest in my work, but warned me that I would have to go overseas and get a PhD in linguistics before anyone would take notice of my views. Interestingly, the 1987 Treasury brief to the incoming government contains a quote noting that the “lack of attention” given to my recommendations on bilingual education in the report to the Foundation was part of a prevailing pattern of the time favouring “the Government’s home made notions of the inevitable evolutionary laws of ‘acculturation’ as evidenced in J.K. Hunn’s 1961 *Report on the Department of Māori Affairs*” (Treasury 1987: 219).

After delivering my report I was invited to accept an informal secondment to the Department of Education, to do more research and write a handbook for teachers on teaching English to Polynesian migrant children. It combined my “amateur” linguistic studies with what I learned from personal contacts with members of the English Language Institute at Victoria University, especially Graeme Kennedy, John Read, David Cooke and Paul Nation, and an Australian author, Gloria Taite, who

had been contracted to prepare an English as a Second Language Curriculum for the New Zealand's Island Territories. One of my friends from my Ardmore days, Apelu Aiavao, had been seconded from Samoa to the Schools Publications Branch to assist with the publication of vernacular language readers for the Island schools, and from him I got a supply of readers in Cook Islands Māori which enabled me to become a miracle worker at the Otago school where I was based. There was a group of five-year-olds in the new entrants class whom the teacher in charge assumed were literally dumb, as they never spoke and took scarcely any part in classroom activities. They were mostly recent arrivals from Manihiki, a remote island in the Northern Cooks, obviously traumatized by their sudden relocation from their home village to the urban jungle. I quickly discovered that they ceased to be dumb if you spoke to them in Cook Island Māori, and encouraged them to talk about the objects or activities illustrated in the little beginning readers. Before long they were chattering among themselves, and beginning to interact, in English, with the other children in the class.

My efforts resulted in the publication of a handbook on the Teaching of English to Polynesian Children (1965), which was apparently useful enough to be reprinted in 1966 and 1972. It was during this period when I had two liminal experiences which have stayed with me ever since. The first was while I was lecturing to a teachers' in-service course at Lopdell House in Titirangi; I suddenly became aware that these people, most of whom were highly experienced teachers and knew a lot more about the practicalities of their calling than I did, were listening to me with rapt attention. My knowledge was mostly theoretical, and I had no way at the time of knowing how well it stacked up with observable reality. It took me back to the time I had captained the debating team at Ardmore, taking the affirmative on the proposition that "Communism is in the best interests of the New Zealand People". We won, but afterwards, one of the lecturers, "Butch" Ryan, said to me "You didn't believe a word you said, did you?", to which, despite my enthusiastic quoting from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, I truthfully answered "No, of course not." "Well," he said, "If you had looked at their faces, you would have seen that by the end of your speech quite a few of your audience believed every word." That was the last debate I took part in, and now I realized that even when you think you are on the right track, you should be careful to leave room for doubt.

The second was a month or two later. By this time Hirini Mead had become a lecturer in Māori Studies at the University, and had invited me to talk to his class and play some of the recordings I had made of children speaking Māori in Ruatahuna and Ruatoki. There was one duo from Ruatoki who had constructed a wonderful dialogue about pig hunting, and I included this as my *pièce de résistance*. The class was very much larger than the inaugural Māori Studies I of my own student days, but to my amazement, I noticed that although a few, mostly Māori faces lit up, the overall impression was that I was talking to a sea of fish-eyes with very little interest in the subject matter. Hirini told me afterwards that this wasn't surprising, because a lot of the students were teachers wanting primarily to add to their qualifications, rather than Māori language enthusiasts! I could see that Bruce Biggs was right: I needed that PhD, and also a base to work from to change this sorry state of affairs.

Thanks to my mother's once more drawing my attention to an advertisement, I was able to start on this journey by applying for an East West Center scholarship to study for a masters degree at the University of Hawai'i. Three people were selected from New Zealand that year, and I had the good fortune to be among them. This was a wonderful time to be at the East West Center, and I am very grateful to the American taxpayer for enabling me to get the thorough grounding in linguistic theory and Austronesian languages, along with the opportunity to meet and learn from eminent scholars and fellow students that launched me on my subsequent career.

My initial application had nominated "English as a Second Language" as my field of study, as linguistics was not included in the list of available subjects. However within a few days of arriving in Hawai'i I was able to change this to linguistics. At enrolment time, shortly afterwards, I had my first encounter with Professor Howard McKaughan, who was to become a mentor and a good friend, in his dual roles as Chairman of the Linguistics Department and Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Hawaii. I wanted to take an advanced course in social anthropology as part of my first semester's work. "Are you a good student?" he asked. I replied that I hoped so, to which he replied "And so do I," as he signed the authorization. Fortunately, our hopes were not misplaced and I acquitted myself honorably in both Social Anthropology and Linguistics during that first semester.

A year later I found myself invited to become a "junior linguist" in a research and development programme to prepare materials for teaching Micronesian languages to Peace Corps trainees, under the auspices of the University's Pacific and Asian Linguistics Institute. Most of this work was done off-campus, based first at a secondary school adjacent to the University during the summer vacation, and then at the Peace Corps training centre on Moloka'i, a short flight from Honolulu, but in many ways a different world, home at that time to Filipino plantation workers and some native Hawaiian families. I became friendly with some of the Hawaiians during our stay, and at one of their gatherings heard two elderly women talking to each other in Hawaiian, although they spoke English to everyone else. I also got to know some of the Filipino workers, who supplied me with a kind of toddy made from pineapple sap (in the manner of palm toddy, tubâ). I used to freeze it to inhibit fermentation - it was powerful stuff! For the PALI project I was assigned to prepare materials for teaching and learning the Trukese (Chuuk) language, with the help of a senior teacher from Chuuk, Sochiki Steven, and I was able to draw on this work for my Master's thesis, on "Substitutes and classifiers in Trukese", which I completed under the guidance of Professors Byron Bender, who was an expert on Micronesian languages, as Chairman, Howard McKaughan and Edwin Cooke (an anthropologist who had taught the Social Anthropology course I had enrolled in during my first semester). My academic record was sufficiently good for me to be granted a further scholarship to complete a PhD in linguistics, and after some additional coursework I worked on a dissertation proposal while studying for my comprehensive examination.

The University of Hawai'i and the East West Center were great places for a graduate student to be. The Linguistics Department included, in addition to those already mentioned, leading scholars of Austronesian languages such as George Grace, Albert Schutz and Samuel Elbert, and Hawai'i's position as a crossroads and

a tourist destination attracted many notable visiting scholars to both the Center and the University. While I was there I had the opportunity to take a course in the history of linguistics by the English linguist R.H. Robins from the University of London, and was one of only two students in a special course on Polynesian outlier languages taught by Samuel Elbert. I was also able to get an insight into the complexity of Amerindian languages in a course taught by the doyen of Salish language studies, Lawrence C. Thompson. As with many of the other resident and visiting scholars, I was able to get to know Larry and his wife personally, and once enjoyed the luxury of riding in their ancient Cadillac when they offered me a ride into the City. On top of all this was the daily contact with other students from North America, Asia and the Pacific, as well as the cosmopolitan environment of Hawai'i itself. It was at this time too that I met my wife, Nena Eslao, an anthropologist who arrived in Hawaii to take up an International Development Fellowship at the Centre at the time I was commuting to Molokai. It was through her that I first got to know another of the contributors to this book, Andy Pawley, whose wife Medina was a good friend of Nena; they had met several years earlier while Nena was completing her Masters degree before she returned to the Philippines and Andy and Medina left Hawai'i for Aotearoa.

After the Micronesian work was finished, Howard McKaughan, as Director of PALI, had secured another contract, to prepare materials on a number of Philippine languages for Peace Corps and US AID field staff. This brought us into direct contact with Howard's secretary, and at our first staff meeting he told us with his characteristic serious humour that good secretaries were much more valuable and far more difficult to find than good researchers, thus if we caused her any undue anxiety we would be the ones who would be shown the door! At that stage Howard was wearing a triple crown, as Dean, Department Chairman, and Institute Director. He kept the roles quite separate by doing the administrative work at set times in separate offices, so there were no files to get mixed up or priorities to become confused. Another valuable lesson that some of us learned at this time was that if you are really good at your work and value the integrity of your organization, you won't compromise important principles just for the sake of a few extra dollars. We happened to be around when Howard had what seemed to be a particularly heated conversation with a rather bumptious Washington bureaucrat, who wanted to dictate how a particular research project should be carried out. The burden of Howard's response was "if we're doing it, we'll do it our way, and if you can't put up with that, then go find someone else". They couldn't find anyone better, so we got the contract anyway.

My PhD dissertation topic was related to this second PALI project. At first I was assigned (at my request) the Zambongueño language, a "contact language" or creole blending Spanish with Philippine (and latterly also English) elements. I had been studying texts in Philippine Spanish creoles, and used to alarm my Spanish-speaking room mate by occasional lapses in Chavacano (as these languages were known collectively) when I was supposed to be practicing my conversational Spanish with him. I wrote a proposal for a doctoral dissertation on aspects of the semantics of Zambongueño, which I asked Professor Theodore Schwartz, a leading psychological anthropologist from the University of California, Davis, whom I had got to know while he held a research fellowship at the Center, to review. He liked



my ideas but warned me that I was treading on dangerous ground, as Southwest Mindanao was really the province of Charles Frake; I would be better off staking my claim in virgin territory. I had never thought of “competing” with the illustrious Professor Frake, or anyone else for that matter, but soon after this the matter was decided by the US AID administrators, who decided that the southern Philippines was no longer a priority area. Fortunately, there was still one unassigned language, Pangasinan, of which my mother-in-law was a native speaker, along with about a million other people in my wife’s home province. There were also a number of fluent speakers of the language resident in Honolulu, who were happy to help me as informants, so I was reasonably well-prepared for my fieldwork by the time we arrived in Manila at the end of October 1968. My mission was to prepare three books: a set of language lessons, a reference grammar, and a learner’s dictionary of the Pangasinan language, and to collect material for a Ph.D. dissertation based on the morphology and syntax of the language. My committee consisted of Howard McKaughan, as Chairman, Byron Bender, Samuel Elbert, George Grace, and the social anthropologist Alice Dewey.

I had an interesting and eventful time in the Philippines. After spending a few weeks staying with relatives and friends in Manila and getting to know some of the theoretical and applied linguists there (my East West Centre and new family contacts made this an easy and enjoyable task), I set off for Pangasinan. The Philippines would be close to Paradise for anyone interested in code-switching or languages in contact in multilingual environments. We used Nena’s family residence as our base. The lingua franca of the household (and the town) was Ilokano (although the neighboring town was Pangasinan-speaking), with English as a frequently used alternative, but there was a Pangasinan-speaking enclave nearby, from which my research assistant was rapidly recruited. My mother-in-law spoke Pangasinan to the itinerant vendors from the coastal towns (where the bulk of the Pangasinan-speakers lived), my sister-in-law next door, who had spent some time in Manila, preferred Tagalog and English to Ilokano, which was unusual – I heard some old women commenting quite scathingly about a group of trainee nurses another sister-in-law (a Professor of Public Health in Manila) was showing around who spoke to them in Tagalog although they were quite capable of speaking in Ilokano). Two members of the family were also fluent in Spanish, and several of our close friends were native-speakers of that language, although most of them spoke to their children in English.

I spent the next year doing fieldwork, listening to Pangasinan radio broadcasts and perusing the Pangasinan language newspaper (which also published novels in instalments) and other literature, as well as studying the existing grammars and dictionaries. I had the privilege of being able to discuss my work with some of the leading figures in Philippine linguistics, including Bonifacio Sibayan, Ernesto Constantino and Fe Otones, on regular visits to the capital. Their assistance and support was invaluable. I was able to complete the drafts of what became three books published in 1971 by the University of Hawai’i Press: a set of lessons, a reference grammar, and a dictionary. We then should have returned to Hawai’i so that I could concentrate on writing my dissertation, but instead I applied for leave from my grant so that Nena and I could accept an invitation to spend a year in Sulu

helping establish a graduate programme in the Social Sciences at Notre Dame of Jolo College.

I found this an extremely rewarding experience. Most of the students were secondary school teachers, and many had been used to rote learning and taking the professor's or other "expert's" words as gospel – we encouraged them to explore a wide range of sources (the Ford and Asia Foundations, sponsors of the programme, had provided a generous grant for purchasing library materials), relate what they were reading about to their own lived experience, and to form and defend their own opinions on the matters we were examining. Part way through the year I was asked to take over as Acting-Dean of the Graduate School of Education so the incumbent dean could complete his own studies in Manila. This was a most enlightening experience, as I had the opportunity to travel to the other universities and colleges in Mindanao that were part of the foundation-sponsored graduate education consortium, and also to Manila to deal with the central bureaucracy about administrative matters. Jolo, in the predominantly Moslem part of the Philippines was a vibrant multilingual community; many of the Christian minority were Zambongueño speakers, and we had good radio reception for broadcasts in that language from Zamboanga – the unforgettable final line of one frequent advertisement for evaporated milk encapsulates the flexibility of the language: "Liberty evaporada: el genuine puro gatas!" The dominant ethnic group were the Moslem Tausug, although there were also Samal and Bajaw minorities with their own languages and variations of Islam), as well as Chinese and "Lowland Philippine" residents. Tausug and English were the preferred lingua francas – a sister-in-law who was staying with us was once angrily shouted at by a teller in the local branch of the Philippine National Bank for insulting him speaking to him in Tagalog instead of English, since she couldn't speak Tausug. We had forgotten to warn her that many of the Tausug did not consider themselves to be Filipinos and regarded Tagalog as the language of an occupying power.

Although I would happily have stayed on, Nena did not regard Jolo as a safe place to bring up a family (she was right – much of the town was destroyed in an insurrection not very long after we left). We left at the end of the year (1970) for New Zealand en route to Hawai'i where I would complete my dissertation. I left Nena and our first-born child there when I went ahead to Hawai'i early in the New Year to find accommodation for us – my father diligently mastered quite a substantial vocabulary in Ilokano to communicate easily with Liam, who was effectively bilingual but preferred Ilokano over English for some topics, and we were able to leave him with my parents while we spent a week in Australia for the International Congress of Orientalists before I returned to Honolulu. We were housed at first in 'Ohana Nui, an abandoned military housing area near the airport, which was quite comfortable and convenient, but a few months later it was scheduled for demolition and we had to take refuge with friends as alternative housing could not be found by the Center. We shifted several times, and spent a while in a repurposed hotel in Waikiki, which in itself was an enlightening experience.

Around the time that I began my doctoral work, the indomitable Charles Hockett, who presided over what was fast becoming the "old school" of linguistics, visited Hawai'i, and gave a stirring oration in which he enjoined us not to join Noam Chomsky and his followers who had "sold their scientific heritage for a mess of

speculative pottage". Some of us, I think, still shared such sentiments, and would gladly have concentrated on the hitherto received wisdom in our theoretical studies, but we were told by Howard that we could agree with Professor Hockett if we wanted to, but we had to learn as much as we could about the new schools of thought nonetheless: "You can't criticize from a position of ignorance!"

Partly as a result of this, while writing my dissertation based on the fieldwork I had done in the Philippines, I became fascinated with the phonological theories of Chomsky and Halle, who had just published their *Sound Patterns of English*. This, by the way, was a complete departure for me from my previous inclinations, which had leaned heavily towards morphology and syntax, particularly the former, and semantics (of, admittedly, a non-Bloomfieldian kind!). So what was supposed to be a brief background chapter burgeoned into a semi-autonomous work of a couple of hundred pages. One memorable evening, as I was finally about to embark on the thesis proper (i.e. the morphology part), I received a phone call from Manong Howard, who had been reading the phonology section of the embryonic magnum opus. "I have an important question for you, Richard. If you were to die tonight, would you have made a contribution to knowledge with what you have written so far?" "I think so," I replied (echoing an earlier response to another question!) "Well then, stop, write a brief conclusion, re-name your dissertation, and hand in the full draft next week!" Thus the general grammar of Pangasinan became a treatise on "phonotactics", and I actually finished my degree before becoming bankrupt! I have had cause, with varying degrees of success, to repeat Howard's sage words to some of my own graduate students over the years. And, at times, to myself!

The title "Manong" by the way is the Ilokano term of respect for "Older Brother", which those of us studying Philippine languages under Howard's aegis decided to bestow on him. Many years later, a group of us who happened also to be visiting the Philippines while he was doing some research there gathered to meet him at a restaurant in Manila. Through the chaos and fumes came the Green Hornet himself, astride a fearsome-looking motorbike clad in the full protective gear. Most of us had no idea that the motorbike was his favourite mode of transport, and none of us would have dared to ride one through Greater Manila at any hour of the day or night, let alone in the middle of a busy week day. We had a wonderful reunion, and stood in awe as the masked biker zoomed out of sight after our farewells.

After my draft dissertation had been revised to my committee's satisfaction, I needed to find some permanent employment. Much to my surprise, at a critical moment just after we had been evicted from 'Ohana Nui, I received a phone call from John Watson, the Director of the NZ Council of Educational Research, asking me if I would be willing to set up a research unit on Māori schooling at the Council – I had been recommended for the post by Jock McEwan, who headed the Department of Māori Affairs, and some senior Māori educational figures. Obviously my work of a few years earlier had not all been in vain! Needless to say, I accepted immediately, after establishing that an initial focus on maintaining the Māori language and extending its presence in formal education would be quite acceptable to the Council. I owe a great deal to both Jock and John for their support after I took up my new post; both within and outside educational circles, attitudes towards *te reo* were ambivalent at best: we had an uphill battle to bring it from the periphery to the centre.

We returned to New Zealand at the end of 1971, and from here te huarahi āwhio takes many twists and turns, but language and linguistics are always evident in the landscape! In my first year at NZCER I was able to set the agenda for the Unit's work. John Watson suggested that I contact Bernard Spolsky, a New Zealander who was Professor of Education, Linguistics and Anthropology at the University of New Mexico, and Director of the Navajo Reading Study, a major (and highly successful) initiative in the substantive use of local languages in education. Bernard put me in touch with Joshua Fishman and other people prominent in sociolinguistic research and bilingual education, all of whom were extremely helpful, and many of them, like Joshua and Bernard, became my life-long friends. I decided that a comprehensive sociolinguistic survey of Māori language use should be the Unit's first priority, and to model it on the survey of Spanish language use among Puerto Ricans in an area of New York City that had recently been completed by Joshua Fishman and colleagues. Concurrently I edited two books for the Council's publishing programme, and, with help from my newly-appointed secretary Ani Hona Bosch, prepared the first of the Unit's publications, a Māori Language Day address *He waka pakaru kino?* speculating, in te reo Māori, about the possible fate of the language.

In 1973 I launched a public debate (in educational circles) with a small publication, *Should Bilingual Education be Fostered in New Zealand?*, and was able to make contact with many leading practitioners in the field through extensive correspondence and contacts facilitated by contacts in New Zealand and (after a while) by each other – again, this resulted in many close personal friendships as thanks to NZCER's generous travel and leave provisions, I was able eventually to meet many of these people in person and discuss ideas with them and others at international gatherings. Meanwhile we launched the survey of language use in Māori language and communities. The core NZCER team consisted of a newly recruited research officer, Peter Ranby, Ani our secretary, and myself. Nena, who had extensive experience with large-scale social science surveys in the Philippines, had a vital role in planning the operational part of the research, supported along with our student interviewers initially by a grant from the Lottery Board of Control, and later by grants from Fletcher Holdings Ltd, the Māori Purposes Fund, and the Māori Education Foundation. We had our trial run in the then Whangaroa County, an area that I was familiar with and Ani's home territory. We established a pattern of doing the fieldwork in the school holidays after publicising our intentions through the schools and local Māori organizations, recruiting Māori and Māori-speaking students as fieldworkers, making our headquarters at a local school, and travelling as a family. I was available to talk about our work to anyone interested, on the spot, and the fact that our very young children (the eldest was four, with a one-year-old brother, joined by a newly-born one the next year) accompanied us (and sometimes went around with the fieldworkers) created a rapport that helped ensure the success of the venture. My whole family has been involved in most of my scholarly activities ever since – I would have accomplished very little of substance without their practical and moral support. Peter's somewhat older family also accompanied him on these forays. No-one refused to cooperate with us.

That pattern continued over the next four years, and then we had the problem of analysing a mountain of data. We could not get government funding for this, and

once again private organizations came to our aid: Fletcher Challenge provided a research fellowship for Nena to supervise the analysis of the data, and our research assistants were supported by a variety of organizations, from Mobil Oil to the Raukawa Trustees, partly facilitated by John Watson and his friends in the business community, and partly the result of my taking around my begging bowl. We gave priority to reporting first to the various communities we had visited, and by 1988 the last of 144 "Community Reports" had been published and distributed. The closest to a full account of the survey had to wait until 1991, when I had a Sumi Makey Alumni Fellowship at the East West Center, and was able to work uninterrupted on looking at the results from multiple perspectives, and prepare the monograph *The Māori language: Dying or reviving?* However, many interim reports had been produced, early ones in the 1970s which helped justify the setting up of bilingual schools in Ruatoki and some other communities, and later a talk I gave to the Teachers of Māori in Universities "Can the Māori language survive?", which stimulated a rapid response in Te Ao Māori and contributed to the formation of kōhanga reo and other initiatives to ensure a positive answer to that question. Before leaving this I must emphasize that the survey and its aftermath, like much of the work I have been involved in, was very much a joint effort. Too many people were involved to mention everyone individually, but a few must be noted: my NZCER research assistants and secretaries America Ponika, Tawini Rangihau and Hiria Tumoana, and, as representative of many the many auxiliary staff, Annette Sykes, Tamati Kruger, Lee Smith and the late Tawhiro Maxwell.

While that was going on, I became deeply involved in studies of language policy and language planning, with particular reference to New Zealand, the South Pacific, and Southeast Asia. Three of the publications based on this research (1979, 1983, 1985) influenced the development and final shape of the Maori Language Act 1987 and the consequent establishment of the Māori Language Commission. I was a foundation member of Nga Kaiwhakapūmau i te Reo, a small group of Wellington-based activists under the leadership of Huirangi Waikerepuru, who, with the support of Sir Graham Latimer, Chairman of the NZ Māori Council at the time, spearheaded the Te Reo Māori Claim which led to the Act and extended the official recognition of te reo. I was an active participant in planning strategy and preparing the brief for the claim and subsequent court cases and negotiations with government agencies and authorities.

Closely related to this was research and publication on the status, maintenance, revival and revitalization of indigenous and minority languages (especially the Māori language in New Zealand), and language in education. One of the publications in this category, written with Nena for the short-lived Māori Education Development Commission, *Revitalizing the Māori Language*, was placed under an embargo by the incoming Minister of Education after the change of government in 1999, but released by his successor - in the interval "pirate" copies were very widely circulated and it was made required reading for students at one Wānanga. I had a similar experience in Singapore twenty years earlier, when the official Malaysian delegation to a symposium organized by the SEAMEO Regional Language Centre asked that my paper suggesting that regional languages and dialects should be given a place in formal education be withdrawn: I had made the mistake of singling out a widely known Malaysian folk epic, *Hikayat Terong Pipit*,

entitling the paper “Terong Pipit Goes to School”, and opening it with a quote from the noted Malaysian linguist Asmah Haji Omar “The language of Terong Pipit does not have any bearing on the written modern Malay of the Kedah man”, and concluding that “By developing a hierarchy of standards with different levels of appropriateness, it should be possible to accommodate the languages of Terong Pipit, Tamahae [the East Coast Māori folk character] and their linguistic heirs”. This flew directly in the face of the Malaysian government policy at the time of rigidly enforcing the use of standard Bahasa Malaysia in the classroom (although Asmah Haji Omar herself in a later paper (1992) noted that this policy was widely circumvented by teachers). We reached a compromise whereby I modified the oral presentation, which attracted a much larger audience than might otherwise have been the case; afterwards there was a high demand especially from Malaysian participants in the conference for copies of the unexpurgated text which had been made for me by the NZ High Commission!

Along the same lines I researched, wrote and lectured about the role of formal education in language revival; the effects of mass-media on language maintenance, including providing numerous affidavits in connection with the various court cases and tribunal hearings on broadcasting policy; and the role of language in forming and maintaining group or national identity. What I have come to regard as probably my most important paper, “Te rito o te korari: Māori language and New Zealand’s national identity” (1984) comes within the latter category. This paper was extensively quoted in the 1987 Treasury assessment of Maori education policy. This interest has had a number of practical outcomes, including dictionaries, wordlists and handbooks for teachers, and a series of Maori language lessons prepared in association with Frank Romanovsky, Rameka Cope, A. & C. Hurihanganui and others run in comic-strip form in the *Evening Post* newspaper in the 1980s, linked to a soundtrack accessible through a dial-in facility. The 1970s and 80s were an exciting time; in addition to the research and advocacy, I guest lectured regularly on our sociolinguistic research and related topics at several universities, taught a course in historical linguistics with the late Harry Orsman at Victoria and also collaborated with Janet Holmes and John Read in constructing a distance course on bilingual education for New Zealand teachers. John Pride, a somewhat eccentric sociolinguist who was Professor of English at Victoria, occasionally took refuge in my office at NZCER; we had many lively conversations and I was a regular guest lecturer in one of his courses.

Inspired by what I had seen in the Basque Country in 1987, I set up an experimental computer-based communications system, Te Wahapū, as an action research project into the use of electronic media in disseminating information among Maori language educators and community members and in stimulating creative and expository writing in Maori by students and adults. The system included a variety of on-line databases, starting with one on new and technical vocabulary and adding others on matters such as the recognition of prior experiential learning, current research on Maori education, and proto-Polynesian vocabulary. The project attracted substantial funding from IBM, and was officially opened by the Minister of Education in 1991, about 18 months after the inaugural log-on from Motatau (a Māori community in the Bay of Islands) to the server in my Wellington home. Gaston Floss, President of Tahiti, launched the on-line version of the “Le’o o Maui”

terminological databases for the Polynesian Languages Forum in 1992 – this short-lived venture was aimed at creating a pan-Polynesian approach to the creation of words to express of new scientific and technical concepts; at the same time, with the help of Te Taka Keegan of Waikato University and Māori Language Commission staff, we set up the database of new and technical vocabulary in Māori, first accessible on-line through Te Wahapū CBCS from 1991; it was on-line until my retirement from NZCER in 1996, with a web-based version maintained and greatly expanded by my colleague Peter Keegan (Te Taka's older brother) for several years after that. More recently, I co-supervised a PhD research project at the University of Waikato, which explored the potential of digital media to facilitate Māori language revitalization. I was also responsible for setting up and maintaining the James Henare Maori Research Centre web site while I was Director, which included an on-line version of the developing Taitokerau Māori Dictionary, among many other features. In March 2004 this website was temporarily shut down; I continued to maintain the dictionary on my own web site, and a hard copy of what is still a preliminary draft was prepared in PDF format at the request of claimants in Te Paparaki o te Raki Claim, and deposited in electronic form with the NZ National Library in 2016.

The work on language in education has ranged over language acquisition and language teaching; bilingual education policy and practice; the effects of bilingualism; the role of literature (something which has interested me greatly but about which I have written very little); the role of ethnic languages in education; assessment of bilingual education; and, especially in the 1970s and 80s, feasibility studies for bilingual schools. In the early stages NZCER commissioned John Moorfield, who had recently returned from Wales, where he had completed a graduate degree with Professor Carl Dodson (whom we later also brought on a visit to NZ) to prepared a draft syllabus for some of these schools. There was no point in waiting for the Department of Education to move! However, eventually it did move, if somewhat reluctantly, and Ruatoki Primary School became the first official bilingual school in 1976. The genesis of these early programmes, official and unofficial, is outlined in *The Flight of the Amokura* (1981: 58-67).

From November 1979 to July 1980 I was a Visiting Professor with a consortium of Philippine Universities implementing a PhD programme in Bilingual Education. This programme was under the direction of Andrew Gonzalez, probably the foremost Philippine linguist at the time. The course was designed to train key personnel to implement the newly decreed national bilingual educational policy. My critique of the policy was published in the *Philippine Journal of Linguistics* (1980). In 1989 Janet Holmes, John Read and I wrote and taught a course on bilingual education for the Advanced Studies for Teachers program at Massey University. Despite all the progress that has been made, the place of te reo Māori in New Zealand education is still tenuous. It does not form part of the core curriculum in New Zealand schools, and over the last few years Auckland "mainstream" primary schools wishing to fund te reo Māori classes have had to fund-raise or divert money from the general funds used to buy toilet paper and cleaning materials to support these initiatives. Similarly the Māori Language Act in its current form, while ostensibly giving legal status to the language, remains essentially toothless. It is not automatically a language of record in courts, even when evidence is given in Māori,

and government officials cannot be held to account through court action for ignoring guidelines made under the Act to provide services in Māori.

There has also been a fair amount of research into Maori history, tradition and epistemology along the way. Much of this has been private and unpublished research, or integrated into other projects – e.g. my research into the relationship of the NZQA Framework and its levels to the nature of higher education generally, and to Maori concepts of higher education in particular, undertaken 1992-95, included an intensive examination of the structure and assumptions underlying pre-colonial Maori education. One publication resulting from this, *The Unbroken Thread* (1995), written in collaboration with Nena and others, seems to have attracted considerable interest in recent years judging by requests I have had for copies. From 1998-2007 I was an objective leader and coordinator for the FRST-funded research programme “Laws and Institutions for Aotearoa/New Zealand”, studying the assumptions (including epistemologies) underlying Maori and state common law, and how these can be incorporated in a distinctive New Zealand jurisprudence. This resulted in three major publications in which I had a key role (2006, 2011, 2013), the third of which, *Te Mātāpunenga*, has become something of a handbook for jurists having to deal with issues involving Māori custom.

Over the years I have worked informally with many groups on social justice, equity, and ethical issues: this has had formal manifestations in my appearances on behalf of Nga Kaiwhakapūmau i te Reo in the various language cases, my Presidential Address to the 1993 NZARE / AARE Joint Conference, and a later commentary on academic freedom (2002), and other activities. Those included participation (as coordinator of a first-aid post) along with my late wife and eldest son in the Philippine revolution of 1986, which became the subject of a feature article in the *NZ Listener* (Campbell 1986). However, my revolutionary experience has taught me in retrospect to recognize the truth of Simon Bolivar’s dictum: “he who serves a revolution ploughs the sea.” Nevertheless, one should not lose hope that persistence will in the end transcend adversity: He iti te mokoroa, e hinga te puriri.

My career, although solidly based in Aotearoa, took me on research, teaching and consultative expeditions to Hawaii, the United States mainland, the Philippines, Singapore and Australia, each multiple times, as well as to Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom (Wales, Scotland and England), the Basque Country, Finland, Belgium, The Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Indonesia, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa and Tahiti. In each of these places I have made many contacts and received valuable assistance and support for my work from people who were also to become good friends. Some are mentioned here, but many who are equally important (including some of the other contributors to this book) are not, simply because it would make the narrative look like a telephone directory. I am profoundly grateful to all of them, named and unnamed alike. In New Zealand I was also able to travel extensively while heading the Māori Unit of NZCER, visiting schools, universities, teachers colleges and communities throughout the North Island, and occasionally lecturing at the Universities of Canterbury and Otago as well. In 1996, after 25 years in Wellington, I was invited by the late Sir Robert Mahuta to join him as Assistant Director of the Centre for Māori Studies and Research at the University of Waikato, then based at the Tainui administrative headquarters at Hopuhopu. Later, at the invitation of Judge Mick Brown, I joined the Mātāhauriki legal research centre at



the University of Waikato. I remained associated with this while I was Director of the James Henare Māori Research Centre at the University of Auckland from 1999 to 2003, and then returned to the Waikato. I finally retired as a research professor at the University of Waikato in July 2007, six weeks after Nena's untimely death from breast cancer.

I have been called back to active service many times since, with each new task providing a stimulating interruption, although I have never found life on our five-acre rural enclave dull or lacking in variety! I was asked by the Waitangi Tribunal to give advice on the language-related aspects of the WAI 262 ("Flora and Fauna") Claim, provided advice to the Māori Language Commission on the evaluation of existing programmes and possible future directions for research and outreach, and prepared evidence related to past and current language policy on behalf of Claimants in the Te Paparahi o te Raki hearings of the Waitangi Tribunal. In 2015 I chaired the external review of the Centre for Samoan Studies, National University of Samoa, Apia. I have also worked on several projects (most notably the completion of *Te Mātāpunenga*) with Te Piringa, the Faculty of Law at the University of Waikato, and am currently co-editing a book on Māori governance for the faculty's Centre for Māori and Indigenous Governance. I still write the occasional journal article or chapter for a book, most recently one of each about the revitalization of te reo Māori (2015, 2017). From time to time I review contributions to a number of international journals, and occasionally supervise the work of graduate students and examine theses for several New Zealand universities. My responsibilities as President of the Polynesian Society also add spice to my life!

Probably my most consuming interest over recent years, although the amount of time I have had to devote to it has varied considerably, has been my ethnobotanical research combining long-standing interests in historical linguistics from my time as a PhD student in Hawaii and life-long interest in NZ native flora and forest ecosystems. This has resulted in my attempts (still a work in progress) to establish a botanical garden, Te Māra Reo, on our family property in Kainui, Waikato, and the associated web site (also a work in progress, but considerably more advanced). This currently includes over 100 web pages on the names brought by the original Polynesian settlers to Aotearoa and bestowed on native plants, along with information about the plants themselves and those from the Tropical Pacific where the names originated. More pages are being added and existing ones updated as time permits. This interest was reflected in "Mauri, tupu, and the secret life of plant names" (2010), my contribution to the Festschrift for Andy Pawley organized by his colleagues at ANU. Although the information on the Te Māra Reo site has come from multiple sources, there are a few people whom I must thank individually for providing me with the data on which much of the linguistic commentary is based. These are my friends and colleagues Andy Pawley, Bob Blust, Ron Himes and Lawrie Reid, along with Ross Clark and my first mentor in linguistics, the late Professor Bruce Biggs. They must, needless to say, be absolved completely from any errors of fact or interpretation in what appears on those pages -- I have little trouble in seeking advice, but I do not always take it!

And that, I think, is as good a place as any to end this peroration.

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