

# **ENDANGERED LANGUAGES**

**PROF. NICOLE NAU, UAM 2017**

Fourth lecture  
(13/03/2017)

# QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

When is a language endangered,  
when is it safe? (continued)

Official attitudes and  
speakers' attitudes

Case study: Māori



# FACTORS THAT DETERMINE LANGUAGE VITALITY (UNESCO ATLAS)



# UNESCO GRADES OF LANGUAGE VITALITY / ENDANGERMENT

<b>5</b>	safe
<b>4</b>	unsafe / vulnerable
<b>3</b>	definitely endangered
<b>2</b>	severely endangered
<b>1</b>	critically endangered
<b>0</b>	extinct

## FACTOR 7: OFFICIAL ATTITUDES AND POLICIES

- 5 Equal support:** All of a country's languages are valued as assets. All languages are protected by law, and the government encourages the maintenance of all languages by implementing explicit policies.
- 4 Differentiated support:** Minority languages are protected primarily as the language of private domains. The use of the language is prestigious.
- 3 Passive assimilation:** The dominant group is indifferent as to whether or not minority languages are spoken, as long as the dominant group's language is the language of interaction. No explicit policy exists for minority languages.

## FACTOR 7 (CONTINUED)

- 2 Active assimilation:** The government encourages minority groups to abandon their own languages by providing education for the minority group members in the dominant language. Speaking and/or writing in non-dominant languages is not encouraged.
- 1 Forced assimilation:** The government has an explicit language policy declaring the dominant group's language to be the only official national language, while the languages of subordinate groups are neither recognized nor supported.
- 0 Prohibition:** Minority languages are prohibited from use in any domain. They may be tolerated in private domains.

# PROHIBITION AND ASSIMILATION

When and where were languages forbidden?

What are examples of language discrimination?

What could be reasons for forced assimilation?

Boarding schools as instruments of assimilation

# OFFICIAL SUPPORT FOR LANGUAGES

What status can a language have in a state?

How can a government support a language?

Which institutions are involved?

What are reasons for officially supporting a language?

What decides about the effects of official support?

## FACTOR 8: SPEAKERS' ATTITUDE

- 5** All members value their language and wish to see it promoted.
- 4** Most members support language maintenance.
- 3** Many members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
- 2** Some members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
- 1** Only a few members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
- 0** No one cares if the language is lost; all prefer to use a dominant language.

# ANOTHER GROUPING OF FACTORS (GILES 2001, ABRAMS 2009, AFTER BAKER 2011)

## **Status factors**

- economic status
- social status
- symbolic status

## **Demographic factors**

- number and distribution of speakers
- contacts among speakers, rural vs. urban

## **Institutional support factors**

- administration, education
- religion, mass media ...

Baker, Colin. 2011. *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism*. 5th edition.

# CASE STUDY: MAORI

Population of New Zealand: about 4.5 Million

Ethnic Māori: about 0.6 Million. Māori speakers:

«A national census undertaken in 2013 suggests there were approximately 125,000 speakers of Māori (around 21 % of all Māori and around 3 % of all people living in NZ). However, the survey Te Kupenga (<http://www.stats.govt.nz/tekupenga>) undertaken by Statistics NZ in 2013 suggests there were approximately 50,000 (11 %) Māori adults who could speak Māori well or very well. Many of the very fluent speakers of Māori were likely to be over 65 years old.»

[http://www.maorilanguage.info/mao\\_lang\\_faq.html](http://www.maorilanguage.info/mao_lang_faq.html)

# LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN NEW ZEALAND 2013

[HTTPS://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/LANGUAGES OF NEW ZEALAND](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_of_New_Zealand)

<b>English (New Zealand English)</b>	3,819,969	96.14
<b>Māori</b>	148,395	3.73
Samoan	86,403	2.17
Hindi	66,309	1.67
Mandarin Chinese	52,263	1.32
French	49,125	1.24
Yue Chinese (Cantonese)	44,625	1.12
Chinese (not further defined)	42,753	1.08
German	36,642	0.92
Tongan	31,839	0.80
Tagalog	29,016	0.73

<b>New Zealand Sign Language</b>	20,235	0.51	-0.12
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# HISTORY

13th-14th c. Polynesian settlers come to New Zealand -> Māori

18th-20th c. European settlers

early 19th c.: Māori dominant language

late 19th c.: English dominant language

20th c.: decline of Māori language among Māori people

forced, active and passive assimilation

urbanization

# SUPPORT AND REVITALIZATION SINCE THE 1980S

1982 first language nest (kōhanga reo)

1985 Māori-medium education

1987 Māori Language Act: official language

2014 Māori Language Strategy

2016/17 Māori Language Bill

Source: History of the Māori language at:

<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/maori-language-week/history-of-the-maori-language>

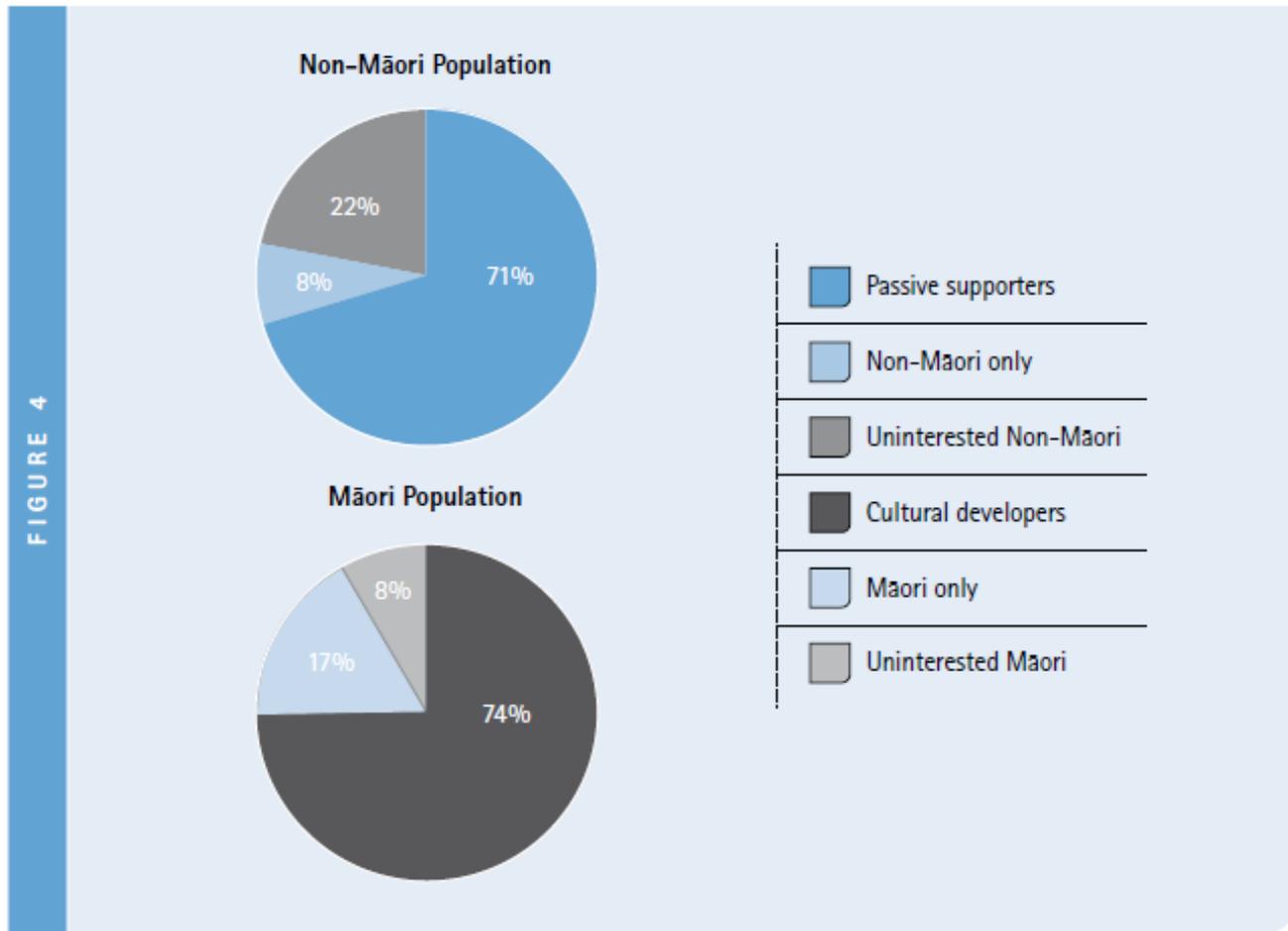
# ATTITUDES TOWARDS MAORI 2009

REPORT AVAILABLE AT: [HTTPS://WWW.TPK.GOV.T.NZ/EN/A-MATOU-MOHIOTANGA/LANGUAGE/](https://www.tpk.govt.nz/en/a-matou-mohiotanga/language/)

For the purposes of this report, attitudes, values and beliefs about language are defined as follows:

- *Attitudes* – opinions towards specific aspects of language use in society such as its role in education or its use in the provision of Government services. Attitudes can be referred to as positive, negative or neutral;
- *Values* – the general underlying orientation of an individual towards a language and ultimately towards the speakers of that language; and
- *Beliefs* – knowledge about a language and the people that speak the language. Beliefs, in this sense, can be measured for accuracy, whereas attitudes and values cannot.

Figure 4: Māori and non-Māori population segmentation by values



Total non-Māori n=500

Total Māori n=1031

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

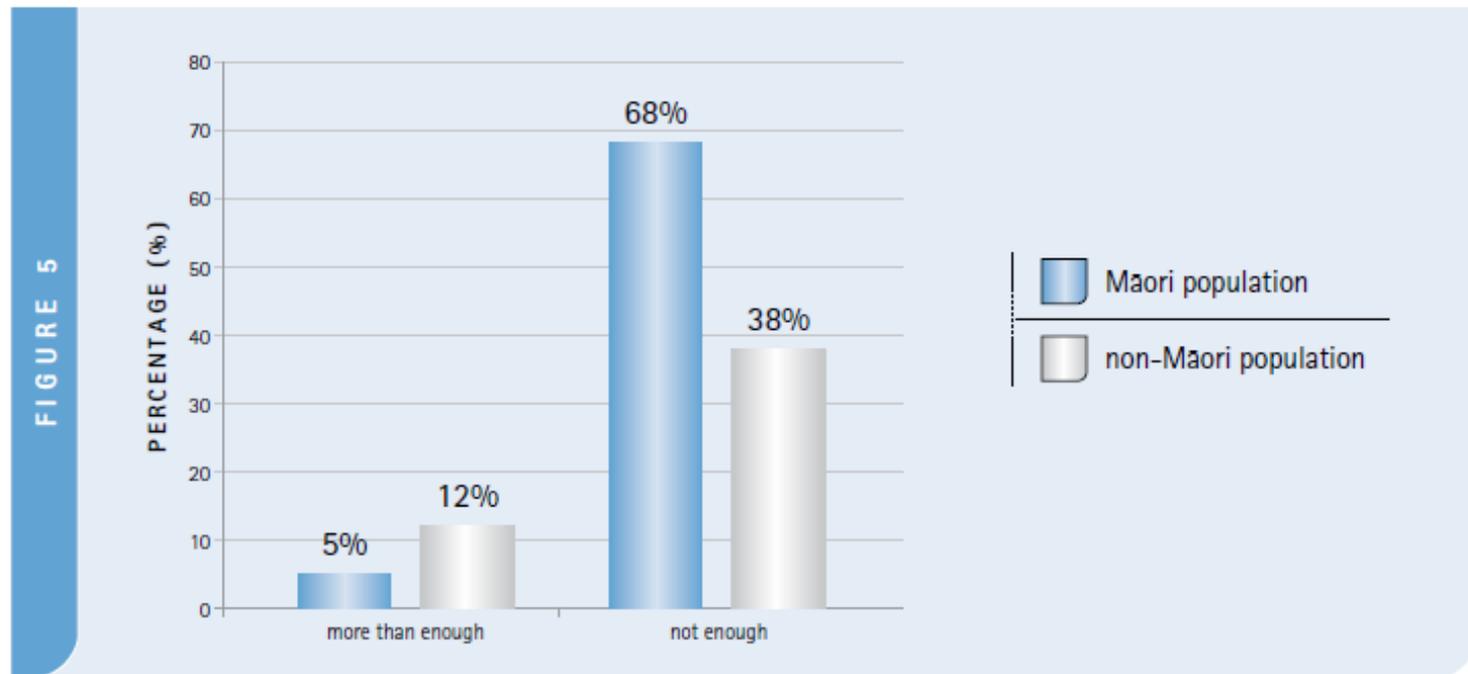
Table 13: Attitudinal statements about Māori language – Māori and non-Māori

% Agree/Strongly agree	Non-Māori 500 %	Māori 1031 %
It is a good thing that Maori speak Maori on the marae	97	98
It is a good thing that Maori people speak Maori at home <sup>14</sup>	91	95
It is OK that people greet others in Maori, but they can take it too far	45	40
It is a good thing that Maori people speak Maori in public places, such as in the street or supermarket	77	89
It is not right that Maori speak Maori in front of people who might not understand what they are saying	39	31
Well spoken Maori is a beautiful thing to listen to	78	96
All Maori should make an effort to learn Maori themselves <sup>15</sup>	66	75
I have a lot of respect for people who can speak Maori fluently	87	95
Some Maori language education should be compulsory in school for Maori children	58	61
Some Maori language education should be compulsory in school for all children	64	68
Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses		

Table 14: Value statements about Māori language – non-Māori and Māori

% Agree/Strongly agree	Non-Māori 500 %	Māori 1031 %
No matter if you are Māori or Pakeha, Māori culture is a part of everyone's heritage	73	70
I personally feel I can learn a lot from all races in New Zealand	90	90
New Zealand would be a better place if there weren't so many races of people	10	19
I really want to be involved in things to do with Māori culture	43	81
I believe Māori should have special rights	25	39
The more New Zealanders that understand Māori culture the less racial tension we would have	76	82
Learning Māori is very high priority for me	20	64
Talk about Māori rights gets me really fired up	34	42
Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses		

Figure 5: Percent of Māori and non-Māori who held that more than enough or not enough Māori is currently being spoken



Total non-Māori n=500

Total Māori n=1031

Table 15: Attitudes toward Government involvement in the Māori language – non-Māori and Māori

% Agree/Strongly agree	Non-Māori 500 %	Māori 1031 %
The Government should encourage the use of Māori in everyday situations such as in the home or at the marae	64	81
The Government should encourage the use of Māori in ceremonial occasions such as public welcomes for dignitaries	81	91
It would be good if Government Departments could conduct business in Māori if requested	55	79
The Government's support of the Māori TV service is a good thing	86	96
The Government's support of Māori radio stations is a good thing	85	94
It is important that the Government takes a role in recording how well the Māori language is doing	79	91
It is only right that signage is in both Māori and English	59	74
The Government should provide resources to help people learn the Māori language	76	89
Support Māori language education (in schools, communities and/or the workplace)	80	93
Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses		

# RECOMMENDED READING

UNESCO Expert group: „Language Vitality and Endangerment”, 2003, online at:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001836/183699E.pdf>)

For next week:

Lewis, Paul & Simon, Gary. 2010. Assessing endangerment: Expanding Fishman’s GIDS. *Revue Roumaine de Linguistique* 55(2):103–120.