

**KOTAHI MANO KĀIKA –**

**KOTAHI MANO WAWATA**

**Patience, Prudence and Functional Differentiation in**

**Ngāi Tahu Iwi Language Revitalisation**

**10 YEAR REVIEW OF LANGUAGE STRATEGY**

**Power Point Notes**

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# **Kotahi Mano Kāika, Kotahi Mano Wawata**

## **Executive summary**

This evaluative review identifies key information from an overview of the relevant literature spanning the years 1999-2010 and the gathering of data over the last six months from the key stakeholders of the Kotahi Mano Kāika, Kotahi Mano Wawata (KMK) Language Strategy using a kaupapa Māori research methodology.

The aims of this Review are to provide a snapshot in time by looking at the following questions;

- How has the Ngāi Tahu language landscape changed in the last 10 years?
- Has Kotahi Mano Kāika, Kotahi Mano Wawata contributed positively to this change?

Over 30 face to face semi-structured interviews were carried out. Key findings were woven into the report under the following nine headings

1. Contextualising Kotahi Mano Kāika
2. Current Status of te reo o Kai Tahu – how far have we come?
3. Value of te reo and interest levels
4. Levels of resourcing
5. Numbers of role models and commitment
6. Wānanga Reo
7. Future Strategies/Leadership
8. Ngā Piki me Ngā Heke
9. Unintended Outcomes

I shall address each of these in turn, weaving in and out of this presentation snippets of video as we go

## Theme 1 Contextualising Kotahi Mano Kāika

The strategy was named *Kotahi Mano Kāika*, *Kotahi Mano Wawata* by Rangi Nicholson (a member of the early establishment team and himself an advocate of language planning) after a visionary dream in the middle of the night to see the reo flourish in homes and the rohe of Ngāi Tahu.

### *History*

Many of the language initiatives of the north found purchase in the south through the relationships formed between the key players, those who we now consider to be the leaders of language revitalization efforts within the Ngāi Tahu takiwā. The history of KMK was based in the sound theories of reversing language shift.

According to Tahu Potiki this kaupapa started long before Kotahi Mano Kāika – the iwi already had concerns about te oranga o te reo and some were interested in learning, which was supported by the Ngāi Tahu Māori Trust Board – to go north to places like te Wānanga Reo o Ngāti Raukawa. Here is Tahu Potiki talking to this.

Now we are back to the KMK language strategy - which drew heavily from the theories of Joshua Fishman particularly around his graded intergenerational disruption scale or GIDS.



Source: <http://image.absoluteastronomy.com>

One of the purposes of the GIDS scale is to use it as a guide to locate the functional disruption of OUR language - so the language *activists* set to work

to prioritise the needs of Ngāi Tahu reo. They invited Professor Fishman and his wife Gella Fishman to attend a Ngāi Tahu Reo hui.

Fishman's visit in 2000 helped to establish the focus and priorities – a huge success for the KMK team. The visit, according to Piri Sciascia, provided the impetus to do more and the realisation that 'it was up to us to do something about it'. In that establishment phase KMK had the support of all – the Whakapapa Unit, Te Tapuae o Rehua and the wider support of the then Ngāi Tahu Development Corporation but the idea has come through, loud and strong, that we have only just begun. According to Piri Sciascia "Let the first 10 years be part of a 50 year plan so we have 40 more and when our mokos' mokos speak – well, then we have got somewhere".

## **Theme 2 Current Status – How far we have come?**

Some advocates for te reo talked about what spurred them on to learn, to speak te reo Māori on a daily basis in order to pass on te reo Māori (

Some commentators talked about the various other kaupapa that had arisen out of KMK for example Toitū te Kura and the Puna Reo which have extended into other activities.

The establishment of the Pari karakaraka was considered an important development, along with various other kaupapa

## **Theme 3 Value of te reo and interest levels**

For many of the research participants learning te reo o Ngāi Tahu was a *matter of pride*. For some there was not enough support prioritising te reo o Ngāi Tahu by the iwi. Others talked about the relationship of Ngāi Tahu reo to identity and therefore its importance as a tribal identifier

Others talked about how easy it is for children to capitalise on being bilingual. – and being able to transition between world views and languages with ease. Mason Durie asserts that "...Māori children will live in a variety of situations

and should be able to move from one to the other with relative ease". Here is talking about their children's experiences.

And here are their children talking about Ngāi Tahu history mapped on to the land demonstrating the importance of weaving these stories into the curriculum reinvigorating our tribal identity, through *te reo*.

#### **Theme 4 Levels of resourcing**

There was general agreement that the KMK Māori language resources were timely and relevant. However, there needs to be more of a focus on the *oral* language. Here is Te Marino talking about the ease of teaching children so that they would not have to attend wānanga reo as adults to learn. Te Marino Lenihan talks about the importance of te reo becoming a vernacular – a spoken everyday language.

Some of the review participants were *disappointed* with the drop in the levels of resourcing.

Other participants spoke of support for accessing resources outside of the rohe e.g., Te Panekiretanga.

#### **Theme 5 Numbers of role models and commitment**

##### ***'Me upoko pakaru ki te kaupapa'***

There was general agreement that still there was only a small amount of whānau dedicated to the kaupapa, more than in the beginning but still room for much growth. That is the challenge.

Kura reo are important forums for our kaumātua to come along to speak Māori for the whole week – 10 years ago that was not happening. The role models for te reo, and those showing commitment and leadership are still relatively young - and we also need the backing and support of our elders.

## **Theme 6 Wānanga Reo**

There is universal accord that the wānanga reo are popular and that they support the whole whānau approach to learning te reo o Ngāi Tahu. The excitement in recent times of the first wānanga reo in Awarua was cited as being indicative of how far Ngāi Tahu iwi has come. It was the first of a series of wānanga where there were 100 strong in the whare and all speaking Māori. Several generations were represented with children also participating.

The second wānanga at Arowhenua was equally as exciting, with more song compositions, histories being told, role plays, field trips and research.

Many of the review participants felt that the wānanga reo were the best ways of learning the language although many also felt that whānau needed further support to get these wānanga reo.

The idea of moving around the land was a common theme for many of the participants - going around to gather the stories – the deep knowledge that is mapped on to the land along with the idea of holding a series of focus wānanga, for example whaikōrero, karanga, karakia, waiata, history, research, kapa haka and so on. Here Piri talks about the idea of a Ngai Tahu Uruwhenua or passport – to research and agree on five central language domains that encapsulate our Ngāi Tahu reo – and then build them into a resource for all – so we have a base line from which to expand.

## **Theme 7 Future Strategies/Leadership**

There has been a shift in the focus and a lack of knowledge on what it really takes to regenerate a threatened language; that the iwi was being flooded with distracting issues; that the iwi was really only paying lip-service to the serious task of regenerating Ngāi Tahu reo. Some participants felt that it should be the top priority for the iwi.

In response to the question – what is the most important strategy? There was a large response around identity links; of building an actual physical community of speakers, to wānanga – Here is Sheree talking about ‘ma te reo’ and some of the strategies. Many participants felt the iwi needs to create stronger links with kōhanga and kura and get resources into kōhanga and kura.

Research the iwi - Ngā kupu, nga kiwaha, and to support people in their own language learning pathways.

Building relationships with other iwi was another suggestion, as was camps for tamariki so that every school holiday there is a reo camp. Here is a rangatahi perspective.

## **Theme 8 Ngā Piki me ngā Heke**

### *Ngā Piki*

In terms of the successful features, young ones, rangatahi, speaking te reo was a central theme and that there had definitely been some growth in that respect. Added to this was the excitement of having a generation, even though still only a small amount, growing up with te reo Māori as their first language.

### *Ngā Heke*

The dominant theme here was the distraction at the iwi level with Pākehā politics, for example business, other international factors, fish and so on with little regard for te reo

## **Theme 9 Unintended Outcomes**

In this last theme it is fitting that I draw on the words of our kaumātua and our tamariki to have the last say. From our Kaumātua has come the notion of reo



as a unifier among whānau and hapū in mobilising and enabling whānau to come together, to work together, to grow together. This has had the added benefit of revitalising many of our marae and reclaiming our tikanga. Aunty Kiwa goes so far as to state that if not for KMK – such revitalising hui would not have been possible.

We are aware that our tamariki are our greatest allies. We intend for them to have the best of the worlds they inhabit, so that they can experience the joys of being Māori, interwoven with the responsibility of passing on Māori knowledges and values to successive generations, lest our language disappear, pērā i te moa .

### **Ahakoā ngā ueue - Kia kaha, kia toa, kia manawanui!**

*When you find things that are difficult in life, Stand strong, stand tall and be of great heart*

In the scheme of things, the history of Ngāi Tahu reo is *thousands* of years old and its disruption, to the point of being in language death, has occurred over the last *couple of hundred years or so*. The moves to revitalise over the last *10 years* need to be seen in that context. KMK is just in its infancy.

As we have seen, the strategy was largely guided by the tenets of reversing language shift by Joshua Fishman. It's fitting to return to Fishman's recent discourse - structured around three key concepts;

1. Patience;
2. Prudence; and
3. Functional differentiation.

Patience in this context means reversing language shift deals with languages which have already undergone considerable weakening, as the literature has shown has been the case for Ngāi Tahu reo with just 13% of Ngāi Tahu having some proficiency and only 1% of native/highly proficient speakers available to the tribe. Therefore the decisions around setting priorities are

often very sensitive ones. As Fishman says, “If you try to move the mountain it may be too much for you to do and in that weakened condition you cannot afford too many more defeats”. The history of language loss is normally one of defeats and therefore the *patience* involves taking on **only** that which you can accomplish, taking on *the minor or less threatening goals* and **less** threatening opponents. Sometimes that’s a very difficult thing to do when there’s an element of frustration but there is only so much you can undertake, particularly in a weakened condition, but **patience**.

The neighbourhood (kura, kōhanga, clubs) and family homes are generally the safest havens and our greatest strength. We still have to plan according to a revival movement – because we do not have a healthy **centre** from which the language can flourish, **but we have a start**.

The second concept is that of **prudence** which has to do with the same lesson but with the realisation that our strategy must not be enticed away by the great white brother–the source of funds. Prudence is about being discreet or cautious in terms of the way we manage our activities and resources. All kinds of false supports can be distracting. Maintain a steadfast commitment to te reo, **ahakoa te aha**. Sometimes even the smallest battles, in the neighbourhood schools and even in our own homes with our whanaunga, can be wearisome. *The patience and the prudence is to undertake those things that you, with your own brain power, your own person power, can conduct and support.*

When dealing with colonial and indigenous languages, te reo Māori and English, the concept of *functional specificity* is about the notion that, no matter which way we look at it, the reality is we are facing a bilingual/multilingual setting. Both languages occupy this space. Both languages have to be learnt, and learnt well. As Durie put it,

*It makes limited sense only to prepare students for a life in international commerce if living as a Māori must be sacrificed. Similarly, if fluency in*

*te reo Māori has been achieved through education but there is no preparation for work or for participating in a wider society, then a disadvantage has occurred (Durie, 2001, p. 5).*

Our tipuna were quick to catch on to the notion of being bilingual for the benefit of our own Ngāi Tahu culture and tikanga - in terms of relations with other people. By the same token we have to realise what we are up against. According to Fishman, English is a great problem – like the *elephant in the parlour*, it cannot be overlooked. Even the French cannot cope with English and have to keep it at arm's length but English is hard to keep at arm's length because of globalisation. In order to cope with English a system has to be worked out where even though everyone knows how to speak English, it is not used for all purposes. There has to be some functions which are specifically for Ngāi Tahu reo, some functions in which we cannot maintain group membership in any other language. Each language has certain functions for which the other will not be used. These areas have to be researched.

With patience we *do not need* to try to fight all things simultaneously. With prudence we will decide to defend that which is most defensible, and with functional specificity we will carve out some functions and domains for our Ngāi Tahu reo - for which English has no access

(refer major findings power point)

## **IN CONCLUSION**

This major findings list is by no means complete. There is a groundswell of excitement and activity in terms of the KMK kaupapa. However, the flip side shows a gap in terms of the extent and pace of change. For many the wider commitment was just not evident. To revitalise our Ngāi Tahu reo it is necessary for the wider tribal leadership and membership to value the language and actively support a positive linguistic environment, rather than just paying *lip-service to the idea*, as some suggested happens, or letting the *politics of distraction* get in the way, as others suggested happens. Further, the tribal leadership may not be aware of its ability to determine and control

patterns of Māori language use. To increase Māori language use, a greater awareness of language choice is required. It was noted that some members of the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu may lack an understanding of the processes involved in second-language learning. This means that they may create unrealistic expectations and pressures for the proponents of KMK, *and either fail to see the transformation needed at the structural level (through policies and supports) or simply abrogate responsibility.* The Government recognises the growing awareness of the intrinsic value of te reo Māori (see Government Strategy) and also the need to protect the language, so why not the tribe? Language is seen as central to culture. Simply put if language erodes, so too does culture. Cultural wellbeing underpins our success as Ngāi Tahu and a secure identity. Poignantly, Te Rūnanga documentation states

*Our language is the cornerstone of our identity. Without it we lose the ability to express our unique culture, to compose a waiata for the birth of a child, to welcome our guests and to farewell our loved ones. The future health and vibrancy of our culture is inextricably tied to the fate of our language.*

It is time to act on that.