Endangered meanings and concepts: Māori language habitats

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Abstract

Māori language words, concepts, and phrasings often risk losing their meaning because the environments reflected in them have either been forgotten or have evolved. We look at endangered language concepts and meanings as being connected to what happens in, or happened to, the environs and situations in which they emerged: whether they be physical, technological, social, economic, or political. Where and how have historic and recent changes catalysed endangerment regarding the Māori language? What types of perceptional shifts have occurred around language forms such as metaphor, placenames, and neologisms? These are some of the focus areas as we view the relocation of language across societies, time, generations of people and physical space (paying particular attention to the workplace).

Keywords: metaphor; language environment; modernisation and language endangerment; Māori language

Introduction

Changes in the environments in which a language is spoken are not risk factors in themselves for language endangerment unless the new environments to which the speakers of a language move or gravitate are already dominated by, or become dominated by, another language. Where a language remains the same across new environments the language simply adapts, accepting some loss of meanings and concepts related to the specific environments of the past, and creating new concepts and meanings in its new environments which are frequently adapted and derived from past concepts and meanings (Deutscher 2005; 2010; Bredeck 1992; Müller 2008). Comparatively, what the endangered language experiences, in moving to a new environment, is instead a social and economic pressure to accept the dominant language's terms (May 2012 pp.310, 326) related to that environment along with their associated linguistic, cultural, and conceptual underpinnings. In adopting these terms through the use of the dominant language, the endangered language speakers do so at the expense of their own language creativity as well as their own responses to the new environment, which then fuels the perception, amongst the language speakers themselves as well as those speaking the dominant language (Williams 2001 p.133), that the endangered language is 'no longer relevant', or at least, less relevant. The perception that the Māori language is not 'relevant' to modern society is an old one within New Zealand and has long been based on the notion that the Māori language has no words, and/or cannot create new words or concepts, to meet new technologies, occupations, and ideas (Williams 2001 p.135). In this way a language becomes endangered, not so much through the endangerment of the environments in which that language was spoken in the past, along with the meanings and concepts that evolved by way of that particular language in those environments (see Mühlhäusler 2003 for extended discussion on language and environment) but because the endangered language finds its growth and evolution into new environments and habitats blocked. As May (2012 p.326) observes,

> The principal consequence for many minorities – at both the individual and collective level – has been the enforced loss of their own ethnic, cultural and linguistic habitus as the necessary price of entry to the civic realm of the nation-state.

Here we look at some examples of Māori language meaning loss through environmental shifts relevant to Māori language speakers, but also provide examples where the Māori language

has successfully broached new environments and situations, and incorporated new speakers. By drawing briefly on Māori language research currently in progress, for example Te Kura Roa – Waiaro, which focuses on the progress of the Māori language in New Zealand government department workplaces, the authors discuss the considerations of extending the Māori language to a range of new and varied habitats, despite the dominance of English in New Zealand. We begin by providing a brief overview of the endangerment of the Māori language generally, which is followed by a quick discussion of the function of metaphor in language as a 'revitalising' force itself that enables words and meanings to adapt to new situations. We then turn to look at endangered meanings and concepts in the Māori language, followed by a discussion on how some of the issues raised in this paper are impacting on the Māori language used in New Zealand government workplaces, as a modern example of recent or 'new' Māori language environments.

The endangering of the Māori language

Māori language endangerment began when Māori moved into English speaking environments such as the western education system (Simon, Smith & Cram 2001; Williams 2001), new areas of employment albeit in rural or urban areas (Williams 2011 p.120, 124, 147) accessed new technologies, and new means of procuring other amenities required for 'modern' living – which were and are predominantly to this day, conducted in English and required the learning of English. Learning English, however, did not necessarily cause endangerment to the Māori language (Williams 2001, 124-127, 135) but did cause a separation of domains where the Māori language was increasingly confined or domesticated to the home or non-work community activities. The exclusion of the Māori language from educational, workplace, and public domains (May 2012 pp.326; Williams 2001; Stephens & Monk 2012; Simon, Smith & Cram 2001) increasingly demotivated generational transmission of the language in the home. The decrease in the number of fluent Māori language speakers since the 1900s is intimately connected with the movement of Māori into those social, political, and economic environments where communication is always in English, such that the steady loss of Māori language speakers and the decline in the generational transmission of the Māori language accelerated after World War Two with the migration of Māori into urban areas (Williams 2001 pp.126, 138, 173, 247-249). Since then efforts to secure the Māori language as a language with modern relevance and use have tended to focus on educational initiatives and more recently on Māori communities and families through 'non-public' domains such as the home and Māori tribal and family groups. May (2012 pp.321-322) sees the limiting of Māori language initiatives to the home and community as a weakness because:

> The over-reliance on education has meant that ongoing Māori language use is increasingly limited to this domain. Intergenerational transmission remains weak, while wider public policy in support of te reo Māori continues to be largely symbolic.

The more environments in which a language can function the less it is endangered because:

> An implicit and critical part of language ecology is the fact that language is not isolated from other social, cultural and ecological factors but interacts with them (Grenoble 2011: 30).

Metaphor and knowledge

While a loss of environment can equate with a loss of word meaning or concepts associated with that environment, not dissimilar to other languages, an essential metaphorical process in the Māori language is to create a multiplicity of meaning that transcends, yet still incorporates, a word or concept's originating circumstances (Day 2013). Many language academics such as Bredeck (1992 p.23-24), Cooper (1986 p.279), Ricoeur (1978 p.188), and Deutscher (2005 p.267), who have

looked at the roles of metaphor in language, have concluded that metaphors originate and flow from 'concrete', physical situations or human 'sense data' to be applied or abstracted to different situations or contexts. The Māori language, however, like other languages, also contains metaphors that emanate from immaterial and more spiritually conceived situations, therefore, the more critical point about the role of metaphor in language relates to the 'environment' from which a metaphor or language expression originates whereby it is culturally attached, and not merely associated with tangible forms.

Jones (1983 p.4), meanwhile, sees metaphors as 'acts of consciousness' especially where the juxtaposition of 'apparently unlike things' through metaphor brings underlying unities into focus, that is, consciousness, and this explanation fits nicely with some conceptual approaches discernible in the Māori language. Metaphors, therefore, can act as agents for 'presence' and 'being' as a feature of consciousness to alert language speakers to the new, the unfamiliar, and the living present. Mauthner (1849-1923) in comparison, perceived the historical growth of language as a 'shift from conscious to unconscious use of metaphor' and increasing 'meaning extension' (Bredeck 1992 p.26). Deutscher's work (2005) points to an ongoing process whereby metaphors and language phrases are dynamic in their conscious and unconscious moments over time. He finds that over time phrases or metaphors, created to express new insights, become 'automatic', freely used, or clichéd, some eventually becoming parts of grammar.

In Māori language philosophical terms, metaphor is often the process of 'becoming' (Royal 2005 p.10) the seen, known, and recognised - from darkness to light, that is, a process of creating knowledge. As described by Mauthner above, however, like other languages over time, that knowledge also may become 'automatic', formulaic, 'cultural', and assumed to have always 'been there' in the language. Defaulting to these is required for all languages for the sake of efficiency in communication (Deutscher 2010) and where concepts are widely accepted by a language's speakers. Ricoeur (1978 p.21) notes that another function of metaphor is to interrupt, displace, and violate the rules and order 'already constituted in terms of genus and species, and in a game where relation-rules – subordination, co-ordination, proportionality or equality of relationships – are already given.' Thus metaphors can alert, challenge and reinvigorate a language and its knowledge systems.

Despite ongoing debate and research on the question 'what is metaphor', a transfer of meaning originating in the name/word/quality/environment of one 'thing' to another is at the heart of most definitions. Literally, in the original Greek, the word 'metaphor' conveys a 'carrying over' (Lewis 1994 p.3) and thus implies transformation. In many ways, however, all words are metaphors in that they signal and represent something other than what they are specifically themselves. Metaphor is more than just the literary and linguistic act of making comparisons between things, it is the fundamental way humans think (Bredeck 1992 p.23). Loss of meaning related to words and metaphors then, even in their simplest form as single words, equates to a loss of human knowledge, but the metaphorical function in language itself compensates to enable a renegotiation of terms, and transformation into new forms, that is, the signs of life.

We now move to discuss the Māori language, paying particular attention to meanings and concepts which have traversed time; generations of people; and social, economic, and political climates.

Endangered meanings and concepts in the Māori language

During the early 1920s, decades before the Māori language was considered to be endangered (Williams 2001), the loss of meaning of some words and metaphorical concepts in the Māori language was of sufficient concern to Sir Apirana Ngata (1929) that it prompted him to collect Māori language compositions from throughout New Zealand in the 1920s. Ngata's method was to ask Māori language communities, *hapū* (family groups) and *iwi* (tribal groups) to send in their *waiata* (Māori language chants, poetry, songs, compositions) which he then had published in the journal *Toa Takatini* with the request that those knowing the conceptual meaning of the *waiata* write in with their explanations. These were then published again through a series of publications called *Ngā Mōteatea* from 1928 to 1990, a series that is acknowledged as one of the most seminal publications of its kind. Ngata described the words that were becoming 'obsolete' as "ngā kupu matangarongaro", that is, words that were losing their 'face' or 'edge'; words that were losing their point, their raison d'être. The areas of knowledge loss identified by Ngata (1959: xiii) as being associated with 'archaic' words used in *waiata* [Māori chants/songs/compositions] were the names of ancestors [*ingoa tīpuna*], place-names [*ingoa wāhi*], battle names and places [*ingoa pakanga*], Māori social, economic, and spiritual practices [*tikanga hapori, ohaoha, taha wairua*], and finally, Māori spiritual entities [*ingoa wairua*]. However, by 1929 Ngata (1961: viii, ix) was less concerned about meaning loss, reporting that he had received much "criticism and many corrections" for the *waiata*[1] published in the 1928 collection. He concluded that the important thing at that time was that there were people with knowledge of the songs still alive and he would collate any explanatory material they could provide. The words that Ngata had thought might be 'archaic' turned out to be words with contemporary meaning pertinent to specific tribes and regions.

    We now look at three main ways in which the meaning of some Māori language words, phrases and concepts has been threatened since the 1840s. Firstly, as land 'passed' to incoming Pākehā (non-Māori immigrants from England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and some European and Scandinavian countries) Māori place names were replaced with English names, frequently severing the visible connection of Māori place names to their location in the landscape as markers of history, culture, ancestors, and events. Secondly, meanings and metaphors where "words were spoken forthrightly with regard to the relationship between a man and a woman,"(Ngata[2] 1959 pp.xix, xii; 1990 pp.viii-ix) have been 'sanitised', and their embedded concomittant philosophical, cosmological, pyschological, and observational comment have been overlooked along with their purposes and contexts within a range of narratives. Thirdly, the environments themselves as expressed in much Māori language phrasing, metaphors, and narratives, are no longer experienced by Māori language speakers as part of daily life.

Loss of place-names

Māori language place-names, frequently metaphorical in nature and compounding larger narratives in a key phrase, include names of ancestors, names of battles, names indicating cultural protocols and behaviours, spiritual entities and authorities (Rewi 2010), and genealogies (Mead 1969; Walker 1969; Wehi et al 2009). The eradication of place names from their geographical location has therefore had a significant impact on meanings in the Māori language. However, the loss of Māori language place names has not, in itself, meant the loss of Māori knowledge because oral and written accounts still exist and continue (Binney 2010). This might, however, indicate the

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[1] Māori chants/songs/compositions
[2] "Human sexual relations would be a more accurate phrase here, but at Ngata's time only 'male-female' sexual relationships were 'recognised' so to speak.

weakening of an intricate method of remembering through the landscape – another means to record events, history, cultural practices and belief systems (Walker 1969). Loss of Māori language place names also speaks to the displacement of Māori from their land, environments and ways of life. Where we might debate whether this directly impacts on language endangerment or not, we would sternly assert that it does effect loss of meaning for some terms and their connection to their geographical environments.

Sanitising the originating metaphorical base

The second main way in which meanings and concepts in the Māori language have become endangered is through what is known as 'sanitisation' (Biggs 1952 p.181; May 2005 p.323) of those Māori language metaphors and expressions that were considered 'inappropriate', or as Ngata (1990 p.viii-ix) put it, "bound to offend against the delicate manners of society". Translations and explanations of Māori language phrases and metaphors, regardless of the narrative type, have tended therefore to focus solely on tangible and surface meanings. Interpreters and translators either missed other meanings, possibly as an oversight or through a lack of cultural knowledge, or those meanings had been lost over time.

The disconnection of language from its originating environments

Thirdly, meaning loss occurs in the Māori language because speakers no longer engage in the day to day activities of their ancestors nor in the same environments as their ancestors. While a phrase may still be extant and used in the Māori language, its originating environment as an experienced activity, insight or knowledge related to survival and living is not. One might blame longstanding and widespread acculturation to modern concepts of what is 'decent' and appropriate to discuss. I will use one example merely to illustrate this, which came about during an informal chat with one of my tribal elders, Timoti Karetu, formerly a commissioner of the Maori Language Commission (Te Taura Whiri I Te Reo Māori), part of whose core business is the development of new Maori words. The word 'taxi', among others, had been presented before them to translate into Māori. A practice long adopted by Māori during the coining of new words for the evolving society it was engaging with was 'transliteration'. An immediate response by those discussing the transliteration of the word 'taxi', Timoti said, was the Māori word 'tekehi'. The late Kingi Matutaera Ihaka, a mentor of Timoti's and chair of the Māori language Commission at the time, opposed this transliteration because part of the transliteration could be enunciated as two separate Māori words: 'teke' and 'hi'. Kingi's contestation of these was because the word 'teke' in Māori was used to refer to the vulva. Because of the sexual reference, a simple motor vehicle used for ferrying people at a cost would now be associated with female genitalia. Sir Kingi encouraged the staff to reconsider and apply another transliteration that would be less likely to be subjected to any sexual connection.

Where Timoti's mentor opposed this simple application, Timoti himself, in one of his compositions regarding the *haka*, expressed the liberal approach Māori had towards sanitisation.

Ki o tātou tīpuna, kāore he huna o te kupu, e

I neherā, kāore he haka tātakimōri. . . . Hou tonu atu ki ngā wāhi tapu o te tāne, o te wahine

> Our elders were never afraid to say what they meant. . . . In the days gone by, no haka was meaningless. No human activity sacrosanct.   Descriptions were explicit and graphic. (Karetu 2010: 43-44)[3]

When we consider endangered meanings and concepts with apparent bipolarity between Timoti and Kingi in terms of their positions regarding sexual references, Kingi's aversion might be viewed more as a move to avoid any critical repercussions by Māori language speakers. Or is it plausible that Kingi was concerned that Māori who are receptive to, and comfortable with, direct and unrestricted explicitness of words, themselves, might actually have fun with the sexual connotation and, thereby, detract from the intended meaning of the transliteration? This propensity to sanitise is not new, but is especially noticeable in that generation of the 10-30 year age group who upon experiencing puberty have a heightened consciousness towards mere verbalization, let alone the expressive representation of genitalia.

Sanitisation doesn't only result as a consequence of cultural transferral, such as the impression of European expectations on what is appropriate, as exemplified above. The adoption by Māori of European expectations and the abandonment, voluntary or otherwise, of particular practices also brought about endangerment of the Māori language. Over the past twenty years a simple act, such as *pūremu* or *moe tāhae* (infidelity), became taboo, at least where the language is concerned. Where the act itself is still in existence, however, young generations of Māori pursuing high proficiency in the Māori language appeared to become blinded romanticizing purists who almost desired that such a thing never existed amongst the proud race they descended from. Because European culture viewed infidelity disparagingly, the inclination might be that Māori reduce the temptation. What this does, however, is endanger not only the term applied for infidelity, but also any other Māori terms describing reprisal against such actions. The whole language family context is compromised.

Other examples of language endangerment exist where, for example, the speaker might refer directly to the penis or the vagina using the Māori language. The taboo perception as impressed upon them by European standards has caused the Māori language to shift and adopt colloquialisms as opposed to the use of explicit and direct Māori words. One might, for example, in the modern Māori language go to 'the little room' whereas I remember hearing my elders merely excusing themselves and saying they were 'going to urinate or defecate'. In addition to the language being endangered in this example, the cultural norms that were once shared amongst Māori have also been compromised. The minority language is being assessed and therefore having minority language standards asserted upon it. This leads us to discussing language endangerment by way of translocation of words across periods of time and their associated geomentalities.

The celestial objects: 'traditional' Māori language narratives/phrasing and their ongoing relevance

Another example of the impact of environmental loss on potential language meaning loss are the myriad Māori language metaphors, expressions, narratives and sayings related to the sun, moon, and stars. In this case it is not so much that the habitats of the sun, moon and stars have disappeared but more that knowledge of their movements, behaviours, and attributes are no longer considered as a precursor for successful living in the sense of moving from one place to another; planting, growing, and harvesting food; prescribing cultural activities; or for explaining

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[3] Kapa Haka (2010) *HE PUNA WAIATA HE PUNA HAKA: Ko ngā waiata me ngā haka a Te Kapa Haka o Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato.* Hamilton: University of Otago. [Draft Manuscript]

the universe. Social and economic success for most of us now revolves around a clock. However, because the sun, moon, and stars still exist, if they are considered as they are seen from earth with the naked eye, light pollution aside, if the movements, attributes, and behaviours of the heavenly bodies are also studied in the light of the many Māori language narratives, sayings, and metaphors, those narratives begin to reveal their so-called 'lost' meaning (Day 2013). That is, by re-engaging with the environments of the skies, some Māori language meanings and concepts reveal themselves

Where a Māori language evironment exists then, despite its purported lack of relevance to modern lifestyles and pressures, and a modern day reliance on complicated agricultural and food systems, artifice, technology and clocks, much Māori language phrasing and terminology shows its profundity and relevance. If an event, a protocol, a behaviour, a concept, a specific knowledge, history, and/or belief system are narratively connected and entwined with that which, relatively, is permanent, then those more permanent environments help guarantee continued language meaning across the generations. Thus it is that some Māori narratives about the sun and moon have them as two brothers. Their travelling together during one part of the month is followed by going their separate ways until once again they are reunited. Frequently dismissed as folklore or anthromorphism, recognition of the relationship between the sun and moon as brothers becomes recognition that likewise brothers can be close, can argue and move away from each other, or take different paths in life, but in all their differences have yet an eternal unity. The understanding emanating from the cosmos and in the examples set by the celestial is thereby also reflected in what it is to be human. Concepts such as separation and unity, difference and agreement, are shown to simultaneously exist in relationship, of one to another. In other Māori narratives the sun is male and the moon is female, or they are sisters.

Many Māori narratives and names are likewise recorded and recited in the landscape, in the hills, rivers, and landmarks, encapsulating multiple layers of meaning and interpretation that withstand time (Mead 1969; Walker 1969).   In being the anchors for much Māori language phraseology and composition types, the environments of the heavenly bodies and their movements in the sky ensure that those narratives are afforded a similar status in that their meaning and underlying concepts remain potentially discernible throughout the ages – the meanings and concepts are relevant and extant precisely because the environments to which they are attached are extant. This is especially noticeable when those narratives tell of the fleeting lives and experiences of their speakers. The only qualifier is that to understand those 'past' but still extant environments they, the environments, need to be experienced from non-technological perspectives – by humans in the world.

We now briefly focus on one of the more recent language environments identified under ongoing research conducted in New Zealand.

Te Kura Roa - Waiaro: Māori language in new environments

The Te Kura Roa is a three year commissioned research programme on the Māori language funded by Ngā Pae O Te Māramatanga, a Centre of Research Excellence hosted by the University of Auckland. One focus project under this is Project Waiaro which surveys attitudes in New Zealand government departments towards the Māori language. Interview participants, who comprised a wide range of Māori language proficiency levels, were asked about what prevented them using the Māori language in the government workplace. Many responded that an absence of Māori language terminology to reflect work activities, technology, and work structures often caused their Māori language communication to falter. In response to the question 'do you prefer to use English

at work', most survey participants, who did not perceive proficiency level as an issue preventing their workplace Māori language communication, said that it was easier to speak English. The implication they shared was that it was the lack of vocabulary for workplace environments which made speaking the Māori language difficult (Report forthcoming). As a result, for some learning the Māori language the big question was:

> well where's the value in knowing the language, where am I going to get to
> use it you know, outside of the marae, where is it used in a business sense
> or in a commercial way or whatever. Well, you know, the government could
> take a lead on that. (Te Kura Roa – Waiaro survey participant)

Survey participants also frequently spoke of only hearing the Māori language spoken in the workplace during formal occasions that were based on Māori protocols, supporting the research of Stephens and Monk (2012) that the role of the Māori language in government and public spaces is at best formulaic and 'traditional' and that in general the Māori language was not being used as a 'normal' means of daily communication. Surprisingly, Te Kura Roa - Waiaro research is showing this can be true even for some of those government departments, or workflows within a government department, specifically aimed to provide services to Māori. In many ways, however, the Māori language at least has a presence in government workplaces whereas in previous decades it did not. Increasingly, Māori language speakers are at least able to engage, albeit with some difficulty at times, with government departments in the Māori language, and while Māori language speaking government employees themselves frequently reported few daily opportunities to communicate in the Māori language, for many the government workplace was the only place they were exposed to the Māori language beyond what they might hear on Māori television programmes.

In many ways, however, the efforts that have been made in New Zealand government workplaces have had a significant impact on improving relationships with Māori communities and improving attitudes within government workplaces towards the Māori language and as a result, Māori people. Early Te Kura Roa - Waiaro research results are indicating that the perceived relevancy of the Māori language in the workplace, however, is directly related to Māori language proficiency, that is, comments regarding relevancy of the Māori language were simply not made by more fluent speakers but were entirely the preserve of those with the least Māori language ability. As a brief example, here is one participant querying the relevance of the Māori language outside of Māori communities that are assumed to be rural, and not involved in business, commerce, or modern workplaces.

> In a Māori community of course it's…, so…, you know exactly what you're
> doing with it but in a contemporary and urban world, 'what would you do
> with it? So that whole relevance to . . . every day communication. (Te Kura
> Roa – Waiaro survey participant)

As proficiency increased survey respondents were also more likely to appreciate, rather than question, the value of the Māori language. Active learning of the Māori language, then, is emerging as the key way to improve attitudes towards the value of the Māori language and its potential as a national language for New Zealand. Regarding the supposed 'relevancy' of the Māori language, fluent speakers showed that the absence of certain vocabulary does not make a language irrelevant. The task they, like many other minority language speakers, are required to perform is to develop a language applicable to the new circumstances, happenstances, and environments with some kind of response from within their language's own reservoir of words, grammar and syntax.

What has been missing for too long from New Zealand's citadels of power, workplaces, and businesses, is a Māori language response and initiative and a Māori language perspective as New Zealand's environments develop and change. However, the signs from within some of New Zealand's government workplaces are that Māori language meaning and concepts are finding a place they can again call home, and that home is wherever a Māori language speaker can engage with another Māori language speaker, polities, ethnicities aside.

Conclusion

Dislocation from the very environments that helped evolve some concepts and words in the Māori language prior to contact with Europeans has not solely resulted from urbanisation, industrialisation, westernisation, or technology. It has been an ongoing process that began with land alienation and the loss of traditional lifeways for obtaining sustenance and building communities (Beattie & Anderson 1994). Even in rural areas where many Māori language concepts and phrases might be thought to be more at home in being closer to the natural environments of those words and phrasings (Temara 1991; Kirby 1992; Keegan 1996; Rewi 2005; Nikora 2006; Royal 2008;), the actual work environments and social practices have long since changed. However, the loss of the originating environment does not mean the meaning of origin may be totally lost from a phrase, word, or metaphor. As shown in this paper, meaning can continue into new environments but in such a way that sometimes meaning is lost as a lived experience. Bakhtin's (1986 p.62) observation of the difference between primary and speech genres seems to reflect a similar pattern that applies to language generally. Words and concepts in language can lose their relationship to the 'natural' world, including the human social world that they first signified. Eventually this produces cultures and beliefs that are at odds with the wider and larger environments in which they reside. The assumed or 'ideal' goal of language is that it should reflect the perceived reality or consciousness (Royal 2005 p.6; Lakoff & Johnson 1999) of the human 'being' in the world, which also makes it possible that a language can shift 'out of alignment', and become disjunctive with its environments. Such a language might tend to reflect more of the internal or social environments (Knight et al 1995) that operate despite other realities and other language people around them.

All languages then face the challenge of responding creatively, efficiently, and responsibly to new environments, as well as carrying with them the treasures learned and experienced in past environments. In New Zealand the benefits of the Māori language as the language containing the most understanding and longest relationship in response to New Zealand environments are not yet realised. The efforts of New Zealand government departments to turn this around in their own work environments, and enable their own staff to learn and speak the Māori language, however, are a very positive sign that the Māori language can and will become once again a normal and natural presence in all of New Zealand landscapes, although this may not be realised for another century yet. While a language needs to be able to continue to build on its knowledge, history, and traditions to negotiate and inform those new environments brought about by change, for example, business, education, science, technology, global communications, and information technology, it is timely to remember that these are all modern environments within which government encourages Māori to find their place.

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