# Aspirations for bilingualism in Aotearoa New Zealand: Pākehā motivations for learning te reo Māori

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Initiatives to increase the use and normalisation of te reo Māori throughout wider society in Aotearoa involve more Pākehā learners and users of te reo Māori. This study explores language motivations of Pākehā (New Zealand Europeans) who have begun learning te reo Māori as a second language through interviews with 13 Pākehā participants with varying levels of Māori language proficiency. Findings from this small-scale qualitative study indicated that some participants viewed Māori culture as a contributing factor to their concept of a national identity, inclusive of biculturalism. Furthermore, motivations to reject negatively framed colonial derived narratives about Māori, and reduce levels of cultural ignorance by Pākehā participants toward Māori, were discussed. Results of this study brought to light distinct language motivations of Pākehā compared with other second language learners of non-indigenous languages. Seeing other Pākehā learners of te reo provided participants with a sense of permission to learn, feelings of language achievability and social approval for the behaviour.

Keywords: Te reo Māori, language learner motivations, biculturalism, national identity

### Introduction

Te reo Māori provides valuable insights into the worldview of the culture from which the language is derived. As indigenous languages around the world continue to be threatened by dominant languages (Simons & Lewis, 2013), knowledge surrounding the choice to use indigenous languages by majority group members is particularly useful for language revitalisation purposes (Higgins, Rewi, & Olsen-Reeder, 2014). Te reo Māori, like other indigenous languages, continues to be exposed to factors which threaten its continued use. One such factor is associated with the limited spaces in which the language is used, largely due to the dominance of Pākehā cultural and language norms in the majority of public domains (Ahu, 2012). This particular barrier has been acknowledged in the most current Māori language strategy (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019), whereby the goal of the strategy is to increase the use of te reo Māori by both Māori and non-Māori in private and public domains. In order to achieve normalised use1 of te reo Māori, te reo Māori will need to be more widely used by all members of society (Higgins, 2016; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019). This study explores some of the motivations that Pākehā, have for learning and using te reo Māori.

Pākehā learners of te reo Māori are distinct from other members of their cultural group. This group of language learners are choosing to enter into learning situations (Māori language classes) where their language and cultural norms are secondary to those of Māori (Mitcalfe, 2008). With the exception of a few studies (Brown, 2011; Jellie, 2001; Mitcalfe, 2008), there are few qualitative studies that explore the motivations and experiences that

Pākehā have in the context of bilingualism in te reo Māori and English (Albury, 2015; Hepi, 2008; Nelson, 2018). In the context of motivation, Nelson's (2018) qualitative study of 14 participants demonstrated that family values, and childhood exposure and experiences contributed to Pākehā adult learner motivations to acquire te reo Māori. Furthermore, societal attitudes coupled with a desire to uphold bicultural partnerships ("wanting to honour the Treaty" p. 14, 2018) were highlighted as key motivations.

An earlier mixed methods study by Jellie (2001) noted that participants in her study were motivated to learn te reo Māori for reasons relating to national identity, an identity that is inclusive of Māori. Furthermore, in a qualitative study of Pākehā who engaged with Māori cultural learning context, Mitcalfe (2008) indicated that her participants viewed being Pākehā as being connected to Māori people, language and culture. Within Mitcalfe's description of Pākehā identity from those who had formed meaningful relationships with Māori, an understanding of te reo Māori and the history of Aotearoa was considered to be important. In addition, Pākehā in this study were aware of the negotiated space between dominant Pākehā narratives toward Māori, and the role of Pākehā privilege.

Recent reports indicate that many beginner-level Māori language courses in 2018 reached full capacity with waitlists in some areas so long that the potential students were turned away until the following year (Hurihanganui, 2018). At Victoria University of Wellington, where the current study was based, beginner-level courses in te reo Māori enrolments have increased from 80 in 2010 to 184 in 2018 with over 220 students enrolling again in 2020. Alongside the many years of investment made by Māori

restrictions, including emotional restrictions felt by the user or listener. It also refers to the reduction in or absence of state imposed restrictions as discussed by Ahu (2012).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the context of te reo Māori, normalised Māori language refers to a reduced feelings of abnormality when the language is used by a speaker or heard by a listener. The language is used freely without

language advocates, a recent increased mainstream media presence of te reo Māori use by both Māori and non-Māori, an increase in Māori language popular music, and political shifts at a global level are perhaps some of the reasons for a surge in Pākehā interest in te reo Māori.

There are a multitude of reasons why individuals learn a second language. Social psychology and intergroup relations are at the centre of some of the most widely recognised language motivation theories proposed by Robert Gardner (Rubenfeld & Clément, 2019). The concept of motivation as defined by Gardner (1985, p. 10) involves "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language." It is perhaps a recent shift in 'favourable attitudes' towards te reo Māori at a national level that has contributed to an increased uptake and motivation in Māori language learning. There are challenges in the relationship between Māori and non-Māori that may interact with language learning processes that are documented as follows.

### Colonisation and Māori language loss

It is well recognised that languages are connected to their speakers. When its speakers are dispossessed, the language suffers. Well-regarded criminal justice advocate Moana Jackson (2019) indicates that ideologies of white supremacy were entrenched in the foundational processes of colonisation. Applying the Doctrine of Discovery, colonisers laid claim to indigenous lands under the assumptions that indigenous lands were unoccupied prior to colonial 'discovery', and that indigenous peoples were inferior and uncivilised, has been used to subjugate indigenous peoples globally for hundreds of years (Ngata, 2019). The colonisation of Aotearoa included violent methods of dispossession, involving the large-scale confiscation of homelands (O'Malley, 2016). Many iwi were prevented from living self-sustainably due to unjust state sanctioned methods of land acquisition. Within these processes, the acquisition of, and reliance on English, was necessary for iwi in order to retain lands through drawnout court proceedings and communication with the Government (Spolsky, 2003). Loss of a secure resource base coupled with the exclusion by force of te reo Māori from native schools (Waitangi Tribunal, 1986), had significant negative impacts on language maintenance (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011).

The impacts of white supremacy and colonisation has had lasting impacts on indigenous languages globally and te reo Māori has not been exempt from such damaging effects. The issues surrounding language loss and revitalisation are part of wider historical and political struggles. Māori language advocates have fought for years to ensure the survival of te reo Māori and have created multiple avenues that allow Māori language to be present in the current day (Higgins, Rewi, & Olsen-Reeder, 2014). In contemporary times, it is possible that some Pākehā who engage with Māori language learning may be wanting to reject notions of white supremacy and the

preference for separatism entrenched underlying colonial ideologies.

# Pākehā engagement and motivations for te reo Māori acquisition

The Government's goal outlined in Te Maihi Karauna (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019) is to increase the number of Māori language speakers to one million by 2040. Applying the UNESCO framework (Moseley, 2010) for determining language endangerment, a group of Māori language experts (Te Paepae Motuhake) declared te reo Māori as falling between the categories of 'definitely endangered' and 'severely endangered' (Reedy et al., 2011). This means that "Children no longer learn the language as a mother tongue in the home" and that "The language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves" (Moseley, 2010). The census data from 2013 shows older Māori are more likely to be language speakers than younger generations confirming the assertions made by Te Paepae Motuhake. Comparatively, Pākehā in older age groups were unlikely to speak te reo at all, however, the rates of Pākehā learners/speakers of te reo Māori are increasing for younger age groups but are still low, with the national total of Pākehā speakers of te reo Māori being merely .83% (Statistics New Zealand, 2013; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019). Furthermore, how a competent a 'speaker' of te reo Māori is being defined is not clear in the report (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019).

Pākehā motivations for wanting to learn te reo Māori are likely to have a relationship with the concept of investment. Norton's (2000) concept of investment brings together the social and historical relationship that a learner may have with a given target language. Applying the concept of investment to the case of te reo Māori and Pākehā CSL2 learners<sup>2</sup>, the historical relationship the learner has with Māori and te reo Māori, as well as their imagined future, are interwoven. These relationships may contribute to possible motivations for the initial behaviour of language learning, and the persistence that they apply over time to acquire a working use of the language as Nelson (2018) indicates in her research with Pākehā learners and speakers of te reo Māori. It is possible that Pākehā who are investing in learning te reo Māori are aware that there are certain benefits associated with learning, an additional feature of the concept of investment (Norton, 2000, 2019).

One of the possible benefits for Pākehā who are learners of te reo Māori is that they are likely to become meaningfully connected with Māori, which could contribute to some learners increased desired to 'invest' in the language. Although Māori and Pākehā have a partnership through the Treaty of Waitangi³, the extent to which Māori and Pākehā interact varies considerably. One of the barriers that interrupts the relationships between Māori and Pākehā is the negative ways in which Māori are portrayed in mainstream media (Moewaka Barnes A. et

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Colonial Settler language learners (CSL2) of an indigenous language are distinguishable as learners from a cultural group that does not share a genealogical relationship with the target language, but does inovle a shared history as a member of the colonial settler

population. The title of colonial settler has been applied by Huygens (2011) to Pākehā.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi is the founding partnership agreement signed by some rangatira Māori (Māori chiefs/representatives) and colonial British Crown officials (Orange, 2015).

al., 2012, Nairn et al., 2012). Pākehā perceptions toward Māori at a national group level are largely informed by long-standing colonial narratives that vilify Maori (McIntosh, 2005). Nairn and McCreanor (1991) have explored the fact that there are specific colonial narratives (labelled as the 'Standard Story') which pigeonhole Māori people in stereotypical ways and have the impact of maintaining inequality between Pākehā and Māori. The Standard Story highlights how individuals are primed to take on certain beliefs about Māori, which have deeprooted historical underpinnings. Kirkwood and colleagues (2005) extended this research in their discourse analysis study of submissions made to the New Zealand Government regarding the seabed and foreshore legislation. The study indicated that, while the majority of submissions analysed from Pākehā follow the Standard Story to refute Māori claims to tino rangatiratanga (selfdetermination), there are also a small group of Pākehā who occupy a marginal position within their cultural ingroup, and utilise the Treaty of Waitangi as a means of legitimising their identity position as being New Zealanders. It is perhaps those Pākehā who are on the margins that seek to invest in their relationships with Māori who may be more prepared to reject the Standard Story. When Pākehā choose to occupy a bicultural identity, their relationship with Māori becomes a central component to the achieving this identity type. It is likely that a motivating factor for some Pākehā CSL2 learners will include a meaningful relationship with Māori through language attainment.

While the desire to create meaning relationships with Māori is an ideal case motivation type for bicultural relations in Aotearoa, it is also possible that those who have only recently begun their Māori language journey would not hold such motivations. Deep levels of analysis about biculturalism and the impact of colonialism on te reo Māori may not be a language motivation, particularly for those who may be learning te reo Māori for reasons completely unrelated to identity or politics.

In addition to motivations which are based from within the confines of the Aotearoa New Zealand context, some motivations Pākehā have for learning te reo Māori are likely to correspond with L2 motivation international literature. Motivations explored within this study are likely to be connected with identity and investment (see Norton, 2019). While this is a small-scale study, it is likely that individuals will discuss learning te reo Māori in the context of their bicultural commitment and relationships with Māori.

### **METHODS**

### **Participants**

Māori language learners who identified as either New Zealand European or Pākehā were included in this study<sup>4</sup>. A total of 13 individuals participated; six identified as male and seven female. Participants had a mean age of 25.7 years with ages ranging from 20 to 55. For the purposes of this study, participants are categorised into three language groups: beginners (n = 5), intermediate (n

<sup>4</sup> Although two individuals indicated that they were New Zealand European (NZE) the majority chose to identify as Pākehā, therefore, rather than differentiating these two individuals who identified as

= 4) and advanced (n = 4). Borrowing from Gardner's (2007, p. 12) stages of language acquisition, those considered to be beginners would be at the Elemental phase, where learning is highly focused on vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Those in the intermediate category might be in the Consolidation phase, whereby "some degree of familiarity with the language is achieved" (p.12). Finally, the advanced group included those in the Conscious Expression phase, where the participant was able to "use the language but with a great deal of conscious effort" (p.12). As this group of participants were still within the undergraduate level of study, it is highly unlikely that any of the participants could be thought of as falling within the Automaticity of Thought phase. However, te reo Māori was the only socially accepted language spoken in the intermediate and advanced classes.

Participants were all university students; therefore, it is likely that they were of similar socio-economic standing. Diversity within this small group of participants cannot be assumed.

### Measures

Semi-structured interview schedules were designed using a method of triangulation "where multiple data sources provide information on the same issue", which has been effective in Action Research, where the processes of change are a central concern (Sixsmith & Daniels, 2011, p. 28). A number theories (L2 specific and those from social psychology) provided inspiration for various sections of the interview schedule (Dörnyei & Schmidt, 2001; Fishman & García, 2010; Gardner, 2007; Giles & Johnson, 1987; Houkamau & Sibley, 2010; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009). In addition, informal discussions with Pākehā learners of te reo Māori helped to design the interview schedule along with research conducted with Māori heritage language learners (Te Huia, 2017). Examples of questions asked during interviews included "What led you to learn te reo Māori?" and "How would you best describe your relationship with the Māori community prior to coming to learning te reo Māori?" The interview schedule included eight focus areas: motivation, social support, benefits from language learning, connection with the Māori speaker community, the impact of language on identity and cultural efficacy, socio-political consciousness, language anxiety, and target language goals.

### **Procedure**

During language classes, information sheets were provided to potential participants. Those interested in the study made contact with the lead researcher via email. A post-graduate male research assistant undertook the interviews to reduce power imbalances between the interviewer and interviewee, as the lead researcher is a lecturer in the Māori language programme. This practice is consistent with the Kaupapa Māori method of powersharing (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). As the researchers are Māori, and the language under consideration is te reo

NZE, the term Pākehā will be applied when discussing generalisable points made by the participant group.

Māori, aspects of Kaupapa Māori methodology were applied. Interviews were an average of 46.7 minutes long and ranged between 21 and 75 minutes. The lead researcher and research assistant discussed the interviews in depth between interviews, providing the research assistant with guidance about future potential follow-up questions.

Participants were gifted a \$20 music voucher for their participation. Interviews were digitally recorded then transcribed and sent back to participants for approval, ensuring that the participant was comfortable with the material disclosed in the interview. This practice reflects the Kaupapa Māori principle Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the mana (dignity, humanity) of people) outlined by Smith (1999, p. 120). Participants either chose a pseudonym or one was appointed to them. The decision to use pseudonyms rather than participant numbers was made to enhance a connection between the reader and the participant's views. The Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee approved this study.

### **Analytic Process**

Thematic analysis was a research method applied to the results (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Consistent with thematic analysis, the researcher listened to each recording twice to ensure familiarity with the content. A journal was used to make notes, including personal reflections, about each transcript. After making notes about each transcript, the NVivo software programme was used to generate initial nodes. Individual nodes were input using semantic references initially. These nodes included references such as: te reo as a marker of citizenship; refuting racism; understanding of Pākehā privilege<sup>5</sup>; and te reo as a marker of differentiation. Some nodes were removed, including intrinsic motivation, as well as some elements from the instrumental motivations as these could be explained without full quotes. From each of these nodes, themes were explored, identified and reviewed. These nodes were then grouped into larger clusters, refined, and named to include: bicultural identity as a motivation; providing a counter-position from the 'Standard Story'; real world incentives as language motivation; and the societal context: positive impact of knowing Pākehā speakers of te reo. These larger clusters contributed to the four major themes of this study. Within the review process, themes were assessed to ensure that the excerpts and subthemes were consistent within each of the themes, and that there was distinctiveness between themes.

### **ANALYSIS**

#### Theme 1: Bicultural Identity as a Motivation

The desire to learn te reo Māori for reasons related to national identity was relayed by over half of participants (n=7) in this study. The responses to why CSL2 learners engage with learning te reo Māori may highlight the desire of some Pākehā to enhance their sense of a bicultural national identity through creating a meaningful relationship with Māori.

<sup>5</sup> These nodes refered to priviliges that Pākehā recieve as dominant group members. Such as the ability to take for granted that Pākehā

Maria: For me it's always been an important part of being a New Zealander. [...] I'm a lot more passionate about it because it's my... it's part of my identity... um, not all Europeans believe this. [Beginner]

The quote above demonstrates a few points, including the participant's desire to claim te reo Māori, and effectively claiming Māori culture as part of her own identity. Second, the participant is differentiating herself from other New Zealand Europeans, creating a positive distinction.

For many participants, the concept that Māori culture is an 'important part of New Zealand' was raised. By the mere fact that participants are raising this overtly presents a case that it cannot be taken for granted as common knowledge.

John: Firstly, just the motivation that I believe Māori are... you know... a very important part of New Zealand society in the past and in the future and... The more that I know about it the more kind of full citizen I feel of Aotearoa, so that's one of the first and simplest motivations, I guess. [Intermediate]

The point being made above indicates that, for some Pākehā, a relationship with Māori is a central part of claiming meaningful citizenship as a New Zealander. This observation reflects some of the findings from Mitcalfe (2008).

Notably, Pākehā who view a relationship with Māori culture as a core characteristic of defining a New Zealand national identity may be more inclined to view te reo Māori as a contributing factor to their own national identity.

Emily: If you're having a whole resurgence of Māori language and it always mattered to me as a New Zealander... why don't I know the culture of New Zealand? Because it's not English culture, it's New Zealand culture and Māori's a huge part of that. IAdvanced!

The point raised above discusses the role of Pākehā in the revitalisation of te reo Māori. Of interest, the participant discusses how New Zealanders are distinct from the English through their relationship with Māori. However, the difficulty highlighted in this quote indicates that Pākehā do not know a good deal about Māori language or culture.

Juxtaposed to participants who grew up with little knowledge about Māori language or a working knowledge of indigenous rights, a few CSL2 learners grew up with a greater level of critical awareness than others.

Michael: I was lucky enough to grow up in this sort of environment that was aware of things like by cultural privilege and indigenous rights and you know? I felt like... ah... well New Zealand obviously supports this idea of biculturalism that in reality, I mean Māori are forced to be bicultural, whereas Pākehā have the cultural privilege of deciding whether or not to learn the culture. So being aware

cultural norms and values will be understood and applied in social interactions.

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of that, I couldn't help but not, in a sense, try to learn more about Māoridom and obviously the language is something intrinsic to that. [Advanced]

Michael (above) explains that part of learning te reo Māori requires CSL2 learners to experience a shift in power, whereby Pākehā learners in Māori-dominant areas become a minority. Learning te reo Māori, particularly to an advanced level, may contribute to CSL2 learners' rejection of a superficial bicultural relationship between Māori and Pākehā.

# Theme 2: Providing a counter-position from the 'Standard Story'

### Subtheme 1: Combating negative mainstream opinions of Māori

CSL2 learners are exposed to two sets of relationships: those with their Māori language learner cohort, as well as those from the mainstream. Being exposed to both groups allows CSL2 learners to view the discrepancies between how Māori are perceived by the mainstream versus interpersonal relationships that they create with their peer group. Results indicated that some participants were motivated to learn te reo Māori in order to dispel negative views toward Māori from the mainstream.

Erica: My father was definitely opinionated [laughs]... and choosing to not believe his [negative]<sup>6</sup> opinions definitely has been a factor in learning te reo and believing that that's important, as a future, hopefully, teacher [laughs] in te reo Māori. [Beginner]

Erica's comment above may also indicate a shift in attitudes between generations. It appears that Erica's view of the future or, potentially, her ideal self, is one that is supportive of using te reo Māori and rejecting of the negative views held by her father.

There were four participants who had intentions of being educators, and this impacted on their motivations for learning. A number of CSL2 learners in this study explained that mainstream views toward Māori were negatively biased. Matthew (below) explains that a motivation for learning te reo Māori was to combat such opinions.

Matthew: I now just wanna go out there and tell people. You know... like... how it is really... like what I've learned, you know? And maybe that might change their perceptions. I mean, not everyone has a negative perception of Māori, but there are things out there that are pushing for that negative perception. [Advanced]

### Subtheme 2: Motivation to decrease cultural ignorance

Some participants highlighted how being ignorant about Māori culture and language contributed to their desire to increase their knowledge in this area.

Kate: It would be nice for me to able to at least have something to say [in Māori language speaking contexts] ... not just sit there and be like "I'm sorry,

I don't actually have a clue what you're saying".
[Beginner]

The participant above acknowledges that the ability to speak te reo Māori allows individuals to participate in the culture. This participant continues by explaining:

Kate: I don't want to be naïve to it all and, you know, this is part of New Zealand as much as everything else so I'd really like to learn and get myself immersed in it more. [Beginner]

Some participants were self-aware about their limited awareness about Māori culture and language. The fact that some CSL2 learners were uncomfortable about their level of ignorance lends to a shift in belief about the societal expectations about Pākehā awareness of te reo Māori.

Sally: I kind of just hated the fact that I was so ignorant about the language and the culture... like I disliked being so completely like... ignorant and not knowing anything about it, so it's good to get a bit educated about it, I think. [Beginner]

Some participants explained that they had experienced being in situations where Māori language or knowledge was expected in certain contexts, but that there was a tokenistic use of Māori cultural practices by those who are unaware of how to correctly perform these tasks.

Emily: When someone says "Look, I'm gonna do a pōwhiri (Māori ceremonial welcome), anyone know how to do that?" So people doing cultural gestures without actually knowing why or knowing how [...] I used to get really annoyed. [Advanced]

Participants acknowledged being privy to expressions of tokenism demonstrated by Pākehā. Although participants did not tend to un-pack why tokenistic behaviours were problematic, or how underlying ideologies associated to such behaviours come about, they were still able to identify the inappropriateness of the behaviour and the feelings of frustration that such acts of tokenism caused. Being able to articulate why a colonising or tokenistic behaviour is detrimental takes a concerted level of understanding about the impacts of colonisation. Having the ability to un-pack why a behaviour is problematic would help Pākehā learners of te reo Māori to support other's within their social/cultural ingroups to develop their understandings of bicultural issues in Aotearoa.

While some participants discussed how they had very few relationships with Māori prior to learning te reo Māori, they also noted how having an improved level of knowledge about the language (and decreased level of cultural ignorance) improved intercultural relationships.

Jacob: Having started to learn te reo Māori, I've demonstrated that I do care, and therefore people are more willing to engage with me, or have me engage with them. [Intermediate]

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 $<sup>^6</sup>$  The participant had previously described that her father held negative views toward Māori.

### Theme 3: Real world incentives as language motivation

Two of the most common instrumental motivations included completing the language paper for points toward their degree and, secondly, to attain a job where an employer valued the language.

Sally: It started off from the fact that I needed 20 B.A. points at any level... um just for my course requirements. [Beginner]

Although some students may come to learn te reo Māori because of instrumental motivations, it is possible that through being exposed to the language provides learners with an environment where the language is seen as valuable.

Erica: I think that learning to reo Māori will hopefully help me get a job... um... maybe help with someone else who hasn't learned it but I also think it's quite important for New Zealand culture that we're integrating Māori into our schools. [Beginner]

It is not clear whether one motivation supersedes another in the excerpt above, for instance, is future employment the major motivation or the integration of te reo Māori in schools? The motivations appear to be somewhat overlapping, and mutually beneficial for language revitalisation purposes. Some participants who were interested in becoming teachers described having multiple motivations, which included both an instrumental motivation (attaining a job), but also a desire to promote social change.

Jacob: Personally, I've wanted to go into politics for a long time [...]. In doing that, is to be able to speak to everyone in the country [...]. One of the things I really want to do just in life as well, is to make sure that I have a pretty good working knowledge of both te reo Māori and New Zealand sign language just so that I've got that capacity, seeing as [there are] three official languages. [Intermediate]

Although there was only one participant who had a clear goal of entering into politics, there were a number of participants who had political motivations for learning te reo Māori. There appear to be dual motivations in the excerpt above, where on the one hand there is an instrumental motivation, and on the other an integrative motivation to develop relationships with the speaker populations of those languages.

While most participants in this study had not begun working in their desired field, the participant below described how learning te reo Māori provided him with the necessary skills to adequately do his job.

Boomer: I began this new job about 7 months ago, and I had no previous particular interest in the Māori world or in Māori. But then you go up as very, very focused on the Māori world. It didn't take me very long to decide after sitting on the marae at hui, meeting Māori people every day that this is an opportunity to take my learning further, and ah that would make me much more comfortable moving in

the Māori world and give me a sense of achievement. So that's why I'm learning. [Beginner]

Again, while instrumental motivations are present in this excerpt above, they are followed by an integrative motivation. The participant understands that by investing in te reo Māori, their skills in te reo Māori will allow them to move more fluidly in Māori cultural contexts at work.

For CSL2 learners who did not have a particular vocation to enter into (such as teaching), it was unclear how learning te reo Māori might remain relevant once they were no longer involved in study. Having instrumental incentives where the language was required to a greater level of fluency rather than merely achieving basic language ability was thought to be a motivational factor for some CSL2 learners.

Michael: Not having real world incentives is something I'm afraid of... I think especially with like the... the revival or the revitalisation... ah... there's gonna be a need to emphasise real-world incentives in order to motivate speakers once they [...] leave university, because um we will just lack forums, especially Pākehā learners. I mean I know adults who did majors in Māori and they like can't speak it now and it's only because they just haven't needed it you know? [...] How great would it be if I got a job [...] it required... a Māori speaker or something? [Advanced]

The limited number of spaces where te reo Māori is spoken to a high degree of fluency was highlighted by more advanced level learners as a barrier to sustaining language fluency. This point highlights the need for employment where the language is used, particularly in the case of endangered languages.

# Theme 4: The societal context: positive impact of knowing Pākehā speakers of te reo

Results indicated that some Pākehā CSL2 learners were motivated by observing other CSL2 learners who were either studying te reo Māori, or had some degree of fluency in the language. What is highlighted across each of the excerpts is that being a Pākehā speaker or learner of te reo Māori is outside of societal norms.

Boomer: I'm working with a lawyer at the moment who is Pākehā who is, to my way of understanding, fluent in te reo Māori. I was deeply impressed when I discovered that and saw him at work, ah, and I thought if he can do it, perhaps I can do it. [Beginner]

Having co-workers and peers who spoke te reo Māori appeared to support Pākehā to want to learn te reo Māori.

Reflecting retrospectively, one participant discussed having a Pākehā teacher during high school, which was a motivational factor. Having someone who is in a position, such as a teacher, of power demonstrate the value of te reo Māori is likely to be positive for student cohorts.

Matthew: My teacher [...] she was Pākehā and she motivated me, a full Pākehā, to learn te reo. [...] She was like "Aw, you're not the only one... you know? Been there done that." [Advanced]

Positive influences, such as peers, who are encouraging of te reo Māori acquisition during high school were influential for some participants. From a developmental perspective, adolescent identities are going through dynamic challenges during the high-school period (Phinney, 1990). If intercultural relationships and the desire to invest in the indigenous language are formed by Pākehā at this developmental stage, it might be positive for future investment the individual makes in their adult life to attain the target language.

Florence: There's one friend who is also Pākehā who I met in high school who had never learned te reo before but was so passionate about it and was so keen to and she did it all through high school [...] and I think that especially during that high school stage she really kind of was like, just reminded like reinvigorated that kind of effort and strive to do that. [Advanced]

The point made by Florence is that not only was it important to have Pākehā peers who were learning te reo Māori, but also the fact that her peer was enthusiastic about learning to a high level.

As well as being motivated by peers, participants who had travelled abroad noted that there was commonly an expectation that Pākehā spoke the national languages of New Zealand. The point below highlights how learning te reo Māori may have had a domino effect for other members within the Pākehā community who were open to learning te reo Māori.

Kate: One of my friends has just enrolled in uni for next year and she's actually going to be taking... I've inspired her... cause she's the one that went overseas and she also found that she couldn't speak Māori and everyone was like "Aw my gosh." Um... so I think she really wants to, so that's cool. [Beginner]

### **Discussion**

The results of this study indicate that some of the reasons why this small group of Pākehā are motivated to learn te reo Māori is due to an identity connection that they feel toward Māori. Furthermore, members of this group of participants highlighted that they preferred to occupy identity positions that were rejecting of cultural ignorance. There social positions amongst their social groups were in some instances marginal positions, for instance, there was an acknowledgement that some individuals came from families who actively voiced racist views about Māori. Some participants felt the need to take a stand to contradict some of the racist, discriminatory views held towards Māori by members of the mainstream, including views held by significant others. This study demonstrated that there is a small group of Pākehā who are motivated to create an identity position that is founded on a relationship with Māori as indicated by other research (Jellie, 2001; Kirkwood et al., 2005; Mitcalfe, 2008, Nelson, 2018).

These findings indicate that there is a group of Pākehā who feel that their relationship with Māori contributes to their concept of 'authentic' citizenship. Authenticity beliefs are prominent issues that Māori have to deal with (Houkamau & Sibley, 2010; McIntosh, 2005). What the

current study exposed is that there may be a set of authenticity beliefs and corresponding criteria that surround what it means to be a Pākehā versus a New Zealand European. It would be useful to explore these issues through future research.

An additional motivation of some CSL2 learners to learn te reo Māori was to oppose the position explicated in the 'Standard Story' (Nairn & McCreanor, 1991). It is likely that there is a proportion of the Pākehā population who are aware of negative discourses, yet refuse to perpetuate the framing of Māori in such a way, as demonstrated in research by Fabish (2014). In response to these negative discourses, there is a minority group of CSL2 learners who choose to demonstrate their support for te reo Māori irrespective of the counterproductive racist views of others from within their cultural group.

Of those interviewed within this study, some participants highlighted that they were motivated to learn te reo Māori in order to reduce their own levels of cultural ignorance. These language learning motivations contradict the view that some dominant group members may hold that Māori knowledge and language can be ignored at a societal level (Jackson, 1998). Spivak (1988) refers to this phenomenon as sanctioned ignorance theory, whereby societies can be ignorant about certain types of knowledge in a way that is societally acceptable. It appears that some CSL2 learners reject the notion that it is acceptable to be ignorant about Māori language. By choosing to learn te reo Māori, CSL2 learners are demonstrating to both their own cultural group and to Māori that they see value in investing time into the language learning process. The choice to learn te reo Māori is unlikely to be apolitical or without political consequences.

There were three elements that were exposed in this study relating to Pākehā being motivated by other Pākehā. Firstly, it appears that there is a sense of permission giving that is required to increase Pākehā language learners of te reo Māori. Secondly, the sense of achievability is gained from seeing non-Māori speakers demonstrate Māori language fluency. Finally, social approval by others from within their cultural ingroup appeared to contribute to why having other Pākehā speak te reo Māori was important for Māori language motivations for this group of participants.

It is possible that CSL2 learners attract like-minded individuals to their friendship groups, which may encourage them to further their learning of the target language. While friendship is a factor already considered part of L2 motivation research (Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994), the importance of friendship among those learning the target L2, who do not identify as heritage language learners with genealogical links to the language, provides a point of possible distinction. Participants in this study were motivated to extend their learning of te reo Māori because they had encountered a Pākehā peer or colleague who had also chosen to learn te reo Māori. If the implications of these results are applied more broadly, it is not enough for Pākehā to encounter Māori speakers of te reo. Instead, Pākehā need to be surrounded by other Pākehā CSL2 learners of te reo Māori in order to increase the critical mass of speakers. From a self-categorisation perspective (Turner, et al., 1987), it is possible that Pākehā who view Māori language as a behaviour belonging to

Māori people are unlikely to see this behaviour as something that is required or permitted by other in-group members.

What is not covered in this study is whether heritage Māori language speakers are generally supportive of Pākehā learning te reo Māori. An increase in Pākehā speakers of te reo Māori appear to be the goals listed in the Maihi Karauna (the Government defined language goals for 2019-2023). The chair of Te Taura Whiri i te reo Māori (The Māori Language Commission) notes that "Consideration of macro-language planning approaches needs to engage wider society and make the language relevant for all citizens by raising its status." Higgins continues by posing the question "For a nation that was founded on the Treaty of Waitangi, what does it mean to continue to promote monlingualism rather than uphold the intentions of the Treaty of Waitangi?" (Higgins, 2016, p. 36). Promoting the normalisation of te reo Māori requires societal acceptance and use of te reo Māori across a range of language speaking domains, including employment spaces. However, whether the wider Māori language speaker population are supportive of an increase in Pākehā speakers of te reo Māori is yet to be researched to any significant degree. Heritage language loss revitalisation is highly political and interwoven into the historical trauma of colonisation in Aotearoa. Te reo Māori is in a state of revitalisation as a direct result of colonial subjugation (Waitangi Tribunal, 1986; 2011). It is not clear how Māori may feel towards an increase in Pākehā speakers of te reo Māori, while there is a decrease in Māori heritage speakers of te reo Māori.

Te reo Māori is increasingly becoming a language that is transferred through educational providers rather than through intergenerational transmission (Mead, 1997; Tihema, 2018). Māori who want to be speakers of te reo Māori, but who are unfamiliar with educational institutions offering te reo Māori, may experience further marginalisation in addition to that which they already face (McIntosh, 2005). A need for more Māori language speakers (including Pākehā) should increase the number of domains where te reo Māori is used eventually. The transition to increasing the number of Pākehā speakers might be challenging for Māori as a group, when the indigenous language loss is attributed to colonial actions of violence and oppression (Coombes, 2011; Waitangi Tribunal, 2011).

The learning context has an impact on motivation to learn and pursue second language learning. Three levels were highlighted by Gardner and Clément (1990) including: the context of the language, the context of an encounter, and the wider societal and intergroup encounter. Therefore, the language that is used or attempted is thought to be related to experiences in each of the previously mentioned contexts. For Pākehā learners of te reo Māori, findings from previous study indicate that individual learners may experience motivations based on the desire to experience future bicultural encounters across a range of contexts. The challenge for many Pākehā learners is likely to be that they may develop an ideological position of wanting to create relationships with Māori in te reo Māori, but may in fact have very little contact with Māori language speaker communities. Interpersonal meaningful engagement is likely to be beneficial for goals of biculturalism, particularly when Pākehā are able to acknowledge their role in the disestablishment of social structures and systems that continue to marginalise Māori populations, and subsequently, the language of those being subjugated.

Real world, instrumental motivations were present in the findings of this study. Positioning the research in a university environment makes it highly likely that a possible motivation for learning an L2 will be for degree completion requirements, which corresponds with other L2 motivation research (Dörnyei & Schmidt, 2001). This study highlights the need for instrumental incentives for learners of endangered languages, particularly in cases where there is no heritage connection to the language. If a language is not used for employment, the economic value attached to the language is lowered. Government investments into businesses that actively encourage the use of te reo Māori are likely to contribute to the prosperity of te reo Māori over the long-term, particularly when language use is used with a level of complexity.

A limitation of this study is that the participants were all students studying at a Pākehā-dominant institution (university), as opposed to a Māori community language learning setting. While some Pākehā may enrol in a Māori language class, and be out of their comfort zone, any Pākehā student entering into a university course is safe in the knowledge that the classes follow the regulations of a Western university system. Future studies that wish to explore aspects associated with acculturation experiences of CSL2 learners in indigenous contexts could investigate the experiences and motivations of Pākehā or other Colonial Settler groups who are not based in a Western university. This study was a small-scale qualitative study that aimed to understand some of the experiences of a few Pākehā who had begun learning te reo Māori. Concrete conclusions cannot be generalised from such a small sample, however, the results do offer insights into some learner motivations from those who are learning te reo within a tertiary institution. Furthermore, this study focused on Pākehā learners of te reo Māori, without the voice of their Maori student counterparts. The ways in which the two cultural groups interact in learning spaces would be useful to explore in future research. Finally, the ways in which Pākehā learners of te reo Māori learn about the cultural and socio-political aspects related to language use were not highlighted in this research given the limited scope. A broader understanding about how such issues about being learned within educational contexts would be helpful to note.

#### Summary

This small-scale project aims to highlight some of the reasons why Pākehā in today's context might be invested in learning the indigenous language of Aotearoa New Zealand. At a fundamental level, there are a number of possible reasons that contribute to second language acquisition, and the relationships the Colonial Settler groups have with the indigenous population is one of those reasons. The processes involved with the acquisition of te reo Māori may be used as a means of healing some intercultural relationships that have resulted through colonisation. Through understanding some of the motivations that both Pākehā and Māori have for learning

te reo Māori and reaching high levels of language competence, there may be an opportunity to shift our current state of language endangerment to language safety.

As professed by King Tāwhiao, "Kotahi te kahao o te ngira e kuhuna ai te miro mā, te miro pango, te miro pango". This whakatauākī (proverbial saying) is used to indicate that there are multiple strands that are needed in order to achieve a common goal. If te reo Māori is to continue to be used as a functional language, working together has the potential to create positive outcomes for language normalisation and subsequently, language revitalisation.

What also needs to be acknowledged is the high value that te reo Māori holds for the identity of Māori (Te Huia, 2017). When Māori are in situations where Pākehā are more fluent than themselves, this is likely to cause

emotional discomfort and distress for some Māori who may feel whakamā or even a sense of indignity due to the incongruence of a non-heritage dominant cultural group member demonstrating a behaviour that they themselves may have been denied due to colonial processes. Conversations need to be held between Māori and Pākehā about how to engage with te reo Māori, particularly given our shared histories. If there is an increase in Pākehā learners of te reo Māori into the future, educational programmes need to encourage acknowledgement about how te reo Māori has been impacted by colonisation and how Pākehā might participate in the process of language revitalisation with care and critical awareness.

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 $<sup>^7</sup>$  This proverbial saying translates into English as "Through the eye of the needle pass the white thread, the black thread, and the red thread".

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