Going for the Bread
It is Sunday morning and Himiona is dispatched with $2 to buy a hot loaf for the family’s breakfast. The unenthusiastic errand boy sets out on his bicycle, but before he reaches the hot bread shop he is distracted by a friend, Pereniko, who calls him over to look at the new spacey machines at the dairy. Himiona is coaxed into cashing in his mother’s $2 for change to try his luck on the machines. The inevitable happens and, abandoned by his friend, Himiona must return empty-handed to his waiting parents.

English translations of post-reading tasks
Task A: Yes/ no/ make it right.
Card A
1. At the beginning of the book Himiona was in bed.
2. Pereniko gave the $2 to Himiona.
3. Himiona went to the shop to buy bananas.
4. Himiona was very keen to go to the shop.
Card B
2. Himiona went to the shop by car.
4. Pereniko called out: “Come and look at the spacey machines.”
6. The spacey machines were in the bread shop.
8. The two boys ran out of the shop.
Task B: Say it!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are Pereniko. What do you say to Himiona when he gets to the shop?</td>
<td>You are Himiona. You want to get change for the two dollars. What do you say to the shopkeeper?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are Dad. What do you say to Mum while you are waiting for Himiona to come home?</td>
<td>You are Mum. Himiona has come home without the bread. What do you say to him?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are Himiona. You have just got home. What will you say to your parents?</td>
<td>You are Pereniko. What will you say to Himiona next time you meet him?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
provided by the reading cards to assist them in structuring their responses. The children's written work showed varying use of syntax, content, and vocabulary from the written texts, in accordance with their individual needs and capabilities.

TEST RESULTS

Oral tests
Oral tests were analysed according to the following criteria:
- number of utterances;
- number of well-formed utterances;
- overall accuracy;
- pronoun use;
- content vocabulary; and
- number of syntactic processes used.

Analysis of oral test results
As well as showing the relative progress made by individual children, the results shown in Table 1 reflected the respective proficiencies of the children in relation to each other. A and B are shown to be the most proficient speakers, achieving a moderate level of accuracy over a range of syntactic processes. F, whose utterance count was also high, showed substantial gains in pronoun use and syntactic processes, while E improved her range of syntactic processes only at some cost to accuracy. C made impressive gains in pronoun use and syntactic processes, but remained the lowest scorer in terms of utterance and vocabulary counts. D extended her range of syntactic processes and achieved a higher content vocabulary count while maintaining moderate accuracy. Her overall results were hampered by her low utterance count in one of the post-tests and her continued pronoun avoidance.

The results for pronoun use imply that only two children progressed in this respect, but analysis of the transcripts revealed that more pronoun avoidance and more errors involving pronouns occurred in the pre-tests than in the post-tests.

Intuitive assessments of oral tests
Three Māori-speaking teachers were given copies of the oral test transcripts and asked to assess them according to their intuitions. Their assessments showed a strong preference for the post-test transcripts over the pre-test transcripts.

Table 2 gives further suggestions for integrating te reo Māori into the classroom environment.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

Implications for the classroom
Central to this research is the understanding that the teacher is not the only source of language input in a classroom. No direct teaching was involved in this particular study, all input resulting from written text and peer interaction. This has important implications for teachers who want to promote Māori in their classrooms but feel they have insufficient proficiency to do justice to the task.

A significant number of New Zealand teachers, both in mainstream and bilingual classes, have limited proficiency in Māori. Interactive reading cards could provide a useful contribution to their programmes, allowing children to participate at their own level of proficiency, even where this is beyond the proficiency level of the teacher. Table 2

developing new materials
Ideally groups of teachers of varying proficiency levels will work together to select texts and develop follow-up tasks, with the more proficient teachers monitoring accuracy. Where no proficient Māori-speaking teacher is available, parents, grandparents, or other Māori-speaking members of the community could work with teachers to translate task content into Māori.

Written texts available in both Māori and English, such as Learning Media’s Nga Kōrero series (translations of English-language school journal stories) enable teachers to use the English texts to check their own understanding before setting tasks which children will carry out through the medium of Māori. In a worst-case scenario the entire reading card might have to be written in English, but if the text itself is in Māori and the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1: RESULTS OF ORAL TESTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total utterances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-formed utterances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syntactic processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
children receive adequate encouragement they may reasonably be expected to be able to complete the oral tasks in Māori. There is, of course, much value to be gained from reading and discussing a Māori-language text even if most of the discussion does take place through the medium of English.

Favourable conditions for language learning

Māori-language texts and reading cards, however, will not lead automatically to the use of Māori in English-medium classrooms. Commitment on the part of both teacher and children is required, along with classroom conditions conducive to language learning. Teachers’ expectations of children’s success have been shown to have a profound effect on children’s confidence and eventual achievement. A teacher who offers children opportunities to use Māori in the classroom and expects and encourages them to do so provides an appropriate environment for the promotion of the language.

Teachers need to believe in children’s ability to make decisions and take responsibility for their own learning. In a classroom where the children speak Māori better than the teacher it becomes essential for the teacher to relinquish some of the power and decision-making to encourage interaction in Māori.

Adequate checks and monitoring will ensure that the consequent increased learner responsibility has positive effects on learning outcomes.

For children to put sustained effort into what they produce they must believe they will have a responsive audience. Parents, grandparents, and local kaumatua (elders) are particularly valuable as an audience because they put the acquisition of the language into its appropriate cultural setting. A teacher who is learning to speak Māori also serves as a responsive audience with a strong incentive to try and understand what Māori-speaking children say and write. Other possible audiences include Māori-speaking children from other classes and schools, or even Māori-language classes at local high schools and polytechnics.

Learning Media encourages submissions of work which reaches a publishing standard and peers could help assess whether a child’s work is of a suitable standard to merit submission.

Underlying all language learning is engagement with the experience. Children who feel positive about the tasks required of them will be prepared to work to the full extent of their abilities in order to gain maximum benefit from the learning experience. Texts and tasks should be on the borderline of the child’s comprehension and production capability so that they challenge without frustrating the learner. They should be capable of arousing the children’s curiosity and sustaining their interest. Tasks must be achievable, relevant, and meaningful.

Native speakers of Māori

The children in our study had limited proficiency in Māori, but reading cards could quite easily be developed for the small but growing number of children who speak Māori.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2: SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of texts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Māori readers and reading cards as part of the instructional reading programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include Māori readers in all independent reading kits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include Māori language books in class and school library collections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display Māori language child-produced texts on the classroom walls and in collections of class writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include Māori song and poetry charts daily in shared reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide Māori word puzzles and skills cards for children’s use during language periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include Māori maths and science activity cards and puzzles alongside English language activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set aside ten minutes of each day for sustained silent reading in Māori, when all children, and the teacher, read silently in Māori at a level appropriate to their personal needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Radio</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Māori radio before school and during the lunch break.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tapes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make taped Māori-stories available at listening posts during reading and language periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make song tapes available for class, group, and individual use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make taped stories, written and/or read by Māori-speaking children, available at listening posts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send taped letters to Māori-speaking penfriends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visits</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage visits from Māori-speaking parents, grandparents, and local elders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit and host Māori-speaking children from other classes and schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit and host local Kohanga Reo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Letters</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write letters to Māori-speaking penfriends at other schools, and share responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write letters to Māori-speaking parents and grandparents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write letters to Māori celebrities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E-mail</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish and maintain regular contact with Māori-speaking children in other schools through e-mail.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
as a first language. The increasing availability of texts, particularly those in Learning Media’s Ngā Kōrero and Te Tāttoke series, provides an appropriate source on which to base a rich and varied range of reading cards for children who are proficient speakers of Māori.

Implications for other languages

There is a growing appreciation among teachers of the value of promoting the use of heritage and community languages in the classroom. As New Zealand classrooms become increasingly multi-ethnic, new initiatives are needed to meet the challenge. Reading cards have been used successfully for teaching English as a second language for a number of years and there is every likelihood that they will also be useful for the promotion of other languages. In classes or schools where a decision has been made to promote community languages, native speakers of those languages could be called in to work with teachers to produce reading cards which are linguistically accurate, culturally appropriate, and pedagogically sound.

CONCLUSION

Language learning from peers

A teacher’s lack of proficiency in Māori should not be used as a reason for omitting Māori from the language programme. Children can and do learn language from their peers as well as from parents and teachers, and written text can provide valuable input whether or not Māori-speaking adults are present.

Observations of children using written texts and reading cards over a six-week period suggest that this is a viable way of encouraging children to communicate with each other in Māori. The participants in this study assisted each other during the pair tasks by modelling, mutual encouragement, and occasionally by overt correction. They successfully completed nearly all of the set tasks, making use of grammatical structures in the texts and on the reading cards to assist them where necessary. They also used Māori briefly for a range of different functions beyond the requirements of the set tasks.

Summary

Oral test results showed that the six children who took part in the study made some gains in proficiency. Overall the children:

- increased their oral output by an average of eight utterances;
- increased their accuracy by 14 percent;
- used an average of eight new content words in their spontaneous discourse; and
- used an average of five new syntactic processes in their spontaneous discourse.

It cannot be said with any certainty that the above results represented new learning and were not simply prior knowledge resurfacing under favourable conditions. What is clear is that the children concerned were able to utilise the input from the texts and carry out a range of tasks which resulted in increased productive proficiency after a period of six weeks.

Ma tahi, ma rua, ka tau.
(Success is achieved through co-operation.)

NOTES

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1. The responsibilities of primary school teachers to include appropriate Māori language is from the foreword of:

2. Background information on the status of te reo Mauri in mainstream New Zealand schools can be found in:

3. For the purposes of this article a heritage language refers to the language of one’s ethnic heritage and community language refers to a language spoken by a minority (usually immigrant) group within a given community.

4. Bilingualism in a heritage language is discussed in:

5. Reference for the proverb quoted in the Waitangi Tribunal, page 7 of:

6. Full details of the research which generated this paper are described in:

7. The benefits of reading in a second language are discussed in:


8. The advantages of peer interaction are discussed in:


9. The text and illustrations on which the sample reading cards are based are from:

10. Ideas for interactive tasks can be found in:

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