

Māori lexical items in the mainstream television news in New Zealand

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This article reports on research undertaken in 2005 on Māori lexical items in the mainstream television news in New Zealand. The research analysed a selection of news items from one week's recordings of *Television New Zealand News* from 1984 and one week's recordings each of *One News* and *3 News* from 2004, examining the nature of Māori lexical items in the mainstream television news, in particular how many there were, what kind, where they appeared in the news, and by whom and how they were used. The results of the research showed that Māori lexical items in the mainstream television news were very low frequency in both 1984 and 2004, with no increase in frequency apparent in 2004. In both periods they were used almost solely in Māori-related news items and most often by Māori participants. There were some apparent differences between 1984 and 2004, however, including the increasing use of non morphologically assimilated Māori lexical items, the introduction of some new Māori lexical items and the establishment of Māori greetings in the news.

1. Introduction

It has been claimed that “the most unmistakably New Zealand part of New Zealand English is its Māori element” (Deverson 1991: 18). There is a growing body of research on the nature and frequency of Māori lexical items in both written and spoken New Zealand English (e.g. Kennedy and Yamazaki 1999, Macalister 2003). In 2005 I undertook research on the use of Māori lexical items in the mainstream television news in New Zealand, using data from 1984 and 2004¹. This article reports on the results of that research.

¹ This research was undertaken from March to June 2005 for a Masters level research dissertation at Victoria University of Wellington. I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Janet Holmes, for her advice and encouragement throughout the conduct of the research, and Dr. John Macalister, for his helpful and insightful comments as I planned and wrote up the research.

2. The influence of Māori on New Zealand English

English has clearly had a strong impact on the Māori language in New Zealand, most obviously in the form of massive language shift from Māori to English, and also in the substantial number of anglicised lexical items in modern Māori, such as *aihikirimi* (ice cream) and *rōia* (lawyer). But, as is usual in language contact situations, the influence has not all been one way. One area of research into the influence of Māori on New Zealand English has been the use of Māori lexical items in New Zealand English. Stubbe and Holmes (2000: 251) have commented that “Māori people in general use Māori lexical items more frequently than Pākehā do, often going well beyond the Māori vocabulary with which most Pākehā speakers of NZE are familiar”. As well as being one of the features of a proposed Māori English, use of words of Māori origin is a highly distinctive feature of New Zealand English in general (Deveson 1991: 18).

As Kennedy and Yamazaki (1999: 33) and Macalister (2003: 41) note, however, most studies on Māori lexical items in New Zealand English have been based largely on impression and observation. It is only recently that researchers have looked at the distribution of Māori lexical items in New Zealand English through corpus analysis. The most substantial corpus-based studies on Māori lexical items in New Zealand English are Kennedy and Yamazaki (1999) (revised in Kennedy 2001), who analysed Māori lexical items in the one million-word Wellington Corpus of Spoken New Zealand English (“WSE”) (Holmes et al 1998) and the one million-word Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English (“WWE”) (Bauer 1993), and Macalister (2003), who analysed lexical items of Māori origin in written New Zealand English from 1850 to 2000, looking at data from newspapers, parliamentary debates and the New Zealand School Journals.

3. Māori language content in the mainstream media

Macalister (2003: 54) was concerned with the question of whether the language of the mainstream media - in his case, newspapers - could be regarded as representative of New Zealand English as a whole. In the present research, media language was viewed as interesting less because it might be seen as representative of New Zealand English in general, but rather because it might be viewed as a prestige language standard against which other New Zealand English usage can be measured (Bell 1983). The mainstream media can reflect current linguistic norms as well as function as a potential medium for linguistic change (Garrett and Bell 1997: 3). Media language may not represent the

language variety all New Zealanders use, but it may be an interesting indication of the language variety New Zealanders regard as an acceptable prestige model, and/or where their future language use is heading.

4. Research questions

Against the backdrop of other recent corpus-based research on Māori lexical items in New Zealand English, my study addressed the following research questions:

1. What was the nature of Māori language content in the mainstream television news in 1984 and 2004, i.e. *how many* Māori lexical items were in the news, *what kind* of Māori lexical items were in the news, *where* were Māori lexical items found in the news, *who* was using Māori lexical items in the news, and *how* were Māori lexical items used in the news?
2. Were there significant differences in Māori language content in the mainstream television news between 1984 and 2004, and between TVNZ and TV3? and
3. What implications could Māori language content in the mainstream television news in New Zealand have for Māori language revitalisation in New Zealand?²

5. Methodology

5.1 Data

The data consisted of a selection of news items from one week's recordings of *Television New Zealand News* from 1984 and one week's recordings each of *One News* and *3 News* from 2004 (referred to below as "the TVNZ 1984 data", "the TVNZ 2004 data" and "the TV3 2004 data" respectively). *Television New Zealand News* and *One News* are produced by the publicly owned broadcaster TVNZ, while *3 News* is produced by the private broadcaster TV3. TV3 data was not available for 1984, as the channel only began screening in 1989. TV3 data for 2004 was included in the study because the news audience in 2004 was split between *One News* and *3 News*, and an analysis of television news in 2004

² The answer to this third research question is necessarily speculative and space prevents detailed discussion of it in this article.

therefore needed to take into account the news on both channels³. Out of a total corpus of 351 news items from these three source weeks of news, the analysis focused on a selection of six comparable⁴ 'national/regional' news items from each source (eighteen news items in total) and all the 'Māori-related' news items from each source (fifteen news items in total). The topic-based distinction between national/regional and Māori-related news items was made given that I expected there to be more Māori language content in news items on Māori-related topics, and this provided a means of comparison.

5.2 What counts as a Māori lexical item?

Other studies have included both lexical items that are currently part of the Māori language, e.g. *whānau* or *kai*, and lexical items of Māori origin that have been modified and could now be seen to be part of New Zealand English, e.g. *Māoridom* or *Kiwiana*. Macalister (2003: 49) refers to the latter as "hybrids, i.e. words containing elements of Māori origin." In the present research, such lexical items were not included. Only those lexical items that could still be used in Māori as Māori lexical items were examined. It is, however, difficult to determine when a lexical item has become part of New Zealand English (see Gordon and Deverson 1985: 37). Arguably, some Māori lexical items, in their surface unchanged state from Māori, have now become part of New Zealand English, and could in fact no longer be seen as Māori lexical items. An example would be *Kiwi*, when used to refer to a New Zealander rather than the bird. Another example could be the word *haka*, which most New Zealanders consider to represent "what the All Blacks do" (Bellett 1995: 87) rather than its original meaning of "a posture dance accompanied by a chant [...]" (Macalister 2005: 10). In both cases, the meanings of these lexical items as used in New Zealand English have become somewhat distinct from their original meanings in Māori. For the purposes of this research, however, such lexical items were treated as Māori lexical items, as they could still be used in Māori as well as in English.

³ On average in May 2005, 746,000 people watched *One News* each day and 343,000 watched *3 News* each day (email correspondence via TVNZ website: 30/05/05).

⁴ Comparability here refers to the general topic of the news items (e.g. politics / education / crime) and their structural complexity (complex news items involving e.g. a reporter and interviews with members of the public were preferred over news items involving a presenter only).

5.3 What counts as a token?

For the purpose of counting the frequency of Māori lexical items in the data, Macalister's (2003:50) concept of the 'complete lexical unit', was followed, whereby:

[...A] word token was taken to be a complete lexical unit; both *whare* and *whare kai* were counted as one Material Culture token, just as *Te Aroha* was treated as one Place Name token rather than two. [...] As well as avoiding an unrealistic inflation of the Māori word presence, this decision accommodates changing orthographic practice – *Ngātiruanui* and *Ngāti Ruanui*, for example, should have equal weight.

For this reason, proper nouns of more than one word, such as names of people (e.g. *Pita Paraone*), place names (e.g. *Te Awamutu*), names of organisations (e.g. *Te Ohu Kai Moana*), and names of iwi (e.g. *Ngāti Hine*) counted as only one token each in the research. Like Macalister (2003), but unlike Kennedy and Yamazaki (1999), structural words were also included as part of the lexical item to which they were attached, given that (Macalister 2003: 49):

Structural words, such as *te*, have no independent meaning within New Zealand English; they exist and only have meaning as part of a larger lexical unit. Examples include *te reo Māori*, *Te Aroha* and *Te Puni Kōkiri*.

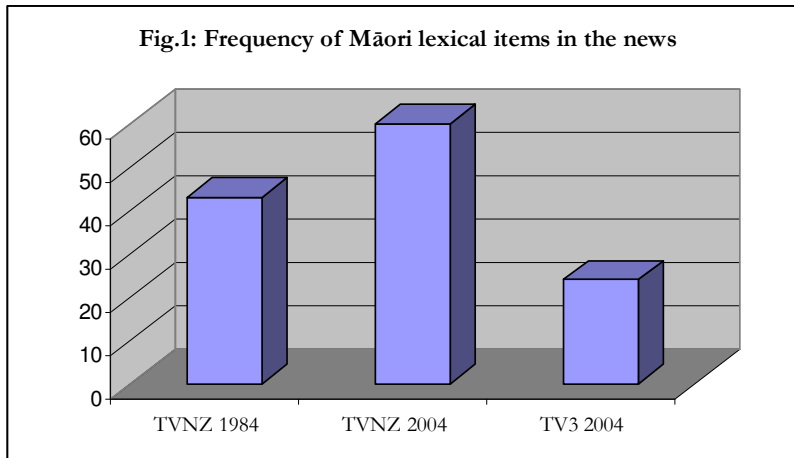
Words that are used together in common phrases, such as *kia ora* and *haere mai* were also counted as one token.

6. Results

6.1 How many Māori lexical items were in the news?

The highest number of Māori lexical items was found in the TVNZ 2004 data (60 Māori lexical items), followed by the TVNZ 1984 data (43 Māori lexical items) and then the TV3 2004 data (24 lexical items). The data therefore showed no clear increase in the frequency of Māori lexical items between 1984 and 2004. Although there were almost twice as many Māori lexical items in the TVNZ data

as in the TV3 data, Māori lexical items in all three data sources were very low frequency.



Kennedy and Yamazaki found that Māori lexical items occurred at a rate of 5 tokens per 1000 in the WSE and 6 tokens per 1000 in the WWE (1999: 37, 39). Macalister concluded from his data that there had been an increase in the frequency of words of Māori origin in newspapers from 3.3 to 7.7 tokens per 1000 between 1850 and 2000. It is not possible to state an exact proportion of Māori to English lexical items in the data in the present research, given that the English lexical items in the news items were not counted, but I would estimate that the amount for each source was easily as low as in these previous corpus-based studies of written and spoken New Zealand English.

6.2 What kind of Māori lexical items were in the news?

Proper nouns

The greatest proportion of Māori lexical items in all three data sources consisted of proper nouns. The proportion was at 44.2% and 40% for the TVNZ 1984 and 2004 data respectively, and considerably higher, at 70.8%, for the TV3 2004 data. This dominance of proper nouns is consistent with previous research. Kennedy and Yamazaki (1999: 39-40) found that proper nouns made up 54.5% of Māori tokens in the WWE and 45.1% of Māori tokens in the WSE (excluding the type *Māori*). Macalister found that proper nouns made up a considerably higher proportion of Māori tokens in his newspapers genre for 1970 and 2000 (92.8% and 86.8% respectively, excluding the type *Māori*). The greater proportion of place names and person names in Macalister's corpus is not surprising, given that one would expect a higher proportion of proper nouns in the news genre

than in other genres of written and spoken New Zealand English. It is perhaps surprising that proper nouns do not feature as strongly in the present research. One reason may be that proper nouns are often shown in written form in the television news, for example in captions, rather than spoken, and the research only took into account those lexical items that were spoken.

The lexical item Māori

Most studies of Māori lexical items in New Zealand English have noted that by far the most common lexical item is the lexical item *Māori* itself (Kennedy and Yamazaki 1999: 41; Macalister 2001: 39). In the present research, the lexical item *Māori* was likewise the single most common lexical item overall in each data source, though in different proportions, figuring at 27.9%, 30% and 12.5% in the TVNZ 1984, TVNZ 2004 and TV3 2004 data respectively.

Flora and fauna

Māori lexical items in the flora and fauna category did not occur at all in the present research. This is perhaps not surprising given that flora and fauna are not often the subject of news items, and are more likely to occur in other genres of spoken and written New Zealand English.

General Māori lexical items

Lexical items in the General Māori category (broadly all lexical items not covered by the previous categories) accounted for 27.9% of all Māori lexical items in the TVNZ 1984 data, 30.0% in the TVNZ 2004 data, and 16.7% in the TV3 2004 data. This category included lexical items such as *hui*, *iwi*, *kaumātua*, *take*, *utu* and *tangata whenua*, among others. The lexical items in the General Māori category are arguably the most interesting, because they involve a choice on the part of the speaker. There is usually no alternative to a proper noun such as *Manurewa* or *Makara*⁵, nor is there any readily available alternative to the lexical item *Māori*. In the case of General Māori lexical items, however, a Māori and an English alternative are usually available. This is also, according to researchers, the semantic area from which it is most likely that new borrowings from Māori are coming into use in New Zealand English (Deveson 1991: 19).

⁵This is not to say that proper nouns are of no interest. See Macalister (2004) on the significance of proper nouns of Māori origin in New Zealand English.

6.3 How are Māori lexical items used in the news?

The research suggested that although there was no apparent increase in the frequency of Māori lexical items used in the television news, there were some apparent differences in *how* the Māori lexical items were used between 1984 and 2004.

Morphological integration

Morphological integration of the lexical items *Māori* and *Pākehā* was more common in the 1984 data than in the 2004 data. The TVNZ 1984 data used an adjective and noun combination (e.g. *Māori people*, as in “I don’t think this hui is the be all and end all for the Treaty or for discussing take that affect *Māori people*”), and (less frequently) a noun with the English plural suffix ‘-s’ (*Māoris*) when referring to Māori as a group. One presenter made the mistake of referring to a book as *Māoris: A Photographic and Social History*, while the news item revealed that the book was actually called *Māori: A Photographic and Social History*. In contrast, the TVNZ 2004 and TV3 2004 data without fail used the unassimilated *Māori* as the plural (e.g. “Trevor Mallard is now battling the bureaucracy and the opposition over spending on *Māori*” (TVNZ 2004)). The pattern was the same for the lexical item *Pākehā*, which appeared as *Pākehās* in the 1984 data (e.g. “My object was [...] to educate other *Pākehās* about the Māori ingredient in New Zealand history”) and *Pākehā* in the 2004 data (“this wall makes no distinction between Māori and *Pākehā*”).

Introduction of new Māori lexical items in the news

Some Māori alternatives for English lexical items did not appear in the 1984 data but appeared frequently in the 2004 data, suggesting the introduction, and/or greater acceptability, of some Māori lexical items on the news. One example of this was bilingual greetings. In the TVNZ 1984 data, there were no instances of Māori greetings (the greeting at the beginning of the news programme usually being the English *Good evening*), but the bilingual greeting *Kia ora Good evening* was used in a systematic manner at the beginning of each news programme in the TV3 2004 data, and also occurred once in the TVNZ 2004 data.

Another example involved the lexical items *iwi* (tribe) and *hapū* (sub-tribe). In the TVNZ 1984 data, there were no instances of the terms *iwi* and *hapū*; with rather several variations on the lexical item *tribe* being used, as illustrated in

Figure 2 below. In the TVNZ 2004 data, in contrast, there was a high incidence of the lexical item *iwi* and, to a lesser extent, the lexical item *hapū*.

Fig. 2: The lexical items *iwi* and *hapū* in the TVNZ data

Lexical items	TVNZ 1984 data	TVNZ 2004 data
Iwi / tribe	<p>“Hundreds of people from all <i>tribal groups</i> arrived at Turangawaewae to listen and express their views on the Treaty of Waitangi”</p> <p>“I would like to see each <i>tribal area</i> really express what they want out of the Treaty”</p>	<p>“The Committee also wants them to be given an <i>iwi-sized</i> share of the 750 million dollar fisheries deal”</p> <p>“It is incorrect for people to say we are an <i>iwi</i> but not for fishing purposes”</p>
Hapū / subtribe	N/A	<p>“Two small <i>hapū</i> are receiving special treatment”</p> <p>“Two Māori <i>hapū</i>, or sub-tribes, are a step closer to being recognised as <i>iwi</i>”</p>

There was a high degree of variability here, however; the TV3 2004 data was more likely to involve the use of *tribe* and *sub-tribe* than *iwi* and *hapū* and in some of the TVNZ 2004 news items the English alternatives *tribe* and *sub-tribe* appeared as well.

6.4 Where were Māori lexical items found in the news?

Despite these apparent changes in the use of Māori lexical items in the news between 1984 and 2004, it was clear that the similarities between the 1984 and 2004 data were more striking than the differences. One of the most obvious similarities was the overwhelming likelihood of Māori lexical items being used primarily in news items on Māori-related topics.

National/regional news items

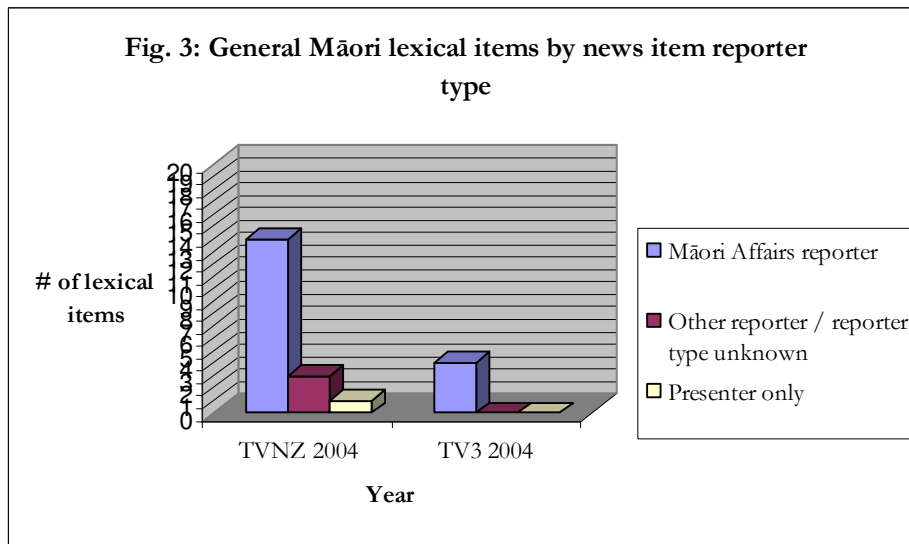
Strikingly, there were virtually no Māori lexical items in the national/regional news items analysed. The only instances were of proper nouns - *Waikato* (TVNZ 2004), *Makara* (TVNZ 2004) and *Manurewa* (TVNZ 2004) - and one greeting, *kia ora*, in a news item that was at the very beginning of the news programme (TV3 2004). This finding is consistent with Macalister's observation (2003: 65-66) that words of Māori origin were virtually non-existent in debates on 'general' bills as opposed to 'Māori-specific' bills in his corpus file of Parliamentary debates.

Māori-related news items

Within the category of Māori-related news items, topic appeared to be important at a more specific level. News items on some topics had a much higher number of General Māori lexical items than others. In the TVNZ 1984 data the greatest number of General Māori lexical items by far occurred in a news item on the topic of a hui on the Treaty of Waitangi and, in both the TVNZ 2004 and TV3 2004 data, the greatest number of Māori lexical items occurred in a news item on the allocation of fisheries assets to iwi by the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission. One possible reason for this is that news items about highly specific Māori issues such as these are more likely to include a greater number of Māori lexical items than news items that could be seen as more tangentially related to Māori people and culture, for example a news item about a Māori-related book winning a prize, or a news item about a group of Māori constructing a rest home. The picture was less clear in the TVNZ 2004 data, however. The number of General Māori lexical items was only high in one of the two fisheries-related news items in this data source, and it was very low in the three news items on the passage of the Foreshore and Seabed legislation, which can surely be seen as a Maori-related topic. Or can it?

News items by Māori affairs reporters

In the present research, the working definition of a Māori-related news item was broad, encompassing all items that related to Māori people and culture. A way of getting to a stricter definition of a Māori-related news item might be to look at what ‘type’ of reporter was used for a news item. A news item by a ‘political reporter’ on race-based policies might be better classified as a general political news item, rather than a Māori-related news item. An item by a ‘Māori Affairs’ reporter might be more specifically Māori-focused and for this reason likely to include more General Māori lexical items. There is support in the data for the hypothesis that Māori lexical items are used most often in news items that have been allocated to Māori Affairs reporters. Figure 3 shows General Māori lexical items by reporter type for the TVNZ 2004 and TV3 2004 data (figures for the TVNZ 1984 data are not shown, as reporter type was not specified in these news items).



6.5 Who used Māori lexical items in the news?

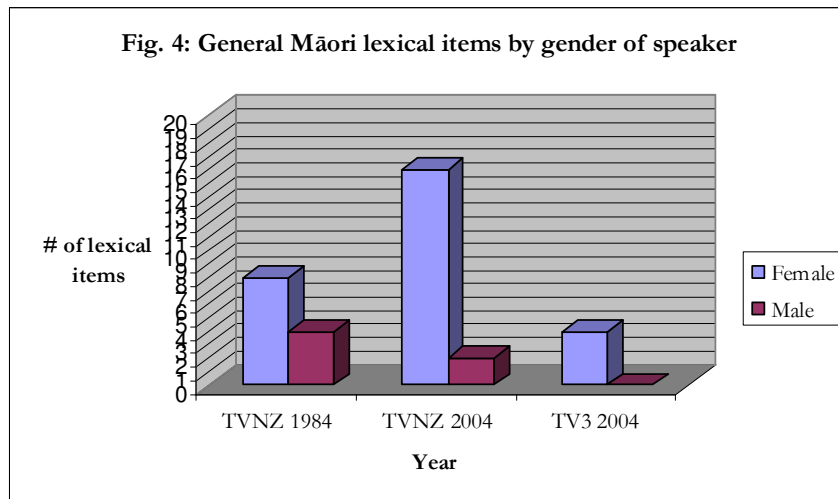
Type of speaker

Although General Māori lexical items occurred most frequently in news items allocated to Māori Affairs reporters, this did not mean that the Māori Affairs reporters were the ones using all the Māori lexical items. General Māori lexical items were used by a wide range of speaker types (including presenters, reporters and interviewees), again suggesting that it might be more the type of news item that is covered by a Māori Affairs reporter than the Māori Affairs

reporter himself or herself that influences the frequency of General Māori lexical items in a news item.

Gender

Figure 4 shows that, in all source years, women were more likely to use General Māori lexical items than men. This is most obvious in the TVNZ 2004 data, where sixteen of the General Māori lexical items were used by women, and two were used by men. In a survey of familiarity with words of Māori origin, Macalister (2003: 262) found that female respondents consistently showed greater knowledge of words of Māori origin than male respondents. However, given that the actual number of lexical items in the present research is small, the difference between women's and men's usage is not statistically significant. It is possible that the results for gender might not be replicated if a larger sample of news items was analysed.



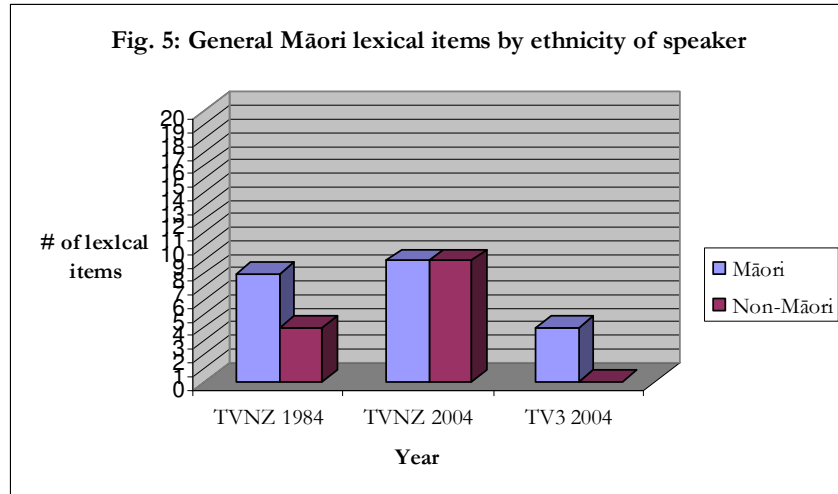
Ethnicity

Previous research has shown that New Zealanders who identify as Māori tend to both know and use a much higher number of Māori lexical items in New Zealand English than those who identify as Pākehā (Bellett 1995, Kennedy 2001: 74 and Macalister 2003: 263). Kennedy (2001: 74) found that in the WSE:

Speakers who identified themselves as having Māori ethnicity used over 17 Māori words per 1000 words when speaking English, while Pākehā speakers used about two words of Māori origin per 1000

words, and other members of the community used less than one word of Māori origin per 1000 words.

Figure 5 shows that in the TVNZ 1984 data and the TV3 2004 data Māori participants (presenters, reporters and interviewees included) were more likely to use General Māori lexical items than non-Māori participants⁶. In the TVNZ 2004 data the proportions were equal.



Holmes (1997: 74) comments that:

When one listens to the tapes in the Wellington Corpus of Spoken New Zealand English (WCSNZE), it is clear that more Māori vocabulary occurs, both in the informal conversations and in the broadcast interviews between Māori speakers, than in those between Pākehā. But it is equally true that Māori topics are more frequent in these interactions. Systematic research is needed in this area to investigate the relative frequency of Māori vocabulary in ME vs. Pākehā English in similar topic areas.

The present research tentatively suggests that when exclusively Māori-related topics are the subject of news items, Māori will still tend to use more General Māori lexical items than Pākehā in these news items. Analysis of a greater sample of news items would be required to produce more conclusive results.

⁶These results must be treated with great caution given that the speakers' ethnicity was ascertained by analyst estimation (based on factors such as name, appearance and accent) rather than by self-identification by the speaker.

Ethnicity and greetings within news items

Ethnicity also appeared to be related to the pattern of greetings within news items (c.f. greetings at the beginning of a news programme). In non-Māori related news items greetings within news items were always in English, regardless of the ethnicity of the participants, for example the greeting “Good evening Belinda” - “Hi Carol” between a Māori presenter and a non-Māori reporter in the TV3 2004 data. In Māori-related items, however, greetings were often in Māori. For example in a Māori-related news item in the TV3 2004 data the same presenter of the previous example said to a reporter “*Kia ora* Mereana, why are these new groups being recognised now?”, with the response “*Kia ora* Carol, well [...]”. In an interesting mixture of examples demonstrating this pattern, one of the TV3 2004 non Māori-related news items occurred at the beginning of the news programme, with the presenter giving a combination of a bilingual greeting to the audience and a greeting in English to the reporter he was about to interview:

Kia ora Good evening, in a rare show of unity, parliament has today passed a resolution condemning anti-semitism [...]. Hello Stephen[...]

Yes good evening John...

It was not possible to tell whether this pattern of greetings in Māori to Māori reporters in Māori-related news items was related primarily to topic or to the ethnicity of the addressee, given that Māori-related news items were usually allocated to Māori reporters. In general, however, the use or otherwise of Māori greetings in the news appeared to follow a similar pattern to the use of Māori lexical items in general: apart from the bilingual greetings to the audience in the TV3 2004 data, Māori lexical items were most likely to be used in Māori-related news items, and generally when Māori reporters were involved. All of these findings are consistent with previous research that has suggested that “Māori lexical items, other than proper nouns, are overwhelmingly used when the topic is specifically Māori” (Macalister 2003: 65-66).

7. Summary and discussion

7.1 What was the nature of the Māori language content in the news in 1984 and 2004?

The present research suggests that in both 1984 and 2004:

- a. Māori lexical items in the television news were very low frequency, with the number unlikely to be higher than previous estimations of under ten lexical items per 1000 in New Zealand English;
- b. Most Māori lexical items in the news fell into the category of Proper Nouns, followed by, in almost equal proportions, the lexical item *Māori* itself and General Māori lexical items, with no lexical items in the category of Flora and Fauna;
- c. General Māori lexical items almost without exception occurred only in Māori-related news items, and within this category were more likely to occur in news items allocated to Māori Affairs reporters; and
- d. General Māori lexical items were used by a wide range of speaker types (including presenters, reporters and interviewees) but were more often used by Māori than by Pākehā.

7.2 Was there much change between 1984 and 2004?

The research suggests there were some changes in how Māori lexical items were used in the mainstream television news between 1984 and 2004. In particular morphological integration of the lexical item *Māori* was less common in the 2004 data than in the 1984 data, and some Māori alternatives for English lexical items did not appear in the 1984 data but appeared frequently in the 2004 data. These differences suggest a move away from the morphological integration of Māori lexical items and the introduction, and/or greater acceptability, of some Māori lexical items on the news.

It is not clear from the data whether the Māori language content in the television news increased in frequency between 1984 and 2004. Māori lexical items were very low frequency in both 1984 and 2004 and no obvious increase was apparent between 1984 and 2004, with the number of Māori lexical items being reasonably

close for the TVNZ data for 1984 and 2004, and considerably fewer for the TV3 data for 2004. It is possible that there was no increase in the frequency of Māori lexical items on the news between 1984 and 2004, and perhaps that a trend towards increased Māori language content in the mainstream media was already well advanced by 1984. Indeed, researchers were already commenting on a perceived increase in Māori language content in the media in the mid-1980s (e.g. Deverson 1984). Whether or not such content has increased, decreased or remained static over the past 20 years continues to be a matter for investigation. Determining any increase in the frequency of Māori lexical items overall or in particular semantic categories would require analysis of a larger sample of news items.

7.3 Were there any differences between the TVNZ and TV3 data?

Based on the limited data analysed, TVNZ appeared to use a significantly higher number of Māori lexical items than TV3 overall. TV3 also appeared to use a significantly higher proportion of Māori lexical items in the Proper Nouns category as opposed to other semantic categories, which might be seen as reflective of a less sophisticated use of Māori lexical items. An analysis of one week of Māori-related news items is not enough to make a firm comparison between TVNZ and TV3, however. If analysis of a greater sample of news items confirmed that TVNZ did exhibit a higher frequency of Māori lexical items than TV3, one reason could be that TVNZ, as a public broadcaster, has a charter (formally implemented in March 2003) that obliges the channel to “ensure in its programmes and programme planning the participation of Māori and the presence of a significant Māori voice” (TVNZ 2003), whereas TV3, a commercial station, is under no such obligation.

8. Conclusion

The continued low frequency of Māori lexical items in the mainstream television news in 2004 and the tendency for Māori lexical items to be used almost solely in Māori-related news items and most often by Māori speakers suggest that Māori is still used only to a very limited extent in the mainstream television news in New Zealand, and in highly restricted areas. However, the increasing use of non-morphologically assimilated Māori lexical items, the introduction of new Māori lexical items and the now common use of Māori greetings on the news, also suggest an increasing orientation on the part of newsreaders, reporters and interviewees towards treating Māori lexical items as authentically Māori within

the context of New Zealand English, and a continued dynamic relationship between the Māori and English languages in New Zealand, with Māori lexical items continuing to enter into common usage in New Zealand English.

The mainstream broadcast media have arguably already had an influence on the standard pronunciation of Māori lexical items in New Zealand English, particularly that of place names (Gordon and Deverson 1998: 120). The mainstream television news may well also influence the nature and extent of use of Māori lexical items in New Zealand English more generally.

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