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EDITORIAL

We dedicate this issue to the memory of New Zealand's most accomplished, most durable, and most loved lexicographer, Dr Harold William Orsman CNZM (1928–2002), known to many simply as 'Harry O'.

The inaugural *NZWords* included the text of an address by Stuart Johnston at a Victoria University function marking the publication of Harry Orsman's *Dictionary of New Zealand English* in 1997. Here just a few years on in sadder times we print Professor Johnston's warm and eloquent tribute to his friend and colleague, delivered at the Requiem Mass for Harry in Wellington on 13 June this year.

In his regular contribution 'From the Centre' Graeme Kennedy also writes of Orsman's generous and invaluable legacy to New Zealand lexicography and to the New Zealand Dictionary Centre specifically.

As editor both of the first New Zealand dictionary (the Heinemann in 1979) and of the colossal work on historical principles that brought such deserved acclaim in his final years, Harry O's own place in history as pre-eminent recorder of New Zealanders' ways with words is assured.

Much interesting work on New Zealand vocabulary and vocabularies continues to be done, as evidenced by the three other contributions in this issue, all of which we can be sure Harry would have read with much pleasure. For all who venture into the field of New Zealand words Harry Orsman's lexicographical endeavours will be an inspiration and a profound influence for a very long time to come.

Tony Deverson
Editor, *NZWords*
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Tony Deverson

HARRY ORSMAN

AN ADDRESS GIVEN BY STUART JOHNSTON AT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST TERESA, KARORI, WELLINGTON, 13 JUNE 2002

It is a privilege to have been asked to speak about Harry Orsman. I have been trying to bring some order to the thoughts and feelings that crowded in on learning of his death, by reflecting on some of the meanings of the word 'character', as one might find them set out by a dictionary-maker like Harry.

In the literature curriculum that Harry and I studied, an interesting by-way was an unfamiliar 17th-century genre, that of the Character books: -collections of brief sketches of various types of person. At their best these Characters were crisp, witty, single paragraphs, full of insights from the writer's knowledge of particularly memorable individuals. I can think of so many titles under which a present-day writer could evoke the multi-faceted, multi-talented personality of Harry Orsman. Some of the 17th-century titles look promising: A Down-right Scholar, A Modest Man, A Good Old Man. How easy it would be to fashion the paragraph on A Family Man. Or the Character of a True Friend. For me the latter would be triggered by memories from 45 years ago, when we were both new householders, breaking in raw sections in Upper Hutt, and sharing the frustrations of the do-it-yourself challenged, and the hazards of getting into town in time to take 8 a.m. tutorials. I can think of so many acts of generosity and support from Harry over the years. He had so many friends who could say the same.

Many other Character sketches could reflect our experience of Harry—A Storyteller, for instance, although a further sketch would be needed, that of A Teller of Inconclusive Stories, given the way Harry was prone to interrupt himself with uproarious asides that swept him off track. You all have your favourite Harry stories, and will have a chance to share them after Mass. I loved the way that, fifty years on, Harry would still convulse himself with mirth recalling his exploits with those unwieldy early tape-recorders as he travelled the country collecting—and then sometimes erasing—oral evidence for his study of New Zealand language. How much would need to be packed into a sketch, inspired by Harry, entitled A Patient Scholar, or one capturing the essence of A Glad Teacher, alive with the spirit of Chaucer's Clerk: 'gladly would he learn and gladly teach'. Behind the sketch of A Compleat Editor could lie Harry's careful crafting of the reports of five royal commissions chaired by his good friend Thaddy McCarthy.

How fully Harry exemplified the character of An Oral Historian. Or that of A Prodigious Reader. Many of his students and colleagues could flesh out the sketch of A Wise Mentor. He had a remarkable gift for helping students who had got themselves into seemingly hopeless academic and administrative tangles. There was no stylised tableau like that of a kindly passer-by helping a lame dog slide over a stile; Harry's way was to lift them well clear of the obstacle, then give the impediment a good kick or two for being in the way. Behind the sketch of A Generous Collaborator could lie Harry's unstinted assistance to the editors of the supplements to the *OED*, and of the *Australian National Dictionary*, and to many others. Think what could be glanced at in the character sketch of A Mocker of Vanities. What rich memories would surface in recalling Harry as An Organiser of Conferences!

I could go on nominating such titles for Character sketches illuminated by our knowledge of Harry, and you would note the paradoxes and striking contrasts between them. I would simply enlist on Harry's behalf Walt Whitman's famous words:

Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself,
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)

THE NEW ZEALAND DICTIONARY CENTRE
A joint project between VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON and OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Turning to another richly evocative sense of the word, I reflect on the ways in which Harry was 'a bit of a character'. Or, in the vernacular he delighted in, a real dag of a joker. There was something inescapably roguish in his personality. We can all vividly recall encounters with his overflowing zest for life, his irrepressible sense of fun, his reluctance to conform to the bland pieties of social decorum, his impeccable sense of wrong—or right—timing on formal occasions, for choosing to share, too loudly for comfort, some subversive insight.

The more I came to know Harry over almost fifty years—and I defer to Des Hurley, Maurice McIntyre, and Felix Kane, who knew Harry at St Pat's, Silverstream; to Alistair Campbell, who met him at Weir House; and to others here who knew him for longer—the more I realised that what he had done was to create a highly colourful persona, a 'character', also confusingly called Harry Orsman, which he played hard whenever he was sufficiently provoked—by the crassness of some figures in authority, by the dullness of complacent conformity, or, most of all, by his finely tuned detection of unfairness or injustice. Those who saw Harry only in one of his more extravagant moments as a lord of misrule could make the grave mistake of thinking that this was the only Harry.

As age and declining health took their toll he put aside that rumbustious character. Perhaps the provocations just receded—so that everyone saw, all the time, the gentler Harry whom those closest to him had known, had admired, and had loved for many years. What was it they had known? If I may venture to speak for his colleagues, it was surely an extraordinary gift for friendship, a constantly enlivening wit, a remarkable sensitivity to the needs and difficulties of others, and unfailingly generous interest in and support for their work. That breadth of interest and encouragement reached out to people working in other fields, and not just in academic circles.

In the volume of essays assembled in honour of Harry I pointed to one of his greatest qualities: 'his gift for putting the decisions and ideas of others to the test of common sense and humanity', for saving us sometimes from our worst selves. That volume of essays and poems by twenty-eight of his colleagues and former students—the Festschrift *Of Pavlova, Poetry and Paradigms*—is testimony of a rare kind to the hold he had taken on their minds and hearts.

I like one dictionary's definition of the final sense of 'character' that shapes my regard for Harry. 'Character: moral strength, especially if highly developed or evident.' My focus in reflecting on this aspect is here—Harry's great *Dictionary of New Zealand English*. I do not need to traverse the whole story of his journey towards this high point of his scholarly career—it has become so well known. The dictionary itself in so many of its citations traces the growth of his fascination with New Zealand English from his childhood, 'down Havelock', onwards. As Harry was fond of saying, the project that began as a PhD thesis in 1951 rather got out of hand, and took the next forty-six years to complete.

It has been praised and honoured as a triumph of learning, as a masterwork of scholarship. I want to honour and praise it today as a triumph of character, of determination, of moral strength highly developed and plainly evident. How easy it would have been through those long years for him to let go of the vision, to have found any number of reasons for abandoning the project and letting the accumulated materials gather dust. What character there was in his sense of responsibility to his material, to the discipline he served, to those who had helped him, to the university he loved. I remain in awe of the way, in the latter stages of his work on the dictionary, that Harry took hold of the shifts in computer technology, seized funding opportunities, recruited excellent assistants, and turned his largely solo endeavour into a large-scale team project, led with flair and executive brilliance.

How marvellous it is that in the past nine years, from the year of Harry's retirement from the university, there have been so many festive occasions on which we have been able to see Harry's delight, both at the completion of his heroic task and at the recognition he had received. There was the launching of *Of Pavlova, Poetry and Paradigms* in 1993, then in July 1997 the formal launching of the *DNZE* by Sir Michael Hardie Boys at Government House. A few months later there was the public installing of Harry as Doctor of Literature at the university's graduation ceremony (marked, very unusually, by a standing ovation from the large assembly of his academic colleagues), followed a few weeks later by his appointment as a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit. We know how much Harry enjoyed this mark of recognition—as he told a reporter, he was not only rapt, he was glad-wrapped. Then in 1998 he was awarded the Montana Medal for the non-fiction book of the year.

He leaves a rich legacy, here in this volume, which will continue to inform, entertain, stimulate, and challenge for many decades to come. Harry's gifting of his intellectual property rights in the dictionary and the transferring of his rich store of research evidence—far more than could be directly used in the volume—have become the basis of the ongoing collaboration between Harry's publishers, OUP, and Victoria University, in the New Zealand Dictionary Centre, which is responsible for maintaining and updating the *DNZE* database and for future revisions of it, for conducting research on New Zealand language, and for preparing other dictionaries and related educational materials.

He leaves another legacy, intangible but immensely pervasive: the memories his friends, colleagues, and students will be buoyed up by as they have occasion to reflect, with enduring respect and gratitude, on all that Harry meant in their lives. Already messages are coming in from Harry's international colleagues at the headquarters of the *Oxford English Dictionary* and elsewhere that movingly express the loss they feel.

I have spoken of Harry as friends and colleagues have known him. I cannot hope to draw close to what his death must mean to Elizabeth and her children and their families. May I simply offer them, on behalf of you all, and of many more in many other places in New Zealand and in other countries, our love and sympathy; and the hope that our uniting with them and accompanying them in this Requiem liturgy will help to comfort and sustain them.

Maori Loanwords and New Zealand Humour

JOHN MACALISTER

It is the borrowings from te reo Maori that most obviously distinguish the New Zealand English vocabulary from that of other varieties of the language. Although the majority of these borrowings are used in a straightforward, literal sense, there is also a subversive undercurrent of use that draws on the Maori language to create a uniquely New Zealand humour. Quite possibly this undercurrent emerged early in New Zealand's post-contact history. This article discusses that use, and groups examples according to the word formation process used.

Humour is, of course, very much in the eye of the beholder. Dictionary makers may fudge the issue of defining humour by applying the descriptive label *joc*. In this discussion, the term will be taken to encompass the wry, the clever, and the creative. Sometimes, it needs to be noted, attempts at humour can be offensive. What may be acceptable intra-group is not acceptable inter-group. A Maori comedian such as Billy T. James could be celebrated for his linguistic humour, but similar jokes could be deemed offensive and racist when used by non-Maori.

Certainly, humour is something more than the generator of a belly laugh—or an unappreciative groan. Diana Witchel, writing in the *Listener* in 1992, commented on one such failed attempt at humour.

> At least everyone else looked professional beside Bert, whose idea of a Kiwi joke is to say: 'Kia Ora, Heinz and Worcestershire to you all!' Seeing what passes for light entertainment in the rest of the world makes you grateful we don't have any here.

Despite Witchel's gloomy assessment of the situation, there is plenty of evidence that humorous word play is alive and well in New Zealand. In New Zealand English, both Maori and Pakeha speakers use borrowings from the Maori language with humorous intent, and the examples used in this article derive from both. Indeed, with examples drawn from written sources it is often impossible to identify the author.

Creating Hybrids

The available data suggests that New Zealanders principally rely on two word formation processes when attempting this form of humour. Possibly the most common method of creating a humorous word is through *hybridisation*; that is, creating a term that contains an English-language element and a Maori-language component, with the new term being analogous to either a Maori or an English model.

Examples of hybrids created by analogy with a Maori original are the place names **Poofanui** (for the up-market resort of Pauanui) and **Tigertigerumu** (for Paraparaumu during the 2002 New Zealand Golf Open, which featured Tiger Woods). There is a potato variety called **Waitangy**, and in Otago the locals are alleged to practise **Scottytanga**, the key component of which appears to be the free borrowing of other people's possessions. Not all such creations are proper nouns. A farmer's march on Parliament was labelled a **cock-oi** (cf. hikoi), and from the Porirua area come reports of the weather being **makachilly** (after makariri).

Analogies with English-language originals are also to be found. One trouble-plagued inter-island ferry was rechristened the **Aratanic** by Wellingtonians, Waiouru's climate is celebrated in the moniker **Waiberia**, and

there are no prizes for guessing the location of **Rotovegas**. Another interesting creation is **Maussie**:

> 'I call myself a Maussie—a Maori Aussie. I've got a big moko tattooed on my chest.'

Other examples are **Whetugate**, **Tukugate**, and that Auckland institution, the **Kai Cart**.

The same process was at work in the creation of a list of the Top Five Maori Films of All Time, circulated by e-mail, that included **Four Hangis and a Tangi** and **Fear and Loathing in Rotovegas**.

A slightly different method of hybridisation is illustrated by such terms as **kina-cut**, **hui-hopper**, **mana-muncher**, and the fashionable shoe, the **pipi-picker**. In these examples, the first three of which appear to be of Maori invention, a new compound word is created from existing lexical items, one drawn from each of the two contributing languages.

Playing With Sound

New coinings other than those arising through the hybridisation process appear to be infrequent contributors to the lexicon of New Zealand humour; **tukus** as a synonym for 'underpants', for instance, does not appear to have caught on. A second process, *homophony*, however, contributes substantially to the corpus of examples, although it must be admitted that the sound similarity is often loose. Thus, another of the invented film titles, **There's Something About Maui**, Taranaki's inter-iwi sports competition, **Pa Wars**, and a shop named **Moazark**. Similarly, the opera singer Kiri Te Kanawa's name has given rise to some creative, perhaps apocryphal, restaurant dishes—**Curry Te Kanawa**, **Kiri Te Kumara**, and **Kiwi Te Kanawa**, a kiwifuit mousse.

The similarity between **paua** and 'power' has also provided opportunities for such word play, with **The Paua and the Glory** by A.K. Grant and Tom Scott being one example and the pseudo-protest slogan **paua to the people** another.

A personal favourite has to be the suggestion that Wellington's stadium situated beside the railway lines be named **Te Kapa**, for 'with appropriate decoration (a thin line drawn round it near the top), the stadium could be reminiscent of the old railways teacup'. Te Kapa would have provided an ironic counterbalance to the gravitas of Te Papa.

In this same category can be included a joke that went around some years ago. The joke works, at least in part, because New Zealanders have an awareness that syllable-timing is a feature of the Maori language.

> What's Maori for a car radio aerial?
> *Te kotanga*.

A similar example, included in a recent television documentary, *The Last Laugh*, was:

> What did the Maoris say to Captain Cook?
> Park here (pronounced *he-ah*).

Both of these jokes originated with Maori speakers, but become less acceptable when repeated by non-Maori. Another example, which was almost certainly a Pakeha creation and which would today be regarded as in dubious taste, is this riddle from the *Taranaki Punch* of 1861.

> Why is the Maori like a dutiful son?
> Because he is fond of his *pa*.

Sound similarities also explain pairings such as **hui-ing and fro-ing**, **too much hui and not enough do-ey**, and **the hoo-ha over puha**, as well as new creations along the lines of **koru-tastrophe** and, another personal favourite, **Te Ware Whare** (where everyone gets a bargain).

One-Off Humour

Many of the examples of humour arising from the interaction of te reo Maori and English share one or more of the following characteristics, characteristics that might limit an item's potential for assimilation into the New Zealand English lexicon: they are generally found in spoken New Zealand English rather than written; they are nonce formations; they are specific to particular events; they are regional; and often their intention appears to be to disparage, to make fun of someone or something or somewhere.

A considerable number of the examples cited above are therefore likely to be ephemeral creations, and not to become a permanent feature of the New Zealand English lexicon. There are, on the other hand, certain methods of lexical generation that appear to be well utilised means of adding humour to the lexicon. Often, but not always, they result in the creation of further humorous hybrids.

Productive Place Names

The first is the connotations attached to a handful of place names sometimes used to humorous effect. Place names are, of course, the most commonly encountered borrowing from te reo Maori into New Zealand English. Perhaps the most productive among them, for humorous purposes, is **Taranaki**, which, in *The Dictionary of New Zealand English*, provides ten such collocations, including **Taranaki bedside light**, **Taranaki salute**, **Taranaki sunshine**, **Taranaki topdressing**, **Taranaki violin**, and **Taranaki wool**, as well as the iconic **Taranaki gate**. To these could be added the more recent **Taranaki wind** (i.e. natural gas). The abbreviated form **the 'naki** would also be a candidate for the descriptive label *joc*.

Eketahuna (sometimes spelt **Ekatahuna**) is another place name often used to raise a smile, evoking as it does both quintessential rural middle-New Zealandness and the urban notion of the ultimate in backblockedness.

> The huge response when Richard [Long] was dropped … Mr and Mrs Eketahuna saw it as a divorce in the family.

> Dateline 1972: Arthur Hoggins, a 21-year-old plumber's mate from Eketahuna, was last night named the country's first Minister of Youth. His appointment … was announced by the leader of the new Nice Government, Mr Happy Smiles …

Another place name borrowed from Maori and sometimes used to humorous effect is that of the Auckland suburb **Remuera**, as in the nickname for the suburb's allegedly ubiquitous four-wheel-drive vehicles, the **Remuera tractor** or the **Remuera taxi**.

At a different end of the socio-economic scale, **Porirua** has also acquired certain connotations, as in **Porirua briefcase**, a possibly offensive term for that 1980s phenomenon, the ghettoblaster.

Further examples might include Lynn of **Tawa**, the imaginary **Waikikamukau**, and the bad taste **Waiouru blonde**, which, in addition to the meaning provided by Harry Orsman's *Dictionary of Modern New Zealand Slang*, is also reputed to be a sheep.

Ngati

The second well-accepted method is the use of the iwi prefix **Ngati** to convey a community of interest, as in **Ngati Cappucino**, **Ngati Koru Club**, **Ngati Nimby**, and **Ngati We-Were-Here-Firsts**, described as 'the holidaymakers who've been trekking over the hills for years' to Piha. Other examples, placed in a Maori military context, are **Ngati Walkabout** and **Ngati Kaupois**, a rendering of 'cowboys'.

Adapting Idioms

The third process that is likely to produce additions to the lexicon is that of substituting a Maori element for an English element in an English-language idiom, particularly when that idiom is fixed. For instance, 'to put the cat among the pigeons' becomes **to put the cat among the kereru**, or 'as dead as a dodo' **as dead as a moa**. **Knock me down with a mere**, on the other hand, is likely to have been a one-off, as is **kapa haka to Seatoun's ears**.

Other examples of the adaptation of fixed idioms are **to suck the kumara**, trying someone in a **kumara court**, and describing someone as being either **a pain in the puku** or **a couple of kumara short of a hangi**.

Not all idioms are fixed, however, and those that are not also have the opportunity to be adapted to humorous effect, although these have less likelihood of entering the lexicon. One such example is the newspaper headline **Have taiaha, will travel**.

Looking Ahead

This type of humour can operate successfully only in a New Zealand context. The fact that it exists and that it is appreciated is an indication of the degree to which borrowings from te reo Maori have entered New Zealand English and the degree to which New Zealanders have at least a passive knowledge of the Maori language. What the effect on New Zealand humour of these characteristics of the language situation will be in the future is impossible to predict, but it is safe to assume that there will be many more occasions to smile, to laugh, and, inevitably, to groan.

John Macalister is a PhD research fellow at the New Zealand Dictionary Centre at Victoria University of Wellington.

FROM THE CENTRE

The **New Zealand Dictionary Centre** is jointly funded by **Oxford University Press** and **Victoria University of Wellington** to research all aspects of New Zealand English and to publish New Zealand dictionaries and other works.

Graeme Kennedy, Director New Zealand Dictionary Centre

MAILBAG

The Editor of NZWords welcomes readers' letters and other contributions on their recent observations of New Zealand usage, both positive and negative. Please write to:

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Harry Orsman, doyen of lexicographers of New Zealand English, died on 10 June 2002, in his seventy-fourth year. For those who had the privilege of working closely with him, Harry was a loyal, generous, intelligent, and witty colleague who was the life and soul of any discussion, whether it involved just a couple of people or a couple of dozen. This life and character were movingly portrayed in the eulogy read at Harry's funeral by Professor Stuart Johnston, which is included elsewhere in this issue of *NZWords*.

More widely, Harry Orsman will be remembered as the scholar who was so in touch with New Zealand, its landscape, history, and people that through his lexicographical work he has helped to define what it means to be a New Zealander. Most particularly he recorded the development and use of English in this country, and brought this scholarly work together in the publication of his monumental *Dictionary of New Zealand English*, published by Oxford University Press in 1997.

Reflecting New Zeland Society

Much has been written about the *DNZE*, how it developed through fifteen drafts to reflect New Zealand institutions, social history, and sense of identity, and how it emerged as a product of Harry's engagement with an increasingly bicultural and multifaceted society. The *DNZE* is astonishing for its level of detail, ranging from a coverage of natural history, which included forty-six kinds of grass underpinning a rural economy, to the fifteen columns of the dictionary devoted to **fern** or the sixteen pages devoted to **bush**. The social history was treated just as thoroughly. His marvellous instinct for New Zealandisms encompassed not only colourful slang but also the ordinary. One of my favourites is his discovery that the use of **carry** in the sense of land **carrying** a certain number of animals to the acre could be first attested in New Zealand.

Although the *DNZE* was the culmination of Harry Orsman's work as a lexicographer, his scholarship had earlier found an audience in a series of smaller popular works. These included his two editions of the *Heinemann New Zealand Dictionary* (1979, 1989) and the *New Zealand Dictionary* edited jointly with Elizabeth Orsman (1994). Later there was the *Dictionary of Modern New Zealand Slang* published by Oxford in 1999.

Making Of The Centre

Another of Harry's legacies is the New Zealand Dictionary Centre. It is no exaggeration to say that the Centre would not exist today, as a joint venture between Victoria University of Wellington and Oxford University Press, if it had not been for the foundation that he laid by generously giving to the university the intellectual property rights to his lexicographical data, the product of almost fifty years study of the vocabulary of New Zealand English, and the basis from which he compiled the *DNZE*. Since 1997 this material has been incorporated into a digitised relational database, and it is being constantly updated, thus providing the basis for future editions and new dictionaries.

Harry Orsman was one of a line of Victoria alumni who carved out distinguished careers in what might have appeared at the time to be the unpromising field of lexicography. Sidney Baker, Robert Burchfield, Grahame Johnston, Bill Ramson, and George Turner, some of whom had been mentored by Professors Ian Gordon or Pip Ardern in Wellington, all had notable lexicographical careers. Robert Burchfield was appointed editor of what became the four-volume Supplement to the *OED* (1972–86). He also edited the *New Zealand Pocket Oxford Dictionary* (1986). Grahame Johnston edited the *Australian Pocket Oxford Dictionary* (1976), and George Turner was responsible for the second edition (1984). Bill Ramson compiled the *Australian National Dictionary* (1988). It was Harry Orsman, however, who through a lifetime of astute listening and reading did most to capture the distinctive New Zealand voice in the English lexicon.

The story is now well known of Harry, as a boy of 13 from the small town of Havelock in the Marlborough Sounds, coming to Wellington for his secondary education; of his time as a student at Victoria; of the several years he spent as a public servant in the Forest Service with a promising career in administration ahead of him, before he returned to lecture at his old university. Over the next four decades he became a much-loved teacher of Old and Middle English language and literature to several generations of students, all the while collecting material on New Zealand English, which was to find its way eventually into the great dictionary that became a fitting memorial to his scholarly life and work.

The Generous Scholar

A revealing insight into the scope and significance of his scholarship, and into the nature of the man, is to be found in the way he shared the priceless information he had collected over the decades with other lexicographers. The introduction to Volume I of the Supplement to the *OED* (1972) acknowledges that 'Mr H. W. Orsman presented to us his unique collection of some 12,000 quotations from the New Zealand works of the period from the rediscovery of New Zealand by James Cook until about 1950'. This was twenty-five years before he could publish the material himself in the *DNZE*. Similarly, when the *Australian National Dictionary* was published in 1988, Harry Orsman's contribution was acknowledged no fewer than three times in the introduction. He was also a consulting editor to other works, including the Macquarie and Penguin dictionaries. His interest in the influence of Maori on New Zealand English was repaid when he served as a technical consultant to the Ngata *English–Maori Dictionary* project (1993). Harry Orsman's legendary scholarly generosity was returned by academic friends who trusted not only his judgement on the origin and use of words but also the use to which he put the data they shared with each other. It is noteworthy that over the weeks before his death Harry was at work advising a recent PhD graduate on how to revise her lexicographical work for possible publication.

After a lifetime of scholarly hard graft, the honours came to Harry Orsman in retirement, among them the LittD from Victoria University, the Montana Medal for the year's outstanding work of non-fiction, and the appointment as a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit. Finally, there was the recognition from his lexicographical peers around the world. When news of his death reached colleagues at Oxford, Penny Silva, director of the *OED* project, eloquently summed up Harry's achievement as a lexicographer: 'Harry's contribution to New Zealand English was huge, but the effects of his work extended far beyond the national borders.' Colleagues at the New Zealand Dictionary Centre record our sorrow at Harry's death and extend our sympathy to Elizabeth and to all their family.

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UTU: A BIT OF GIVE AND TAKE?

MARIA BARTLETT

In July and August 2001 a total of 120 people were interviewed in four Christchurch malls and asked the question 'Have you ever heard of the word "utu"?' Their initial reaction, almost certainly, was to wonder why anyone would spend their weekends asking people such a question, which is a fair enough response. To understand why the particular word 'utu' might be of interest, it is necessary to revisit some assumptions about lexical transfer from Te Reo Maori (TRM) to New Zealand English (NZE).

It has been suggested that lexical transfer, 'loaning' or 'borrowing', has occurred from TRM to NZE in two waves. The first wave occurred in the early years of European settlement (the colonial intake), and the second as a result of the Maori cultural renaissance of the final quarter of the twentieth century (a 'koha Maori', as it were). The colonial intake primarily involved words *taken* by the European settlers to describe Maori society, native flora and fauna, and place names, for which there were often no English equivalents (a receiver-oriented transfer). The more recent intake, triggered by the Maori Renaissance, involves words *given* to the language, as a means for NZE speakers to better understand Maori society and the New Zealand cultural landscape (a donor-oriented transfer).

An important question arises from the assumption that there have been two waves of lexical transfer from TRM to NZE; namely, how is a word identified as part of the first or the second wave? In the same way that Orsman's *Dictionary of New Zealand English* uses early texts to identify the first written usage of a word as part of NZE, it ought to be possible to identify how more recent transfers occurred and at what point they entered the NZE lexicon.

Certainly, during the flurry of reporting that accompanied the sacking of Dover Samuels as Maori Affairs Minister in June 2000, and the subsequent police investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct, the utu angle provided great media fodder. All the major metropolitan papers and TV news programmes carried the story of Mr Samuels' supposed desire for utu. As far as exposure goes, the word 'utu' could have had no better publicity, and it is fair to say that the word had reached a level of mass use in NZE at this point.

There can be no doubt that 'utu' was part of the first wave of transfers, of interest to the colonials due to its specific relation to warfare practices, but Gordon and Deverson in *New Zealand English and English in New Zealand* (1998) acknowledge that words in the second wave of lexical transfer include those that fell into disuse after the first wave and were revived. If 'utu' can be included in the second wave, then it is under that subset of words given new life as a result of the Maori Renaissance.

Visual media played a crucial role in the 'reawakening' process of the Maori Renaissance, with images of the Maori appeal for justice and New Zealand's cultural struggle, such as Dame Whina Cooper's historic 1975 land march and the 1981 Springbok Tour, having a lasting effect on national identity. During this era, film-making in New Zealand experienced a significant upsurge, helped in large part by the efforts of Geoff Murphy and Bruno Lawrence.

Geoff Murphy's film *Utu* was released in 1983 and had the distinction of being the most expensive film ever produced in New Zealand at the time, the second biggest box office success (behind *Goodbye Pork Pie*), and the first to be included in the main programme at the Cannes Film Festival. As a consequence, it received significant media attention—the 'talkability' factor that advertisers, marketers, and PR professionals covet. In terms of an entry point into the NZE lexicon as a part of the second wave, the film *Utu* is a strong candidate as a vehicle for revival of the word 'utu'.

The word 'utu' is interesting, then, because it represents an opportunity for exploring the possible link between a significant media event and lexical development. Furthermore, 'utu' might be a part of both the *give* and *take* phases of lexical transfer from TRM to NZE, neatly fitting with the reciprocity aspect of utu itself. With this in mind, the question 'Have you ever heard of the word "utu"?' was a good starting point for exploration of the hypotheses.

Measuring Utu

An eleven-point questionnaire was developed to investigate the following hypotheses: (1) that before the Maori Renaissance the term 'utu' was not commonly used or understood by native NZE speakers; (2) that the term is now in mainstream use by native NZE speakers as a synonym for 'revenge'; and (3) that the film *Utu* was responsible for drawing national attention to the word and facilitating its journey into current mainstream use. Clearly the second is the easiest of the three elements to test, and care had to be taken to avoid leading questions with regard to the third.

If subjects answered 'no' to the first question about awareness of the word 'utu', then no further questions were asked, aside from the gathering of demographic information. The second question was a request for the subjects' personal definition of the word, and the full response was written down, in order to test the second hypothesis. The next five questions were designed to find out when and where the subjects last heard or saw the word, in reference to what situation, whether they considered the word to be used more or less now than in the past, and how they would use the word themselves.

Not until question 8 were the first and third hypotheses approached. The eighth question was optimistically included and asked whether subjects could remember the first time they had ever heard the word. It was expected that a great number of responses would be negative, simply because remembering the first occurrence of a word is not something that people are often called on to do, but the results for this question, as will be seen below, proved surprising.

The ninth question asked which setting had the greatest influence on respondents' personal definition of the word (e.g. family and friends, education, television, etc.), and the tenth, a multiple choice question, asked whether they had heard of the word 'utu' before hearing of the film *Utu*. This question was left until near the end to allow information to come out with as little prodding as possible earlier in the questionnaire. The final question asked whether the subjects could speak Maori fluently; this received no responses in the affirmative.

While interviewing, a screening question was used to establish whether respondents had been born in New Zealand or had lived here since the age of five. Attempts were made to balance the sample in terms of age and gender, but the final count was 65 females and 55 males, and there were varying numbers of people in each of the six decade-divided age categories (from younger than 20 to older than 60), totalling 19, 25, 17, 20, 19, and 20 respectively. Although the age categories were not perfectly balanced, at least six of each gender were included in each age range.

The Return

Besides age and gender, other characteristics of the sample included a weighting in favour of people raised in the South Island, constituting 80 per cent of the total. In terms of ethnicity, 81 per cent of respondents were NZ European / Pakeha, 8 per cent identified as being at least part Maori, 3 per cent as Pacific Island, and the remainder considered themselves either Kiwis or New Zealanders.

More than a third of subjects (36 per cent) had an education level of fifth form or less, 23 per cent had reached sixth or seventh form, 21 per cent had undertaken some kind of further training other than university, and 20 per cent had a university degree or higher.

The first striking result of the survey was to the first question. More than a third of the sample (35 per cent) had never heard of the word 'utu'. It rang no bells and meant absolutely nothing to them, which instantly makes the second hypothesis a little shaky. Checking across the age range, all but one of the nineteen subjects younger than 20 answered 'no' to this question, including three young Maori males. The best awareness of the word was among the 30–60-year-olds, who had a higher level of awareness than those younger than 30 and older than 60.

When it came to giving a definition for the word, of the seventy-eighty people who said they had heard of the word, only a third could cite a working definition. Many identified the word as being of Maori origin, but five thought it was African. Twelve people automatically mentioned the film, but as many as nineteen admitted directly that they did not know what its title meant. The most creative response would have to be 'somewhere near Taihape'. Clearly, hypothesis 2 can claim to apply to only around a quarter of the sample—a far lower proportion than was originally expected.

When subjects were asked how long it had been since they had last heard or seen the word used, two-thirds (68 per cent) said that it was more than a year ago. As far as identifying where it was that they had heard or seen the word, 37 per cent cited the movie, even though this was not one of the multiple-choice options. The next most popular choice was television (13 per cent). When asked to explain the situation the word was used to describe, around 40 per cent could not give an answer, but nineteen people said that it had something to do with the film, ahead of the thirteen people who said it had something to do with Maori or something to do with revenge. Already, support emerges for hypothesis 3.

In terms of frequency of use, exactly half of the people who had heard of the word 'utu' believed that the word is used less now than it was in the past. Only 10 per cent agreed that it was used more, and the rest thought that use was about the same (26 per cent) or were unsure (14 per cent). An overwhelming number (85 per cent) said that they would never be likely to use the word themselves, whereas 7 per cent said that they might use it when talking specifically about things Maori or with regard to current events. Seven people out of seventy-eight claimed that they would use the word in general conversation, and only three of those understood the word sufficiently to do so, given the definitions they supplied in question 2. The three subjects were all male, two of whom were New Zealand European/Pakeha raised in close association with Maori and who had fond recollections of the word, describing it warmly as having a humorous and friendly connotation.

In answer to question 8, which asked directly about the first time subjects had heard of the word 'utu', a great number said they couldn't remember (41 per cent), but an equally high number said that the film had introduced them to the word (36 per cent), which was a strong result for such a difficult question to answer. The next greatest number mentioned education (15 per cent), with some mentioning television (4 per cent), childhood (3 per cent), and the air force specifically (1 per cent). Again, hypothesis 3 appears to have some credence.

In terms of influences, more than half of the seventy-eight people who knew of the word cited New Zealand film and television as having the greatest influence on their understanding of the word, with fourteen people choosing education and the rest choosing a smattering of other sources, including six people who mentioned family and friends. It comes as no surprise, then, given the preceding results, that 60 per cent of subjects who knew of the word claimed that they had never heard of the word until they heard of the film, whereas 26 per cent had either at least heard of the word before they heard of the film, or were somewhat familiar with the word, or had known it since childhood. The rest knew of the word, but not of the film, which is interesting in itself.

Give And Take?

As far as fitting the idea of a role in the *take* phase of lexical transfer, followed by a renewed role in the *give* phase, the evidence could be considered supportive to some degree. The over-60 age group did not seem to have as high a degree of awareness as the 30–60 age group, which seems to indicate a rise in awareness in the middle-aged group that would correspond with the time of the Maori Renaissance. A closer look at the over-60 age group showed that only a quarter of them were familiar with the word before release of the film.

As has already been stated, only a quarter of the total number of subjects had a working definition of the word. This low level of direct knowledge could simply reflect the fact that 'utu' is not a very common word and is applicable only in specific circumstances. The evidence linking the film with first knowledge of the word is fairly strong, indicating that the film *Utu* created a 'spike' of awareness among a particular generation of New Zealanders but has not facilitated an increase in its general use.

The fact that some awareness of the word existed among the older population shows that 'utu' had not completely lapsed from the NZE lexicon after the first wave. The film boosted awareness of the word around the time of the second wave, but the effects have certainly waned, and in fact, with regard to 'utu', the tide of knowledge is almost completely out as far as the younger generation is concerned.

Seeking Utu

The survey results very clearly showed that the word 'utu' is not one that most NZE speakers are likely to use, even though around a quarter have the capacity to use it. Looking at a database of INL newspaper articles dating back to 1995, ninety instances of the word 'utu' were found in the text (not including the sixty-nine instances that mentioned the film or named a person or place). In other words, ninety articles out of the 1.4 million in the database included an active textual use of the word 'utu', which gives a fairly graphic indication of just how rare the word is. Even so, the majority of these articles (fifty-five) did not feel the need to include a definition alongside the word in text.

Most of the articles using the word 'utu' were talking about either Maori politics, New Zealand history, or Maori society, but some covered wider politics, sport, and general topics. 'Utu' in its abstract sense was variously described as a concept, notion, principle, law, or tradition, but the more interesting textual uses of the word related to the 'act of utu' or to a sense of vengeance. Many of the uses were direct substitutions for the word 'revenge', as the following examples indicate: 'savouring a side dish of utu'; 'Samuels seeks utu'; 'getting utu on the Taniwhas'; 'as Winston takes his utu'; 'I want utu against my enemy'; 'East Coast exerted [presumably meaning 'exacted'] some utu'.

As far the act of utu was concerned, phrases related either to the initiator of utu or the receiver of utu. The above examples relate to the initiator of utu, who may seek, desire, get or take utu. Phrases describing utu frequently had violent or fearful overtones, with articles talking about 'the fury of utu', 'the threat of utu', 'the stench of utu', 'the fear of utu', and the 'feeling of utu'—something like foreboding. Utu was related to killing, maiming, and assault in the most extreme cases but also included public humiliation, political retaliation, and legal redress or compensation. As well as a reference to traditional tribal utu, in a modern context it was possible for the articles to talk of 'union utu' and even 'office utu', which constituted a sort of mischievous justice.

The reciprocal and continual nature of utu was captured in such phrases as 'cyclic utu', 'endless cycles of utu', and 'the pernicious cycle of utu'. Utu was also referred to as a calculation, in terms of the 'utu equation'. All of these examples demonstrate that although the word is infrequently used, it still has some vitality as part of New Zealand English and, in some cases, captures more than the limited notion of revenge.

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Anyone For Marbles?

LAURIE BAUER AND WINIFRED BAUER

As part of an investigation into the playground language of children funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand through the Marsden Fund, year 7 and 8 children (forms 1 and 2, 11 or 12 years old) were interviewed in thirty-three schools right around New Zealand. One of the questions they were asked concerned marbles. We were primarily concerned with two matters: the names of individual marble types, and the words used for the difference between a game in which the winner keeps all the marbles they have won and a game in which all the players walk away with their own marbles. Although we also asked about games played with marbles, we were given very few details, and in general our survey cannot compete with that carried out by Brian Sutton-Smith (*The Folkgames of Children*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972).

The interviewer carried a bag of assorted marbles, selected from those available from our children's collection and a visit to some toy shops. Children (usually boys, but occasionally girls) were asked whether they played marbles, and if they said that they did or that they used to, they were asked about the names for the marbles in the bag, and then asked for other names for marbles and the games they played. The methodology had its advantages and its drawbacks. The advantages lay in providing a fixed set of stimuli to which the children could respond. The drawbacks turned out to be rather more important.

Because the marbles in the bag were virtually a random selection, some common types were not carried and some rare types were. Moreover, some types were carried in two slightly contrasting exemplars. Because the marbles in the bag were randomly selected, they were not necessarily prototypical examples of any particular type; this meant that children argued about whether a particular marble was or was not a member of category X, or would give two labels for the same marble if it had aspects of two prototypes.

The result is an often confusing plethora of labels for the researcher to wade through. Matters have been simplified here by not discussing names that were given in only one school (these might have wider currency, but we have no way of knowing) and by attempting to sort out the features to which the children were responding in giving different names; this, of course, presupposes the interviewer's proper understanding, which is probably a dangerous assumption to make.

The students who answered the question ranged from those who (like the interviewer) thought that they were all just marbles (although some were bigger than others) to those who provided a quarter-hour lecture on the niceties of the various games, the histories of the various types of marble, and the sociology of marble-playing in the relevant school.

Words such as *alley* and *taw/tor* are mentioned by Sutton-Smith as general names for marbles. These terms did not arise in our data. However, it would be premature to presume that they are obsolete, since our methodology led to our asking about *marbles* and did not give the opportunity for these other terms to come up.

Marbles By Size

Marbles come in different sizes. The default marble size is occasionally called a **normal** or a **shooter**, and a smaller size is called a **peewee**. The larger sizes have a wide range of names, but the names do not always refer to the same size of marble. Thus two large marbles of different sizes were both referred to as **bonkers** and **donks** (the word **donk** was restricted to Northland in our data), and one large marble was referred to by as many as fourteen different names. When different names for sizes were reported, it was not always possible to gather what the hierarchy of sizes was or whether the same hierarchy applied in all schools. As well as the names already mentioned, the following were used for various kinds of large marble: **bonk** (rare), **conker** (South Island only), **emperor** (North Island only), **grandad** (**grandaddy, grandfather, grandpa**), **giant, godfather, jumbo, king, queenie, titanic**.

Marbles By Pattern

The difficulty in a publication that does not provide colour photographs is to describe each of the relevant patterns in a way that can be understood. There were several basic patterns, with a number of names each.

The default marble is clear glass with a twist of coloured material in the centre. This type is usually called a **cat's eye**, although this label was not used in Northland where **budget** was sometimes given instead, and the term **leafie** was provided as an alternative only in the Nelson–Marlborough area. Another alternative provided sporadically was **dummy**.

The next most obvious pattern is one in which the marble has a single background colour, but has three or four stripes (usually of different colours) running from pole to pole. This was most frequently termed a **beachball**, and sometimes a **candy**.

A marble with a particularly shiny coloured surface is called a **pearl** if it is white, although *pearl* is submodified by a colour term in other cases.

A ballbearing used as a marble is, for obvious reasons, called a **steelie**.

A marble whose surface provides the same optical impression of a rainbow that a pool of spilt oil provides is called an **oily.** This label was sometimes extended to marbles whose surface pattern showed two or more colours mixed through each other.

A marble on whose surface there are a number of lines intertwined in a random manner is called a **spaghetti**. Similarly patterned marbles were sometimes called **swirlies**, although no single school reported the two names as synonyms.

A transparent marble made out of coloured glass has a number of possible names. The ones in the interviewer's bag were made of brown glass and were called **smokies** or **coca-colas** (**cokes, colas**). These were occasionally also called **clearies**, a name that apparently applies to marbles of other colours as well. This term was also used occasionally for a marble with only a small amount of superficial colour, otherwise known as a **bird's cage**.

There were two speckled marbles in the interviewer's sample bag, one showing coloured speckles on a white background, the other showing the same speckles on a black background. Usually these were both included under the term **galaxy**, although the name **speckled egg** was sometimes applied to either colour. Sporadic, less polite names were used for the white one.

Black and white marbles were termed **dalmatians**, although there were occasional references to other black and white animals, including **pandas**.

Some children reported knowing about **Chinese marbles**, which are flat on one side, although the interviewer had none of these.

Finally, a marble that was opaque, as if made of frosted glass, was referred to as a **frostie** or a **champagne**.

A few other labels were recurrent, although they did not refer to marbles in the interviewer's bag or their reference was not clear: there were various alternative kinds of eye, including **pirate's eye**, as well as **genie, milk shake, red devil**, and **toothpaste** (this last possibly an alternative name for a *beachball*).

To Keep Or Not To Keep?

If you keep the marbles you win, children overwhelmingly speak of playing **for keeps** or just **keepsies** (sometimes both names were given from the same school). Only in the south of the South Island was the term **keepers** an alternative. Some children had no term for the other state of affairs, although **friendlies** and **friendsies** were the most common terms, with **funsies** a long way behind numerically. All the schools that reported *friendsies* also reported *keepsies*, but not vice versa.

The Games

The number of recurrent names that were offered turned out to be small, in some cases no doubt because games were described rather than named. **Holes** (**holies, holesies**), **tic-tac-toe**, and **clicks** (**clickies**) were the most commonly named games. One minor variation of interest is that an **eye-drop** (when you get very close to an opponent marble, instead of firing at it on the ground, you pick up your marble and attempt to drop it on the opponent from **eye-height**) turned up elsewhere as an **eagle-drop**. We cannot say how widespread either of these terms is.

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