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Te Pātaka Rangahau a Te Whare Pāremata

The Māori Language: Selected Events 1800-2009

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SUMMARY

- ▶ This chronology outlines key events and dates since the early 19th century relating to the Māori language.

Early 19th Century

Māori is the predominant language of New Zealand.

1814

Missionaries make the first attempts to write down the Māori language.

1835

St Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians are printed in Māori. This comes to be known as the first Māori book.

1842

The first Māori language newspaper is published.

1844

The first edition of the Māori-English language Williams Dictionary is published.

1858

The Native Districts Regulation Act 1858 and the Native Circuit Courts Act 1858 are the first Acts of the government printed in Māori.

1865

The Native Land Act 1865 is the first Act of the New Zealand Parliament to be printed in Māori.

1867

The Native Schools Act decrees that English should be the only language used in the education of Māori children.

1870s

Following the New Zealand Wars, society is divided between Māori and Pākehā. Māori is the predominant language in Māori areas.

1913

Ninety percent of Māori school children are native Māori speakers.

1920s

By the 1920s Māori grammar is taught in only a few private schools.

Sir Āpirana Ngata encourages Māori communities to promote the use of the Māori language in homes and communities, while also promoting English language education for Māori in schools.

1930s

Māori remains the predominant language in Māori homes and communities. However, the use of English begins to increase, and some Māori leaders continue to support English-only education.

1940s

Māori urban migration begins.

1950s

Māori urban migration continues. This discourages the use of the Māori language.

1960s

Playcentre supporters encourage Māori parents to speak English to prepare Māori children for primary school.

Early 1970s

Concerns for the Māori language are expressed by Māori urban groups including Ngā Tamatoa and Te Reo Māori Society.

1973-1978

A national survey shows that approximately 70,000 Māori, or 18-20 percent of Māori, are fluent Māori speakers, and that most of these are elderly.

1975

The first Māori Language Week is held.

1978

Rūātoki School becomes the first officially bilingual school in New Zealand.

1979-1980

Te Ātaarangi movement is established to restore Māori language knowledge to Māori adults.

1980s

Experiments in Māori radio broadcasting lead to the establishment of Te Upoko o te Ika and Radio Ngāti Porou.

1982

Te Kōhanga Reo is established to promote the Māori language among Māori infants. In 1990 an estimated 9,299 Māori are enrolled in Te Kōhanga Reo and 10,600 by 2004.

1983

A news programme in Māori, 'Te Karere', begins on television.

The first Māori-owned Māori language radio station goes to air.

1985

The first Kura Kaupapa Māori is established to cater for the needs of Māori children emerging from Te Kōhanga Reo.

1986

Te Reo Māori is found by the Waitangi Tribunal to be a taonga guaranteed protection under the Treaty of Waitangi.

1987

The Māori Language Act is passed in Parliament. Māori is declared an official language and Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission) is established.

1989

The Education Amendment Act provides formal recognition for Kura Kaupapa Māori and wānanga (Māori tertiary institutions).

The Government reserves radio and television broadcasting frequencies for use by Māori.

1992

A survey finds 58 percent of non-Māori and 89 percent of Māori agree Māori should survive as a spoken language.

1993

The Māori broadcasting funding agency Te Māngai Pāho is established to promote the Māori language and culture.

More than twenty iwi radio stations broadcast throughout New Zealand.

1995

He Taonga Te Reo (Māori language year) is celebrated. Hui Taumata Reo Māori is held in Wellington.

A survey shows that about 10,000 Māori adults are very fluent speakers of Māori.

1996

The Aotearoa Māori Television Network broadcasts in the Auckland area (the Network ceases operating in 1997).

1997

The Cabinet agrees that the Crown and Māori have a duty, derived from the Treaty of Waitangi, to take all reasonable steps to actively enable the survival of Māori as a living language.

1998

The Government announces funding for a Māori television channel and increased funding for Te Māngai Pāho.

1999

The Government announces objectives and monitoring indicators for its Māori Language Strategy. The goals are:

- To increase the number of people who know the Māori language by increasing their opportunities to learn Māori;
- To improve the proficiency levels of people in speaking Māori, reading Māori, and writing Māori;
- To increase the opportunities to use Māori by increasing the number of situations where Māori can be used;
- To increase the rate at which the Māori language develops so that it can be used for the full range of modern activities;
- To foster amongst Māori and non-Māori positive attitudes towards, and accurate beliefs and positive values about, the Māori language so that Māori-English bilingualism becomes a valued part of New Zealand society.

2000

The Cabinet agrees that the establishment of a Māori television channel is a Government priority within the Māori broadcasting policy area.

A survey finds that 94 percent of Māori and 90 percent of non-Māori believe it is good for Māori people to speak Māori on the marae and at home. Another 68 percent of Māori (40 percent of non-Māori) believe it is good for Māori to speak Māori in public places or at work.

2001

A survey indicates that nine percent of Māori adults can speak Māori very well or well.

2002

Mā te Reo Fund is established to support Māori language growth in communities.

2003

The Revised Government Māori Language Strategy is launched. The goals to be achieved by 2028 are:

- The majority of Māori will be able to speak Māori to some extent and proficiency levels in speaking, listening to, reading and writing Māori will increase.
- Māori language use will be increased at marae, within Māori households, and other targeted domains.
- All Māori and other New Zealanders will have enhanced access to high-quality Māori language education.
- Iwi, hapū and local communities will be the leading parties in ensuring local-level language revitalisation. Iwi dialects of the Māori language will be supported.
- The Māori language will be valued by all New Zealanders, and there will be a common awareness of the need to protect the language.

The Māori Television Service Act is passed in Parliament.

2004

The Māori Television Service begins broadcasting.

Inaugural Māori Language Week Awards held in Wellington.

2005

The Māori Language Commission launches the interactive 'Kōrero Māori' website www.koreromaori.co.nz.

Microsoft Office and Windows in Te Reo Māori are launched.

2006

According to Statistics New Zealand in 2006 –

131,613 (23.7 percent) of Māori can converse about everyday things in Te Reo Māori, an increase of 1,128 people from the 2001 Census.

One-quarter of Māori aged 15 to 64 years can hold a conversation in Te Reo Māori.

Just under half (48.7 percent) of Māori aged 65 years and over can hold a conversation in Te Reo Māori.

More than one in six Māori (35,148 people) aged under 15 years can hold a conversation in Te Reo Māori.

A survey indicates that 14 percent of Māori adults can speak Māori very well or well.

A survey finds that 98 percent of Māori and 96 percent of non-Māori believe it is good for Māori people to speak Māori on the marae and at home. Another 94 percent of Māori (80 percent of non-Māori) believe it is good for Māori to speak Māori in public places or at work.

2008

The second Māori Television channel, Te Reo, is launched.

Google Māori, the Māori interface of online search engine Google, is launched.

The first monolingual Māori dictionary is launched.

2009

An independent panel, Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, completes reviewing the Māori Television Service Act 2003.

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