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# **Netting the Maroro:**

## **An exploration of**

## **Cook Islands teachers' beliefs**

## **about language learning**

## **and teaching**

A thesis presented in partial  
fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
in Second Language Teaching  
at Massey University  
Palmerston North

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2003

## **Abstract**

Teachers' beliefs play an important role in teachers' decision making processes and affect their practice. Beliefs are situated within specific contexts. Little work has been done to investigate the beliefs of language teachers in the South Pacific. This study investigated the beliefs about language learning and language teaching of Cook Islands teachers working in Rarotonga, Cook Islands. The research used a qualitative approach based on questionnaires, interviews, and stimulated recall, including detailed case studies of three teachers.

The findings suggest that the Cook Islands teachers involved in this study held beliefs about the language learning process, the nature and use of language, Cook Islands learners, the challenge of risk-taking by students in schools and the teacher's role within the classroom. Beliefs about the language learning process included those relating to initial and ongoing language acquisition, the relationship between written and spoken language, and the teaching strategies best suited to effective language learning. The role of phonics, reading, and the place of modelling were identified as particularly important. Beliefs relating to the nature and use of language included strongly identified beliefs about the links between culture and language and about the relationship between the languages used in the Cook Islands. Bilingualism was seen as an ideal goal but getting there was seen as problematic. Teachers' beliefs about learners included beliefs about affective factors and the idea of learner readiness. Beliefs were held about the particular problems associated with risk-taking in Cook Islands classrooms. Teachers held beliefs about their roles, particularly in the relationships they have with students and school administrators including the ideas of tolerance and patience in providing a good learning environment for students.

In situations where decision-making was needed, but individual beliefs were in conflict with each other, the process of more centrally held beliefs overriding other less centrally held beliefs was observed.

Many of the beliefs held were influenced by teachers' own language learning experiences. Significant events in the teachers' lives were identified as important sources of beliefs and motivation. The influence of the historical colonial setting was particularly evident.

The research shows that Cook Islands teachers have specific beliefs that influence their practice. These beliefs were found to be strongly related to the historical, social and professional context of the believer. Because of the effects of beliefs on practice it is important for beliefs to be considered in any process of teacher change. The findings of this research should help towards an understanding of teacher beliefs necessary for future initiatives aimed at improving language teacher practice.

# Acknowledgments

*E teia nei*

*Ko Iesu tei atu mou*

*Akameitaki au iakoe*

*Akateitei au iakoe*

*Kia tapu to'ou ingoa*

*E tuatau atu*

I would like to thank the following people for their assistance in the preparation of this thesis.

Mr Ken Matheson, Secretary for Education, who allowed me access to schools in Rarotonga and encouraged the research.

Staff of the Cook Islands Curriculum Unit, who gave generously of their time and through discussion provided insight into local school culture.

The teachers and students of the Cook Islands, particularly the three teachers who allowed me to enter their lives. Thank you for the way you opened your hearts to me.

Margaret Franken, my supervisor, who encouraged me to do this in the first place and who provided advice and direction. Her expert knowledge of the field and useful feedback proved extremely helpful.

Richard, Sarah, Katie and Stephanie, my family, who provided support in so many ways.

Meitaki ma'ata koutou.

Kia orana e kia manuia.

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# **Chapter One      Introduction**

*All thinking begins in wonderment.*

Socrates

This thesis explores the beliefs some Cook Islands teachers have about language learning and language teaching. The main focus of this study is their beliefs about English language learning and teaching. English is a second or third language for most teachers in the Cook Islands and for most of the students. The researcher was prompted to investigate teacher beliefs whilst providing in-service training to teachers on a number of islands in the Cook Islands.

When planning for teacher training and teacher development it is important to consider the things the students or teachers involved bring to the training. Previous experience, knowledge and beliefs will have a bearing on how teachers and learners receive new material presented to them. Interpretations of material are coloured by what teachers and learners already believe, know and understand. It seems likely that teachers' beliefs about language would be influenced by a number of factors including their experience in their first language, usually a dialect of Cook Islands Maori.

The literature suggests that teachers' beliefs must be considered as they contribute to the decisions teachers make in their day to day classroom practice. Knowledge of these beliefs is therefore useful, providing insight into the reasons why teachers act and react in certain ways.

Schools in Rarotonga, Cook Islands provided the context for this study. Rarotonga is the largest island in the Cook Islands, a small country in the South Pacific. Rarotonga had a population of about 8000 people in 2001. It is the administrative centre for the

group of fifteen small islands spread over two million square kilometres of ocean. There are thirteen schools in Rarotonga. These range in size from Rutaki School with 34 pupils to Tereora College (the only full secondary school) with 450 pupils. The schools are located around the perimeter of the island in the main villages. Most Cook Islands teachers work in Rarotonga for at least part of their working lives.

The interest in teachers' beliefs was stimulated by observations of classroom teachers' practices in language teaching and involvement in in-depth discussions with teachers. The researcher realised that a greater understanding of teachers' beliefs might help in the development of more effective in-service training in the context of the Cook Islands. It was also thought that an understanding of the history of education in the Cook Islands, with a particular focus on language policy, would provide an important angle from which to view teacher beliefs.

The research was therefore framed around the question: What are Cook Islands teachers' beliefs about English language learning and language teaching? It was decided that to answer the question a qualitative methodology would be employed. The results of this research will give teacher trainers some insight into what teachers believe in the area of language teaching and learning and this should prove helpful for course planning and decision making for both pre-service and in-service training.

There were two phases to the research. First, a general questionnaire was given to approximately one-third of the teachers working in Rarotonga. The responses gave a general view of teacher beliefs and gave direction for in-depth interviews and observations of a smaller group of teachers. The second phase involved exploring beliefs in detail with a smaller group of teachers. Three teachers were interviewed. They then took part in stimulated recall, where lessons in classrooms were observed and videotaped, forming the basis for subsequent discussion of aspects of their classroom practice. Time was spent talking with language advisers as part of the development of the interviews. Interviews were taped and transcribed.

In order to explore English language teachers' beliefs in the Cook Islands, it is necessary first to provide background contextual information. This includes a historical background of the Cook Islands with a focus on education, particularly language education, and a review of the roles of the two languages, Cook Islands Maori and English, in education during the course of history. This is done in Chapter Two. Chapter Three presents a review of relevant literature. The concept of beliefs is explored and literature concerning the nature and effects of beliefs is reviewed. Teachers' beliefs and the link between beliefs and practice are discussed, with specific reference to teaching English as a second language. However there is a limitation in that the cultural perspective on which much of the reported research is based is not locally grounded.

The methodology employed in this research is outlined in Chapter Four. The three methods used in the study to explore the nature of selected teacher beliefs were questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and stimulated recall. These are described in Chapter Four.

In Chapter Five the results are presented in three main parts. Firstly results from the teacher questionnaire are described. Secondly the in-depth interviews with three teachers are reported on individually using six broad groupings generated from the data. Finally there is a section summarising the key findings on teachers' beliefs. The results are discussed in Chapter Six. The key teachers' beliefs about language learning and language teaching identified in the results are discussed and comparisons with previous research findings are made. The effects of teachers' beliefs, especially effects on teachers' classroom practice, are explored. The sources of teachers' beliefs and the significance of these sources are discussed. Implications of this research for professional development for Cook Islands teachers are suggested in the final chapter.

## **Chapter Two      The Context**

*An historical period is not a watertight compartment, containing only what it has itself created, sharing nothing with what has gone before and what comes after. It is a tangle of movements and forces, of various origin, sometimes intertwined and sometimes running parallel, some beginning, some in their prime, some in decay; streaked with anomalies and freaks of nature; coloured by physical conditions, by national characteristics, by personalities; struck across by unexpected, inexplicable stirrings of the spirit of God or of man; yet with every strand part of what is past or what is to come; a great river ever fed by new streams, its course continuous and abrupt, chequered and unfaltering, now thundering over a sudden cataract, now partially diverted into a backwater and carrying on its mysterious surface fragments of wreckage, survivals of an earlier day, not yet dissolved into oblivion.*

Lord David Cecil.

A brief presentation of contextual information is important to situate the study of teacher beliefs. As Lord David Cecil comments, no situation is free from the influence of previous happenings and is intertwined in ongoing events. To understand a situation these relationships must be considered.

### **2.1      Country Description**

#### **2.1.1      Geography**

The Cook Islands is a self-governing independent country in the South Pacific. It is comprised of 15 islands with a total land area of 241 sq km. These islands are scattered over approximately 2 million sq km of ocean. There are two groups of islands in the Cook Islands, distinguished by location, geology and climate. The

Northern Group islands are coral atolls with a deep inner lagoon surrounded by sandy *motu* (small islands). The Southern Group islands are volcanic in nature with fertile soil and a fringing reef. Rarotonga is the largest of the Cook Islands and is the centre for government and business in the country. This island is 32 km in circumference. It is dominated by high volcanic peaks and surrounded by a fringing tropical reef.

At present there are approximately 14 000 people living in the Cook Islands. Of these, roughly 8000 live on Rarotonga and 2500 live on Aitutaki. The rest live on 11 of the remaining islands. Each island has recently been given a large degree of control over its own affairs, although this has not been the case through most of their modern history. Health and education services are still controlled centrally from Rarotonga.

### **2.1.2      Economics**

Economically the country depends on tourism, off-shore banking and the black pearl industry as well as aid from mostly Pacific Rim and some European countries. There are some agricultural activities in the Southern Group, particularly the cultivation of *taro*, the staple food for many, and coconuts. This agriculture is mainly for family use. Subsistence fishing is also important on all islands except Rarotonga. In the Northern Group there is no arable land except for small areas on Pukapuka, so coconuts and local fish provide much of the required nutrition for the populations there. Supplementary imported food is important in many islands and is depended upon by most residents on Rarotonga.

### **2.1.3      The People**

Cook Islanders are Polynesians. Family ties are important in this society with extended families still living together or in close proximity to each other, particularly in outer islands. Responsibility for children is often shared between adult family members and many children are cared for by grandparents. Family land is a very important part of life in the Cook Islands. It is shared out between the family

members according to need but always remains in the family. Decisions about land are usually made by family leaders although the Land Court is used to record decisions. The sale of land is prohibited in the Cook Islands.

#### **2.1.4     Influence of the church**

The church plays an important role in most people's lives. The most influential church is the Cook Islands Christian Church (CICC). It runs a Sunday School programme parallel to a child's formal state education. Teaching practice in the Sunday Schools is instructional, didactic and involves large amounts of rote learning, repetition and question and answer based upon absolutes. Its influence is very strong amongst members and it advocates firm imposed discipline as a solution to almost all youth and child problems. Church related activities are frequent and time consuming for many families. Other churches such as Seventh Day Adventist, Catholic, and Church of the Latter Day Saints have congregations on most islands. The Cook Islands Christian Church is particularly strong on outer islands.

#### **2.1.5     Employment**

On Rarotonga levels of employment are higher than on outer islands because of the demand from tourism, central government and private enterprises for employees. On the outer islands opportunities for employment are far fewer. For example on the island of Rakahanga, which has a population of 250 people, only 25 people are in paid employment (Cook Islands News, 2001). The rest of the population is occupied in subsistence-type activities. Local wages tend to be quite low.

#### **2.1.6     Language**

The native language spoken by most people is Cook Islands Maori. Palmerston Island alone uses an archaic version of English as the first language of the approximately 50

inhabitants. The status of languages and dialects used in the Cook Islands is not agreed. Balawa (1996) maintains there are three distinct languages in the Cook Islands: Pukapukan, Penrhyn and Rarotongan, with Penrhyn and Rarotongan having various dialects. Arnell (1996), however, views Cook Islands Maori as a main language with various dialects being spoken in the northern and southern islands, and Pukapukan being a dialect closely related to Samoan and Tokelauan. The general consensus in the Cook Islands is that there are two distinctive indigenous languages, Cook Islands Maori, sometimes called Maori, (referring to all the dialects spoken in all islands except Pukapuka) and Pukapukan. Cook Islands Maori is recognised as belonging to the Eastern Polynesian language group, and every island from Penrhyn to Mangaia, because of their mutual intelligibility, speaks a dialect of Cook Islands Maori (Language Policy Report, 1997). Rarotongan Maori has been accepted as the *lingua franca* between all islands. The island of Pukapuka has a separate language, Pukapukan, which is more similar to Samoan than to Cook Islands Maori.

On all islands except Rarotonga, Palmerston, Pukapuka and to a lesser extent Aitutaki Cook Islands Maori is the language used by local residents for all communication except in school lessons. On Rarotonga Maori and English are both used. English was adopted as the official language of the Cook Islands since the start of the colonial period in 1915 (Arnell, 1996). No Maori dialect has official language status although there are plans to give Rarotongan official language status alongside English. At present there is a declining use of Maori on Rarotonga, and the status of Rarotongan Maori relative to the status of English is low (Language Policy Report, 1997).

### **2.1.7 Schools**

The following statistics illustrate the size and staffing of schools in the Cook Islands based on figures from the Cook Islands Ministry of Education. In the Cook Islands there are a total of 34 schools. Of these 25 are government schools, 7 are Church schools and 2 are private schools. In March 2001 there were 4657 students, 2709 of whom were on Rarotonga. A total of 253 teachers were employed with approximately

one quarter being male teachers (Cook Islands Education Statistics Digest, 2001). Expatriate teachers are employed especially for secondary schools. Approximately 25% of all teachers working at secondary level in 2001 were expatriates.

There is a major problem with retention of students as they progress through the school system in the Cook Islands, e.g. in 2001 there were 504 students enrolled in Grade 1 (Year 1) across the country, and only 22 in Form 7 (Year 13). Most students complete nine years of schooling, with a steady decline in numbers for each year after that.

School curriculum statements are similar to New Zealand curricula. Many have been based on the New Zealand model. Students are eligible for New Zealand secondary qualifications at most Southern Group schools with an additional certificate (Cook Islands School Certificate) at a lower level than New Zealand School Certificate. This was being phased out over 2000-2003.

Many Cook Islands teachers have limited tertiary experience. Sixteen percent of all teachers (including New Zealand and Australian expatriates) hold a university degree and 14% are uncertified. The rest hold some sort of teaching certificate, with the most common being the Cook Islands Teaching Certificate or Diploma. Many teachers are nearing retirement with 36% of teachers being over the age of 50 years, and 59% over the age of 40 years. Most teachers are paid between NZ\$10000 – NZ\$15000 per annum (Cook Islands Education Statistics Digest, 2000).

## **2.2      History**

Cook Islands history can be broken into 4 periods of time: the pre-European period, the missionary period, the colonial period and the period since independence was achieved (Beaglehole, 1957; Gilson, 1991). During its history the people of the Cook Islands have undergone considerable social change, especially since the arrival and

settlement of westerners. Part of this change has been the introduction of the English language.

The pre-European period includes the time from the original discovery and consequent settlement of the islands that now make up the Cook Islands until the arrival of the first missionaries from the London Missionary Society. During this time the Islands operated independently; there was no governing body controlling groups of islands although warfare did mean that at times one island or area was dominated by groups from another. There was no written language at this time but a strong oral tradition meant that each generation could effectively pass on traditions and knowledge to the next generation.

The Missionary period extended from 1821 until 1888. During this time huge social change was experienced on all of the islands now in the Cook Islands. Christianity was introduced and a social structure based on the beliefs of the missionaries was instituted. This period of time brought much change to the lives of Cook Islanders as they accepted the teachings of the missionaries and came under their authority.

The colonial period started when the Cook Islands were declared a British Protectorate in 1888 partly to remove the threat of French aggression. New Zealanders were appointed as British Resident until 1901 when the islands were annexed to New Zealand. A series of New Zealand Resident Commissioners ruled this New Zealand island territory until independence was granted in 1965. Each colonial ruler tended to undermine the work of their predecessor and so progress towards empowering local people was slow, some say intentionally slow (Crocombe, 1979). Money was sent from New Zealand to support the territory but development in many areas was frequently limited by lack of funds.

Nationhood was gained by the Cook Islands in 1965 although they chose to limit their own powers, especially in foreign affairs, in order to maintain a beneficial relationship with New Zealand. The Cook Islands' status is that of a self-governing

‘Associated State’ which maintains the right to unilaterally declare full independence at any time. This means Cook Islanders still have New Zealand citizenship and free access to employment opportunities and educational institutions in New Zealand.

### **2.2.1 Pre-European period and language**

According to tradition Cook Islanders come from the legendary homeland of Avaiki. This is a tradition shared with other Polynesian groups, who may use the spelling Hawai'i or Hawai'iki for their place of origin. The whereabouts of Avaiki is lost in history but it is not modern day Hawaii. It is thought that Polynesians may have been seafarers who migrated from South-East Asia to the Pacific islands 500BC – 400AD (Kirch, 1995). The people would have gradually populated the islands in the Pacific and as they dispersed the language they used continued to develop.

According to oral history chieftains founded lineage groups on the islands they discovered and a hierarchical social structure was formed. The *ariki* (paramount chief) ruled the people of a district, being supported by the next in rank – *mataiapo*, and *rangatira*. The position of *ariki* was bestowed upon a member of the chiefly families. *Ariki* exercised control over the people by the use of their *mana* (a sort of supernatural power they were believed to possess) and the control of *tapu* (ability to decide what was forbidden for the people). *Ariki* led people in war, allocated land for the use of family groups, represented the people to the gods in exchange for labour and gifts. *Ta'unga* (priests and knowers of important knowledge) were important and also held power over the people as they were thought to have the spiritual powers on their side. Rarotonga was divided into three districts, with an *ariki* governing each district. These districts are still recognised today (*Puaikura*, *Takitumu* and *Te-au-o-tonga*).

Contact between islands did occasionally occur but there was enough separation for the language to develop various dialects.

## **2.2.2      The missionary period and language**

This period stretches from the arrival of the British missionary John Williams on Rarotonga in 1823 to the declaration in 1888 of a British Protectorate over most of what are now the Cook Islands. Before missionaries from the London Missionary Society (LMS) settled on Rarotonga the local people had little contact with Europeans. Pukapuka had been sighted by the Spaniard Alvaro de Menana in 1595 and Spanish explorers landed on various Northern Group islands at times in 1606 (Rakahanga) and then in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Of the Southern Group islands, many were discovered by Europeans in the 1770s and Maretu (1871) records the oral tradition that the *Bounty* arrived in Rarotonga after the mutiny. In the early 1800s the *Endeavour* and other ships sailed close to the islands. The first known foreign landing in Rarotonga was in 1814 by the crew of the *Cumberland*, in their search for sandalwood. The word *papa'a* was, and still is, used to describe the Europeans – *papa'a* comes from the words *papa* (layers) and '*a* (four) referring to the 4 layers of clothes worn by the Europeans.

John Williams landed first in Aitutaki in 1821 bringing with him Tahitian missionaries. He travelled to Rarotonga in 1823 and introduced Christianity to the Rarotongans, who willingly accepted this new religion. The first Europeans to reside in the islands were missionaries who came to live on Rarotonga in 1827. Their arrival heralded the first real introduction of the English language to Rarotongan people.

Missionary policy in the mid-1800s influenced the language choices for future Cook Islanders. In particular the following guidelines used by the LMS missionaries were important: (1) The use of indigenous missionaries and the native language, (2) isolation from other Europeans and restricted relations with all non-Maori residents, (3) application of schooling to promote literacy and spread Christianity among Cook Islanders (Gilson, 1991).

With the arrival of the missionaries and their success in evangelising in Rarotonga huge social change occurred for people of that time. By 1883 the results of social change were clearly apparent in Rarotonga (Beaglehole, 1957). Settlements were established near missionary stations, *marae* (cleared areas used for ceremonial and religious purposes) were destroyed, images of gods were destroyed, new Western-style laws were written and enforced, warfare with associated cannibalism ceased and many people converted to Christianity.

John Williams and the missionaries who followed recognised the importance of using the vernacular when working with native people. He used Polynesian converts from the Society Islands and Tahiti as missionaries. The Polynesians had linguistic and cultural advantages over Europeans. Similarities between the Rarotongan and Tahitian languages meant the local language was easy to learn for the Polynesian missionaries. Williams observed that “it is a circumstance of very rare occurrence that a religious impression is produced upon the minds of a people, except by addressing them in their mother tongue” (Buzacott, 1985, p.68). Aaron Buzacott, LMS missionary who arrived in 1828 and had a major impact on the Rarotongans, was trained in Tahitian and this enabled him to talk freely with Rarotongans in just a few weeks and preach his first sermon in Rarotongan within three months. Rarotongan missionaries were subsequently sent to other islands where they made use of the mother tongue and achieved success in the introduction of Christianity.

Missionary families maintained contact with the local people only on a level of formal teaching or informal friendship, but intermarriage between Europeans and Maori was strictly prohibited. This meant that a social distance existed and that exposure to the English language was limited. English was never promoted among the Maori although some English loan words were introduced e.g. *pepa* (paper), *kapu* (cup), *peni* (pen). The missionaries also strongly discouraged Rarotongan contact with ‘white heathens’ (the traders, sailors and whalers who called into port at Avarua).

With the arrival of the missionaries came other social change. The introduction of diseases never before encountered in the Cook Islands meant large numbers of deaths for the Cook Islands people. The missionaries also brought their culture and introduced the local people to western style clothing, tools, and the use of money. People were encouraged to move out from the hills where they lived and to resettle in small coastal villages, each built around a church.

An important part of the missionary work in these early days was the construction of a written form of the Cook Islands Maori language. Williams devised an alphabet and written vocabulary and later started to translate the New Testament into Cook Islands Maori. The missionaries recognised the importance of teaching the Maori people to read and classes were introduced soon after their arrival. At the beginning classes were only available to the chiefs and their children and for some time chiefs tried to limit this new form of education to themselves.

According to Gill (1984) many of the adults learnt parts of scripture by memory. Soon classes became available to everyone and hundreds of adults presented themselves for tuition. Buzacott reported that by 9am each day 2500 adults and children had received about an hour and a half of tuition. The Tahitian teachers were not well trained and so were limited in what they could teach. The lack of equipment was also a constraint. The greatest hindrance was the lack of books in the Rarotongan dialect. However in 1832 Buzacott obtained an old printing press and began publishing books in the local dialect. Copies of the New Testament were also now available and were in high demand.

As a direct result of missionary policy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Cook Islanders became literate in their ancestral language. It has been suggested that the use of Maori only was part of an isolationist policy depriving Cook Islanders of knowledge crucial to future self-government, not that self-government required English, but that participation in a system with an English speaking overlord did (Wiglesworth, 1996).

However the policy of the missionaries ensured the continuation of use of their language rather than its demise.

Cook Islanders embraced literacy and achieved high literacy levels. Beaglehole (1957) notes that by 1857 almost all of the population could read and the majority could write and do some ciphering. Nearly all the educational activity of the mission was directed towards Christianisation and the literature available was Christian based. A few elementary texts in arithmetic, geography and history were printed, but education in these subjects and in special crafts was mostly restricted to the children of chiefs and other prominent people who were taught separately by the missionaries or their wives. The average islander received little more than basic reading knowledge and a drilling in catechisms from Polynesian pastors.

### **2.2.3      The Colonial Period and language**

Near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and as the first generation of LMS missionaries retired the Cook Islanders enthusiasm for Christianity waned and laws against intermarriage were repealed. Foreign settlers (mostly English speaking) began to settle in greater numbers in the Cook Islands (75 by 1900). These settlers began to exercise disproportionate power and it was largely in support of their interests that the Cook Islands were annexed to New Zealand in 1901. Before this the Cooks were part of a British Protectorate. British Resident Frederick Moss (who held this position from 1891 – 1898) was one of the more forward looking and effective leaders. He was keen to maintain the *mana* of the local people and appointed very few Europeans to key posts. As he explained to the New Zealand Governor, the Earl of Onslow:

It is important that they should not have more Europeans than possible placed over them if they are to preserve self-respect. I am told that in Fiji a man may live with a half-caste girl but if he marries her it is social death. Such a feeling is only possible when the Natives form an inferior caste altogether and it would be a pity to see it introduced into Rarotonga.

(cited in Scott, 1991, p.53).

Because missionary policy had restricted classes to using only Maori language there was only a very small pool of bilingual people available for administration positions. Frederick Moss agreed with the feeling of local people that schooling should be available for all people in English. He prompted parliament to make English education mandatory in the mission schools and planned to provide free, secular coeducational English-teaching schools in every district. Moss believed that democratic self-government and economic development would follow naturally from such an education. The chiefs accepted Moss's views and English became a sign of progress in their eyes.

The London Missionary Society opposed teaching English to the Maori. 'Will it change their hearts? It will only lead them to read trashy novels as French has taught the natives to do in Tahiti', was the comment by Rev Hutchin (cited in Scott, 1991, p.63). However the LMS was persuaded by Makea Ariki, highest chief in Rarotonga, to open Tereora, the first secondary school in the Cook Islands, in 1896. With the introduction of legislation and regulations pertaining to primary and secondary schools it was stipulated that the vernacular should not be spoken during school hours. This of course caused huge problems as there were not enough trained teachers capable of teaching English in the islands. Around this time other religious factions such as Seventh Day Adventists and Roman Catholics entered the Cooks and offered educational services to schools. The LMS recognised their inability to teach entirely in English but threatened by other factions they tried to keep their schools open.

In 1895 Parliament passed an Act to prohibit the operation of any school in which English was not the language of instruction. Regulations required that all teaching be in English, and that a full range of subjects comparable to the New Zealand curriculum be introduced. This system however turned out to be unworkable. The students had no knowledge of English and their expatriate teachers could not speak the vernacular. Attendance dropped and the free public school system ended soon

after. The LMS reverted to their original programme although they did add English to their curriculum in Avarua.

Tereora College remained open for a few more years with the help of a subsidy from the state and did provide an ‘English education’ for fifty secondary students. The academic standards at Tereora were not as high as New Zealand schools provided. With the need to charge fees, Tereora became a school for the elite and was finally closed down in 1912 due to a lack of funds. Thus no secondary education was available in the Cook Islands for the next 45 years. This has been seen by some as a type of colonial oppression. Crocombe (1979, pp.1-2) writes:

The colonial government abolished higher formal education to preclude the emergence of a new leadership... Apart from a very few who were later sent to Maori Colleges in New Zealand and for medical training in Fiji, Cook Islanders were effectively (and intentionally) denied the training that would have equipped them for senior posts in the government, commerce and the churches.

(Crocombe, 1979, pp.1-2)

Under the rule of W.E Gudgeon, the British Resident and then New Zealand Resident Commissioner (1898–1909) education was relegated to the mission groups. He felt that education would actually cause problems and dissatisfaction amongst the local people. The traditional leaders were adamant they needed an English education but their pleas were not heard. In the federal council, one Maori speaker made an appeal for state schools to replace mission schools:

We are children and are living in darkness, and we want to be as wise as those under whose wing we are living. That is one thing that we know will be of great benefit to the island...that everybody may learn, and also learn to speak the English language, and anything else that may be learned in school.

(cited in Scott, 1991, p.120).

Because of rising operating costs LMS schools were finally given over to the state in 1914.

Compulsory education was introduced in 1914 by the Resident Commissioner and several primary schools were opened. Parents were required to pay tuition fees and school committees were formed to keep the buildings repaired. European head teachers instituted an English curriculum in ‘the three R’s, crafts and elementary agriculture’ and used Maori only to introduce the new language. According to Gilson (1991, p.173) the impetus for this policy came from the belief that Cook Islanders had rejected their own culture, which was “no longer useful to them” and wanted to imitate Europeans, with whom they “had been unable to compete commercially or intellectually”.

The Resident Commissioner 1916 – 1921, Frederick Platts, was a hands-on administrator and worked to increase enrolments in schools. When he arrived in Rarotonga there were only three primary schools in the entire country, with 450 students taught by nine teachers. He was able to increase this to a total of nine schools open in just three years, where more than 1000 pupils were being taught. He saw that Cook Islanders obtained scholarships to New Zealand schools. He became personally involved in finding the best way to teach English to pupils for whom it was a foreign language. School readers prepared by the American Bureau of Education for use in the Philippines were finally selected and a curriculum for teaching English as a foreign language was introduced (Scott, 1991). A technical school was also opened to help with apprentice training in areas such as radio operation.

In the early 1920s in New Zealand there was unease over the use of English as the sole medium of instruction in Cook Islands schools but this policy was defended by Pomare, the New Zealand Minister responsible for the Cook Islands, and officials in the New Zealand Department of Education. It was claimed that the islanders had been held back by an inadequate knowledge of English, that a number of essential concepts including those pertaining to disease could not be expressed in the vernacular, particularly as dialects differed from island to island, and that the people needed a

language that they could use when visiting New Zealand or other parts of the Pacific (Gilson, 1991).

During the 1920s the first steps were taken to centralise educational administration. Before this time schools were run independently. A temporary syllabus was developed by the newly appointed Superintendent of Cook Islands schools (who was also the headmaster of Avarua school), as was a programme for teacher training. Up until this time teachers were mostly pastors or non-trained graduates of the primary schools. Teacher training was a three-year course and included the pastor-trainers from the LMS. The training college was opened in conjunction with Avarua School in 1927. The lack of self-esteem and pride in culture was addressed by the introduction of native arts and basketry, which were hoped to inspire ‘pride of race’.

Between 1922 and 1935 there was great discussion about cultural contact and the role of education in ‘Europeanising’ the people. The use of English as the medium of instruction was an important feature and much time was spent stressing the importance of English and teaching the language, although the teachers were themselves poor speakers of English. Instruction in indigenous arts and crafts, legends and culture was limited.

In the 1930s another new curriculum focused on instruction in English to support the expression of modern concepts (such as western medicine) and the provision of a *lingua franca* among the island dialects and throughout the Pacific. However due to poor teacher training, lack of supervision from Wellington, New Zealand, irregular inspections and inadequate budgets, Cook Islanders were still receiving an education far inferior to New Zealanders. With a paucity of resources, large classes, and poor teacher pay, morale was low in schools. Students did not show much proficiency in English.

English did not replace the vernacular outside the schools so many Rarotongans became bilingual. The standards of proficiency are not known but it is presumed that

few used English of a standard much higher than that taught at the primary schools. Knowledge of English did little for the prospects of local people. There were no regular library services or newspapers in English. English was useful when dealing with officials but not essential. Some jobs required special training in New Zealand and three Cook Islanders per year were involved in this training. Having a working knowledge did enable local islanders to seek unskilled work in New Zealand and migration to Auckland and other parts of the country became an option for many Cook Islanders.

The educational programme developed in New Zealand for the Cooks while Pomare and Ngata were responsible for the Cook Islands remained in place until 1945. During this time enrolment numbers increased and many more islanders became teachers. There was little supervision from New Zealand and New Zealand's expenditure on education in the Cook Islands was very limited. The Teachers College was not open fulltime and teachers with a good knowledge of English and 'first hand' knowledge of the outside world were in very short supply. The school regulations prohibiting the use of the vernacular in schools meant that subjects such as geography, traditional culture and technical subjects were neglected while teachers and students struggled to learn English. In only a few schools was New Zealand Standard VI level reached.

In 1945 a visit from a committee of three experts from the New Zealand Department of Education confirmed that schools were using English as the medium of instruction. However they found that children were not acquiring a firm grasp of the language, nor were they learning to express themselves adequately in the vernacular.

The lack of control of English as a medium of thought and expression would not be so serious if there were a compensating facility in the vernacular...But ... the vernacular languages are rapidly breaking down and are ceasing to be accurate and sensitive instruments of thought and communication... There is cause for serious concern that a generation should grow up with no language clear-cut and delicate enough to enable them to think out the problems facing them, and to understand and discuss anything beyond the simple concrete

situations of daily life. No people can have thought that is clearer and more disciplined than the language in which it is conveyed. The problems of health, education, trade, religion, morals and politics with which the Cook Islander must grapple if he is to take a real part in the government of his country, cannot be handled by men and women whose control of some language, either English or the vernacular, is not accurate, sure and free from confusion.

(Beeby, Renyard and Fletcher, 1945, p.53).

This committee recommended a return to the vernacular as the sole medium for the first two to three years of primary school, with the gradual introduction of English as a second medium of instruction. The hope was that English would be learned more quickly by this method and that most students would be able to use both languages on completion of their primary education. The committee proposed that the Rarotongan dialect should be the standard vernacular for textbooks and that more time be spent learning local social sciences and traditional crafts, dances and legends.

There was widespread resistance to the reintroduction of Maori language by the islanders, who still regarded the teaching of English as the most important function of the schools. As a compromise with the community some use of the vernacular was introduced to all classes and some English was taught to infant classes: oral English was taught in the first year and reading added in the second year with writing added in the third year. Some textbooks were written in the vernacular to help with the extreme shortage and a journal was published bimonthly. By 1950, 19 children had been sent to New Zealand secondary schools and several teachers had been sent to New Zealand for short courses at training colleges. Two Cook Islanders had taken degrees. Tereora College was reopened as a secondary school for students from all islands in 1954.

The problem of recruitment and retention of well educated and qualified teachers continued (and still continues up to the present day). New Zealand expatriate teachers were used as organising teachers with overall responsibility for policy, training and

development in schools. However local teachers still struggled with basic teaching skills.

In the early 1960s New Zealand funded a major study to improve the curriculum for teaching English (Tate, 1963). The Tate Method was adopted and used in schools for many years. This was a comprehensive structured oral English course that teachers with little linguistic knowledge or expertise could use. Tate's English programme was used for students in Grade 1 – 6. Vestiges of the use of the Tate method can be observed in some schools up to the present time especially in the Northern Group islands (personal observation).

In the mid-sixties major educational developments took place on the outer southern group islands with the establishment of Junior High Schools catering for students up to 15 years old. New Zealand standards were used to measure the effectiveness of education in local schools but because of the low level of education of many teachers, the syllabi were not followed well.

#### **2.2.4 Independence Period and language**

After the Cook Islands became independent in 1965 New Zealand continued to supply a number of well-trained teachers to assist with education, especially at the secondary level in the Southern Cooks. An Education Act was passed which prescribed the administrative components of a free, equal and universal system of education. In mid 1975 the first Education Policy Statement was issued. This policy included directions to raise standards in schools and the teacher training programmes. A strong Cook Islands Maori identity was recognised as important and was to be fostered in all schools. This policy was well received throughout the country and one of its lasting effects was to lay a powerful ideological base for Cook Islands education (Polynesia Way, 1989). One of the key components of this was bilingualism. However it was observed over the next decade that the political will to provide acceptable levels of funding for the resulting initiatives did not materialise. Most

teachers were not well qualified and there was little incentive for teachers to pursue professional development. Rates of pay for teachers remained very low, the job seemed to be onerous and boring under the conditions and there were few opportunities for promotion. This meant that well-qualified teachers defected to other government departments or to the private sector (Polynesia Way, 1989).

The Cook Islands continued to be influenced by New Zealand through the use of New Zealand qualifications for secondary students (New Zealand School Certificate, University Entrance, Sixth form Certificate and University Bursaries examinations) and the provision of secondary teachers especially to work at the senior secondary level. A number of Pacific nations had elected to use the New Zealand qualifications system at mid-century but most phased this out later. The Cook Islands decided to keep the New Zealand system for qualifications as well as use some courses from the University of the South Pacific. Now with the recent changes in the New Zealand system of qualifications the Cook Islands Ministry of Education has changed the local aspects of qualifications to be in line with the new Standards Based Assessment as implemented by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).

Although Cook Islands Maori was reintroduced into the curriculum in the 1940s, teachers continued to punish students for speaking Maori at school into the 1980s in attempts to address problems with English proficiency (Wiglesworth, 1996). By 1980, a survey of language use and preference in Southern Cook Islands primary schools (Tixier and Early, 1980) found the schools able to impart English and maintain Cook Islands Maori successfully. The authors cautioned that Rarotongan youths' preference for English signalled a language shift in progress. This has been noted by a number of concerned people. Some of them are still working on the problem, but it is very difficult to deal with. As commented by Lynch (1998, p. 277):

If people want to shift to another language that they think is more useful, it is their right to do so. Very often this debate is held in the rarefied circles of academe, without much input from the speakers of the language themselves. Those speakers will of course have the final say (and perhaps the last laugh)

by choosing the course of action that seems most sensible and practical; from their perspective.

The education system continued to operate with minimal funding sufficient to maintain teachers' salaries but little else. Community fund-raising efforts from time to time paid for other basic school requirements but there was little input of resources. A financial crisis causing the loss of approximately one third of government jobs in the mid-1990s meant mass migration of Cook Islanders to New Zealand and Australia, including teachers. Many of the teachers who emigrated were the better qualified teachers who were able to get work overseas.

By the mid-1990s the schools' resources such as books were very limited and out-of-date and teacher morale was low. In a bid to improve schools and education an Education Development project funded by an Asia Development Bank Loan in the late 1990s meant an injection of much needed money to do basic building maintenance, fund some curriculum development and policy writing, and provide resources for schools.

The schools received resource materials, library books and teacher resource books for all curriculum areas. The resources provided in the language area were mostly junior readers and books that were found to be useful in New Zealand settings. Few resources were specifically written as English as a Second Language teaching resources. Instead most have been used successfully with native speakers of English in teaching to the New Zealand *English in the New Zealand Curriculum* (1994).

A language policy report completed in 1997 commented on the status of languages in the Cook Islands. In outer islands the status of Maori was found to be higher than on Rarotonga with Maori being widely spoken in the community and in schools. In Pukapuka the Pukapukan language is used in the community and at school, with Rarotongan and English introduced later in the school's programme. The standard of Rarotongan Maori is declining in Rarotonga as it is eroded by English through wholesale use of English structures within oral and written Maori texts (Language

Policy Report, 1997). Rarotongan Maori has been subject to intergenerational loss in the last 25 years.

According to the Language Policy Report (1997), on Rarotonga the schools teach English in an unprincipled and unsystematic way, arbitrarily mixing Maori and English. It was noted that students have inadequate English language necessary for school learning despite being fluent in conversational English. Reading comprehension, writing and vocabulary continue to be areas of weakness, and teachers are not using active and interactive pedagogy. Data from the 2000 national Grade 6 examination show that English language achievement is generally higher in Rarotonga than in the outer island schools but that Maori language achievement is proportionally higher in Southern Group schools.

A language syllabus was prepared in 1992 and then in 1997 and 1998 draft primary and secondary English Curricula, based in part on the Samoan curriculum (primary) and the NZ Curriculum Statement (secondary), were written. These have been officially adopted but many teachers have little awareness of the current curriculum (Broadbent and Rogers, 2000). The area of reading teaching is causing serious concern as many teachers who are self-taught in their methods of teaching reading appear to have little understanding of the process. Even after the injection of reading materials into schools in the last few years there are still not enough resources available. The lack of resources in Cook Islands Maori mean that even in outer islands schools readers of Maori cannot move into the area of independent reading before they move to English text.

A Cook Islands Language Policy was written in 1997 as part of the language report but has not been adopted up to the present time. A language commission has been reconvened to discuss important issues and be responsible for ongoing planning. Seen as a priority was the need to have Cook Islands Maori declared an official language of the Cook Islands. In 1998 Cabinet approved the enactment of an Official Language

Act to establish the Cook Islands Language Commission, and declare Cook Islands Maori as an official language of the Cook Islands. This Act is still being drafted.

According to curriculum advisers (Cook Islands Ministry of Education) the policy of using Cook Islands Maori for the first three years of schooling is still in place and should be adhered to. However in reality this is no longer the case in Rarotonga, where most teaching even at Grade 1 level is done in English or an English /Maori mix sometimes called ‘Maroro English’. Maroro is the local name of the flying fish that lives in the ocean – the term Maroro English refers to the way communication consists of two languages – flying backwards and forwards between Maori and English. Teachers code-switch between English and Maori on Rarotonga, and between Rarotongan and the local island dialect in outer islands (Balawa, 1996). Cook Islands Maori is still a compulsory subject up to Year 11 level. The teaching of this subject however faces several problems including a lack of resources, lack of specific language teaching training for teachers and the attitudes of the general public who feel that Maori is an inferior language.

The Cook Islands government including the Ministry of Education recognises the need to do something about language development in both Cook Islands Maori and English. It recognises that there are no easy solutions. It is in this context then with increasing importance placed on English, declining use of Cook Islands Maori and a history of erratic and piecemeal colonial intervention that we take a closer look at the beliefs Cook Islands teachers have about language learning and language teaching. However firstly the literature review surveys research on the area of teacher beliefs.

# **Chapter Three    Literature Review**

*A mind once stretched by a new idea can never go back to its original dimension.*

Oliver W. Holmes

This chapter reviews the literature that informed the present study. The first section discusses beliefs in general including the rationale for focusing on beliefs, the concept of beliefs and the nature of beliefs. The links between beliefs and knowledge are considered and differences described. The effects of beliefs on practice are discussed and the relationship between culture and beliefs is explored. The second section looks at teacher beliefs. This section focuses on beliefs about the teaching environment, then goes on to review epistemological beliefs. Research about links between beliefs, teaching practice and teacher training is reviewed. Particular reference is made to research relating to beliefs held by teachers about language teaching and language learning.

## **3.1      Beliefs in General**

### **3.1.1     Rationale for focusing on beliefs**

Teachers' beliefs are an important consideration when investigating any aspect of teaching. According to Clark and Peterson (1986) the process of teaching involves two major domains: (1) teachers' actions and their observable effects, and (2) teachers' thought processes. The first domain is observable and measurable, whereas the second is not. Teachers' actions and their observable effects include teachers' classroom behaviour, students' classroom behaviour, and students' achievement, all of which can be monitored, measured and assessed. Teachers' thought processes, however, occur inside teachers' heads and are therefore only observable indirectly.

Clark and Petersen (1986) categorised teachers' thought processes as follows: (1) teacher planning, (2) teachers' interactive thoughts and decisions and (3) teachers' theories and beliefs. Teachers' planning encompasses thoughts teachers have before or after classroom interaction. Teachers' interactive thoughts are those which take place during classroom interaction. Teachers' theories and beliefs affect the thought processes teachers use, and may themselves be affected by teachers' interactive thoughts and decisions and teacher planning. When investigating teachers' beliefs, the relationships between beliefs and other aspects of thought processes need to be considered.

To better understand the process of teaching, much educational research has focused on the classroom practice of teachers and resulting student learning. Determining the characteristics of effective classroom practice and the effectiveness of classroom strategies has produced a large body of literature. However, suggestions have been made by a number of researchers that in order to understand teacher behaviours the beliefs of teachers have to be a focus of investigation (Clark, 1988; Fenstermacher, 1986; Nespor, 1987).

Nisbett and Ross (1980) and Rokeach (1968) suggest that the beliefs that individuals hold affect their perceptions of reality and their judgements, and these in turn affect behaviour; thus beliefs are good predictors of decisions people make. Several studies have shown that teachers' beliefs affect their students' educational experience (Borg, 1999a; De Guerreno, 2000; Fang, 1996a; Golombok, 1998; Krashnick, 1986; Munby, 1982; Pajares & Graham, 1998; Richards & Lockhart, 1994). It is therefore important if we wish to understand teaching from a teacher's perspective, that we understand the beliefs with which they define their work (Nespor, 1987).

### **3.1.2 Clarifying the concept of beliefs**

The concept of belief is not easily defined. Researchers use many terms when referring to the general idea of belief. Terms such as attitudes, judgements, personal

theories, perceptions, ideology, values, implicit theories, personal practical knowledge, perspectives, are used for this concept in the literature (Pajares, 1992). These terms themselves have subtle variations in meaning as well as the specific meanings chosen by the author.

A number of authors have attempted to explain the term ‘beliefs’, each explanation giving insight to the concept. Harvey (1986) has a helpful definition: that a belief is an individual's representation of an aspect of reality that has enough validity, truth or credibility to guide thought and behaviour. Brown and Cooney (1982) suggest that beliefs are depositions to action and major determinants of behaviour, although the depositions are time and context specific. Clark (1988, p.5) describes beliefs as ‘eclectic aggregations of cause-effect propositions from many sources, rules of thumb, generalisations drawn from personal experience, beliefs, values, biases, and prejudices’. A belief may be seen as a mental state which has as its content a proposition that is accepted as true by the individual holding it, although the individual may recognise that alternative beliefs may be held by others (Borg, 2001). Beliefs are held by individuals and tend to guide and direct their behaviour (Pajares, 1992; Shavelston & Stern, 1981). They have affective and evaluative components (Nespor, 1987). The evaluative aspect to the concept of belief is not surprising as the word itself originates from the Aryan word *lubh*, meaning ‘to like or to hold dear’ from which the word *love* also originates (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989).

Borg's (2001, p.186) definition sums up many of the important ideas defining beliefs when she writes ‘...a belief is a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behaviour.’

### **3.1.3      Nature of beliefs**

#### **3.1.3.1    *Source of beliefs***

Theorists generally agree that beliefs are formed through a process of enculturation and social construction through processes in education and schooling (Pajares, 1992). Enculturation involves incidental learning that occurs during life in the context of the cultural elements present in an individual's personal world e.g. children learn by observation that music and dance are important in Tongareva, Cook Islands. Enculturation includes the assimilation by individual observation, participation and imitation of all the cultural elements present in their personal world. Education is the directed learning which brings behaviour in line with cultural requirements. Schooling is the specific teaching that takes place outside the home. In and through experiences in the context of the individual's culture, beliefs are created. Beliefs, once formed, generally endure unaltered unless deliberately challenged (Lasley, 1980). As a child grows she experiences the world through her senses and starts to see patterns that help her make sense of the world. She constructs meaning about herself and the world through her observations, incidental learning, anticipation and imitation. She also develops beliefs about herself and the world around her.

#### **3.1.3.2    *Characteristics of beliefs***

Nespor (1987) suggests that beliefs have at least four characteristics which distinguish them from other forms of 'knowledge'. These are:

- existential presumption - incontrovertible, personal truths
- alternativity - representations of alternative realities
- affective and evaluative loading - which seem to be relied on more heavily in belief systems than in knowledge systems
- episodic nature (beliefs tend to derive their subjective power and legitimacy from particular episodes or events).

Each of these will be discussed in detail below.

### *Existential presumption*

Existential presumptions are the propositions or assumptions about the existence or non-existence of entities. Existential presumption not only includes religious beliefs about the existence of God but also more ordinary beliefs that teachers hold. Nespor (1987) found that the beliefs teachers held about student ‘ability’, ‘maturity’ and ‘laziness’ were not only descriptive. These were labels for entities seen as embodied in students. Teachers worked within the structure of these beliefs as they were seen as beyond their control and influence. For example a teacher believing that learning is a function of maturity rejects the notion of ‘forcing’ learning on the grounds that it is impossible to force maturation. Once these beliefs are developed the entities tend to be seen as, and so become, immutable.

### *Alternativity*

The alternativity of beliefs refers to representations of alternative realities or ‘alternative worlds’ seen by the believer. Nespor provides the example of a teacher who drew her ideal of teaching from what she would want to experience as a child – a classroom that was friendly and fun to be in. She had never experienced this herself, it was an alternative to her own experience. However this important belief strongly influenced the way she ran her classroom. The characteristic of alternativity refers to the conceptions of ideal situations which differ from present reality, and this characteristic serves to cause them to be important in the defining of goals and tasks.

### *Affective and evaluative loading*

Beliefs have affective and evaluative components and belief systems are said to rely more heavily on these components than knowledge systems do (Abelson, 1979). The involvement of moods, feelings, emotions and subjective evaluations can cause an event to have a ‘signature feeling’ as it is stored in the memory (Spiro, 1982, cited in Nespor).

Feelings, moods and judgements based on personal opinion can regulate how much energy teachers will expend on an activity (Pajares, 1992). The sometimes unrecognised feelings about students that teachers have affect their teaching and expectations. Affect is also important in the area of teachers' conceptions of subject matter and in their approach to teaching (Burns, 1992; Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Smith, 1996). The values placed on course content often influence how teachers teach the content e.g. what they select as important material (Nespor, 1987).

#### *Episodic nature*

A characteristic of beliefs is the important role of critical episodes in their formation. The importance of specific episodes or events in the formation and the development of beliefs has been investigated and there are clear indications that such critical episodes play important roles in teachers' practice (Nespor, 1987). Drawing on the work of Abelson (1979), Nespor's study shows that critical episodes in the lives of teachers colour the comprehension of events later in time. A crucial experience can produce a richly detailed episodic memory which later serves a teacher as inspiration or a template for his or her own teaching practices. Goodman (1988) discusses the *guiding images* from past events which influence teachers by creating *intuitive screens* through which new information is filtered.

The episodal nature of beliefs explains in part how people develop educational beliefs as children (Pajares, 1992). Critical episodes are stored in the memory. Beliefs often derive their subjective power, authority and legitimacy from particular episodes or events. The role of such critical episodes in determining teachers' behaviour has been reported by Nespor (1987) when it was found that a number of teachers suggested that critical episodes or experiences gained earlier in their teaching careers were important to their present practices.

### **3.1.3.3 *Resistance to change***

Beliefs are formed over a period of time and seem to be difficult to change. The earlier a belief is added to a belief structure the more difficult it is to alter, because these beliefs have affected the perception and processing of information from the time of their adoption. Beliefs which are adopted early in life are often more centrally placed in belief structures and are harder to change. This centrality of some beliefs has been defined by Rokeach (1968, p.5) in terms of ‘connectedness: the more a given belief is functionally connected or in communication with other beliefs, the more implications and consequences it has for other beliefs, and therefore the more central the belief.’ It follows that this centrality will make it more resistant to change because more of the connections will be required to change.

Mori (1999) suggests that many beliefs consist of multiple independent constructs, which means they are not easily influenced by instruction. Once beliefs are held they generally are not altered unless deliberately challenged. Even when challenged, beliefs are highly resistant to change. Nespor (1987) attributes this to the nonconsensuality of belief systems. When contradictory evidence is presented to a person they are much more likely to try to assimilate it in their current belief structures than to change their beliefs significantly. This assimilation may even mean compartmentalising contradictory evidence if, for example, scientific proofs are offered to people which contradict their beliefs. Nespor (1987) argues that because individual beliefs do not require internal consistency, they are basically unchanging and when they do change it is not through reason or argument but a ‘conversion or gestalt shift’. Accommodation (the term used by Piaget and then by Posner, Strike, Hewson & Gertzog, (1982) amongst others) takes place when new information cannot be assimilated and so existing beliefs must be replaced or reorganised. The new beliefs must be able to be connected to other belief structures. To accommodate anomalies in beliefs an individual must understand that the anomaly exists, must believe that the information should be reconciled with existing beliefs, must want to

reduce inconsistencies, and must see the efforts at assimilation as failures (Posner, Strike, Hewson & Gertzog, 1982). If these conditions are met then beliefs can change.

The beliefs held by an individual can sometimes be contradictory, only partially clear, and even incoherent (Schutz, 1970). Seemingly contradictory beliefs can be held comfortably by individuals and only when dissonance is encountered, will one of the beliefs dictate behaviour over the others. This belief is the more central belief. The dissonance does not force the believer to change beliefs however; the beliefs generally do not change even when it is logical or necessary for them to do so (Nisbett & Ross, 1980).

The beliefs individuals hold have a filtering effect on thinking and perceptions of reality. The earlier in a person's life a belief is adopted the more effect that belief will have, as all subsequent experiences will be understood through the filter of the beliefs already held. Beliefs constructed early in life are highly resistant to change (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). As early beliefs are more 'central' in an individual's belief structure (seen as a web or network by Rokeach, 1968) they are more difficult to alter, whereas newly acquired beliefs, which have fewer connections, are most vulnerable. Rokeach proposed that centrality gives some beliefs more intensity and power and makes them more resistant to change.

### **3.1.3.4 *Beliefs linked in systems***

Beliefs are thought to be loosely bound in systems with linkages to events, situations and knowledge systems (Abelson, 1979). The linkages are highly variable, and have no clear logical rules, and may be tied up with the personal, episodic and emotional experiences of the believer. This uncertainty means that beliefs may be applied to many situations, often not predictably. For example two people with some of the same beliefs may not see a situation in the same way because of the way those beliefs were formed. Nespor (1987) suggests that non-consensuality is a feature of belief

systems because these systems consist of items which are in principle disputable and independent. Belief systems are fairly static.

Belief systems include affective factors and evaluations as well as vivid memories of personal experiences and this makes them less able to be evaluated in the way knowledge systems can be. Belief systems are not bound by logical rules and the relevance of individual beliefs may be bound up with personal, episodic and emotional experiences. This would lead to the suggestion that while beliefs may have stable ‘core’ applications, they can be extended in radical and unpredictable ways (Nespor, 1987).

Belief structures can be likened to thread in a web where some have more connections to other points than others. Rokeach proposed that the amount of connectedness affects the perceived importance of any belief. Beliefs which deal with personal identity, beliefs that are shared with others and beliefs which are a result of direct encounter or experience are more connected. Derived beliefs and beliefs concerning matters of taste are less connected and less central. The beliefs people hold are often different and the complex connections between them determine their importance for each individual (Pajares, 1992). Their relative importance can only be observed when dissonance is introduced, as discussed earlier.

Gradually as belief systems (systems for storing, grouping, ordering and retrieving beliefs) are built up these have a filtering effect on our thinking and information processing. They play a very important role in shaping both our perceptions and behaviour (Johnson, 1994).

### **3.1.4      Belief and knowledge**

Writers have sought to distinguish between the concepts of belief and knowledge. A way of distinguishing between belief and knowledge is that belief is based on

evaluation and judgement: knowledge is based on objective fact (Pajares, 1992). A distinction between concepts of belief and knowledge was made by Clandinin and Connelly (1987) when they discussed *personal knowledge constructs* in studies of teachers' beliefs and *personal practical knowledge*, which they defined as experiential knowledge. Teachers hold beliefs about their work, their students, their roles and responsibilities. Teachers also have a store of knowledge that they use. The distinction between knowledge and beliefs is not an easy one to make.

One of the key differences between belief and knowledge is that knowledge must actually be true in some external sense (Borg, 2001). Fenstermacher (1994) states that knowledge is commonly defined as justified true belief. Knowledge can be viewed on a continuum from an accumulation of facts to highly interrelated concepts (Schommer, 1990). Beliefs, on the other hand, are often not open to outside evaluation or critical examination because they include assumptions about entities and alternative worlds, affective feelings, and memories of personal experiences. This means beliefs cannot be judged as 'true'.

The way beliefs and knowledge work as systems also points to differences between beliefs and knowledge. Nespor argues that belief systems (the way beliefs are organised) consist of propositions, concepts and arguments, which are recognised as being in dispute. The belief systems people have often include things which are not open to outside evaluation or critical analysis in the same sense that the components of knowledge systems are. Knowledge systems are malleable and dynamic, changing according to well-established canons of argument, whereas belief systems are much less malleable and are relatively static. The domains of application of knowledge systems are generally well-defined. Belief systems are more loosely bound systems linking events, situations and knowledge in ways that might not be seen as logical. The linkages in belief systems are bound up with the personal, episodic and emotional experiences of a person (Nespor, 1987). Rokeach (1968, p. 2) describes a belief system 'as having represented within it in some organised and psychological but not necessarily logical form, each and every one of a person's countless beliefs about

physical and social reality'.

The beliefs people hold have a significant impact on what they do. Nespor (1987) concludes, in the implications of a study of eight teachers over the course of a semester, that beliefs are far more influential than knowledge in determining how individuals perceive and define tasks and problems and are stronger predictors of behaviour. There is also evidence that understanding the powerful effect of beliefs is useful in understanding and predicting how teachers make decisions (Ernest, 1989).

### **3.1.5 Effects of beliefs**

Beliefs play a role in the behaviour of the believer through their influence on the believer's perceptions of reality and so their response to it. Nespor (1987) suggests that beliefs and belief systems have important functions in both task definition and cognitive strategy selection and use in memory processes. Beliefs are used to 'frame' or define a task (Schoenfeld, 1983). With this comes cognitive processing at a number of levels of thought (internal processing, resourcing, control of metacognitive processes, belief structures).

Spiro (1982) suggests that when events have a dominant experiential quality they will be represented cognitively by a relatively homogeneous colouration or 'signature feeling'. This background colouration facilitates memory recall, supplies cohesion to elements in memory, and performs an important function in constructive and reconstructive memory processes. Spiro argues that signature feelings can constrain reconstructive processes, in which the partial representations held in the memory are fleshed out, by filtering out information that distorts or conflicts with the stable signature feeling, even if it fits logically with the event. This has implications for how easy it is to alter or change an individual's beliefs (as discussed in section 3.1.3.3). Beliefs can influence the way events are indexed and retrieved in memory and reconstructed during recall (Spiro, 1982).

### **3.1.6 Culture and beliefs**

Almost all existing theory in the area of belief structure and use is based on findings from white educated US population. Cultural differences have not been researched to any extent. Existing epistemological theories are based on western style schooled cultures in which individualism and a freedom from the dictates of authority are valued. However in a more collectivist culture such as the Cook Islands other norms may lead to different kinds of beliefs and belief systems. ‘It is possible that in a more collectivist culture in which the view of self has interindividual implications, personal theories of knowledge and knowing could evolve towards an acceptance of consensus, not a reliance on independent thinking’ (Triandis, cited in Hofer & Pintrich, 1997, p. 130). This clearly has implications for the present research. There are few studies that explore the nature of teachers’ and learners’ beliefs in other cultures. Most studies have focused on what the beliefs are (for example Mori (1999), Lee (1996), Kern (1995)).

## **3.2 Teachers’ Beliefs**

Because the construct of educational beliefs is broad and encompassing it is very difficult to research effectively (Pajares, 1992). It is more meaningful to look at ‘*teacher beliefs about...*’ so as to give a context in which to frame the research. Therefore in this study the focus is specifically on *teachers’ beliefs about language learning and language teaching*. The term *teachers’ beliefs* is often used to refer to teachers’ pedagogic beliefs, or those beliefs relevant to an individuals’ teaching (Borg, 1998).

### **3.2.1 Beliefs teachers hold**

As has been discussed earlier in this review, the beliefs an individual holds affect his/her perceptions, definitions and thoughts and they may cause him/her to behave in

certain ways. It is important to consider how the beliefs teachers hold may affect their practice as there is considerable evidence that teachers' beliefs influence practice in significant and sometimes unexpected ways. "Beliefs and attitudes are not only reflected in [teacher] decisions and actions, there is evidence that teachers' beliefs and attitudes drive important decisions and classroom practice" (Renzaglia, Hutchins & Lee (1997), cited in Stuart & Thurlow, 2000, p. 118).

Teachers hold beliefs other than those about their teaching. Pajares (1992) suggests that the beliefs teachers hold about such things as the nature of knowledge, causes of teachers' and students' performance, teacher efficacy, and motivation, are educational beliefs, and must be viewed as but a part of an individual's personal belief system. The broader general beliefs teachers hold are present in a network with their educational beliefs as an integral part of their belief systems.

### **3.2.2 Teaching environment**

The nature of the environment in which teachers work is such that beliefs can be particularly effective in guiding behaviour. The problems teachers encounter are often not straightforward but can be classified as 'ill-structured' problems (Simon, cited in Nespor, 1987) i.e. problems where goals are not easily defined, sets of procedures for reaching goals are not defined, the information provided is not enough and alternative courses of action at different points of the problem solving process are not clearly defined. Teachers operate in an environment of entangled domains. An entangled domain can be defined as a place where entities can be seen to fall in more than one domain i.e. they may be identified by some criteria as belonging to a certain domain but not sharing all important sets of criteria for that domain (Spiro and Myers, cited in Nespor, 1987). The fact that teachers have to juggle what they do within the constraints they face may explain the sometimes inconsistent-appearing behaviour where teachers may be seen as dilemma managers (Fang, 1996b).

In an environment of ill-defined problems and entangled domains, the logical or standard cognitive processing strategies are no longer available and this is where beliefs and belief systems are better suited to being used, as belief systems are unbounded and often able to deal with alternative arrangements of reality (Nespor, 1987).

### **3.2.3 Epistemological beliefs**

When investigating teachers' beliefs, epistemological beliefs (beliefs about the nature of knowledge and knowing) are important to consider as these have implications for other beliefs and for teaching practice. For example a teacher may believe that the teacher is all-knowing, or that knowledge must be discovered to be understood. Such beliefs will greatly affect their approach to teaching.

There has been recent research on epistemological beliefs generally but there is still little agreement on the actual construct under study (Hofer and Pintrich (1997) provide a good review). Research has centred on how individuals interpret their educational experiences, or how epistemological assumptions influence thinking and reasoning processes. The epistemological models proposed in recent research are based on structural, developmental models. There have been three main areas of interest: how individuals interpret their educational experiences (e.g. Baxter Magolda, 1987); how epistemological assumptions influence thinking and reasoning processes (e.g. King & Kitchener, 1994); and the investigation of the idea that epistemological ideas are systems of belief that may be more or less independent rather than reflecting a coherent developmental structure (Schommer, 1990).

It has been shown that epistemological beliefs may influence comprehension and cognition for academic tasks (Schommer, 1990). This more recent line of work takes the position that epistemological ideas are systems of beliefs which are more or less independent rather than developmental. The earlier these beliefs are adopted the more

effect they will have on subsequent interpretation of observations and belief development.

Hofer and Pintrich (1997) propose that the definition of epistemological beliefs be limited to individuals' beliefs about the nature of knowledge and the process of knowing. They recognise that beliefs about learning, intelligence and teaching are related to epistemological beliefs. Hofer and Pintrich (1997) also suggest that it might be more appropriate to look at and speak of epistemological beliefs only in specific contexts rather than providing descriptions of individuals' views in general. Most research into epistemological beliefs has been carried out in western schooling and culture so there is much to be done to investigate the epistemological beliefs of other populations and examine cross cultural differences. A socio-cultural view of learning would shift the focus away from views of universal or general beliefs to the beliefs situated in particular contextual settings. The present research represents an attempt to limit investigation of beliefs to a predetermined context.

### **3.2.4 Teaching practice**

In recent years it is in the area of reading and literacy that the most significant contributions to our understanding of the link between teachers' beliefs and practice have been made. A considerable number of studies have explored the link between what teachers believe and what they do in their classrooms. Many studies show that teachers hold specific beliefs about reading and that these beliefs do shape their practice (Brophy & Good, 1974). Similarly in other areas research shows consistency between beliefs and practice. A study by Johnson (1992) of teachers of literacy for non-native English speakers, teaching practice was found to be consistent with beliefs within literacy contexts. In a study of language teachers Breen (1991) found similar results in general teaching pedagogy. Smith and Neale (1987) found that in science, teachers' beliefs played a significant role in their practice. A positive relationship was found between Grade 1 teachers' pedagogical content beliefs, teachers' pedagogical

knowledge and student achievement. In the teaching of writing, Wing (1989) found that teaching practice was consistent with teacher beliefs.

However some research has shown no such consistency (for example, Simmons, 1999) or has shown mixed results (Davis & Wilson, 1999, in instructional decisions; Duffy & Anderson, 1984, in reading). Some of the studies which report no evidence of links between espoused beliefs and practice were not based on classroom observation, but on teacher responses to hypothetical scenarios. In others however the links between teacher beliefs and actions were found in real classroom situations. This inconsistency in research findings is not entirely surprising given that teachers work in an environment which is very complex and ever-changing. Fang (1996b, p. 53) comments that such results suggest that contextual factors such as administration, colleagues and students can have powerful influences on teachers. With the constraints sometimes operating in a classroom, teachers' decisions can be affected by external pressures (Shavelston & Stern, 1981). Teachers' decisions may also be guided by the actions of others in the system, not just their own beliefs. In this way the school environment may set boundaries on teachers' pedagogical decisions. Measures used in the research may also have contributed to the inconsistencies observed, particularly the use of dichotomies which are not real for teachers, or the use of imprecise language and buzz words such as 'whole language' (Fang, 1996b).

### **3.2.5 Teacher training**

The early formation and subsequent power of beliefs in the perception and understanding of new experiences has ramifications for teacher training. Even before a person starts their training as a teacher or works in a school they have well formed beliefs about learning, classroom management, curricular areas, and what a good teacher is like. This has been described as the apprenticeship of learning, or as the vivid memories of ten thousand hours in classrooms that help new teachers determine what they want to be and do in teaching (Lortie, 1975).

Teacher trainees have an accumulation of prior experiences and images which manifest themselves in the form of beliefs including epistemological beliefs. Many of these personal beliefs are associated with the candidate's own life experiences, especially exemplary models of teachers and the candidate's image of him/herself as a learner (Kagan, 1992). Trainees may not be able to articulate all of their educational beliefs, but their beliefs will all act as cultural filters throughout the training process (Hollingsworth, 1989; Kagan, 1992). As stated previously these beliefs tend to be quite stable and resistant to change (Johnson, 1994). Research suggests that the power of these pre-training beliefs may be as strong as, or actually outweigh, the effects of formal teacher training on beginning teachers' classroom practice (Goodman, cited in Borg, 1998). It has been shown that the pre-service beliefs of teacher trainees often have a greater effect on their classroom practice, than the beliefs espoused by their trainers (Burns, 1992; Rust, 1994; Tatto, 1998). Certainly the ideas about language teaching that trainees bring with them may inhibit the prospective teachers' receptiveness to the ideas presented by their trainers (Horwitz, 1985). In general student teachers' beliefs are stable and do not become like those of their supervising teacher (Smith, 1997).

In a study investigating pre-service ESL teachers' beliefs, Johnson (1994) observed that teachers had images from prior experiences in the formal classroom which to a large extent determined the teachers' images of themselves as teachers. Teachers' beliefs are especially hard to change if the teachers are not given alternative images. Often, even if the teachers recognise inconsistencies in their practice they are unable to change because they have not been given clear alternative models (Johnson, 1994). However it has been shown that even with clear alternatives, teachers are able to compartmentalise beliefs in order to resist the change that the incongruencies of these beliefs would suggest.

Teacher education and curriculum models that assume that knowledge about teaching is acquired as the product of an input-output process fall short of reality (Stern, in Burns, 1992). Researchers have demonstrated that teacher beliefs influence

knowledge acquisition and interpretation, task definition and selection, interpretation of course content and comprehension monitoring (Pajares, 1992). The influence of beliefs does not stop once a teacher is trained but will continue to influence the decisions made by the teachers throughout their professional lives (Cronin-Jones, 1991; Kagan, 1992; Smith, 1996). Rust (1994) reports that in a longitudinal study of first year teachers, the beliefs brought to bear in the classroom were their pre-training beliefs and attitudes about teaching and learning. The beliefs and attitudes 'developed' during training were replaced by the pre-training beliefs once they were working in their own classrooms. In this way unproductive language teaching strategies may be perpetuated.

The implications for teacher training are enormous. When training addresses trainees' existing beliefs there is chance of lasting impact being made by the training (Briscoe, 1991). The first step should be in making the trainees' beliefs explicit (Horwitz, 1985). By looking at and reflecting on beliefs, individual change and development can be fostered as teachers develop (Lynch, 1989). Training programmes with constructivist-oriented curricula may be more successful in promoting epistemological changes (Howard, McGee, Schwartz, & Purcell, 2000). The recognition of the need for preservice trainees to understand the role of beliefs in performance has led to the development of some courses where trainees' awareness of their own beliefs is raised, with promising outcomes (Stuart & Thurlow, 2000).

### **3.2.6 Second language teaching**

Teachers of English as a second language (ESL teachers) have specific beliefs about language learning and language teaching, as well as beliefs about many other aspects of education and life in general. Specific beliefs that have an effect on decision making include, but are not restricted to, beliefs about English, learning, learners, teaching, programme and curriculum, and language teaching as a profession.

Research on language teachers' belief systems about language learning and teaching

suggests that their beliefs are derived from a number of different sources (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). These sources include the individual's own experience as a second language learner; referred to by Lortie (1975) as the apprenticeship of observation. Some second language teachers have not learned another language themselves. The teachers in this study, however, are all bilingual and so will be affected by their second language learning experience. Another source of beliefs is the teacher's experience of what works best, and the established practice within a teaching institution or district. Educationally based or research based principles (for those teachers exposed to them) can be important sources. Personality factors have also been found to be important in affecting beliefs (Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

In a study of teachers working in beginning ESL classes Burns (1992) found that second language teacher beliefs were complex and interrelated, clustering around five focus areas:

1. The nature of language as it relates to beginning language learning
2. The relationship between written and spoken language in beginning language learning
3. The nature of beginning language learning and the strategies relevant to language learning at this point
4. Learners, their ability to learn and their ability to learn English
5. The nature of the language classroom and the teacher's role within it.

Research has shown that differing beliefs held by English language teachers lead to different approaches to teaching (Johnson, 1992), and that ESL teacher beliefs are consistent with teacher decisions (Smith, 1996). Connelly and Clandinin (1986) argue that teachers personalize theoretical models and make them practical for the classroom situation in which they operate. For example, the literature often presents two perspectives of language teaching: "product oriented" or "process oriented" but such differentiation is not seen in teacher practices i.e. teacher decisions do not wholly reflect one or the other, but a combination of the two (Smith, 1996). Teachers' use of theory tends to be eclectic and teachers filter and choose aspects which

correlate with their personal beliefs. Smith (1996, p.213) concludes in her study that “teacher beliefs about the nature of L2 learning are a critical factor in determining whether lesson activities and related participation structure have a structural or communicative focus.” An internal consistency exists between individual beliefs and practices (Smith, 1996, Borg, 1999a, Fang, 1996b).

Experienced language teachers have been found to select material and ideas that correlate with their personal beliefs, and use techniques they have found successful when they are planning lessons (Smith, 1996). The beliefs teachers hold about the nature of the language they are teaching are critical in determining whether the lessons have a communicative focus or structural focus. Smith (1996) found that teachers used a range of theoretical models but selected and modified these so they were consistent with their personal beliefs and practical knowledge. ESL teachers have been found to rely on colleagues, experience and books for ideas, rather than using recent research based reports or expert advice (Crookes & Arakaki, 1999).

The present research looks at the beliefs of teachers in the particular context of the Cook Islands. Teachers in this context have experienced the apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) and will have particular views on the nature of second language learning given the current relative status of Cook Islands Maori and English. The following chapter sets out to describe the methodology and methods used in this research.

# **Chapter Four      Methodology and methods**

*Enter into the world. Observe and wonder; experience and reflect. To understand a world you must become part of that world while at the same time remaining separate, a part of and apart from. Go then, and return to tell me what you see and hear, what you learn, and what you come to understand.*

Patton, 1980: p.121

## **4.1      Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology chosen to investigate the research questions outlined in Chapter One, and describes the methods used. The aim of this study is to provide a perspective on the beliefs Cook Islands' teachers hold about language learning and language teaching. A qualitative research model has been adopted. This means that the emphasis is placed on understanding people's words and actions in order to discern patterns of meaning. The human-as-instrument is used, assuming a posture of indwelling. The posture of indwelling allows existence within the research – walking a mile in the other person's shoes (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). The model adopted utilizes qualitative data collection techniques within a restricted time frame to gain an understanding of participants' meanings. It requires descriptions that include participants' interpretations as well as taking account of other social and cultural information (Davis, 1995).

The research comprised an initial questionnaire and then three case studies involving teachers. In each case study teacher beliefs were elicited through questionnaires, in depth interviews and classroom observation with subsequent stimulated recall. The field work was conducted in schools on Rarotonga, Cook Islands (ranging from junior primary to secondary) where the teachers were employed.

## **4.2 Research framework**

### **4.2.1 Approach to research**

As mentioned above, qualitative research methods have been used in this study. The research presented in this study has been developed within an exploratory-interpretive paradigm (Grotjahn, 1987). Within the exploratory-interpretive paradigm this study does not set out to test a priori hypotheses but to describe and interpret beliefs by means of a naturalistic research design. Applied to the study of teacher beliefs from their perspective this paradigm allows for an exploration and subsequent understanding of what teachers believe about language learning and language teaching.

In qualitative research the researcher assumes a posture of ‘indwelling’ as described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p.25). This means that the researcher becomes at one with the persons under investigation, walking a mile in their shoes, understanding the person’s point of view from an empathetic position. This indwelling is also reflective so the researcher is part of the investigation as a participant observer but also removes herself from the situation to rethink the meanings of the experiences she has. Openness and communication are key criteria in this study with the researcher being the research instrument by virtue of her role as interpreter.

This study takes a phenomenological approach with a focus on understanding the meaning events have for the persons being studied congruent with an indwelling orientation. In a phenomenological approach it is recognised that there are realities and that these are constructed by people in unique ways. The individual and his or her world are seen as co-constituted (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). ‘In the truest sense, the person is viewed as having no existence apart from the world, and the world as having no existence apart from the person’ (Valle and King, 1978).

The knower and the known are interdependent; if knowledge is constructed then the knower cannot be totally separated from what is known. In the phenomenological approach context is valued and it is recognised that the understanding of a phenomena in all its complexity occurs within a particular situation and environment (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

It is acknowledged that in qualitative research the researcher brings to the research task particular frames of interpretation and schemata. To ensure against researcher bias, member checks and debriefing by peers were employed as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Member checks, sometimes called communication validation (Grotjahn, 1987), attempt to ensure validity by examining to what extent the informant agrees with the interpretation of what he or she said. Securing validity is a primary aim in this type of research (Grotjahn, 1987).

By working in another culture and social experience, the researcher was more readily able to identify cultural patterns but perhaps was less able to guard against ethnocentric views. The peer debriefing sessions and professional discussion with Cook Islanders helped the researcher gain ‘insider’ views. As discussed by Davis (1995) insider and outsider researchers can build on each others strengths in helping ensure a credible and reliable study.

Exploratory-interpretive methodology postulates that valid data can only be obtained when an appropriate relationship is built up between the researcher and the subject. The aim is a data collection situation that is as free of dominance relationships as possible (Grotjahn, 1987). As stated by Erikson (1986, p.142): “Trust and rapport in fieldwork are not simply a matter of niceness; a non-coercive, mutually rewarding relationship with key informants is essential if the researcher is to gain valid insights into the informant’s point of view”. The need to establish trust and maintain it throughout the course of a study is crucial, if a sense of the perspective of the informant is to be gained. In this study the required relationship was built over a period of time. The researcher lived in Rarotonga for a period of four years, during

which time relationships with many members of the local community were developed. Living in a community of just 8000 people meant that the researcher was known by a large proportion of the community. The researcher built both professional and social relationships with all of the participants and was accepted as a friend and colleague.

#### **4.2.2 Data collection methods**

Data was collected predominantly using three tools: a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and classroom observation followed by stimulated recall of teaching situations. English was used in all interactions. These methods allowed teachers to express ideas in depth and allowed the researcher to react to ideas with appropriate follow up questions. It is usually best to access teachers' beliefs indirectly, for example through extended interviews, when a teacher can recount specific cases and events; and through stimulated recall, when a teacher tries to remember interactive thoughts while viewing a video tape of his or her classroom performance (Haertel, cited in Kagan, 1990). Case studies were used to provide a rich description including contextual detail.

The questionnaire provided much of the background information needed to select possible case study participants. This 'snap shot' also provided background for the researcher to use in the development of interview questions for the semi-structured interviews conducted later.

The interview was the main tool for data collection. Semi-structured interviews were designed to give the participants opportunity to talk about a range of topics or issues raised by the interviewer. In semi-structured interviews the interviewer has an idea of where she wants the interview to go but is open to letting the participant discuss what they see as pertinent topics. Topics and issues rather than questions determine the course of the interview. The advantages of semi-structured interviews are that the interviewee has some degree of control over the interview, and the interviewer has a

great deal of flexibility. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer privileged access to other people's lives, at their discretion.

Stimulated recall is a technique where the researcher records part of an event or a series of encounters. The researcher then gets the teacher to view parts of the recorded lesson and comment on what was happening at the time the teaching and learning took place. At this point teachers can then describe what caused them to act in certain ways and what beliefs might underlie such actions. A similar method was used by Woods (1989) in his investigation of the decision-making of ESL teachers. He used three data collection methods: ethnographic interviews, ethnographic observation over time and stimulated recall. In this study videotape recordings of observed lessons were used for stimulated recall interviews with teachers. Teachers were asked to comment on aspects of the lessons they taught.

The observation of teachers-in-action can lead to behavioural validation of results gained elsewhere in the study, where introspective statements about beliefs are checked out against directly observable behaviour. Lessons observed were videotaped and field notes were recorded by the researcher.

Data collection and analysis in the study were not linear but cyclical. Data were collected and analysed throughout the period of field work, with each successive stage of data collection being influenced by the analysis of the data already collected (as in Borg, 1998). Discussion with peers and other informal interactions with participants occurred during the time of the research.

## **4.3 Research Design**

### **4.3.1 Timeframe for research**

The research was carried out during 2001 in Rarotonga, Cook Islands. The research design was developed in March-May 2001, following discussions and investigation of current school and teacher data available through the Cook Islands Ministry of Education. Questionnaires were distributed and completed by teachers in May 2001. After analysing the questionnaires, three teachers were approached for inclusion in the case study phase. Interview questions were piloted with other education staff in May-June 2001. Semi-structured interviews with the three teachers involved in the case studies took place in June–December 2001, with classroom observation and stimulated recall events being carried out during October-November 2001. Transcription of interviews and analysis of data was ongoing during 2001 and completed in 2002.

### **4.3.2 Samples**

The questionnaire was distributed to three schools in Rarotonga; one secondary and two primary schools. The selection of schools was based on the researcher's personal knowledge of schools on the island and followed consultation with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education staff. The three schools represented a cross section of school types and styles.

Completed questionnaires were collected and the results analysed. Three teachers were selected based on their willingness, and on their teaching experience and qualifications. A range of teaching experience and qualifications was sought. The researcher's perceived ease of communication with possible participants in English was also taken into consideration.

#### **4.3.3 Site entry and ethics**

Initial ideas and plans for the research were discussed with teachers and Ministry of Education officials in the Cook Islands. Included in initial discussions were ethical concerns. It was agreed that the appropriate approach to meeting ethical principles was to follow Cook Islands Education administration formal protocol.

Access to schools and teachers was negotiated through the Cook Islands Secretary of Education after detailed discussion regarding the purpose of the study and the proposed methods to be employed. In the context of Cook Islands culture, the agreement and the active support of the research by the Secretary of Education was critical to its reception and acceptance by teachers and encouraged their participation. A letter provided by the Cook Islands Secretary of Education allowed the researcher access to all schools on Rarotonga.

All school principals, curriculum advisers and teachers who became involved in the research were informed by letter of the purposes and activities of the research as well as any burdens or risks they may incur. The researcher stated her obligation to protect participants' anonymity. The participants were made aware of their right at any time to withdraw from the research, or withdraw any information they had provided. All teachers involved gave their written consent to be involved with the research project.

Connected to negotiating access was the offer of an exchange of services. This is commonly referred to in ethnographic literature as 'exchange of services' or 'reciprocity' (Agar, 1980). Teachers were offered time off in lieu of the time they were involved with the researcher participating in interviews. The researcher taught their classes on an hour-for-hour basis for time given to the project by the teachers. All school principals involved and the Ministry of Education agreed to this. It was also agreed that the findings of the research would be made available to the Cook Islands Ministry of Education.

At all stages of the study participants anonymity was protected and confidentiality was maintained.

#### **4.3.4 Data Collection and Analysis**

The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was prepared and administered to all willing teachers in three large schools (two primary and one secondary) in Rarotonga. These schools catered for approximately 40% of all enrolled students in Rarotonga. The researcher personally distributed and collected the questionnaires and spoke to all teachers, explaining details of the questionnaire form. In the secondary school only the English language teachers were targeted. After analysis of the questionnaire results three teachers were approached seeking their involvement as case study participants. The choice of teacher was based on the need to select teachers from a range of teaching qualifications and teaching experience.

An initial set of questions were constructed to form the basis of semi-structured interviews with participants (see Appendix 2). The interview questions were trialled with two language teachers who had recently left their classrooms to work for the Cook Islands Ministry of Education in another capacity. The trials proved unproblematic and data was rich.

The initial interview (Interview 1) was conducted with each of the three teachers in their own classrooms without classes present. Interviews were 60-90 minutes in duration and took the form of a semi-structured conversation that invited the teacher to talk about language. Focus questions guided the interview and further probing questions were used to explore and clarify specific ideas raised. These interviews were recorded and transcribed. Notes were taken during each interview.

After careful reading and consideration of the results of Interview 1 a second semi-structured interview (Interview 2) was designed. Its purpose was to clarify issues raised during Interview 1 and probe more deeply into beliefs about language. The

focus questions of Interview 2 (see Appendix 3) varied between participants depending on the participants' initial responses. Again Interview 2 was conducted in the teachers' own classrooms and lasted 60-90 minutes.

Interviews were fully transcribed as soon after the interview as possible after listening to the taped interview several times. In some instances where responses were not clear on tape the field notes were used to back up the interpretation of responses. After each interview participants were given copies of transcripts and asked to confirm that the transcripts represented the views they expressed accurately.

The next stage of the study consisted of classroom observation of each teacher. The researcher's role in the classroom was that of non-participant observer. Observation was for one morning per teacher. Classes and times were negotiated with the teacher concerned. Field notes were made and the lessons were video-taped. The video camera was set in a corner of the classroom so as to be as unobtrusive as possible. Students seemed comfortable with this arrangement and ignored the camera. Some immediate feedback given by teachers at the end of lessons was noted in the researcher's field notebook. In order to gain insight into teachers' thought processes and beliefs a post-observation interview was conducted with each participant within a week of the event. During this interview, key episodes from the lessons were reviewed and participants were prompted to elaborate on them.

#### **4.3.5 Data analysis**

Questionnaire data was collated and summarized and tabulated where appropriate. Data relating to teacher experience and qualifications were extracted and grouped according to the qualification groupings recognised by the Cook Islands Ministry of Education. This was supplemented by data from the Cook Islands Education Digest (2001).

Interview data was transcribed and then analysed together with field notes. Recurrent themes and issues the respondents saw as very important were noted. Emotional involvement in some of the stories told was noted at the time and was considered by the researcher. After listening to and reading the data several times, a summary for each participant was made based around the themes that seemed to be evident in the data they provided. Comparison of what each teacher said in interviews and what was observed in their classrooms was made. The espoused beliefs of each teacher were then combined and general findings synthesised. In this final stage, a summary of the data produced by school advisers in the interview trials was also included.

#### **4.3.6 Reliability and validity**

Internal validity refers to interpretability of research, answering the question ‘does the research actually measure what it sets out to measure?’ There are a number of areas in this research where the internal validity could be threatened. This includes bias that may be introduced by the researcher during interviews, survey questions that may be misunderstood, and the unwillingness of participants to answer truthfully and plainly.

To enhance internal validity, the research took a series of measures. Internal validity was provided by the relationship of trust built between researcher and participants. By living in the Cook Islands for an extended period of time and having opportunity to reflect on data as it was generated, the researcher was able to refine constructs to ensure a match between categories used in data analysis and what participants meant in reality. The interviews were carefully designed so as to be clear and easily understood using the knowledge of participants, and were trialled with ex-teachers with similar experiences. The researcher took care not to introduce her own ideas during the semi-structured interviews and worked with a list of questions generated by previous discussions (see Appendices 2 and 3). Straightforward English was used in the interviews with a smattering of Maori. Questions were formulated so that the meanings were clear, and the interview approach encouraged the participants to follow their own thoughts in descriptions and comments, which were facilitated rather

than directed by the researcher. The participants knew that all responses were recorded in absolute confidence and would not be shared directly with their employing body. This assurance reduced the likelihood of anxiety and the perceived need for any dishonesty in answers. Interviewing was carried out in familiar settings. All phases of the data collection and analysis incorporated a process of researcher self-monitoring.

External validity relates to the way generalisations beyond the subjects under investigation can be made. In this study three case studies are presented. They are context bound and have limited generalisability. The cases have been described in detail and are seen by the researcher as individual cases. The purpose of this study is not to make generalisations to larger groups of teachers but to describe the beliefs of teachers *in situ*. Any future comparisons or generalisations drawn would need to acknowledge the individual nature of case studies. The researcher felt that her presence did not influence the outcomes of the research unduly.

The reliability of this research speaks of the extent to which the research can be replicated. External reliability is strengthened by explicit description of the status of the researcher, the choice of informants, social situations, analytic constructs and premises, methods of data collection and analysis (Nunan, 1992). These are described in detail earlier in this chapter.

The issue of internal reliability concerns the likelihood of independent researchers analysing primary data to come up with the same conclusions as the researcher. All raw data (field notes, completed survey forms, interview recordings and classroom recordings) were made available to participants. To authenticate data and improve reliability the participants were given transcripts of the raw data they generated and the interpretations made and were asked to validate these. All interviews and classroom observations were audio or video-taped and then subsequently transcribed, to improve reliability.

Triangulation (the use of two or more methods of data collection) by the use of questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations increases the reliability of the data collected.

This study is qualitative in nature, based in an exploratory-interpretive paradigm. The research design, methods and data analysis reflect this. All possible precautions were taken by the researcher to ensure validity and reliability in the research. Appropriate ethical considerations were made. The research was designed and carried out in Rarotonga, Cook Islands. The data collected is analysed and presented in the next Chapter.

# **Chapter Five      Results**

*What fire is the hardest to put out?*

*Thought.*

Old Cook Islands riddle

## **5.1      Introduction**

As explained in the methodology chapter there were three sources of data: questionnaire results, in-depth interviews, classroom observation and stimulated recall using videotaped lessons. The results are reported in three sections. The first section gives the collated results of the questionnaires given to teachers of the three participating schools in this study. Summary statements of responses to questions are included and key findings are noted.

The second section reports the results generated by in-depth interviews and classroom observations with associated stimulated recall with the three teachers, one secondary English teacher and two primary teachers. Each set of data is treated and reported separately so that individual differences can be seen.

The third section is a summary of the combination of all interview results from the three teachers involved in the study and the two local school advisers who were involved in the pilot interviews. Similarities and differences in beliefs are identified.

## **5.2      Teacher Questionnaire Summary**

Thirty four questionnaires were distributed and explained to all the teachers of two major primary schools and to the English teachers of the major secondary school in Rarotonga. Completion of the questionnaires was voluntary. Fifteen questionnaires were completed and returned, and the combined results are reported below. One New

Zealand teacher on short term contract and one Fijian teacher are included in the results. All other respondents were Cook Islander teachers.

The use of a questionnaire was not intended to give a statistically representative sample of Cook Islands teachers, but instead to help select study participants and give background information that would be used in the development of interview questions. The results give a ‘snap shot’ of teachers’ views.

Table 1 shows characteristics of the teachers who responded by completing and returning the questionnaire. The data in the Table indicates that most of the respondents were female, over the age of 40 and most had been teaching for over 20 years.

**Table 1      Characteristics of Respondents**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number of teachers</b>
<b>Sex:</b> male female	2 13
<b>Age:</b> 20-29 years 30-39 years 40-49 years 50+ years	4 1 3 7
<b>Years of teaching:</b> 1-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 15-20 years 20+ years	3 3 1 0 8

Table 2 shows the teaching qualifications and language use of teachers who responded to the questionnaire. Most teachers had as their highest qualification the Cook Islands teaching certificate. Two teachers involved in the questionnaire had ESL qualifications, and one of these was a New Zealand expatriate teacher. Predominantly the respondents regarded Cook Islands Maori as their first language. All the respondents were at least bilingual, except for the New Zealand expatriate teacher.

**Table 2 Qualifications held by teachers and languages used**

	<b>Number of teachers</b>
<b>Teaching Qualifications</b>	
None	1
CI teaching certificate	9
Fiji diploma	3
UPNG diploma	1
NZ teaching diploma	3
NZ degree	1
<b>English Language teaching qualifications</b>	
Dip TESL	1
BA (linguistics)	1
<b>First language</b>	
Cook Islands Maori	13
English	1
Fijian	1
<b>Other languages spoken</b>	
English	13
PNG pidgin	1
Hawaiian	1
Fijian	1

Table 3 gives the results showing which languages teachers find most comfortable to use in various contexts and which language they use when teaching.

**Table 3      Language use of respondents**

<b>Which language do you feel most comfortable using...</b>	<b>Number of teachers</b>
<b>At home?</b>	
English	1
Maori	10
English/Maori equally	3
Fijian	1
<b>When teaching?</b>	
English	8
Maori	0
English/Maori equally	7
<b>With friends?</b>	
English	3
Maori	4
English/Maori equally	7
<b>Which language do you use most in the classroom?</b>	
English	13
Maori	0
English/Maori equally	2

Except for the two teachers recruited from overseas all teachers considered some dialect of Cook Islands Maori to be their first language and most felt most comfortable using this language when at home. However, a lower number of teachers felt most comfortable teaching in Maori and most teachers used English mostly or entirely when teaching in the classroom.

### **5.2.1      Key features of the sample group**

This sample group had a large proportion of female teachers and older teachers reflecting demographic patterns in the larger community. Nationally, 71% of

teachers working in the Cook Islands in 2001 were female and 33% were over the age of 50 years (Cook Islands Education Statistics Digest, 2001). The usual age for retirement in the Cook Islands is 55 years old. Over half of the sample group had a Cook Islands teaching certificate (a basic two-year course) as their highest qualification. Only the teacher from New Zealand and one Cook Islands teacher had a formal English language teaching qualification. All teachers except the New Zealand and Fijian recruits identified some dialect of Cook Islands Maori as their first language.

The results of responses to a number of statements made about language learning and teaching in the Cook Islands are summarized in Table 4. For each statement teachers responded using a Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

**Table 4      Summary of teacher responses to statements**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
English is a hard language to learn	4	1	5	3	1
It's OK to guess if you don't know a word in English	0	6	1	6	2
It is necessary to know an English speaker's culture in order to speak English well	2	5	2	4	1
It is important to repeat and practice a lot when learning a language	9	4	0	0	1
Cook Islanders are good at learning English	3	5	5	0	1
It is easier to read and write in English than to speak and understand	1	0	3	7	3
When students are learning two languages at the same time they will not do as well in either of them	1	6	4	3	1
Students' bilingualism should be the aim of all teachers in the Cook Islands	4	4	5	1	0
The best way to learn a language is by learning grammar	0	6	3	2	4
Teachers must model accurate language for their students	7	6	1	1	0

Many of the statements in the questionnaire had a wide range of responses from teachers indicating that a range of ideas about language learning and language teaching exists within the group of classroom teachers involved in this study. Most teachers agreed that student bilingualism should be the aim of language teachers. They felt that Cook Islands students are good language learners but felt that learning two languages at the same time would mean students would not do as well in either language. Most felt that teacher-modelling is important and that practice is an important part of learning language. Teachers were divided over whether it is good to guess unknown words and whether it is best to learn a language by learning grammar. There was also a range of opinions on whether English is a hard language to learn and on whether knowledge of the culture of English speakers helps with proficiency.

A question was also asked exploring thoughts about length of time needed for fluency when learning a language in a restricted way. Results are shown in Table 5. A large proportion of teachers agreed that you cannot learn a language in 1 hour per day but an equal proportion thought it would be possible to do so in 1-5 years.

**Table 5              Time to learn a language: responses to questions**

<b>If someone spent 1 hour a day learning English how long would it take them to become fluent?</b>	<b>Number of teachers who agree</b>
less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	3
3-5 years	3
5-10 years	1
you can't learn a language in 1 hour per day	6

### **5.2.2 Summary of responses to written questions**

Most of the questionnaire respondents felt that Cook Islands students were good language learners. The most commonly mentioned things that made English language learning easier for the students are listed below:

- Good models of English language, with examples given such as movies, TV, native speakers to interact with
- Knowledge of the Cook Islands Maori language, with reading and writing in Maori mentioned specifically
- A good learning environment, including a range of practical classroom activities and opportunity for lots of practice
- Access to books, and the encouragement of reading
- Parental support, and community cooperation with school programmes

The most commonly identified hindrances to improvement in English language were:

- Lack of knowledge of Maori, lack of fluency in Maori
- Lack of support for learners from family and community, including the lack of support of reading programmes and help with school work
- The culture of criticism and being laughed at by others
- Low motivation levels
- The language students are exposed to, which is often incorrect and not fluent

Almost all teachers felt strongly that English language learning should be based on a system of learning phonics. After this, the learning of reading was seen as most important with writing skills also mentioned. Some teachers mentioned the need for students to be taught what they need to pass exams.

Teachers felt they should provide many things for their students including teaching strategies to enable the students to learn processes (with the process to decode phonetically mentioned particularly). Teachers mentioned providing an environment which was encouraging and where students could enjoy learning. Many also

mentioned that the environment should be disciplined. They felt they were responsible for providing correct models as well as resources, particularly books.

### **5.3 Interviews and observations**

As detailed in the methodology chapter, the results from the questionnaire reported above informed the questions used in the first semi-structured interview. This section details the main findings from detailed interviews with study participants. Each of the three participants is reported on separately. The results from each teacher are grouped under six headings. These groupings were chosen after results were analysed as the identified themes coming from the results.

The six themes were:

- Input: refers to the target language a learner is presented with/comes across from which they can acquire language.
- Language usage: includes the use of English and Maori by students, teachers and members of the community.
- Language learning process: the teacher's views on the way language is learnt.
- Nature of language: refers to the teacher's views on language and how it relates to other aspects of life e.g. culture.
- Nature of learners and learning community: refers to the characteristics teachers identify as belonging to learners or their communities that affect language acquisition.
- Source of beliefs: a reflection by teachers on what might have affected their thinking about language and their beliefs about language learning and teaching.

### **5.3.1 Mata**

#### **5.3.1.1 *Background***

Mata was a secondary English teacher in her 50s who was teaching English to Y9 – Y12 classes in a secondary school on Rarotonga during the time of the research. She was a forthright and articulate person who held definite views on education as well as on life in general. She was a compassionate teacher who cared about her students and who championed their cause. Mata believed there were many influences operating in her classroom, and in schools generally, which dictated to a large degree the success of the language learners she worked with.

Mata was born and educated in the Cook Islands and was awarded a scholarship to New Zealand to complete her secondary education and train as a teacher. During her schooling in Rarotonga the use of Cook Islands Maori was prohibited at school. After returning to the Cook Islands Mata worked in schools on Rarotonga and for a long period on Mangaia (a small outer island in the Southern Cooks with a population of approximately 1000) and also spent some time working for the Ministry of Education. Mata was well known in the community and knew her students and their families well. Her classroom was basic but typical of secondary classrooms in the Cook Islands with a concrete floor, blackboard, desks and several broken louvre windows. The room had bare painted walls.

#### **5.3.1.2 *Input***

Mata held very definite views on what enhanced language learning. Mata believed that for effective and accurate language acquisition to occur it was firstly crucial to have good language models to provide correct input.

*A model, you know, someone who speaks good English... and then, um, copy it. I think that was... I would say that that was the best for me, although when*

*you were at school you, umm, tried to imitate the te... you know the teachers and it was not until I left for New Zealand I realised that I actually spoke like some of my teachers... and I made the same mistakes as my teachers.*

She enlisted the help of native English speakers to provide accurate input whenever they visited the island of Mangaia so the students she was teaching could hear more accurate models. Mata was a fluent and confident speaker of English but was very aware of her status as a second language speaker. This awareness caused her to doubt her ability to teach native English speakers in her classes. Mata felt that the input provided by teachers was vital to learners' progress.

Whilst living in New Zealand at a Napier boarding school Mata spent time with local families during holidays and recalled the ways she was able to improve her English. She found the way New Zealand mothers spoke to their children very useful for her own English acquisition.

*When I got there (NZ) I thought they spoke a different tongue... language... oohh it was wicked... no wonder we... you never seen anyone cry so much... we wept and just wept... the whole place was so alien.*

*I found that the children talking to their parents was one of the... easier way I could... picking up grammar, correct grammar, and correct pronunciation... 'cos when some mothers repeat words then we've got the correct pronunciation... and I was very aware of that. That's what I preferred and I guess that's what led me into teaching.*

Mata felt that she was able to learn a lot from listening to the way New Zealand mothers spoke to their children. She also thought songs provide good input for learners.

She criticised previous approaches used in the Cook Islands, particularly barring the use of Maori at school and the use of drilling, repetition, and the Tate Method (used extensively in 1960s and 1970s in the Cook Islands).

Mata believed very strongly in the importance of reading when learning language, particularly for vocabulary development. This was something she found helpful herself and she encouraged all of her classes to read widely. Mata felt that correct vocabulary use was very important and was one of the key goals in language learning. Through reading students could learn vocabulary.

*When I go to a school to teach English I always encourage reading, very important. It has a very imp... vital part of... you know and when I used to think why... it's that building up of vocabulary. I always say to my young girls, 13, 14, 15 ummmm they say, 'Ohh Miss, the Mills and Boon'... and I said you can learn a good five words. I often... I read along with them and I said 'I always learn good words from here – one or two – because the story is interesting you remember it and you can use it too.' And I always encourage them...*

*I always remember being told off for reading stupid books when I was about twelve or thirteen, and of course the more I was, you know, reading, the more I got told , the more I read them... out of sight of course.*

*Yeah, but ah... I have actually learnt quite a lot of new words and phrases and expressions... um ... sometimes I marvel at the way some of these authors describe human emotions. It is incredible how they describe... some of them.*

### **5.3.1.3    Language Usage**

Mata believed that using English is a key to learning the language well. In the days when Mata attended school there was a strict policy of no Maori allowed at school. Any offenders caught speaking Maori would be severely punished with either corporal punishment or jobs to be done around the school. Although she did not agree with this policy she felt it helped students with English acquisition.

*We were forced to speak English. I came through a school system where no Maori was allowed... we were punished for speaking Maori... you got punished. You had to go and weed the garden you go and clean the toilet, pick up the leaves. It was never-ending.*

*It's what I can remember about Maori speaking... smacked on the thing, go outside and pick those... go outside and pull those bloody weeds, or collect the rocks off the stadium.*

She gave examples of many people who went to school when this policy was in place, and have become very successful scholars and professionals. They are also very competent users of the English language. A key to language acquisition was identified as practice. Mata felt that because of the system that was in place while she was growing up, disallowing Maori use at school, Cook Islanders of that generation have better English than students at school at the time of this study.

Mata believed that outer island students were disadvantaged by not being able to practice spoken English in real life situations. This coupled with the pressure not to make mistakes in public led to outer islands students being better at reading and writing than at speaking and listening. She believed that being able to use another language fluently gives the speaker superiority, something that was not always celebrated in outer islands.

Rarotongans in particular were seen by Mata as lazy speakers. This 'laziness' transferred from one language to another.

*In fact I always thought they [Rarotongans] were lazy speakers. They slur their, you know, whereas in Mangaia they do pronounce their vowels quite clearly in Maori as well as in English.*

Mata believed that because Cook Islanders saw many of the desirable commodities as being Western, which included using English, this meant that English would eventually dominate in the country.

*I'm sure they will [students will see English as being more important]. Let's face it, most of the students over here [Rarotonga] don't even speak Maori so... it's our fault... its people like me who didn't like... I never taught my children... [They picked it up in Mangaia].*

*I think the children of this generation must see sooner or later that English will be the language, over here though.*

*[Students on the outer islands] They see it as a second language... I think generally that the feeling is that... all the written material is all papa'a, all the movies are papa'as (sic) and all the things that are natural for us to want like beautiful houses, is all in English. Even if they will voice it I think they will have to live through and experience the quality of Maori before they are able. But as students if they don't go through that experience they won't regard Maori they will always regard English as second... but as one that matters more so than Maori. This colonial influence is truly quite great.*

Another strong belief Mata espoused was that ability in language gives the speaker power and prestige although this is not always welcomed in the Cook Islands. The local culture tends not to celebrate difference but ridicule it.

*I always maintained I've got to be able speak in English, not so much as a house girl but just so I can feel slightly better than these blooming ex-pats.*

*You know the other thing that I didn't realise was socially... see when I went back to my people [after living in New Zealand] they always said that I spoke high-class, kind of thing. You know I was not aware of it... no wonder I was shunned. I always felt that I had to be twice as good before I am easily accepted and every time I opened my mouth to speak in a netball game or... thing... they always say, 'huh, high class' and I was not aware... but it was when I was training to be a teacher that I realised... um... 'cos that there is a slight difference between my learnt English to their socially picked... and when I come to think of it I would say that most of my language was really taught... I acquired it from my teachers.*

#### **5.3.1.4 Language learning process**

Mata distinguished between learning English at school and learning English socially. She believed language should be taught in an ordered way at school but that in reality

when using English to communicate socially the language may be learnt in any order. She compared her academically acquired English to the English used by many of her friends who had acquired it socially.

An important part of the process of learning was identified as practice.

*Just practice, saying as much as you like, practice... say as much as you like... speak as much as you can.*

*I mean I'm still practising.*

Mata felt that the context for language learning was very important. She believed that learning English in a context that was interesting or pertinent to students meant the students would have a much greater chance of retaining what they had learnt and that they would be able to recall and use it. In observed teaching practice Mata spoke to her students about language that was practical and used everyday examples and contexts the students could relate to.

Mata said she saw grammar as something 'picked up' during the process of language acquisition and felt that it was unimportant to spend class time on grammar. However during classroom observations it was obvious that Mata found it necessary to spend time on grammar points. One grammar based lesson was centred on verb usage and sentence building. This was partly to fulfill syllabus requirements and to prepare students for end of year assessment according to Mata.

To enable language learning to occur effectively Mata felt that the behaviour of the classroom teacher and the environment the students worked in were very important. Mata described a classroom where good language teaching was occurring as one which had a varied programme and had an atmosphere that encouraged talk between students. She emphasised the need to build relationships with students and be very encouraging. Plenty of practice would ensure success.

*The children will be talking. They will be... they are not unruly... it is a practical... they are all practically chatting.*

*To me I've given the instruction and they should be working and I don't mind a bit of noise... controlled noise.*

*Good language... I would be bound to see someone reading... at least one or two would be reading something anyway... or would be attracted to some wall chart.*

*They will be busy... doing some activities related to reading or language... chatting... some might be sitting meditating perhaps... dreaming perhaps... you are always bound to find that.*

*[When talking about good teaching] Time goes so quickly... and you haven't even finished. That's because I am involved in my teaching and the children are involved. It is spontaneous... responses and you can see that they are... you've got their attention.*

She felt that teachers should respond to students' interests and questions. During classroom observation it was observed that Mata often changed the focus of her lessons to follow particular voiced student interests. She was very encouraging when providing feedback. Her students responded well to this.

Mata believed that teachers made a huge impact on the learning of language. She criticised the sometimes critical methods of her colleagues. Mata believed that students need to feel supported as they take risks with language. The surrounding culture which included ridicule of mistakes meant that this often did not happen.

*It's not really noticeable over here unless a child is really weak at English... but it is so in the Outer Islands, because, you know the dominant language is the Cook Islands language. It's... it's the humiliation of being laughed at and unfortunately so of the teachers, as I said, you know I'm using my experience in the outer islands... we are a lot more exposed to English over here. That's why we don't... it's not as noticeable but in the outer islands – even some teachers would umm laugh at the... humiliate the kids when they make mistakes and of course umm that sometimes we speak in English and then we*

*don't know the English word for a certain thing... we punctuate it with Maori and away we go. It's the humiliation, embarrassment... you know generally Polynesians are timid and shy... generally.*

*I used to be in that way where I'm always ridiculing... I'm good at ridiculing others when they try to speak in English, but that was before I became a teacher. But when I became a teacher, isn't it funny, you go back and you hate yourself for it, to the extent where you just cannot put up with it. I remember that because I had such an outgoing personality and I was quick at escaping that really is what make me do it. I love being chased and I always know that I cannot be caught, 'cos if I get caught I get a hiding.*

*That, and jealously, because the particular person who is trying to speak in English is getting the focus... oh, she's speaking in English... and I'd ridicule her, sort of to... all that feeling I didn't know at the time because I was so much younger but now that I am an English teacher, of course, I cannot stand teachers who... you know the irony is that I have actually come across teachers who humiliate students for trying to speak in English, and then they bring their work to me to check for USP courses, [and it is written in poor English] ... and that's when it really gets me.*

Mata felt that the school system sometimes worked against language learning for students, particularly at secondary level. She felt that in the Cook Islands the secondary school system did not allow teachers the flexibility to teach basic language skills and address ongoing English language acquisition. Pressures from the curriculum and from administration staff meant the language programmes were determined not by students' needs but by assessment requirements. This caused conflict for her in her classroom practice as the pressure from her English Department meant she could not address needs as she recognised them. Although she recognised the conflict she felt there was nothing she could do to resolve it. In the Cook Islands teachers must follow the programmes they are given; to deviate significantly from the programme is not acceptable. Judgements about teachers tend to be made by looking at summative assessment results.

*I feel that I just don't teach at [my school]. I'm covering a syllabus at [my school]. If you can't read... I just can't... honestly it worries me and gets on my conscience... because there is nothing I can do. All we ever do is draw pictures and label it if they can't [read]. Some of them can't even copy from... correctly. It's probably an expectation but I know if I start teaching them we will be behind with the syllabus. You know that's what gets me sometimes because [my two colleagues] have already finished theirs and... not at [my school], but I have done it at the primary school.*

*No teaching at all. It is really just expansion.*

*Come to think of it... I never think of it... teaching reading or writing... it's probably just that expectation... you just don't over here. By the time they get here [to secondary school] they should know... Unfortunately it's just a bad rule for them if they don't.*

### **5.3.1.5    *Nature of Language***

Mata believed that language gave people an identity, and that language and culture are related.

*I think they [language and culture] must... I think language sort of belongs to a culture because of the vocabulary that is used, it is exclusively related to a particular culture.*

Mata believed that there is an important connection between culture and language. The cultural pressure not to make mistakes in public which decreased students' risk-taking has been described earlier. Mata also gave examples of where different cultural understanding of concepts could cause confusion when learning English.

*One of the things that is my favourite is that they will say, 'we're going to have breakfast' at lunchtime. That kind of thing. They cannot see that breakfast is a morning meal and that lunch and... they say at 4 o'clock we are going to go to so-and-so's place to have lunch... That's a culture... if you had lived with papa's as (sic) you would know, but that's a culture... that's*

*language too, because for us we have kai ti in the morning and main meal in the midday and kai ti in the...*

*The breakfast, lunch, and... is definitely a papa'a culture, so is the language.*

*English is [changing the culture]. I mean it has to change. We are becoming technical with the computer and these things. It is that and there is even a lot of complaints about the Cook Islands dancing is more commercialised, more Tahitian.*

She was astounded when she arrived at school in New Zealand to find that many of her New Zealand Maori friends were not competent in Maori language.

*The incredible thing Frances, was though... I couldn't believe it... they didn't even speak Maori, New Zealand Maori.*

Mata believed strongly that it is very important for children to be 'grounded' in their mother tongue before being introduced to English. Although she taught almost entirely in English (as was the policy at secondary level) she did use Maori with lower ability classes. Mata felt that when students were not secure in their first language they would find English difficult. She thought this was particularly true for children living in Rarotonga. In the outer islands Maori is used at all times so students are more competent users of Maori but in Rarotonga an English-Maori mix is used by many people.

*That's what I used to complain about because they are not supposed to teach in English until they get to Grade 3, three years of school.*

Mata admitted that she did not teach her own children Maori when they lived in Rarotonga, although they learnt it when they moved to live on Mangaia.

She described the follow-on from the 'no Maori at school' policy being that when those children in her generation became parents they did not really allow their children to speak Maori when they were growing up.

*Even those who could hardly speak English never allowed their children to speak Maori... now they are regretting it.*

*... more inclined to speak English.*

*It took me a long time to face up to that (the loss of Maori)... I think it was really a very foolish thing, you know... to stop natural speakers of um... Maori because I always maintained that if you have that inclination to want to speak in English, you can actually be a better speaker of English if you were fluent with your own language...I've just come to realise that over the last... not very long ago.*

She felt angry that teachers who taught in the time when she was at school later have complained about the lack of Maori being spoken by the younger generation – it was a system they perpetuated.

#### **5.3.1.6    *Nature of learners and learning communities***

When discussing herself and her students as Cook Islander language learners Mata identified a number of features she felt influenced achievement.

Mata explained the success of language learners was very dependent on the motivation of the learner. Using herself as an example she described that her drive to be an excellent speaker of English came as a result of her upbringing. She was one of four daughters born into a hard working family. Her mother worked as a house-girl (servant) to one of the European families living in Rarotonga. Her mother encouraged the girls to speak English and put them into uncomfortable situations to force them to use their English. Mata found her mother's acceptance of the role as servant to the papa'a as abhorrent and became determined to not follow in her mother's footsteps.

*Mum felt comfortable as a servant and you always had that impression of servitude instilled because there were four of us girls and umm... but I was determined I was not going to be and I thought that, well that one of the ways*

*I could overcome was to speak their language.*

*Yeah, it was. Because our mother wanted us to have as much exposure to papa'a way of life I was used to umm... I was forced to, forced to go to birthday parties of English speakers, even when I was about four. She just loved dressing me up and I dreaded it... because I didn't know how to speak... and we'd go... I kept going every year. I kept going to these birthday parties because she wanted me to go... to these papa'a birthday parties.*

*And I thought one of these days I'm going to master this and I'm going to look for little girls like me.*

*I always behaved because I was just so frightened.*

*When we finished the party we always came back with a basket of candy, home made candy and an apple... what do you call that... toffee apple... umm yeah... even with those I HATED it... it wasn't worth it.*

*I was dressed like them, but I just didn't speak like them.*

*These home made lollies were scrumptious... but it wasn't worth it... it wasn't. I always won the games 'cos I could run faster than them... but no language whatsoever... I was determined that I was... one of these days I was going to speak better than them.*

Mata saw that with determination she was able to reach her goal. Conversely Mata saw the lack of a strong motivation as a justifiable reason for not making progress in language learning. In her comments about New Zealanders who had lived in the Cook Islands for many years and had not yet even mastered place name pronunciation, Mata commented:

*It's just because they are not that way inclined. I'm a lot more forgiving towards those kind because if you're not inclined... And then there are those who just rattle off – no problem because they like it, and I admire that too. But I do find it a lot more forgiving for those who are not that way inclined and can't even say names correctly.*

Mata believed that Cook Islands' learners were not able to take risks in many cases because of the humiliation they suffered at the hands of peers or teachers. This made them shy and less willing to take risks which in turn slowed down the learning process.

*It's not really noticeable over here unless a child is really weak at English... but it is so in the Outer Islands, because, you know the dominant language is the Cook Islands language. Its... it's the humiliation of being laughed at and unfortunately so of the teachers, as I said, you know I'm using my experience in the outer islands... we are a lot more exposed to English over here. That's why we don't... it's not as noticeable but in the outer islands – even some teachers would umm laugh at the... humiliate the kids when they make mistakes and of course umm that sometimes we speak in English and then we don't know the English word for a certain thing... we punctuate it with Maori and away we go. It's the humiliation, embarrassment... you know generally Polynesians are timid and shy... generally.*

The customs of Cook Islands learners was also identified as hindering English acquisition and made senior school assessment difficult for some students.

*The culture comes into it to because for us it is rude to... children are to be seen and not heard, kind of thing. It is very rude and this looking at people in the eyes... oh that took me... you know I always feel sorry for... when they are being assessed for interviewing in the 5<sup>th</sup> form, 6<sup>th</sup> form, they are not used to it.*

Mata believed that many of the products of colonialism still affected many parts of Cook Islanders' lives. In schools she saw the hierarchy that existed and the attitudes of teachers towards students as being as a result of the colonial influence. The only way she saw to help learners was by gentle encouragement from classroom teachers.

*Kids are limited [under an authoritative classroom regime]. That's why I don't like it. The kids are really just limited to that persons [teachers] ability or that persons teaching, whereas if they have freedom to experiment or use other methods ... because it makes you as a teacher look at other angles for*

*learning the same kind of thing... for a teacher that's what I've found. That's why I like befriending students.*

With the move into post-colonialism Mata still saw much outside influence as negative on Cook Islands learners. For example the employment of teachers from overseas continued to affect school climate and discipline as the teachers introduced new western philosophy. The papa'a teachers were blamed for the breakdown in discipline.

*[The authoritarian approach in Rarotonga] It hasn't gone. I think there still is that respect. You see this is why they start thinking... they start... it's not a secret really... they think it is these papa'a teachers that are bringing in these freedoms. Like last year we had Rights of the Child. Most Polynesians, Cook Islanders do not like that sort of thing. Not even for the likes of us who have come [back from New Zealand]. Maybe for... I think it is basically that we don't want the children to be aware of their rights. Although we do realise that they have got some rights... but the whole system has gone, like the breakdown now at school – the smoking, the drugs – is all given, we all blame the papa'a teachers.*

Mata believed that it was for the Cook Islanders themselves to determine the future of their own people and language. Experts from overseas were often used by the Cook Islands government on a consultancy basis. Mata gave examples of times when Cook Islanders had been insulted by papa'a experts telling them how to preserve their language. Learners who do not succeed in language learning will always be looked after by the community and so literacy and English language competency is not seen as a necessity by local people. This is in conflict with many overseas consultants' views. For example when discussing the approach of a New Zealand expert working in a school on an outer island Mata said:

*Speak more Maori?... I was quite insulted and I felt offended because he was telling me to speak more Maori... I got beaten by my local teachers for doing something natural [speaking Maori while a student at school] and here I have this foreigner telling me in my own... that's how I felt. I really was. I'm just bitter because here is this foreigner telling me to speak in Maori when I*

*live here... I can speak the language. Who is he to tell me that I should my own, that I should practise?*

*He said to them [school students] “Did you know that if you don’t get School Certificate you are going to end up on the street, with no job, nothing, absolutely nothing” ... well... I was quite fascinated at the time and I thought “How dare you?” Of course they will... and being the coward that I was I went around his back and said, “Don’t take any notice of that. You’re not going to starve, you’re not going to be without a job, you’re not going to be without food. He might though, he and his children, because he doesn’t belong here.”*

#### **5.3.1.7    *Source of beliefs***

Mata stated that she thought many of her beliefs came as a result of influences in her life as she was growing up. Her mother, in particular, influenced her greatly. She admired her mother for the way she learnt about the papa'a way of life but she definitely did not want to follow the same life pathway as her mother. This gave her a very strong motivation to be very good at English. Her experiences as a young person who moved to New Zealand to complete her education also influenced her beliefs considerably as she struggled to learn the language and cope with academic work.

#### **5.3.2       *Tu***

##### **5.3.2.1    *Background***

Tu was a teacher in her 20s; a young woman who had worked as an untrained teacher in a local school on Rarotonga and then completed a three year teacher training course in Fiji and Hawaii through the Corpus Christi Teachers' College. She was in her first year of post-training teaching when this research project was undertaken. Tu was enthusiastic and seen by the principal of the school she was working in as having great promise for the future.

Tu taught Grade 2 students (6-7 years old) in a large Roman Catholic primary school. Her classroom was light and airy with posters (including commercially prepared charts) and art work displayed on the walls. Rudimentary but functional furniture was arranged so that students sat in groups. A large mat was placed at the front of the classroom for mat-time. Tu's classroom was busy and interesting, but very orderly.

Tu was born in Rarotonga. She was raised by her grandparents, a common arrangement in many families in the Cook Islands. Her first language was Cook Islands Maori, the language of her grandparents. Tu was very involved in village life in Rarotonga and most of the children she taught she knew very well. She said the relationship she had with her pupils stemmed from the social relationship they had already built before the children started school.

### **5.3.2.2    *Input***

Tu believed that oral language is the key to learning language. She saw her role as providing a good model as vital, and classroom observation confirmed the emphasis she placed on students listening and imitating her speech.

*Modelling is very important.*

*I think I'll learn it better... like if one person says it to me, I'll say it the same way. You know, that person pronounces it like this... I'll pronounce it like that... wrong or right... I'll pronounce it like that.*

*If I was a learner child I would say 'This is my teacher, my teacher should know it all' ... so pronounce it right. That's learning.*

*I just... I use myself as... I'm sure that if I speak it the proper way they will... if I speak it the wrong way they'll definitely the wrong way.*

As part of providing a good learning environment Tu believed immersing the children in language was important. She felt that students received input from many sources and as a teacher one of her jobs was to provide as much language stimulus as she could.

*Just full surrounding environment with language, words. Surround them, let them see, hear, read... all the senses of... you know, of the language.*

### **5.3.2.3    *Language Usage***

Tu believed that using language in a variety of ways was essential when students were learning a language. Tu encouraged interactions because she believed that learners learnt from each other, and that this was a positive thing.

*[Interactions are] very important... with me. I enjoy having them together, and then having us together... yes I like that... I encourage that a lot, not alone... go in pairs, or can go in a bigger group, threes, fours.*

*It's like the students maybe cannot help the understanding of this through the teacher maybe through the teachers again... learning from each other, that would definitely bring out learning... good language work there.*

*And with the speaking like they got it wrong. Turn around, correct them and ask them do they know why they're wrong and they 'oh yes I do' and let them correct them or each other.*

In Tu's class the researcher observed much interaction between Tu and her class as a whole and within small groups of students.

Tu felt that sometimes fear stopped children from using English, as many children are shy and afraid of being laughed at. Her aim was to reduce this fear by making the learning environment as encouraging as possible.

Tu taught almost entirely in English, although her class was Grade 2 (7 year olds), and many came from Maori speaking families. This went against the Cook Islands education policy of teaching in Maori until Grade 3. She maintained that the students thought in English.

*Even classes when I've tried English and switch [to] Maori exactly the same way I teach... English will be no problem... but Maori is like 'We'll take our time at this. It's Maori, and we don't speak it much.' They can, but... they'll take their time. The environment is just English so the whole thinking has to be English.*

*It's all around them... that's the thing I would say... it's just the fact It's...what, 90% around them... in and out of home... on the field... in the road.*

Tu believed that the ability to use both Maori and English is necessary for life in Rarotonga.

#### **5.3.2.4 Language learning process**

Tu believed that there was a correct order in which to learn a language, and that this started with sounds. She based her thoughts on acquisition order on her knowledge of learning Maori, using the same patterns.

*I think there should be [an order things should be learnt in]. With language, no matter what language, but in terms of language there should be an order of it. I think if there is an order any language can go... can be learnt so easily. Orally you know, or the other way.*

*Even myself I am trying to make a routine, you know, order of the language in my basic English here. Then if I can settle it straight into Maori language. That's what I, you know, am thinking behind me. I'm sure if there's an order because children can always stick to routines...when they know the routines they'll just stick to that. And yes I've started on some sort of order.*

Tu felt that she might discover the best order for teaching English language as she worked with her class over the period of a year or two.

When she described her approach to teaching language she started with phonics. She firmly believed in teaching sounds and then building on these.

*Definitely phonics. Phonics, the alphabet, recognizing, the structure of sentences, a lot of oral, just oral speaking.*

*At least in the first Term 1 I like to just focus for the first three weeks or so how much they already know about their phonics...what they already know. From there that would help me know if he or she is good at this, weak at that. And then... we'll work with our rhymes and that. A lot of language does, we do through songs before we actually get down to structure... the reading.*

When discussing the way English language was introduced and taught Tu mentioned mastering English language sounds as of primary importance.

[The most important first things are] *sounding. Sounds. Phonics I mean.*

*Yeah. Recognition, yeah, very important.*

Tu believed that the sounds used in a language must be recognised and learnt by her students, and that she provided the most reliable model for these students.

Tu felt that the writing process takes time to develop but that the skills can be taught. She felt that grammar is an important part of writing that must be taught. She compared the progress of Cook Islands students to that of Fijian students. She drew many similarities between the two groups.

Tu did not find English an easy subject at school and she struggled throughout most of her schooling. She attributed her final success in learning English to the environment she encountered at secondary school. She placed a high value on providing a suitable environment so that the learning process could occur for her students.

*This is how I saw myself. I went through primary. I didn't do well in English... I just enjoyed numbers... loved numbers... anything with language words, I hated it... I can't stand it. It was easy for me. Language – shut it out, numbers – ohh give it to me. Everything went on, but then it came to high*

*school... I don't know. I suppose it is what I saw. The reinforcements children get from school through class teachers and then the end of the year awards and everything. Well it just came... I just started... then I had to start again second form... and then instead of shutting it out I opened it up and gave it a chance... and say hey now I enjoy it, and I did. Then I left high school and eh... it was just probably, it just didn't maybe because it didn't get the right environment when I was younger... and I suppose when I came secondary a different environment and ... you weren't forced into it... it eventually comes out.*

Tu put a great emphasis on the environment in her classroom and on her relationship with the children she taught. She explained that the relationship between teachers and students was more distant and formal in other teachers' classes and on the outer islands. She felt that without an environment conducive to learning very little language acquisition would occur.

*I think it is the getting alongside relationship that is more common with the Cook Islands children and teachers. It makes it worse that it is such a small place. You get along anywhere around your village... it just all blends into school work and other community work.*

*I'm the boss, you're just the children... no... and that's one thing that I would discourage too. I like to hear their ideas before I even start most of my lessons. What they know already or not.*

Tu believed that a good classroom is a noisy, busy classroom, where children are free to ask questions and learn from each other.

*It's like the student maybe cannot help the understanding of this through the teacher maybe through the teachers again... learning from each other, that would definitely bring out learning... good language work there.*

*[A good classroom?] It would be a noisy classroom. A noisy classroom because if it is a good language class teacher, like conversation would be going on, questions would be asked all the time... stories would definitely be*

*read a lot. A lot of communications in many ways would be happening, orally or not.*

Classroom observation confirmed that these beliefs were in operation in Tu's classroom. Children were talking, asking and answering questions and seemed to be at ease. The atmosphere was relaxed but well disciplined. Group work was used and children were encouraged to take part in discussions.

### **5.3.2.5    *Nature of language***

Tu believed that languages relate to each other, and that when learning English and Maori the languages help each other.

*I think it is so important that it dialogues so fluently with each other, English and Maori, because I believe that once you know one language so well it is so easy to hold onto another, even despite you see it but it is too totally different. But in the structure of it really, and the foundation of building the language here and then building it. It will flow easily I believe.*

*If my English flows in this system [in the classroom] then all I have to do is put it into Maori, it will flow... for the kids because they will just know, 'Ohh this is what we did for English and...' like you tell stories, you put in characters with Maori names and stuff. They will find that very interesting you know, two languages going but it is one story going.*

Tu believed that culture and language are linked. She believed that language and culture are both changing rapidly on Rarotonga. In her view Maori had changed considerably with the addition of coined words and what she saw as the loss of 'deep meaning' in the younger generation. Tu saw that the Maori that was taught and used in schools was different to the Maori spoken by the old people, and she discussed the conflict that this can cause. She saw the loss of Maori on Rarotonga as inevitable.

*Maori is not the same as when talking fifty years ago – it's not the same. If we had to chant Maori fifty years ago that is written up today we wouldn't*

*understand it. We would still chant it, and we wouldn't understand... the Maori then, the old Maori then.*

*The language, the culture has to change.*

[Talking about the lack of Maori spoken by Rarotongan children] *It's sad, it is... you can just picture, what, twenty years down the line – it's gone, exactly... 'Cos like even when I went to Hawaii for that one year you could not find a single person on the main island who could speak fluent Hawaiian... you have to search. That's exactly what would happen here... you can't find a single Hawaiian speaker.*

*At least I can see the problem is only for this island [Rarotonga]... it is just this island and hopefully just stays like this.*

Tu stated that both languages are useful and needed for life in Rarotonga.

*I know to cope with the lifestyle today it is helping [having] both languages...it is linked with each other. It's going to have to...with the lifestyle now. If we are going to stuck with one I don't think it would balance there...it has to be both.*

*I wouldn't say [one language is] more important than the others. I would say equal importance. If I was... if I looked back 30 or 40 years ago then maybe my Maori thinking would be different then, say no my English has to be more important. Today I say no, hell no! It's both ways that is.*

*I think it is [important that the old people provide that link], despite that they come to school and we teach it a different way. 'Cos we are given...but I am sure that that it still is important, in the state that people were taught it and would understand it better than we would understand their old Maori... their old Maori ways.*

*... deeper, meaningful in the old ways. As for our Maori we would say it is a Maori that has been studied by people and written to the books that we study from. And that's a different culture there... than the old ways... was passed on.*

However Tu thought that young Rarotongans do not have sufficient Maori and that Maori is disappearing from the island and she feels that in some ways language and culture has to change with the times.

### **5.3.2.6    *Nature of learners and learning communities***

Tu believed that Cook Islanders were good language learners, especially when compared with other Pacific language speakers. She believed that motivation played a big part in language acquisition. Tu was brought up by her grandparents on Rarotonga and had all of her schooling on the island. As she grew up she spoke English at school but Maori at home. Tu talked at length about her desire to learn English from an early age.

*I can remember the first day I went to preschool. There was a lot of Maori there. There was. Why? Because my teacher made sure there was. Yeah. But then when we take off – me in my corner with my friends, we want English... she or he is determined English... I am.*

*I can remember in my primary days there were always a lot of new students coming. You know, European... in that time. Yeah, I think there were a lot of student coming to (my school)... there were a lot of new students. You can tell... it's overseas... and I think that was... ummm... helped me... help myself - to make sure that I'll learn this language that they speaking so I can be friends with them... bond in with them.*

The papa'a students in Rarotonga gave Tu motivation to learn English. Tu believed that motivation and determination mean that learners eventually reach their language learning goals.

*I've seen it too... [the way people learn language]... yeah the way they use it on living it instead of pulling it back and gave up on it. But there are people that I have seen that language... that couldn't speak language at all but say that they could do it, and have done it!*

Coupled with motivation, Tu believed that the students' backgrounds determined to a large extent their success in learning English.

*The background, the environment and background of a child or of children. A background where a lot of encouragement and reinforcement is used from the beginning as they are an infant 'til they grow. I am sure encouragement and reinforcement in their own homes... you'll be very much determined to learn. If you get the kind of background that neglects you and everything's negative... hold there... forget it... you just don't want to go any further.*

The ability to take risks was identified as an important factor in language learning, and this was seen as a combination of a child's personality strength and how encouraging their environment was.

She conceded that what happened outside the classroom was beyond her control and she felt that sometimes criticism directed at children by parents did little to encourage learning or risk-taking in children. Tu knew she was limited in what she could do to combat this criticism, except encourage the children to take a positive stance.

*A lot of that [talking about laughing and teasing children]. You need a lot of patience and practice [to turn attitudes around].*

*I looked at it too, myself... you got to get the habit... Someone got it wrong? Don't laugh but turn around and say 'No, it's...'. Then you go outside [the school] and you go in the homes eh... when you visit the homes and this girl says it wrong and then Mum 'Hey no!' Then there's yell, yell, yell or laugh, laugh, laugh. Then it's 'Who's your teacher at school?' Da, da, da growling... The kid drop everything, you know the whole feeling the kid had... just drops all down and that's... this why, this is why! How can we help at school and then come home and have screamed or laughed at and judged at... ohh, that's another thing here.*

*I must say I was very surprised one girl who turned around to her bigger brother [and said] 'Don't laugh, don't laugh at me... you correct me.'... and I just had to have a [celebratory] smoke for just hearing that. Good on you girl!*

### **5.3.2.7    *Source of beliefs***

Tu stated that she thought she based her beliefs on her own language learning experience. She explained how she learnt English through the school system where rote learning was used extensively, and through her need to communicate with papa'a girls.

*Believe it 'cos you live it. I think that's how... I think the way I think because I live. I have experienced it... and done it and came down it and came through it. I think I would say it.*

Tu did not mention her teacher training as affecting her understanding of language processes or language teaching, but classroom observations would suggest that Tu implemented techniques she had acquired during her teacher training and that these were applied somewhat rigorously.

## **5.3.3      Tama**

### **5.3.3.1    *Background***

At the time of this research Tama was a teacher in her 30s teaching at a large primary school in Rarotonga. However, Tama spoke as an outer island teacher, having only arrived to the one-year post in Rarotonga at the beginning of 2001. Prior to this Tama spent most of her life and teaching career on the small outer island of Aitutaki in the Southern Cooks Group. The researcher met Tama whilst working on an earlier project with the Cook Islands Ministry of Education on Aitutaki, and since then had had several visits to her school and classroom.

Tama was born on a small outer island in the Southern Cooks group and had the first 4 years of her education there. At the age of nine Tama was sent to live with members of her extended family in Auckland, New Zealand. This was where she first

encountered the English language. Tama returned to her home island at the age of fifteen and completed her secondary education there. From there she trained as a teacher in Rarotonga (a 2 year basic teaching course). Since her teacher training Tama has worked as a teacher at all levels of the primary school and has completed a Certificate in Special Education. She was ambitious in her teaching career, keen to complete a degree.

As an outer island teacher almost all of her experience had been in an environment where Maori was spoken by almost all of the community in all settings. English was taught and used in schools and students were exposed to English in videos and television broadcasts, however English was not the language of everyday life and was not used as the language of choice by island inhabitants.

Tama was a strong woman, not afraid to speak her mind. She was a generous and outgoing person with a caring nature who was genuinely interested in children and in providing the best opportunities for them. She enjoyed teaching at all levels. She was happy to be involved in this research and enjoyed speaking about her thoughts as a teacher.

In 2001 Tama taught Year 3 children in a typical Cook Islands classroom with concrete floors, a blackboard and basic furniture. Her classroom walls were covered in students' art work, written work, model sentences, poems, and songs in both Cook Islands Maori and English. Tama held strong beliefs on the way the English language should be taught to Cook Islands' students. She based her beliefs on her own experience of language learning and on her personal beliefs about best approaches towards children.

#### **5.3.3.2    *Input***

Tama believed that some of the most important input for language learners is available through reading; she saw it as a key to language learning. Tama talked

about when she arrived in New Zealand with absolutely no English; she soon discovered that reading would help her. She read shop signs, beginner books and then more advanced material.

*Reading helps in fluency. It had made me really fluent in English.*

*It [improvement in language] was mostly because I did a lot of reading... during all those reading... reading, reading... I got read in class, after school, in break... and it helped me more fluent in my language.*

Tama recognised that reading plays a part in extension of vocabulary and language skills:

*Every time when I talk to someone I always remember some of the sentences in books I've read. Maybe you try to be more sophisticated in your language.*

This belief in the importance of reading was borne out in Tama's classroom practice, with the reading programme given high priority and a home reading programme in place (unlike the practice in many classes). The classroom was full of displays of printed material which Tama utilized whilst teaching.

Tama felt that being surrounded by a variety of input was important when learning language.

*I think you have to... a place where you can hear a lot of that [talking] a lot of languages and see a lot of languages. I think you've got to... what... develop yourself in an environment like that where you hear a lot of the languages spoken and you see them and then you can read... a lot of it.*

Tama believed that music provides particularly good input, and that songs could be used in many ways in class.

### **5.3.3.3    *Language usage***

Tama believed that getting children to feel confident to use language was an important role for her as a teacher. Tama described how she encouraged risk-taking in the classroom by providing students with opportunities to try out their English.

*Getting them into smaller groups you find that children actually take risks... in talking in English in the outer islands. You know most kids, I think they are probably scared of too many people listening when they make mistakes.*

She felt that becoming a competent user of English was important. Local parents saw English as the language of power: to get a scholarship for tertiary training overseas students have to be good scholars of English. Tama felt she could not argue against this. However there was a tension for her over the issue of the relative positions of the two languages.

*Us Cook Islanders know the advantage of English and most would actually get their children to speak English and write in English. And why? ... because they want their children's future to be better than theirs, and all over there in the Cook Islands to get a good job, or to get somewhere good you got to have English.*

*We can't really say to a parents 'OK I don't want to teach your child English', because the parents really want the child's welfare to be better, and that's the only way to make it better.*

*One lucky thing about the Cook Islands is we always use two language (sic), English and Cook Islands Maori, so it wouldn't really affect us because we... we use both language (sic) quite often. So I doubt if we... us Cook Islanders know the advantage of English and most would actually get their children to speak English and to write in English. And why? Because they want their children's future to be better than theirs, and all over there in the Cook Islands to get a good job or get somewhere good you got to have English. It's sad that we... Cook Islands Maori is not brought up as a degree. It would've been good I think in some way of the Cook Islanders were strong to put Cook Islands Maori as a degree level.*

She worried about the fact that Cook Islands Maori does not have the academic standing that English enjoys.

Tama believed that the way Cook Islands parents use language with their children slows the rate of acquisition in children. Many parents restrict their interaction with children to commands and do not engage in extended interactions with them.

*Because no language had been practiced... could be that... like having parents that doesn't talk to you at all, only when they want you to do this or that... total silence... It could be the environment itself or the community itself, especially with English the community is always speaking Cook Islands [Maori].*

Speaking from her own experience Tama believed that if language is not used and practiced it will become forgotten. She found that after spending a few years in New Zealand her Aitutakian (dialect of Cook Islands Maori spoken in Aitutaki) became quite rusty and it took her a while to fit back into the community there. Her concern was for outer islands children who had limited opportunities to use English, and who were scared to use their English because of possible reprimands or the possibility of being laughed at by the listeners.

Tama did make the point that she saw English as a more efficient and precise language to use.

Tama discussed the 'no Maori at school' policy that was in place in the Cook Islands. She felt that by being forced to speak English the students of that era learnt better English, although it was difficult for them. She gave examples of fluent older speakers who had learnt English at this time e.g. Sir Geoffrey Henry.

Another important aspect of language that Tama commented on several times was the way language can be used to project an image.

*Anyway I hear a lot of people say that to me... like even some papa'as (sic) you know English speaking people say to me, 'Ohhh', my accent sometimes*

*comes like American, you know, a bit of a twang. You've got to give your language a style.*

Tama believed that her language was good and had style.

#### **5.3.3.4 Language learning process**

Tama strongly believed in a step-by-step approach to language learning based on phonics and recognition of the sounds letters make. She stated that understanding at this level comes before understanding of meaning. Her ideas on the process of learning English were stated in an interview as follows:

*Well you certainly have to know all the phonics, you've got to have the phonics, and from those phonics it helps you pronounce words... the sounds, you know what to say the sounds. Phonics, the sounds... you've got to recognise them... recognise the alphabet, letters, the sounds... make the sounds, pronounce them... and then after that you've got to understand the words you say. So after all those things... you've got to... the alphabet and the phonics... you have to drill it in for you to remember them, and then even the sounds... as you say the letter you have to say the sounds. And then when you read words and reading the words phonetically you pronunciation of the words. Then as you... as you go through all these things you'll read more... you know you have to read... you have to read a lot actually... I mean reading is very important and read at the same time you have to have a dictionary next to you. A dictionary is very important next to understanding of your languages. OK, you've got to read it, understand it, finding if it in the dictionary or write sentences to clarify understanding of a word. I think that is the whole picture of how for you to conquer all your language.*

Tama described Cook Islands Maori language teaching as a model on which to base English language teaching. As Cook Islanders learn to read and write in Cook Islands Maori the phonic chart is central to their learning (Appendix 4 contains a copy of this chart for reference). Children learn individual consonant and vowel sounds and then learn the 'chart' which is a combination of all vowels and consonants. This is chanted

by all children in junior classes. Words can then be constructed from combinations of the learnt syllables, as Cook Islands Maori is largely a phonetic language. Tama explained how Cook Islands Maori was taught:

*Start with the sounds, the phonics... build up from there. In our language that's how we... especially in the Maori language... start with a chart, start with the phonics, then you put in words, combine... letters, put letters together to make a word. I think it is actually similar to English... you got to build up your words, you have to. You can't go straight into reading if you don't build up a few words.*

With the emphasis on phonics came a pronounced effort in the drilling of language.

*So after all those things... you have to drill it in for you to remember them.*

Tama remembered the drilling exercises she experienced when she was a student.

*It was basically just drilling, even the sentences we have to read after what the teacher's written down or what the teacher says. You don't ... ummm... you know sentences don't come out of our head just like that. In English you don't volunteer things like that... you know its... umm... even we read out of books by rote... just drilling. 'Tere's here'... like, 'This is a boy', 'The boy is sitting'... those simple things and we would act them out... read first and then after we speak those sentences we write it down and after we write it down we compare it to a picture... it helps us understand it.*

Classroom observation confirmed the use of "drill" exercises in language lessons. However this was planned by Tama to fit in with the theme she had chosen for the week. It did not include randomly selected portions of text for memorization, as has been observed by the researcher elsewhere.

Tama believed that language learning is an ongoing process because languages are always changing.

*Definitely you learn language every day... I believe there's no way would actually say you've learnt it... because there's always new things made, new things come up and you need new words or new language for it.*

*There's words in the [Rarotongan] Bible I never heard before, especially in the Bible, they used in the olden days.*

Tama explained that her approach to teaching involved providing a supportive environment for learners. She saw the need for a great variety in her teaching programme to stimulate and challenge her students.

*I like to see a lot of things happening, children enjoying it and understanding it and keeping children on task... be interesting and also challenging. There are some children who like challenges you know. Different varieties, that's what I would like to see. Different varieties of writing activities.*

Tama went on to describe many teaching strategies including using different sorts of literature, drama, and group discussions. Tama believed that the teacher themselves has a profound effect on the students. She felt that sometimes the theoretically-best teaching plans are not workable, and that flexibility is a key strength of good teachers.

Tama believed that the approach teachers take to error correction is crucial to the students' progress. Her aim was to provide a supportive classroom where children could feel confident about trying language out, and to provide correction only when she felt the children were able to feel good about what they were doing. She felt that accuracy was not always important. A main emphasis was on praise.

*Let them [students] make mistakes... then maybe you see them making a lot of... I won't say mistakes... taking risks... you see them taking risks often, that is when you slowly come in... it's like you sneak in [laughing]... you sneak in without them knowing, when you sneak in and then all of a sudden they've attempted a language and even said it correctly... and praise them. A lot of praise... 'cos we have children with low self esteem, so we got to think on the positive... you've got to really think positively about yourself, about your children.*

During observation in Tama's class many instances of genuine praise of children's attempts were noted. She believed that praise helped the learning process.

Tama felt that teachers play a very important role in language learning. She thought some teachers inhibit learning.

[Talking about fear of teachers] *Well it could their voice, their attitudes, you know how they shout at... at a child that makes a mistake. You know... I'll tell you it happens, it happens. Even sometimes physically smacking them... it happens. You know that could be fear and again laughing at the child. By doing that a child would even think that, by... you know they would say 'you're stupid' or 'you're dumb' from the first time a child hear that through his grow... or as he grow up he will always think of himself as being stupid and dumb, and that will never... it will probably be hard to change that persons idea of himself or herself, will probably have low self esteem.*

*There are some... it is happening... there is always some teachers who like that... who are like that. But there are some very good teachers... but with sometimes because of being human... all teachers because of being human because you have a bad day.*

Classroom observations revealed that Tama was not negative towards children, but was firm in her expectations of them. Discipline was maintained in a positive way. She was genuinely interested in the progress her students were making.

### **5.3.3.5    *Nature of language***

Tama held firm beliefs regarding the nature of language. She saw a close connection between language and customs. Tama believed that learning two languages gives learners an advantage in life, and she felt that responsibility for this lay with the community as well as with teachers. Tama believed that languages differ in complexity and sophistication. She stated that English is more difficult to learn than

Maori but is a more efficient language, and that in her mind this means that Maori does not have the academic standing of English.

*It's funny, if I write a story on a same topic in English and Maori I probably have more in Maori... more pages in Maori... the same things I said but in English I can probably just explain it in a short paragraph... not even a page, probably... Maori I'd probably fill two pages of the same topic.*

Tama felt the two languages she taught (Cook Islands Maori and English) played quite separate and specific roles in the lives of her students. In her discussions about the two languages Tama explicitly referred to the importance of the Cook Islands' Maori language for Cook Islanders. However she also recognised that English was the language that would enable students to have access to a greater number of education pathways, and eventually give students greater vocational opportunities. She was proud of Cook Islands children as bilingual. She saw Cook Islands Maori as giving children an identity and providing a connection with local culture.

*It's a way of identifying an individual... that's the only way to identify yourself – through language.*

*Without language how can you have a culture? You've got to have some sort of language to see everything would link with language or the other way round. Language and culture everywhere.*

*In Rarotonga, in Rarotonga there is some sort of weakening in culture... as identification of their culture there is a little bit of drop... you know... I believe the outer islands are alright. It's the Rarotonga that is getting affected. I mean a new person to come here to identify for Cook Islanders how can that person identify you when you're speaking English? Whose culture is this?*

However she saw Maori as a clumsy language with many words (especially in Rarotongan) coined from English.

*It is easier when you explain things in English than in Maori, because English has a short-cut way of explaining things. There is a lot of*

*short-cut words ‘cos there is a lot of words in English. In Maori you have to say it is whole long sentences to you to actually get the meaning of it... you’ve got to go around.’*

Tama did believe that having two languages is an advantage to a learner and that greater sophistication in the use of language is also an advantage.

#### **5.3.3.6    *Nature of learners and learning communities***

Tama felt that affective factors play a huge role in the ability of students to progress in English language learning. She related this to her own experience as she grew up first surrounded by one language, then another. She also related classroom observations and experiences with learners to the culture pervading the wider community. One of her key concerns is the students’ willingness to take risks in a culture which discourages individual difference.

*I think kids are scared to take a risk. They’re scared of their peers. They’re scared of being laughed at, and maybe scared of the teacher... being reprimanded by the teacher.*

*There’s no way you can get kids to risk it [speaking in English].*

Tama saw this as a result of the way the island community viewed expression in others. When talking about why students were unwilling to take risks she explained:

*It could be a fear... maybe it’s because it’s from home. They haven’t been given the freedom to express themselves. Apart from that... not being trained to think for themselves.*

*Parents have this policy or this saying ‘I do this – you listen’ ... or ‘what I say is right’... nobody can say anything to change it.*

*You’ve got to have the whole community... the whole community, the whole school, you know helping children to attempt... take risks in languages... and not to harshly correct kids.*

Personality factors were mentioned as important in language learning by Tama. She described people with strong personalities who were willing to take risks as being more successful language learners. Tama put herself in this category.

*I was the type of person I wasn't scared of taking risks... in languages. So it is who you are... OK it is who you are, its how. If you've got a strong personality and you don't care what people think about you... you know you just take risks. So that's what I did. I didn't care what people thought of me...I took risks. You know, I didn't care.*

She felt that the whole community has a role to play in language development, especially in encouraging children to take risks. She felt that Cook Islanders are good language learners but that things could improve if the children were not put down by others around them. Young learners were seen as particularly quick learners.

*At a younger age children catches it, you know, learn languages easily. I think the Cook Islands children are doing pretty good learning both languages.*

Tama believed that learners need to be motivated. Enjoying their learning environment contributed to increased motivation and more success for many learners.

#### **5.3.3.7    *Source of beliefs***

As Tama described her thoughts and beliefs about language teaching, she also reflected on where these beliefs may have originated. She pointed to key episodes in her own life, particularly her experience when she moved to New Zealand with no English and then back to Aitutaki with limited Maori. She discussed how she coped with learning English, and emphasised particularly the things which helped her make progress in learning English. Some things in particular that she found useful were

reading books and the text that surrounded her as she walked to and from school, as well as the TV and movies she saw, and the talk she listened to. She also described her treatment, being placed in slow-learners classes as she grappled with the new language, as giving her something to reflect on. This placed her in a position of being treated as deficient when in fact she knew inside herself that she was not. She described herself as having a strong personality which meant she could forge ahead with her learning without needing constant reassurance from others. Her experience on arrival back in Aitutaki as a 15 year old also helped shape her ideas about education and the language difficulties students face.

## **5.4 Summary of findings**

This section combines the interview findings from the three teachers and draws on comments by the two advisers (English language and Maori language advisers) involved in the pilot interviews for this research. Because the advisers were not the focus of this study full descriptions of the advisers' interviews are not detailed in these results. However the key points they raise are mentioned in this summary.

### **5.4.1 Input**

All interviewees discussed previous approaches to language teaching in the Cook Islands including the widespread use of rote learning. Although there was a move away from this as the main approach, it was still seen as an important tool by all interviewees. The Tate Method (used from the 1960s until the early 1990s) was still evident in many classrooms in 2001, particularly on the outer islands. The use of drilling exercises when teaching English was seen as useful and used widely. All the teachers believed that there was a place for rote learning in the classroom. Classroom observation by the researcher confirmed the use of drilling and rote learning in many classrooms.

While none of the interviewees approved wholeheartedly of the ‘no Maori spoken at school’ regime of the 1950s – 1970s (while some of them were students) they reflected how much more successfully English language was learnt in those days (e.g. look at Sir Geoffrey Henry). All saw the level of English used by people who had learnt English during the time this policy was implemented as being higher than the English that young people left school with at the time of this study. They condoned the harsh regime because of the results it brought. Mata (teacher), Keu and Tangi (advisers) all described severe punishments given by teachers in that era, and they all commented on how well they learnt English because of it.

When talking about the kinds of language input that help in learning English, all mentioned that the students had good models to learn from. Mata bemoaned the fact that many Cook Islands secondary teachers have poor English, and do not feel comfortable using English.

All teachers spoke at length about the important role of reading when learning a language, although ‘reading and writing’ were not specifically taught at secondary school – constraints of the curriculum were blamed. All interviewees described the importance reading played in their own acquisition of English.

All teachers described the important role papa'a play. Teachers thought they should be role models of English for the Cook Islands students. Speaking is difficult for students learning English as students are shy about trying out their English in public. Having papa'a in the community or more importantly as teachers was seen as helpful. The primary teachers also explained the important role songs and rhymes play in giving kids model English to use. They see the number of ways and opportunities students have to experience English as important. (However papa'a teachers were also seen as one of the reasons students' behaviour is so bad nowadays).

The importance of being surrounded with written/visual/oral English was emphasised by the primary teachers. This included the use of music at primary level. At

phonics approach was used. Advisers also mentioned the central role of phonics. They saw language learning as a process which follows a pattern: hearing, seeing, reading, and understanding. All interviewees described the learning process as a series of steps to be followed i.e. phonics/letters, words, sentences, leading to reading. Keu (and to some extent Tama) had a more ‘whole language’ approach and saw language teaching as better suited to a revolving curriculum, giving an order but revisiting basics like phonics, rather than a linear process. He thought teaching through contexts such as stories, conversations, and topics of interest is better.

*English language learning occurs all at once.*

All teachers discussed the merits of using many activities during each lesson; each activity giving students another piece of the big picture of language. It was agreed by all that classrooms should be busy, noisy places and should be places where students are encouraged to take risks. Mata and Tama believed that grammar should not be an important focus (or that it comes later), whereas Tu thought it should. Tu believed that the role of teacher as model was important in the learning process, and that in the end the teacher was the expert in the class and so students should rely on their accuracy. Teachers discussed the importance of group work, and how children can help each other learn. Both primary teachers gave examples of detailed programmes for language using a range of activities (similar to a basic New Zealand primary class programme).

Mata believed that language learning in schools was very different to social learning or learning in the community.

All interviewees believed that learner motivation is very important and all emphasised the need for a motivating force, referring to their own language learning success and what motivated them.

Most people interviewed thought error correction was important and necessary during the learning process. The teachers all felt strongly that harsh correction has a negative

secondary level there seemed to be more interest in the grammar and structure of English as students were prepared for examinations.

#### **5.4.2 Language Usage**

All teachers and advisers noted than on Rarotonga English was becoming the language of choice for many young people. English was used by children and young people when speaking together in peer groups, and many students tended to respond in English when spoken to in Maori. This was not the case on the outer islands however, where English was only used in school. English was seen as the language of opportunity, leading on to educational and career opportunities. Maori was not seen to have an academic standing, and using English was seen by some as giving the speaker a feeling of superiority.

Maori was seen by teachers as ideally having equal status with English, however they also described how much more efficient English is.

*Maori takes twice as long to say the same thing.*

Interviewees described the situation on outer islands where because English was not used much at all students found it hard to improve as they have little opportunity to practice. All teachers believed that practice is a key to language learning and felt that children from outer islands are disadvantaged because of their lack of opportunity for real practice. As well, the fear of reprimand or humiliation was seen as a deterrent to English usage in outer islands.

#### **5.4.3 Language learning process**

All teachers had a definite view on how language should be learnt. Tama and Tu (primary teachers) both firmly believed that phonics is the key to language learning, and the basis on which all else is built. In reading, speaking, and pronunciation, a

effect on learning and that errors should be corrected gently. Correction on the spot was seen as very useful, but Tama qualified this by stating the need for teachers to be sensitive, not treating kids harshly. Tu expressed her delight when recalling overhearing a young student telling her brother to correct her instead of laughing at her (as was the custom).

Keu thought that code-switching should be encouraged in classrooms. Although teachers reported a predominant use of English in classrooms they did switch between English and Maori particularly in Rarotonga but did not necessarily encourage students to use this strategy. Tama and Mata mentioned that teachers often will not accept approximations from students when they are trying to use English, and they feel this hinders learners' progress.

Tama discussed the way language was used in Cook Island homes. Often the language parents used with their children was restricted to commands. She thought that this hindered language development for the children.

Teacher qualities were explored and discussed by most of the interviewees as having a great influence on learning. The teacher's authority was an important issue for most. Tangi (Maori adviser) emphasised how important it is to be strict. Mata, who prefers having a closer relationship with her students commented on how she had her way of putting students in their place. A definite hierarchy existed in classrooms. Mata and Tama explained how teachers could be encouraging or critical. The teachers agreed that a teacher's attitude could have a huge effect on the students he/she teaches. They felt strongly that teachers who put students down or humiliate them, discourage the students from taking risks (again referring to their own experience). All the teachers agreed that the teachers in outer islands schools are more likely to be authoritarian in their approach, and all commented that some teachers in the Cook Islands smack children or humiliate them in front of others (and that that is accepted in their culture). Tama mentioned that she thought there needs to be a change in community attitudes so that kids don't feel so scared (of being laughed at by others). Tama and

Tu emphasised the need to culture a good relationship with students so they feel they can take risks in the classroom but admit this goes against what is happening in many homes. All the teachers emphasised the importance of teachers in the learning process - giving praise and encouraging students to take risks in their language learning. Mata added that teachers need to be spontaneous in responding to needs.

#### **5.4.4 Nature of language**

All interviewees believed that language and culture are linked (or at least it is in the Cook Islands, although several commented that there is no ‘English culture’). They believed that Cook Islands Maori gives them an identity. They all agreed that when language is weakened then culture is weakened to the point of:

*Without a language there is no culture.*

All those interviewed believed that it is an advantage to have two languages (Cook Islands Maori and English), and that having a good foundation in Cook Islands Maori will make it easier for kids to learn English. However they all also recognised that Maori is changing, with English encroaching and so English is changing the local culture. The Maori spoken by grandparents was said to be considerably different to that used at the time of the study. Many younger people did not know many of the words used in the Rarotongan Bible. There were many coined words from English which people found easier to use. Tu believed that the Maori language being taught by teachers had lost the richness and deep meaning that the language once had. However she commented that she believed language does have to change with the times. Many interviewees felt that English was a more ‘precise’ language than Maori, with the use of technical terms and wider vocabulary.

Most interviewees mentioned the way that people are judged by the language they use, and that ability in language gives power or opportunity to the user. This is clearly visible in the Cook Islands where the only people who obtain scholarships for tertiary study overseas are the students with higher levels of English language; when these

people return to the Cooks they get the high ranking jobs in the government and private sectors. Sophistication in the use of language was seen as being better than basic knowledge of the language.

All interviewees discussed the loss of Maori from the younger generation in Rarotonga and to a lesser extent in Aitutaki. Some thought that most Rarotongan children thought in English now even when they were speaking in Maori, and that children saw English as the only important language to master.

All interviewees stated that by being strong in Maori, students will probably be more successful in their English language learning. Tama was the only one who discussed how the community have a role to play in language development, especially in the area of allowing/encouraging children to take risks in their learning.

#### **5.4.5 Nature of learners and learning communities**

All interviewees stated that Cook Islands children were good at learning language, one interviewee implying a genetic disposition to language learning ability. They all went on to describe the types of learners who were more likely to achieve very well in English. These students were more likely to be the students with determination and strong personalities. Most teachers and advisers described Cook Island children as generally timid and shy, not willing to take risks for fear of humiliation. Tama described learner-fear as a result of the home upbringing of children and the attitudes of peers and teachers. Many children were said to be scared of their teachers so would rather keep quiet in class than take a risk and perhaps make a mistake. Shyness was seen by Mata and Tama as a major reason that progress was slow when students were learning English. Many people mentioned the Maori word *akama* (meaning shame or loss of face) when describing the way children would feel making mistakes in front of others.

Comments were made regarding the lack of recognition by teachers that students need to be trained to think for themselves. Questioning by students was seen by some interviewees as insolent or as challenging the authority of the teacher.

Most interviewees saw the motivation of the learner as a key to language learning success. Some saw the enjoyment of lessons as contributing to this motivation. Another important factor identified by the younger teachers was the need for confidence to be instilled in learners. The need that Cook Islanders have for English is seen as the greatest motivating factor. Tu also explored, as a motivating factor, the way children wanted to be like their papa'a friends – to be bonded to them, and English was seen as the bond. Two of the teachers commented that learners could not be forced to learn, but would learn when the time was right. They commented on the fact that some learners would never be successful, but that if they were not, these learners would be looked after by the community.

Mata spoke at length about vestiges of the colonial regime that remain. She mentioned that although Maori speakers need to learn English, they may be insulted by papa'a 'language experts' who come into the country to tell Cook Islanders how to preserve and teach their own language.

#### **5.4.6      Source of beliefs**

All interviewees had definite ideas about how their own ideas about language developed. Many mentioned specific people or experiences in their past. Tangi explained the role the Irish nuns at school played in her acquisition of English, including punishments.

Keu related his experience of travelling to NZ when very young with Aunties who had no English. He was thrust into the position of interpreter with his limited English. This proved to be a turning point for him. Mata told of her experience growing up with her Mum being a house-girl in a papa'a home. She made a decision that she was

not going to serve papa'a, and she saw being able to speak English as well as they could as the key.

Tama's experience of moving to NZ for part of her education and her reflection on how she felt during that time affected her strongly. Her return to Aitutaki, and the associated language adjustments she again had to make, affected her attitudes and beliefs about language learning and teaching. Tu related the experience of growing up attending a catholic school and wanting to be able to be like the papa'a. The motivation and experience of language learning affected her attitudes. None of the interviewees mentioned the effects of learning about language teaching in a formal sense during teacher training. All discussed the "English-only" at school as important, although Tu went through school after this ruling ceased.

#### **5.4.7 Conclusion**

The results show that the teachers involved in this study had many specific beliefs about language learning and teaching. Many of the beliefs appeared to be closely related to the Cook Islands education setting. The beliefs fell into major groupings including beliefs about the language learning process (including input), the nature and use of language, Cook Islands learners, risk-taking in the learning environment, and the teacher's role. There were clear connections between past experience and the nature of teachers' beliefs. Links between beliefs and teaching practice were observed. The beliefs identified show some important and interesting connections with research findings and theory described in the literature. These relationships are described in Chapter 6.

# **Chapter Six      Discussion**

*There can be no significant innovation in education that does not have at its centre the attitudes of the teachers. The beliefs, assumptions, feelings of teachers are the air of the learning environment; they determine the quality of life within it.*

Postman & Weinganner, 1969

In this chapter the results are discussed in relation to the literature. In this discussion the Cook Islands teachers referred to are the teachers who took part in this study, although the findings may have broader applications. The results identified a number of features of Cook Islands teachers' beliefs. These include beliefs about the learning process, beliefs about language, its status, use and importance, beliefs about learners including the context in which they are learning, specific challenges in taking risks in the Cook Islands language classroom, and beliefs about the role of teachers. The sources of the teachers' beliefs will be discussed. The relationships between beliefs and practices will be explored.

## **6.1      Teacher Beliefs**

In the context of this research the beliefs Cook Islands teachers hold about language learning and teaching can be grouped into five major areas. The areas identified have considerable overlap with those described by Burns (1992), discussed in section 3.2.6.

The five major groupings of beliefs held by the teachers involved in this study are:

1. Beliefs relating to the language learning process, including beliefs about:
  - the initial steps to acquisition and literacy
  - the relationship between written and spoken language in beginning language learning

- the nature of beginning language learning and the strategies relevant to language learning at this point
  - effective teaching methodology for ongoing language acquisition
2. Beliefs relating to the nature and use of language including beliefs about:
    - the nature of Cook Islands Maori
    - the nature of English
    - the relationship between the languages used in the Cook Islands
    - bilingualism
  3. Beliefs about Cook Islands learners including beliefs about:
    - affective factors influencing the learners
    - learner readiness
  4. Beliefs about the challenge of risk-taking by students in schools
  5. Beliefs about the teacher's role within the classroom, particularly beliefs about:
    - the nature of the language classroom
    - the learning environment

### **6.1.1 Language learning process**

This section discusses the beliefs Cook Islands teachers have about the language learning process from their perspective as both learners and teachers. Beliefs about specific aspects of language learning will be explored.

The responses from questionnaires and discussions with teachers show that an overwhelming majority believe that a phonics-based approach to language learning, particularly reading, is best. Language is seen as being made up of small discrete sounds and as learners become competent at recognising and pronouncing these sounds words can be built up by the aggregation of the phonemes. Teachers explain this by comparing the sound chart they use when teaching Maori to students in their early years at school with their approach to teaching English. Research by Johnson

(1992) suggested that teachers persevere with the teaching approaches which were prominent when they began teaching a second language. For most teachers in the Cook Islands this would include using a phonics-based system of drilling and limited formal practice in both English and Cook Islands Maori.

The teaching of reading in Maori is entirely dependent on mastering the phonetic chart (Appendix 4) and then combining sounds to make words. As Cook Islands Maori has a fairly simple phonological structure (Lynch, 1993), the writing system is fairly straightforward, using five vowels and nine consonants. A macron is sometimes used to denote a long vowel sound and the glottal stop, which is a particularly frequent phoneme, is written as an apostrophe. The macron and apostrophe are not often used in everyday writing such as the local newspaper or in personal letters, or in classrooms. The structure of the language lends itself to being taught using a phonetic approach.

All Cook Islands teachers learnt to read and write in Maori using a phonetic system. They were introduced to English by teachers using what they knew about teaching Maori as a basis for their methodology. The Tate Oral English Course provided the model for English teaching, based on oral repetition and formulaic structures. As most teachers have had little or no exposure to other models of language learning they base their teaching on what they have experienced themselves as language learners; referred to by Lortie (1975) as the apprenticeship of observation. Lameta (2000) found similar approaches to English language teaching in Samoa. She found that English language instruction was very similar to Samoan language instruction, with emphases on language forms at the word or sentence level, oral correctness and repetition.

The place of reading during the process of language acquisition is seen as very important by Cook Islands teachers. All teachers involved in interviews emphasised the importance of reading, particularly for vocabulary acquisition. Reading does expose students to new vocabulary. However it must be remembered that second

language learners may not read or process text in the same way that native speakers of English do and tend not to use the context to predict the meanings of words in the same way that native speakers do (Carrell and Wallace, 1982). Teachers seemed aware of the importance of using texts set in familiar contexts (i.e. books that island-dwelling children could relate to) but they were only able to use texts the school owned, and these were sometimes not appropriate for the learners. Teachers were strong advocates of dictionary use, even for very young students, and tended to encourage students to use the dictionary rather than context to work out the meaning of words. This again illustrates a bottom-up approach where meaning is built up from word level.

The research indicates that Cook Islands teachers believe that copying good models is an important part of the language learning process. Their view tends to be behaviourist in nature as they involve children in repetitive practice in order to form habits. Although they may not be confident English speakers themselves in some contexts, most teachers see their English providing a good model for students to copy. Modelling has been seen as an important role of teachers and especially as a responsibility of papa'a teachers who are held in higher esteem because they are generally native English speakers.

The observed emphasis on grammar during lessons seems to be a result of school policy rather than personal choice. Many teachers claimed to believe that grammar is not an important aspect of language learning to focus on, yet classroom observations showed that grammar was a focus of lessons even at Grade 2 (6-7 year old students) level. Teachers base their approach to grammar teaching on their previous experience in the context of a system where grammar is examined across the country (by national examinations at Grade 6). Since the removal of the Tate materials from schools (books that were used to teach English in a structured way published in the 1960s) no direction has been given to teachers regarding the place of grammar teaching. Considerable research on grammar teaching has been conducted (see Ellis, 1994, for a review), but no consensus has been reached about how best to teach grammar (Ellis,

1998). Cook Islands teachers would tend to concur that formal grammar practice activities enhance language acquisition.

A large variety of input is seen as extremely important by primary school teachers. Classroom walls are likely to have work displayed on them including songs and poems for the students to read. When talking about how to improve English for students one teacher commented:

*Just full surrounding environment with language, words. Surround them, let them see, hear, read ... all the senses of ... you know, of the language.*

In contrast, in the secondary sector there is little emphasis on input except for the use of books. Books and papa'a teachers are seen as the best source of input for secondary students. The focus at secondary level is not language acquisition as much as language maintenance with some extension, for example the introduction of different genre as prescribed for examinations. This means students who have not yet acquired a sufficient level of English find it extremely difficult to continue with secondary level education. As students enter senior secondary classes they are more likely to have papa'a teachers, as many Cook Islands teachers are not confident about teaching English to senior levels and so teachers recruited from overseas are placed with these classes.

Most teachers believed that the use of music helped in language acquisition, and the primary teachers interviewed explained ways they incorporated music into their programmes. In Cook Islands schools music and dance is given high priority and a much greater time allowance than would occur in most New Zealand classrooms. The use of songs in particular is seen as a natural way to teach. In Cook Islands culture, music is used for almost every occasion and is valued as a central part of life. Many hours are spent participating in choral singing in schools, churches and in social gatherings. On some islands whole days are set aside for island singing where stories and legends are sung, thus the next generation learns the island's history and

important legends through song (researcher's personal observation). In many western countries the use of music is seen as an extra, whereas in the Cook Islands it is seen as a much more central or core part of learning.

Cook Islands teachers believe that it is important to use a range of activities with students. Observation confirmed the use of a range of teaching techniques, although the lessons were usually fairly teacher-centred. Maintaining authority is seen as an important role for any teacher, and not having an orderly quiet class is seen by many as teacher failure. Community expectations are that teachers will maintain control of their classes at all times, where control is defined as an orderly quiet classroom where children sit quietly and listen to and learn from teachers. Noisy classrooms are deemed to be indicative of poor teachers who do not have enough authority. Most of this is modelled from the church structures. Classroom activities tend therefore to be fairly structured with little independent choice for the learners.

Error correction was seen as another key part of the language learning process. All teachers interviewed discussed how errors may be corrected in ways which either encourage or discourage the students. All seemed to recognise the effects of harsh criticism on learners, having had personal experience of such criticism in their own education. Harsh and excessive error correction can have a strong negative effect on motivation (Lightbown & Spada, 1993). During classroom observation it was observed that errors were pointed out and corrections made to students' work without much interaction with the students. No examples of talking students through possibilities and letting them make choices was observed. Through this, the unspoken maxim that teachers are the experts was reinforced.

### **6.1.2 Status, Nature and Use of Language**

Results from this study indicate that Cook Islands teachers believe strongly in the importance of a knowledge of Cook Islands Maori for children in the Cook Islands. They see the language as giving the people an identity which sets them apart from

other peoples. Teachers believe that the Cook Islands Maori language comes with their culture – the two are interlinked and impossible to separate. This tie was recognised by the first missionaries when they arrived in the Cook Islands. The missionary policy was not to introduce English but to use the vernacular. This extended to devising a written form of the language and translating the Bible. It was during the colonial period that English increasingly became the language of power. During that time, Cook Island Maori language was seen as becoming less important and less useful for the future and so schooling in English began with the agenda of ‘Europeanisation’, based on the premise that the local Cook Islanders rejected their own culture and wanted to imitate Europeans (Gilson, 1991).

Teachers believe that Maori is an inefficient language with no real academic standing. On several occasions examples were given explaining the inefficiencies of the language and how Cook Islands Maori is unable to be used for exchanges involving technical or modern information. Teachers pointed out the huge number of coined words in Cook Islands Maori as a weakness and explained how Rarotongan in particular is losing its richness as older people die. The lack of a large variety of texts written in Cook Islands Maori seems to confirm to many speakers their perception of the inferior nature of the language. For example one teacher commented: “*... sometimes we have one word to mean say five different things. That's one of the advantages I find with the English language ... they have words that really ... ummm ... really define how you feel, you know.*” Similar attitudes towards New Zealand Maori have been identified and discussed (Bayard, 1995). Although linguists would disagree with the concept of Cook Islands Maori being an archaic, less useful, Stone Age language, the beliefs that the Cook Islands teachers hold will influence their practice and the attitudes they display towards the language, and this will in turn affect their students’ attitudes. As found elsewhere (Breen, 1991; Burns, 1992; Burns, 1996) such beliefs will affect teaching practice and also the modelling teachers provide.

Teachers believe that the basic language used in the homes in Rarotonga does not extend vocabulary or enhance language learning. In the Cook Islands there is little or no use of motherese – the adaptation adults make to form, meaning and paralinguistic features when interacting with infants and very young children, as documented in middle class environments in some countries (Lieven, 1994). An observation made by one Cook Islands teacher who spent time in New Zealand was the usefulness to her own language learning of listening to the way European mothers spoke to their children. Patterns of social behaviour in the Cook Islands mean that siblings often care for each other and parents use imperatives when addressing their children. This pattern of socialization is very similar to the patterns found in Hawaiian families described by Jordan (1982) and in Samoa (Ochs, 1985). As a result of the social organisation peer relationships tend to be more important in Polynesian communities than in western communities.

Maori language and culture are seen by most teachers to be weakening on Rarotonga as English becomes more and more widely used by young people. Fishman (1991) cited in Baker (1993, p.56) clarifies the relationship between language and culture in terms of three links: a language indexes its culture, and best expresses the culture it has grown around; a language symbolizes its culture; and culture is partly created from its language. With the language shift occurring in Rarotonga as documented in the Language Policy Report (1997) a loss in some aspects of culture may result.

Teachers generally believe that students' bilingualism should be an aim for all teachers in the Cook Islands. In the classes of almost all teachers involved in this research however, English was the dominant or only language used. This would indicate that teachers may believe that bilingualism is achievable in the Cook Islands without Maori language input at school, or that the difficulties in implementing a bilingual programme are too great. Bilingualism at school is only achievable if development and maintenance of the first language at school is provided. This provides psychological and sociological support for linguistic and academic learning in both languages (Swain, 1982; Baker, 1993). The results of this study indicate that

development and maintenance of Cook Islands Maori is not occurring in schools in Rarotonga. In many schools English is being used as the language of instruction from the time students enter school and Maori is used less and less as students progress. This is an example of subtractive bilingualism, where the learning of English, because of its prestigious and powerful status, and perceived academic and economic value, results in the lack of maintenance or loss of Cook Islands Maori (Swain, 1982; Baker, 1993).

Another interesting finding was that many teachers believe that when students are learning two languages at the same time they will not do as well in either of them as the use of two languages confuses learners and slows down learning. This belief is contrary to what much research shows. There is considerable evidence pointing to positive links between bilingualism and cognitive functioning (Baker, 1993). Nevertheless the beliefs teachers hold regarding negative outcomes of becoming bilingual are an important consideration as they will affect their behaviour. This may explain the teachers' reluctance to provide a bilingual environment at school for their students.

Teachers believe that the standard of Rarotongan Maori in general use is deteriorating as English influences enter the language, and this further lowers the status of Maori. This was documented in the Language Policy Report (1997). In that report the status of Maori relative to that of English on Rarotonga was stated as low, with declining standards in accuracy of grammar, pronunciation and richness of vocabulary noted. Teachers believe that the only way to cope with the increasing linguistic diversity on Rarotonga is by using mostly English or a mixture of English and Maori. This further marginalises the Maori language.

All teachers feel that outer islands' students are secure in their own dialects because these are used on all occasions except during school classes. Some teachers fear that eventually vernacular loss will occur on Aitutaki (second most populous island in the southern Cook Islands) because of the increasing importance of tourism to the island.

Cook Islands Maori is used in many homes, but teachers report that on Rarotonga parents often encourage their children to use English. The encouragement of children to use English is partly because many of the parents went to school when no Maori was allowed to be spoken at school. Because of this experience parents are mindful of the importance of English for their children. The fact that all qualifications students will get from Cook Islands schools are assessed in English reinforces the need for English competence. Students therefore often start school speaking ‘maroro English’. This is a form of code switching (the practice of alternating between two languages in verbal interactions). With the huge impact of tourism in Rarotonga competence in English is seen by most families as extremely important. Opportunities for employment within the tourism industry are considerably enhanced if young people are fluent English speakers.

An aspect of language use discussed by one adviser, and observed in many classes, is code-switching. During the course of this study it was observed that teachers tended to switch from English to Maori at times when disciplining students or speaking to individuals who were not following verbal instructions. This differed from observations the researcher had earlier made on outer islands of teachers who switched from English to Maori to explain key concepts or check on understanding. Code switching by teachers on Rarotonga was reported as common by Balawa (1996) in a report on the policy and practice of vernacular usage in formal education. Children are not encouraged to code-switch.

Code switching can be viewed negatively and positively. Attitudes to code switching have included ‘an impoverished form of expression’, ‘a bastard language’, ‘attributable to lack of education, bad manners, and an improper control of two grammars’ in a study of Arabic-French bilinguals (Bentahila, 1983; cited in Mugler & Lynch, 1996, p. 94). However code switching can be useful. In schools, the teacher’s choice of language may determine students’ achievement in some content areas so using the best language for the job might be useful. It may be easier for students to

discuss topics in a language different to the one the topic was presented in, and in this case learning may be enhanced by code switching. This does seem to be happening on the outer islands. However the code switching in Rarotonga appears to be being used more for procedural reasons such as classroom management.

### **6.1.3 Learners**

Teachers have specific beliefs about learners in the Cook Islands. These beliefs are used to explain the success of language learners. All interviewees thought that Cook Islands children are naturally good language learners. They described the most successful language learners as children who were determined to succeed. Positive attitude and the ability to take risks were seen as particularly good predictors of success.

Cook Islands teachers believe that generally Cook Islands students are shy and timid when dealing with teachers. This comes from the cultural expectation that children should respect authority, particularly parents, teachers, traditional leaders such as ariki and mataiapo, and church leaders. It is expected that young people do not become involved in adult conversations and that they do not question decisions. Some teachers, especially on the outer islands, see their role of maintaining authority and respect going beyond the school environment and may, for example, discipline a child at school for something they did during the weekend. This role of the teacher tends to mean students are more reticent in class and not comfortable with asking questions. They tend to be passive learners rather than active learners.

Teachers believe that the home environment many students have makes it harder for them to achieve at school. They explained that students often have no time or encouragement to do homework, to read for pleasure or complete school projects. Pressures on students include those from their family and community to be involved in community activities, responsibilities for siblings and work in the home, church commitments and the fluidity of living arrangements (children may not always live at

the same house or with the same people). As mentioned earlier, the community perception that schools are completely responsible for students' learning means that little interest is shown in students' day-to-day school learning in many cases. This is partly because of the high status given to teachers. Teachers recognise that the way of life in the Cook Islands makes it difficult to change community perceptions, but the majority of teachers involved in this study believe that with more support from home students would do better at school.

Teachers discussed the qualities that good language learners possess. One of the key qualities identified was a positive attitude towards learning and towards English language. Teachers pointed to their own experience of being positive about their learning ability and having a positive attitude. Attitude has been described as being the single most important factor in second language acquisition (Savignon, 1976). Savignon reports that attitudes learners have towards members of the target language group, and the learners' abilities to adopt features of this group are important in determining success in language acquisition.

It has been shown that the beliefs teachers hold are one of many factors that affect students' beliefs (Kern, 1995). Teachers involved in this study discussed their own beliefs as language learners and extrapolated these to fit their students. Very little mention was made of their students' individual beliefs. Language learners' beliefs may inhibit language learning (Horwitz, 1985). For example if learners believe in the importance of innate ability they may achieve at lower levels than predicted and thus lose confidence in their own ability (Mori, 1999).

Motivation was identified as a very important influence on language learning success. Teachers believed that without motivation children will not find success and they commented on the difficulty they have in motivating some students. Motivation is primarily a result of individuals' beliefs about the likely outcomes of their actions and of the incentive value they place on those outcomes (Pajares, 1996). According to Pajares, motivation does directly influence how often students use learning strategies,

how often they interact with native speakers, how much input they receive in the language they are learning, how well they do in tests and how high their general proficiency becomes. Teachers in the Cook Islands tended to combine descriptions of motivation with descriptions of personality factors such as extroversion, inhibition, and self-esteem. Reflecting on their own language learning experiences each teacher spoke of what helped them become motivated language learners. Many of the experiences referred to and reasons given were not school-related, for example wanting to make friends with English-speaking neighbours.

Another interesting theme consistent across teachers interviewed was the concept of learner readiness. Teachers recognised that all learners are not ready for the same things at the same time. They expressed an acceptance of this coupled with the willingness to be patient and wait until a learner is ready. This contrasts with a western approach where teachers are looking for ways to ensure and promote readiness in learners. The Rarotongan teachers seemed quite willing to wait for readiness without judging the student as deficient. Readiness was recognised when learners became engaged in activities offered to them in the classroom.

#### **6.1.4 Risk-taking**

Cook Islands teachers interviewed in this study spoke at length about what they saw as a key problem area for young Cook Islanders learning English: the area of risk-taking. Risk-taking can be defined as decisions on action-outcome events under uncertainty (Clifford, 1991). Bem (1971, p.5) phrases it in a different way: "Taking a risk ... may be viewed as a selection of one alternative or course of action from among many in which the consequences of that choice could leave the individual in a worse position than if he had selected otherwise or not selected at all". An individual's ability to take risks is dependent on a number of factors including the individual (personality), the situation and the social setting.

Teachers believe that it is much more difficult for Cook Islands students to take risks than it is for other students in other contexts. This is because difference is not accepted in the community, and any mistakes that are made are often identified and ridiculed by others (also documented in Edwards, 1999). Teachers explained that in many instances teachers laugh at or punish students for making mistakes. This is similar to what happens in other areas of life. When talking about attitudes of community members at netball games one teacher commented: "*I think it's a culture type of thing ... there is always that feeling of jealousy ... You just cannot be different.*" For example children are sometimes laughed at or shouted at from the sideline of the netball court for dropping the ball (personal observation). Teachers used the term *akama* when describing how children feel when this happens (a feeling of shame and great embarrassment). Because of this cultural environment some children find it very difficult to take risks in their learning. The teachers stated in interviews that they felt powerless to change community attitudes but all did mention their efforts to make their classrooms places where children could feel safe enough to take risks. This means re-training other class members to react differently when their peers make mistakes. The teachers interviewed all told of the time they spent getting to know students and encouraging them in small ways. Although it took time teachers felt that students did respond in more positive ways to one another if this was the teacher's expectation, and thus the likelihood of risk-taking for all students increased.

Risk taking is valued in different ways by different cultures. Western culture tends to value risk-taking highly but it must be expected that other cultures will place different values on it (Beebe, 1983).

Error correction was seen as an important part of language teaching as long as it was not done harshly or in a way that would discourage the students. Many stories of how students are sometimes treated in other classes were sobering reminders that many teachers are not as understanding. In classes where nothing short of complete accuracy is accepted the levels of risk-taking will be lower (Beebe, 1983).

In a study investigating classroom participation of language learners Ely (1986) noted that language class discomfort has a negative effect on language class risk-taking and a negative effect on language class sociability. Therefore simply exhorting students to take more risks may not be effective whereas making the class more comfortable may enable risk-taking. The ability to take risks in language classes is positively correlated with the level of student participation in classes, which in turn may positively affect oral proficiency (Ely, 1986).

Anxiety is a state experienced by language learners which can be caused and/or aggravated by an unsuccessful self-image. This may occur when students compare themselves to other learners or when they are compared to other learners in a public way. Such comparison does occur in Cook Islands schools. The anxiety felt by learners can work in positive or negative ways for the learners. For some learners anxiety can be debilitating causing the language learner to avoid contact with English which leads to impaired language acquisition. For some learners anxiety can be facilitating causing increased effort and competitiveness, leading to enhancement of learning and producing a successful self image (Bailey, 1983).

### **6.1.5      Role of the teacher**

The teachers involved in this study believed that as teachers they had specific roles to play. Breen (1991) found that teachers' concerns about the teacher's role as guide and manager influenced instructional decisions. Anthony (1963) found that teachers' belief systems contribute heavily to teacher behaviour at levels of approach, method and technique.

The Cook Islands teachers who responded to questionnaires or interviews believed one of their key roles is to be a good model for their children and to provide an environment where students feel valued and comfortable. As well as this they felt real responsibility towards the education system and school policies within which they

worked. Where there are conflicts between personal beliefs and institutional expectations teachers allow the school expectation to determine their action.

Classroom environment was believed to be very important by all teachers in providing necessary input to support language learning. Teachers felt that the provision of an encouraging environment was quite crucial and a very important role of teachers. The social environment in the form of effective interpersonal relationships was seen as a key component of the development of a learning environment. The physical environment was seen as having secondary importance. This mirrors the findings of Smith (1996), who in a study of nine teachers working with adult students found that they shared the view that a positive social-affective climate was an essential element in the classroom. Smith found that the belief in this environment was a central factor in the decisions the teachers made about tasks and materials.

Living on a small island gives teachers the advantage of knowing the children they teach, and their families, socially. There is also the issue of being a blood-relative to a number of students. Teachers felt that the relationship they held with students meant that it was easy to relate to the students at school. For example they might be called Mrs Tangaroa at school but be called Aunty in all other contexts (as is the practice in the Cook Islands for young people addressing most older women). All teachers spoke of the great importance of the relationships they had with students. The Cook Islands teachers interviewed felt that the development and maintenance of relationships with students is an important role of teachers.

Beliefs about the nature of the learning environment obviously affected the practice of the teachers in this study. Their approach to feedback and error correction illustrated the way teachers' perceptions may create obstacles for learning. Classroom observation confirmed the use of praise and positive feedback used even when more constructive and critical feedback may have helped the learner. Pajares and Graham (1998) found that honest criticism and instruction were minimized by teachers trying

to make the child feel good about his work and himself independent of the work's merits.

High tolerance of inaccuracy and ambiguity by the teachers was also evident, and was explained as part of the way teachers make students feel comfortable and willing to take risks. This means that while many students in secondary classes are fluent English speakers, they are not accurate in their use of the language. Eskey (1983, p. 319) comments that "fluency in a language is no guarantee of formal accuracy." Inaccuracy and lack of control in the use of language was one of the key concerns identified many years ago (Beeby, Renyard & Fletcher, 1945) and it continues to be an ongoing concern.

Teachers' practices are influenced by their personal beliefs about language and learners, and their beliefs about specific instructional tasks and materials (Burns, 1996). In this study teachers felt that one of their important roles is to provide students with activities and tasks that they enjoy. Songs, reading aloud to the class, plays, and story writing were frequently mentioned in relation to younger learners. Teachers made eclectic use of teaching strategies, mostly based on their teaching experience. Planning for lessons in the primary sector tended to be around activities that had been found to be enjoyable and useful by children. As students approached senior levels where they were examined nationally the focus changed towards preparation for the external assessments. Curriculum was only mentioned by senior secondary teachers with respect to examinations i.e. as prescription. No other teachers made any mention of curriculum documents.

In the Cook Islands school principals have a strong directive influence on school programmes. The hierarchical nature of the school system means that teachers are limited in how they can vary programmes. This causes conflict in teachers at times, as was explained by a secondary teacher talking about her frustrations of having to teach to the Year 9 English scheme when some of her students were at an elementary level in English language. However in cases where school policy seems to go against best

language teaching practice, teachers feel bound by what the school expects. The teachers' beliefs about their role as classroom teachers in this context include the belief that school procedure should be followed. Elsewhere it has been reported that teachers' practices were shaped by beliefs relating to the institutional culture of the school they worked in (Burns, 1996). Several teachers suggested that many people hold the view that teachers, and especially principals, are in a position of authority similar to that of the 'orometua (church pastor). The respect given to the 'orometua in a village is natural and unquestioned. This being the case it would be particularly difficult for most teachers to openly question and challenge school policy or the decisions of school principals. Richards (1996) also found that practice sometimes does not reflect teachers' maxims (personal working principles which reflect teachers' individual philosophies of teaching) because of contextual factors.

## 6.2      Source of beliefs

Almost all Cook Islands teachers speak English as a second language and see themselves as language learners in an ongoing way. This means they view second language acquisition from the position of a learner as well as from the position of a teacher. For example, comments such as "*I mean I'm still practising*" from teachers emphasised their position as ongoing learners. This provides an extra dimension when looking at Cook Islands teachers' beliefs. The beliefs they hold about language teaching will be linked to beliefs they hold about language learning from their own experience.

Each teacher interviewed spoke about specific significant events that occurred during their life, particularly when they were young, which they felt had somehow helped them in the development of their beliefs about language learning and teaching. These significant events were usually times when the teachers had to face their own English language learning challenges. Each teacher interviewed relayed these events with detail and emotion, reliving the feelings they had experienced at the time of the events. These events varied including being forced to attend birthday parties with

papa'a children, having to act as an interpreter for old Aunties travelling to New Zealand, wanting to make friends with English-speaking children, discovering how reading could help with language learning, or being punished cruelly for speaking Maori at school. In each case teachers explained how the experience had taught them something very specific, or had given them motivation to learn English well. It was obvious that emotion was involved in the memories related. This supports Nespor's (1987) suggestion that one characteristic of beliefs is the important role of critical episodes in their formation. Beliefs are legitimised by referral to these events in memory by the believer.

Some of the key memories referred to were incidents which happened whilst the teachers were quite young. Based on research by Nespor (1987) this would imply that the beliefs based on these events are more central in the belief system of the teacher. Beliefs based on early experiences tend to be more rigid and more resistant to change because of this centrality. Beliefs developed later would have been developed through the filter of existing earlier beliefs. The connectedness of beliefs also makes it hard to alter beliefs which are more central and therefore connected to more beliefs. When speaking about their beliefs teachers referred back to events from the past, and used these events as evidence to support current beliefs. For example one teacher spoke of her realization of the importance of reading in providing useful input when she was nine years old and had just arrived in New Zealand. This seemed to provide her with some justification to give her students a solid reading programme as she worked as a teacher.

It has been suggested by Richards (1994) that teacher beliefs are influenced by shared experiences and school practices. School culture does affect how teachers view things. For example in a study in Hong Kong, Richards, Tung and Ng (1992) found that teachers held uniform beliefs on a number of issues such as their role in the classroom. School culture sits within the community culture but has its own nature. It was of interest that not one teacher involved in any aspect of this study mentioned their teacher training so it is not known to what extent the teacher training

programmes have impacted on teachers beliefs about language learning and language teaching. Any effect that they have had is not explicitly recognised by the teachers.

The effects of colonization are apparent in the teachers' attitudes to the Cook Islands Maori language. During the missionary period (1823-1888) Cook Islands Maori was valued and used extensively by the missionaries. During this time the language was written for the first time, and great effort on the part of missionaries went into learning and using Cook Islands Maori, albeit to serve their purpose of spreading the gospel. It was during the period of colonial rule that the status of the languages changed, with English becoming the language of power. Through most of the twentieth century English has been used as the medium of instruction in schools. It was only in the late twentieth century that the Cook Islands Ministry of Education formally recognised the place that Cook Islands Maori language and culture should play in the education system.

Most teachers working in schools at the time of this study were themselves students at school when English was the sole language of instruction and when students were punished for using Cook Islands Maori at school. Their beliefs have been coloured by the implicit message that English is the language of education, economics and the future, and that Cook Islands Maori is by comparison somewhat deficient and of limited use.

As discussed earlier, the beliefs teachers have about the nature of language affects their practice. This includes their beliefs about the relative values of languages. It has been found elsewhere that schooling, particularly teachers' language education, is a particularly influential experience in generating teacher cognitions (Borg, 1999). Beliefs formed early in life are used as a filter through which to understand subsequent experiences so the early exposure and messages about the value placed on different languages could have far reaching effects for teachers.

As suggested by Nespor (1987) the environments within which teachers work, and many of the situations they encounter are ill-defined (lack clear goals, methods and require people to make guesses and assumptions) and deeply entangled (with overlapping domains lacking clear dominance relationships), and beliefs are peculiarly suited for making sense of such contexts. When decisions about teaching practice involve complicated contexts and beliefs which may be in conflict, then the more central belief will dictate behaviour over the others (Nisbett & Ross, 1980). For example, a teacher explained that she had to follow school policy regarding curriculum even if the programme was not appropriate to learners with specific needs. In this example a teachers' belief about order of language acquisition was subsumed by her belief in the importance of showing respect for authority (which in this case demanded that the curriculum be followed).

The findings of this study support much of the research into teacher beliefs described in the literature. They also indicate the context-specific nature of teacher beliefs and the need to consider teacher beliefs in the context of the teacher. The beliefs about language learning and teaching held by teachers were wide ranging and specific. Beliefs about language and learning clearly affect the practice of teachers, as observed in this study. The effects of culture and historical background on teacher beliefs were particularly apparent in the comments made by participants and in their approach to language teaching. It was also clear that beliefs operate in systems with more central beliefs having greater influence on teacher behaviour.

The findings of this research have implications for providers of teacher education in the Cook Islands at both the pre-service and in-service level. These implications are discussed in the next chapter along with a discussion of possible future research.

# **Chapter Seven      Conclusions**

## **7.1      Implications for teacher education**

Educational research has shown that much can be learned about the nature of teaching through the study of teachers' cognition including their beliefs, and that teachers' beliefs have a powerful impact on their classroom practices. Teachers' interpretations of classroom events are influenced by the beliefs they hold.

In the area of language teaching and learning, particularly the teaching of English, areas where Cook Islands teachers hold important beliefs have been identified. These include, but are not restricted to, beliefs about:

- the language learning process
- the nature and use of language
- Cook Islands learners
- the challenge of risk-taking by students in schools
- the teacher's role within the classroom

The sources of the beliefs teachers held were often attributed to specific significant events experienced when the teachers were young. The experience of learning English as a second or third language both in formal and informal settings also contributed to the development of these beliefs.

The beliefs identified in this study had characteristics as described by Nespor (1987). Some beliefs were concerned with entities seen as embodied in students and beyond the teachers control and influence, e.g. the belief that students at some stage will be 'ready' for learning – the state of readiness being outside the control of any person. Alternativity of beliefs was seen in cases where beliefs and actions were based on ideal situations seen as alternative to the reality experienced by the teacher. For

example a teacher acted on the belief that children should be allowed to work in groups, which was something quite different to what she had experienced herself as a student. Teachers showed emotion and talked about feelings linked with beliefs, showing an evaluative loading the beliefs had. Often quite strongly felt emotions were related to memories of specific events they recognised as having particular influence on their beliefs.

Burns (1992) found that second language teacher beliefs were complex and interrelated and the results of this study would support this position. The beliefs teachers hold do not operate alone, but are linked together and are operational all at once. Teaching practice is affected by many factors including teachers' beliefs, and in the busyness of the classroom decisions are often made based on a huge number of factors. This means at times teachers admit they do not operate according to their stated beliefs about language teaching because other more central beliefs override these, for example the need to comply with the wishes of the school principal. Centrality gives some beliefs more intensity and influence (Rokeach, 1968).

The findings of this research have a number of important implications for teacher education in the Cook Islands. Cook Islands teachers individually and collectively have a number of beliefs which they use in classrooms. These beliefs influence decision-making in organizational, curriculum and social areas. In order to change teaching practice any person involved in working with teachers needs to first recognise that teachers have beliefs, some of which are held very strongly. These beliefs may not have been made explicit by teachers. Steps to help teachers identify beliefs and help teachers acknowledge them are therefore also important in teacher development work.

Levels of proficiency of Cook Islands Maori and English have been identified as a major concern for the country. There appears to be a need for teachers to come to a greater understanding of the principles of bilingual development and how this can

work to support language acquisition and language maintenance. In order for this to happen teachers' existing beliefs need to be addressed.

The beliefs surrounding what constitutes good language teaching are based predominantly on teachers' own experiences as language learners. This means that much of what happens in their classrooms is based on how language was taught to them. Because many of the older teaching methods are used, such as repetition and drill exercises, these need to be considered as the base from which to work for professional development. Something of a pedagogical void exists at present from when the Tate materials were removed as no substantial professional development has been offered to teachers in order to permit them to understand and use newer methodology and materials. A broader understanding of more recent methodology developed for second language acquisition needs to be made available to teachers. Beliefs, once held, are difficult to change so any language professional development work needs to be carried out in a deliberate and structured way, identifying existing beliefs and practices and building on these.

The context of the teachers' own learning is also important. Just under 70% of teachers employed in the Cook Islands in 2001 attended school when the policy forbidding the use of Maori at school was in force in many or all schools. However as the demographics change (many of these teachers will be retiring in the next decade) and more young teachers join the teaching workforce the beliefs and experience of teachers may well be different. The influences shaping the beliefs and the nature of these beliefs of these younger teachers will need to be identified.

The issue of the way papa'a culture is affecting life and language on Rarotonga is important. The effects of colonial attitudes are still felt in areas such as the way languages are valued. Teachers' attitudes to language do affect their teaching practices, and so may influence the importance placed on language in use for the younger generations of Cook Islanders.

Attitudes towards Cook Islands Maori language vary but the lack of instructional teaching in Cook Islands Maori is worrying in Rarotonga if the intergenerational loss of language is to be reversed. Lack of understanding by teachers of the basics such as the process of learning to read mean the teaching of Cook Islands Maori is no better than the teaching of English and so until this is addressed an improvement in language teaching will be difficult to achieve (Broadbent & Rogers, 2000).

There are cultural implications for overseas experts working with teachers in the Cook Islands. In different cultures, perceptions and understandings differ and these in turn affect beliefs. Overseas experts with little experience in Cook Islands culture will have difficulty working effectively to promote teacher change. For these people, time spent reflecting with teachers on the beliefs and attitudes they hold will be valuable both in giving direction to the support provided and in enabling teachers to reflect on their beliefs.

## **7.2 Implications for further research**

This research provides a starting point for further investigations into aspects of teacher beliefs. A number of areas could be explored which would provide interesting and useful understandings in the context of the Cook Islands.

Longer term research into the connection between beliefs and practice in the Cook Islands would provide useful perspectives on the classroom dynamics there. Such research would guide the direction of future professional development of teachers. This would be useful in the area of language education, but also in other curriculum areas. In particular investigation of the use of new materials provided by the huge injection into the education sector from 1997-2000 would be useful, with the option of further professional development packages being developed as a result of this research. Linking resources to the beliefs and practices of teachers should lead to resources being much more effective in supporting student learning.

Comparisons of outer islands teachers' beliefs and Rarotongan teachers' beliefs could provide interesting data as the issues facing both groups are quite different and yet both groups need ongoing in-service training. The investigations of similarities and differences in Cook Islands teachers' beliefs between Cook Islands teachers working in the Cook Islands and those working in New Zealand or Australia would also provide useful insights into the way teachers develop beliefs and how environment may affect these.

Very little data regarding teachers' beliefs in Pacific Nations exists and any research in this area would add to the research literature. Nation-specific research into effective professional development of teachers, notably development which allows for identification and building on existing beliefs would be possible.

An exploration of the beliefs young people bring to the pre-service teacher training programme would be useful for programme planners. Using this data the development and subsequent monitoring of an effective pre-service language teaching programme suitable in the Cook Islands context would be possible.

The belief change process is one that appears difficult to implement. Research exploring possible links between professional development and belief evaluation/change needs to be ongoing. Links between culture and beliefs is another area that needs study.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

This research makes a contribution to the body of research concerned with teacher beliefs in a specific context that has not previously been investigated. The actual beliefs identified and the ways in which they are formed and operate illustrate both the nature of beliefs as independent constructs and the complex relationships between beliefs. It also indicates how the centrality of some beliefs explains teachers' actions when conflicts among beliefs over possible actions occur.

The research shows how the development of teachers' beliefs and belief structures is strongly dependent on their historical, social and professional context. This suggests that any process of teacher change needs to consider carefully the beliefs of the teachers involved.

The attitudes held by teachers, and education policy regarding the languages used in the Cook Islands both historically and more recently, strongly influence the current direction for language education. With the concern about language shift and language competence in Rarotonga particularly education decision makers are keen to develop effective strategies for improving language teaching and learning with the ultimate goal of a fully bilingual population. The findings shed light on the reasons for pedagogical choices made by teachers.

The position of languages used in Cook Islands society will be determined ultimately by the Cook Islands people themselves but schools need to be in a position to provide the best support for all languages used in the country. At the centre of this is the teacher and what they believe. While this study provides a good basis for future work, it also highlights research that is needed to clarify Cook Islands language teachers' beliefs and how they affect teaching practice.

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# **Appendix 1**

## **Teacher Questionnaire**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male/Female (delete one)

Age: (Circle one)

15-20      20-29      30-39      40-49      50+

School:

Class level taught:

Years of teaching:

Teaching qualifications (including country where they were gained):

English language teaching qualifications (e.g. Dip TESL, USP papers):

Other qualifications (including country they were gained):

Which language do you regard as your first language?

Which other languages do you speak?

Which language do you feel most comfortable using:

- a) when you are at home?
- b) when you are teaching?
- c) when you are with your friends?

In your classroom which language do you use the most?

Below are beliefs that some people have about learning English. Read each statement below and then decide if you:

1) strongly agree, 2) agree, 3) neither agree or disagree, 4) disagree, 5) strongly disagree

1. English is a hard language to learn. 1 2 3 4 5
2. It's OK to guess if you don't know a word in English. 1 2 3 4 5
3. It is necessary to know an English speaker's culture in order to speak English well. 1 2 3 4 5
4. It is important to repeat and practise a lot when learning a language. 1 2 3 4 5
5. Cook Islanders are good at learning English. 1 2 3 4 5
6. It is easier to read and write in English than to speak and understand. 1 2 3 4 5
7. When students are learning two languages at the same time (e.g. Maori and English) they will not do as well in either of them. 1 2 3 4 5
8. Student bilingualism should be the aim of all teachers in the Cook Islands. 1 2 3 4 5
9. The best way to learn a language is by learning the grammar. 1 2 3 4 5
10. Teachers must model accurate language for their students. 1 2 3 4 5
11. If someone spent one hour a day learning English how long would it take them to become fluent? (Circle the best answer)
  - a) less than one year
  - b) 1-2 years
  - c) 3-5 years
  - d) 5-10 years
  - e) you can't learn a language in 1 hour a day
12. When teaching language what are the main things you want your students to learn?

Please answer the following questions:

As a teacher of English language what are the most important things you provide for your students?

What things make it easier for students in the Cook Islands to learn and improve their English?

What things make it more difficult for students in the Cook Islands to learn and improve their English?

What teaching methods work best for you when you are teaching English to your classes?

I understand that this information will only be used for the purposes of this research, and that all responses will be treated in a confidential manner.

I am / not willing to be called upon to further help with this research.

Signed.....

## **Appendix 2**

### **Interview 1**

A semi-structured interview using the following questions as starters for discussion about language learning, but not limited to these questions.

1. Tell me about how you learnt English.

*What things helped you learn English? How?*

*Would these same things help others learn English nowadays?*

2. When learning a language what things did you have to learn?

*What are the best ways to learn these things?*

*What order, if any, should these things be learnt in?*

*What is the best way to get better at English?*

3. What factors/things affect a person's ability to learn a language?

4. Do you think Cook Islanders are good at learning English?

*Are there things they know that help them learn English?*

*Are there things that hinder them from learning English?*

5. Can you think of what has made you think this way?

*Who...? Where...? When...? What...?*

# **Appendix 3**

## **Interview 2**

A semi-structured interview using the following questions as starters for discussion about language learning, but not limited to these questions.

### **Part 1:**

Specific questions to clarify understanding of individual responses during Interview

1. (E.g. Mata: can you clarify for me the connection you said you see between language and customs?)

### **Part 2:**

1. What is it that makes kids unwilling to take risks when learning language (as mentioned in previous interview)?
2. Describe the relationship between teachers and students in the average Cook Islands' classroom.

*Is it like this in your classroom? How do the systems in place affect language learning?*

3. People have indicated that there is a strong link between language and culture. I'd like you to explain what kind of link you think there is between language and culture.

*Is this link strengthening/weakening? Why?*

4. I'd like you to comment on the relative importance of Maori and English in the Cook Islands.

*Why do you think this is?*

5. Write down on this piece of paper (provided during interview) what needs to be learnt to learn a language.

*Could you suggest an order / Is there an order for this to be done?*

6. If you went into a classroom of a good language teacher what sorts of things might be happening in it?

*What makes the teaching good?*

7. What do students have to learn in the area of reading skills?

*How should you teach this? Is this how you do it in your classroom? Why/why not?*

8. What do students have to learn in the area of writing skills?

*How should you teach this? Is this how you do it in your classroom? Why/why not?*

9. What do students have to learn in the area of listening skills?

*How should you teach this? Is this how you do it in your classroom? Why/why not?*

10. What do students have to learn in the area of speaking skills?

*How should you teach this? Is this how you do it in your classroom? Why/why not?*

## Appendix 4

Cook Islands Maori phonetic chart used in junior classrooms

a	e	i	o	u
nga	nge	ngi	ngo	ngu
ka	ke	ki	ko	ku
ma	me	mi	mo	mu
na	ne	ni	no	nu
pa	pe	pi	po	pu
ra	re	ri	ro	ru
ta	te	ti	to	tu
va	ve	vi	vo	vu