The sociolinguistic situation in the Cook Islands

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Executive summary

This report stems from a brief visit to Rarotonga in April 2013 facilitated by Roderick Dixon, Director of the University of the South Pacific in the Cook Islands. It addresses the following topics:

1. Language maintenance / shift

There are anecdotal reports that English is starting to replace Maori in Rarotonga and in the other islands. Concerns are raised periodically which seem to be substantiated by education surveys. Very little sociolinguistic research has been carried out to date so it is unclear to what extent language shift is happening and in what areas of life.

2. Languages and dialects

Official government documents stress the importance of Te Reo Maori for cultural maintenance and to strengthen Cook Islands nationhood. Te Reo Maori Act 2003 aims to create a national standard despite inter-island variation.

Some informants would rather consider each island’s variety as a distinct language. How widespread is this view?

In light of perceived language shift, how prevalent are language mixing and dialect levelling?

3. Expatriate / diaspora members of the speech community

It is estimated that about 90 per cent of ethnic Cook Islanders live abroad, mainly in English-speaking countries. Language shift among expatriates is endemic, but some wish to (re-)learn their heritage language.

4. Language policy and language in education

Official education policy promotes bilingualism and biliteracy, but there are reservations about how effective implementation of this policy is. In particular, teachers do not seem to be trained to teach Maori.

It is unclear whether there is any provision for teaching Maori as a second/foreign/heritage language.

Language policies often focus on education, but it is important to promote opportunities to speak the language outside school settings.
5. Dictionaries of Cook Islands Maori

All previous dictionaries are out of print. There are three ongoing projects to adapt them for online access. None includes full multimedia or pronunciation guidance.

Expatriates are a major target audience for online dictionaries, which need to take their needs into account.

6. Records of Cook Islands Maori: (a) oral, and (b) written

Audio recordings from the 1970s are currently being digitised in New Zealand on behalf of the Language Commission. Traditional orators were also recorded between 2000 and 2005.

Interface, format, levels of accessibility and security of digital archives need to be considered.

It would be valuable to collect fuller samples of Te Reo Maori in everyday settings while it is still a vital community language. Audio and video clips would also enhance multimedia dictionaries.

Some islanders have expressed a desire for the return of missionary records archived in London (a list is appended). Feasibility needs to be investigated, taking into account legal issues, the condition of the papers, etc.

In the Proposals section I suggest an interim solution involving digital scanning; some records may already be on microfilm.

7. Proposals

See pages 13-14 for research proposals on several of the areas outlined above.

A collaborative approach is suggested which would both validate local research capabilities and paradigms, and contribute to skills development. Research results would be relevant to the local context, and thus have greater validity and reliability as well as having a positive impact on language policies and planning.
The sociolinguistic situation in the Cook Islands

Detailed report

1. Language maintenance / shift / change

Cook Islanders have traditionally spoken Cook Islands Maori\(^1\) (CIM). Concerns have been raised that younger generations are increasingly preferring English, although there is little empirical evidence to support or contradict anecdotal reports. Research is needed to ascertain whether or to what extent speakers of CIM are shifting to English, and if so whether there is any correlation with factors such as age, gender, class, social networks and domains of life (e.g. home, work, education, church).

There are also anecdotal reports that there is more language shift in the island of Rarotonga than in the other islands, but that it may be beginning in Aitutaki (perhaps because of growth in tourism).

A UNESCO Education for All report in 2000\(^2\) stated that:

> Competency in Maori is directly related to isolation from Rarotonga. The more isolated Northern Group islands have the highest percentage of students attaining minimum standards in Maori as well the highest percentage of students attaining high standards in Maori. Achievement by Southern Group students, although not as high as Northern Group students, is nevertheless significantly higher than the achievement of students on Rarotonga. Over a third of Rarotonga students fail to reach the minimum standard of competence in Maori [at Grade 4]. The low level of achievement in Maori on Rarotonga is generally attributed to parents and teachers assigning priority to English as the main language required by students for higher education and professions.

The reverse trend is true for competency in English, which is strongest in Rarotonga, weaker in the Southern Group and weakest in the Northern Group where only one third of students achieve the minimum standard of competence. In the outer islands Maori is the dominant language in the home and the workplace.

*Source : “Report on Grade 4 Diagnostics Tests 1999”, Peter Etches, Ministry of Education*

This report does not state the basis of its conclusions regarding home and workplace usage, but other sources substantiate these trends. The *UNESCO Atlas of Languages in Danger*\(^3\) describes Rarotongan as ‘Vulnerable’: ‘most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g. home’). The *Ethnologue* database of languages\(^4\) describes the vitality of ‘Rarotongan’ (see section 2) as follows:

> Intergenerational transmission is in the process of being broken, but the child-bearing generation can still use the language so it is possible that revitalization efforts could restore transmission of the language in the home ... Speaker numbers [are] rapidly decreasing, especially in the diaspora.

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\(^1\) I am writing the name of Te Reo Maori without a macron (ā), as this seems to be the preferred spelling in the Cook Islands. I apologise for any unintentional disrespect to anyone who may prefer using the macron.


A 2010 study reported that 'Statistics show that the Cook Islands Maori language and its dialects are in decline and are considered endangered (Cook Island Statistics Office, 2006).'

Herrman (2005: 124) highlighted the effect of negative attitudes towards Maori:

In Rarotonga, English is increasingly becoming the dominant language. It is the language of government, business, sport and the media ... The 1997 Language Policy Report noted a declining use of Raratongan [sic.] in both public and communal domains. Its use is confined to specific domains such as social interaction, cultural activities and health. The report notes that there is a perception that Raratongan is an inferior language, incapable of addressing complex and scientific concepts. Another perception noted is that there is no economic value in learning it, and that children who speak it will be disadvantaged when they begin school. For this reason, many people speak English in the home and send their children to schools where only English is used. ... The report notes that the decline in the use of Raratongan is particularly noticeable among the younger generation and there is concern about the increasing number of children who are proficient in neither Raratonagan nor English.

The Cook Islands government website estimates that tourism accounts for 75% of GDP, with the majority of visitors being Anglophones from New Zealand. It also observes that labour shortages, particularly in the tourism sector, have led to the employment of foreign workers, particularly from Fiji and the Philippines. Foreign workers are estimated to account for 10% of the resident population. Both factors clearly impact on the sociolinguistic situation, with an increasing role for English as lingua franca. On the other hand, the employment of foreign workers in the tourist industry may lessen its impact on the maintenance of local languages.

There has been little sociolinguistic research in the Cook Islands, and Rod Dixon, Director of the Avarua Campus of the University of the South Pacific, reports that no empirical research into the vitality of CIM languages has been carried out since the 1980s. Crocombe and Crocombe reported in 2003 that use of CIM on internet discussion sites was vibrant; it would be interesting to survey its use in social media, which could also inform the development of online materials.

It is unclear how reliable are anecdotal reports of whether or not children are maintaining local languages or shifting to English, and in what domains of use. Rod Dixon suggests that language maintenance is class-related, with middle-class families preferring their children to speak English to prepare them for potential higher education in New Zealand, while working-class families are more likely to maintain local languages. This hypothesis is based on anecdotal observations and would need to be tested empirically.

As with most languages, there are complaints about poor usage, e.g. in the media and among young people. Mixing English terms with Maori is known as ‘Maroro (flying fish) Maori’ because speakers

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5 Glasgow, Ali, 2010. ‘Measures to preserve indigenous language and culture in Te Reo Kuki Airani (Cook Islands Maori language).’ AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples, Vol 6, No 2. It would be useful to see the statistics referred to; the 2006 census data available online do not include language information.


9 I have been unable to find details of this research and would be grateful for references.

jump in and out. This is often seen as indicative of poor Maori, but for linguists language mixing or ‘code-switching’ is a sign of bilingual competence.

There is no empirical information on whether, to what extent or in what ways CIM might be changing, either in response to contact between languages or due to development across generations (which is normal in all languages). Usage and language mixing can only be examined through observation and analysis of language in use, as self-reports are rarely accurate.

Informants working on the dictionaries (see 5) expressed a concern that older words, usages and pronunciations should not be lost. They described how a grandfather might correct children who are perceived to be mixing languages or speaking incorrectly. However, it is important not to put children off speaking heritage languages by criticising them. Language change is natural and reflects vitality rather than decline; a language that does not adapt is moribund.

It would therefore be valuable to record and document the language practices of older generations as well as those of younger generations.

2. Languages and dialects

The 2003 Te Reo Maori Act\(^\text{11}\) states that ‘Maori’:

a) Means the Maori language (including its various dialects) as spoken or written in any island of the Cook Islands; and

b) Is deemed to include Pukapukan.

The Cook Islands Curriculum Framework of 2002\(^\text{12}\) concurs that ‘Cook Islands Maori refers to the two distinctive languages of the Cook Islands: Cook Islands Maori (that is a collective of every island dialect from Penrhyn to Mangaia) and Pukapukan.’

Influential linguistics resources such as Ethnologue and the UNESCO Atlas of Languages in Danger subsume all Cook Islands Maori varieties under Rarotongan. However, Herrman (2005) notes that the official definitions are based on those of Hoepa (1978:14)\(^\text{13}\) who considers that Cook Islands Maori includes every island dialect and that Rarotongan is one of these dialects. Sonny Williams, head of the Maori Language Commission, stated at our meeting on 5\(^\text{th}\) April 2013 that CIM is defined as ‘the dialects of the islands’, with Rarotongan as the working language. Herrman (2005: 125) confirms that ‘The Rarotongan dialect of Cook Island Maori is used as the lingua franca because of its prominence in the Bible, church, official notices, official functions, school and curriculum development.’ It is therefore ironic that this seems to be the variety most prone to language shift.

According to Herrman, the primary goal of the National Language Policy is:

To strengthen Cook Islands nationhood through the preservation and development of its linguistic resources and to contribute to its social, cultural, spiritual and economic growth.

The government may therefore prefer to promote a unified view of CIM in order to strengthen feelings of nationhood.


Informants interviewed through the University of the South Pacific preferred to class each island’s varieties as distinct languages, and identified a new desire to mark out each island’s own language. From this perspective the dominance of Rarotonga is a result of colonial history: other island varieties did not originate from Rarotonga and are thus not dialects of Rarotongan. There is no information as to how widespread this preference is.

This may seem an esoteric issue, but decades of experience in the field of language maintenance and revitalisation have shown:

a) Language varieties which are recognised as distinct are more likely to be valued and maintained;

b) The importance of clarifying issues and goals in language policy and planning.\(^{14}\)

Sociolinguistically, differentiation between languages and dialects is more about social and political factors than about measurable distance between language varieties. My own background is from the Channel Islands (English Channel), where the island languages have suffered from being seen as inferior dialects of French, so I am sympathetic to linguistic self-determination in the Cook Islands.

There are anecdotal reports of language mixing between the different island varieties (which can lead to dialect levelling or the disappearance of distinctiveness) due to migration and intermarriage.

**Codification and standardisation**

One of the aims of the Maori Language Act of 2003 was to set up Te Kopapa Reo Maori (The Maori Language Commission) whose duties include ‘To create, and update as necessary, a national standard for Maori on matters such as phonics, grammar, vocabulary (including coining new words if necessary), orthography, and the alphabet’. It was acknowledged by Sonny Williams that Te Kopapa Reo Maori is behind schedule: a planned database of terms is still under discussion; this is to be the basis for all other activities such as translation, new terminology, etc.\(^{15}\) There is strong pressure from government agencies, schools and expatriates to supply terms for contemporary items such as technology, science laboratories, refectory, etc. It is also perceived as difficult to assess children’s levels of Maori without a standard as benchmark.

There have been two main dictionaries published (Buse & Taringa, Savage), another by Eastman, and a grammar by Mose (1961). All are out of print (although an e-book of an 1850s grammar by Buzacott is available via Google Books).

One informant stated that the grammar of CIM in use is totally different from that shown in books, and the ‘correct’ way of writing is different from the way it is used. Children do not transfer the standard language studied at school to the home. For linguists dictionaries and grammars are descriptive works which illustrate how the language is used at the time of compilation, but readers tend to see them as authoritative.

Te Kopapa Reo Maori and some informants feel that ‘good usage’ should be decided according to the ‘best usage’ of acknowledged literary authors. This raises the question of whether a national standard is in fact necessary if there is general agreement on what is ‘good usage’ (as is the case with English, which has no official standard). On the other hand, there is a danger that ‘folk


\(^{15}\) However, a link from the UNESCO news item on the Commission links to ‘Database Maori’ [http://www.maori.org.ck/index.php](http://www.maori.org.ck/index.php) although this is an unofficial initiative (accessed 7 August 2013).
linguistic’ notions might over-value archaic usage, put off younger speakers and handicap language development. It is interesting to note that Te Kopapa Reo Maori as constituted in the 2003 Act should include a youth representative and a women’s representative; in our meeting Sonny Williams interpreted the latter as a ‘representative of mothers as transmitters of the language’. By contrast, a photo I was shown of the language panel for one of the dictionaries consisted solely of older men (see the comments above on language change). There are also traditional ‘knowledge guardian’ families; (how) does Te Kopapa Reo Maori relate to them?

3. Expatriate / diaspora members of the speech community

It is estimated that about 90 per cent of ethnic Cook Islanders live abroad, mainly in New Zealand and Australia. Emigration continues and the islands’ population continues to fall by approx. 9% a year. Informants reported that Aitutaki has a population of 2000, but that 60,000 ethnic Aitutakians live in New Zealand or Australia, most of whom have lost their heritage language.

This language shift among expatriates is confirmed by research. A 2002 study of Pasifika language maintenance in Manukau, New Zealand, showed that ability to hold a conversation in CIM correlates with age, with only 13% of 5–14-year-olds able to converse in CIM.

The extent to which language policy in the Cook Islands can/should cater for expatriates abroad is unclear, but I was told that they are a major target audience for the online dictionaries being developed. Their requirements as language learners should therefore be addressed in dictionary design and development (see section 5).

Some expatriates return to the Cook Islands for various reasons, and some wish to reconnect with their heritage languages (see below).

4. Language policy and language in education

The Cook Islands became a British protectorate in 1888 and were transferred to New Zealand administration in 1901. From 1915, English was the only official language of the Cook Islands until 2003 when CIM was made co-official. Te Reo Maori Act tasked the Ministry of Cultural Development:

(a) To give effect to the declaration that Maori is an official language of the Cook Islands
(b) To bring out a status for Maori that is equal to English in the Cook Islands.

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The New Zealand and Cook Islands government websites estimate population levels as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>18,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>14,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10,777</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


I have not been able to see a copy of the National Language Policy but have a copy of Te Reo Maori Act 2003 and the Cook Islands Curriculum Framework (2002), which places considerable importance on CIM:

Cook Islands Maori is the language of the indigenous people of the Cook Islands and is the essence of Maori identity. Without language, culture will cease to exist, for the loss of a language spells the loss of a culture. (p. 11)

The third principle underlying the curriculum is:

The Cook Islands Curriculum recognises the primary importance of language in the delivery of the curriculum. It promotes the use of an effective bilingual approach. (p. 5) ... The Cook Islands Curriculum supports bilingualism where high levels of proficiency in Cook Islands Maori and English are aspired to as a goal of language development and learning in schools. (p. 9; my italics)

Research worldwide over the last 60-70 years confirms that children learn best through their mother tongue, and that bilingualism promotes brain plasticity. However, it is unclear to what extent the principle of bilingualism, and objective (b) of Te Reo Maori Act, have been put into effect. Previous research such as Herrman (2005) describes legislation and policy objectives but does not discuss or evaluate implementation of the policies. It is well known that there are ‘weak linkages’ between policies to support smaller languages and planning to implement them.19

According to anecdotal reports, English remains the major language of education and commerce (including tourism) and many islanders aspire to attend university in Anglophone countries such as New Zealand or Australia. Some parents are reported to teach their children English before they start school.

The Curriculum expresses support for local languages, but does not include any mention of teacher training.20 It states that ‘Every teacher is a teacher of language’, implying that no specific training is required. I was told that there are no teachers of CIM, but other informants and Herrman state that it is a policy principle that every school must include CIM as a subject up to year 13.

The 2000 UNESCO Education for All report stated that diagnostic tests were held in ‘English, Maori and Mathematics. The Maori and Mathematics tests were translated into 7 island dialects including Pukapukan. Students sat the Maori test in their local island dialect and elected to sit the Mathematics test in either English or the local island dialect’ (despite the lack of an official standard for CIM). The report also noted that achievement in Grade 5 English had declined since 1994 while achievement in Grade 6 Maori had also decreased since 1994.

It is not clear from this report which language is the medium of education at which grade(s) and on which islands, although it highlights apparent language shift. Some junior schools are reported to hold classes in CIM, but there seems little prospect of secondary education through the medium of CIM, especially when many young people’s aim is to emigrate.

Some considerations:

20 Research was carried out in 2003 for a Master’s dissertation: ‘Netting the Maroro: An Exploration of Cook Islands Teachers’ Beliefs about Language Learning and Teaching’ by Frances Edwards, Massey University, Palmerston North, NZ, 2003. (Edwards is now lecturing in education at Waikato University.)
If language shift is under way in Rarotonga, it cannot be assumed that all children have Rarotongan as their dominant language (this is implied in the 2000 education report). The Curriculum document states that ‘Provisions will be made for students whose first language is not Cook Islands Maori.’

If language maintenance is seen as desirable, language planning will need to address the need to teach Rarotongan as a heritage language: both in schools and as a home/community language. From anecdotal reports it seems that there are few, if any, facilities in the islands for non-native speakers to (re)learn CIM as a second, foreign, or heritage language. According to the Education for All report, USP has run courses in Conversational Maori for adults: are these for second/heritage language learners? Are they still available?

Language planning needs to encompass other domains as well as schools. In other countries (e.g. New Zealand, Wales) it is noticeable that where school is relied on for language maintenance, there is a low level of use of the heritage language in community settings or in the family.

I was told that cultural festivals, dancing, song competitions and projects for young people encourage the study of language and oral traditions. Maintenance of traditions is a major motivation for adults involved in language-related activities, but experience around the world shows that they may be less motivating for teenage learners: a flexible and imaginative approach to language planning is necessary to help younger generations make traditional languages and cultures their own.

5. Dictionaries of Cook Islands Maori

All the print dictionaries of CIM seem to be out of print. At least three online dictionaries are in preparation, based largely on these works.

Dictionaries of the Mangaia, Aitutaki, and Atiu language varieties (and possibly others) are being developed by volunteers under the auspices of USP in collaboration with Auckland University of Technology.\(^21\) The Mangaian dictionary is based on index cards compiled by Donald Marshall in the 1950s. The volunteers recognise that the card index records differ from how the language is used nowadays. I was told that the entries for the Atiu dictionary are based on information supplied by the father of a volunteer, which probably also tends to reflect the usage of the older generations. The current priority of the USP/AUT project is to get as many words entered as possible, on the premise that ‘something is better than nothing’.

Another online dictionary, ‘Cook Islands Maori Dictionary: Free Online Dictionary of Rarotongan & Cook Islands Maori’ is based on the Buse and Savage dictionaries and focuses on Rarotongan as the main dialect of CIM.\(^22\)

A third project, Database Maori,\(^23\) is being developed by a local company at the instigation of Rod Dixon, also based on the Buse and Savage dictionaries plus contributions from the public. Unlike the other dictionaries it includes contemporary terms such as ‘computer’ and ‘offshore bank’. It has secured funding from Cook Islands Telecom.


All the online dictionaries are ‘works in progress’ and contain some errors and duplication; functionality is still being developed. None has full multimedia (sound, video), although the Cook Islands Maori Dictionary has some photos, especially of flora and fauna. Database Maori seems to be the most developed in terms of working search engine, planning and progress. Most of the work on all these dictionaries is being done by volunteers.

Some considerations:

Access: The dictionaries are being published online but internet coverage in the Cook Islands is poor and download speeds very slow. This also hampers other potential language support activities such as social networking. The prototype android and iphone app being developed by Database Maori is a potential solution if good phone signals are available.

Inclusion of current terminology: Two of the three online CIM dictionaries do not include a word for ‘computer’. Database Maori does include roro uira for computer, as well as other ‘Maori words used to describe English terms commonly used in the day to day work at the National Environment Services and other organisations’, which are described as having been ‘have been developed in conjunction with Marjorie Crocombe, Mauri Toa, Makiuti and co.’ These terms are ‘not yet endorsed by the Maori Language Board but have stakeholder endorsement’ so are being incorporated in the database anyway. Such terms are important for maintaining the currency of CIM, especially among younger speakers.

Pronunciation: The online dictionaries do not include audio or information on pronunciation. Speakers may assume that pronunciation is clear from spelling, but the spelling system is not explained and is not necessarily obvious to non-native speakers. In addition, large parts of the dictionaries are based on historical records, and pronunciation is prone to change over time (especially if there is language contact).

Target audience: According to the people I spoke to, the Mangaian dictionary is aimed at members of the diaspora, who may not be fluent in CIM. If this is the case, compilers need to be careful to make the language of the definitions easy to understand. As well as definitions they need example sentences and pronunciation guidance.

Some of the compilers say they are working on monolingual dictionaries (e.g. Atiu) which are fine if everyone is fluent, and they make an important statement about the validity of the language. But they are not accessible to users who are English-dominant.

6. Records of Cook Islands Maori

a. Oral

It was reported in interviews that in the 1970s oral histories in CIM were collected by anthropologists. Concerns were raised by several informants about the safekeeping and condition of these tapes. Sonny Williams, head of the Maori Language Commission, reported that funding has been received from UNESCO to digitise them and that a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with an organisation in New Zealand to carry out the work.

Between 2000 and 2005, the Ministry of Cultural Development conducted a project for recording and collecting oral traditions with support of UNESCO. The researchers of the Ministry travelled to the outer islands to record oral traditions of Tumu Korero, or traditional orators, with a view to capturing their knowledge and wisdom expressed in Maori language before it was too late. These masters with exceptional oratory skills were indeed a reservoir of knowledge and wisdom. The project was then extended to the orators residing overseas including Australia and New Zealand.

However, this project was not mentioned when we met Mr Sonny Williams, head of the Maori Language Commission. Where are these recordings?

*Ethnologue* reports that there are a number of recordings of CIM held at the Pacific And Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures (PARADISEC), a consortium of Australian researchers from the University of Sydney, the University of Melbourne and the Australian National University.\footnote{http://www.language-archives.org/language/rar; \url{http://catalog.paradisec.org.au/collections/AC1/items/012}, \url{http://paradisec.org.au/}, accessed 30 July 2013.}

**Some considerations**

*Accessibility*: What type of interface, format and levels of accessibility are envisaged under the MOA with the NZ digitisation organisation? Are the wishes of the recorderes and their families taken into account (acknowledgement, anonymity, sensitive information)? Experience from other digital archives shows that apart from linguists, the most frequent users of such archives are descendants of people recorded and language learners. Yet academic archives frequently store transcripts using specialist programs such as ELAN which although they are freely downloadable, are not in common use among the general public.

*Type of language*: While it is valuable to document exceptional oratory skills, it is also important to gather ‘a record of a language which leaves nothing to be desired by later generations wanting to explore whatever aspect of the language they are interested in’ (Himmelmann 2006: 7)\footnote{Himmelmann, Nikolaus P. 2006. Language documentation: What is it and what is it good for? In Gippert, Jost, Nikolaus Himmelmann, & Ulrike Mosel (eds): *Essentials of language documentation*, 1-30. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.}, including everyday conversation as well as oral traditions. In my work (admittedly with more endangered languages), I’ve found that intuitions about words, their meanings and usages don’t always match language practices. For this reason, it is preferable to collect recordings of natural language, which can be incorporated into reference and learning materials. The best time to create a comprehensive record of language in use is while it still has speakers of all ages and is used in a range of social settings. This is especially important if language shift seems to be impending.

**b. Written**

A considerable number of written records in CIM are held in the library of my university, the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, UK, especially in the archive of the London Missionary Society (LMS). Some informants expressed a desire for them to be repatriated, and I offered to investigate options and feasibility. However, precise aims and scope were left vague and need to be discussed further before opening negotiations with SOAS and/or LMS. A list of...
documents is included in the Appendix to this report; I have not yet examined them first-hand or assessed their condition.

The LMS has been incorporated into the Council for World Mission, along with the Commonwealth Missionary Society. Their archive is extensive, and includes minutes, correspondence, reports, personal papers, c. 11,000 photographs, and c. 13,000 books and pamphlets including ‘LMS serials’; SOAS has published a guide.\(^{27}\) The *Journal of Pacific Studies*\(^{28}\) reports that ‘most of this material to 1923 has been filmed by the Australian Joint Copying Project.’

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints database also includes microfilm of ‘Eastman’s Rarotongan-English Dictionary and a Grammar Book of Rarotonga Maori Language and Maori Vocabulary in Rarotongan. The latter is a Rarotongan-English and English- Rarotongan dictionary written by Elder Earle A. Hollingshead’.\(^{29}\) There are also some electronic texts about the Cook Islands, e.g. songs and legends, culture, place names, in the New Zealand Electronic Text Collection (Te Pūhikotuhi o Aotearoa).\(^{30}\)

**Some considerations:**

Depositing records in an archive does not necessarily transfer ownership or copyright; this would have to be investigated. Legal title does not necessarily take into account moral rights of the source community, but missionary societies might be amenable to pressure on ethical grounds. In some cases the Cook Is. records are combined with others.

An interim option to maximise access relatively quickly might be to obtain copies of digital records, and to scan key papers for inclusion in a local digital archive. Another advantage would be that scholars could then access them without any possibility of damaging fragile papers. We could also investigate the possibility of obtaining or digitising a copy of the ‘film’ [format unclear] from the Library of New South Wales, as well as other digitised records.

7. **Proposals**

A number of possibilities for further research can be identified (see list below). To date there seems to have been little sociolinguistic research carried out in the Cook Islands (or in Oceania overall), although there have been some educational and anthropological studies and some descriptive linguistics.

Informants expressed a strong desire for local people to be involved in research. Knowledge of local language practices and sensitivities is also essential for obtaining accurate information. I feel that through a collaborative approach it is possible to combine local expertise with sensitive use of selected Western research methods. This would both validate indigenous knowledge paradigms and contribute to skills development. Research results would be relevant to the local context, and thus

\(^{27}\) *The archives of the Council for World Mission (incorporating the London Missionary Society): an Outline Guide*, SOAS, 1973 (according to the website a new guide is in preparation). The Pacific Islands material is listed in greater detail by Phyllis Mander-Jones in *Manuscripts in the British Isles relating to Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific* (Canberra 1972).\

\(^{28}\) Vol. 9, 1974, p. 171. The films are in two series (M1-116, M608-670), sponsored by the National Library and the Mitchell Library as a department of the Library of New South Wales.


\(^{30}\) Part of Victoria University of Wellington Library: [http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/name-031209.html](http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/name-031209.html), accessed 8 August 2013.
have greater validity and reliability as well as greater potential for making a positive contribution to effective language policies and planning.

Funding will need to be sought from various agencies, both local and international, to cover time (replacement teaching), travel, equipment, etc. Although much language work in the Cook Islands is done by volunteers, funding would put the research on a firmer footing in terms of timescale. It would allow for broader scope, and could also compensate volunteers for expenses or loss of earnings if this is deemed appropriate.

1. **Assessment of language shift/maintenance**

In order to substantiate anecdotal reports, and to inform effective language planning, it is necessary to ascertain to what extent language shift is happening.

As part of such research it is important to find out about language attitudes, ideologies and received opinions, both overt and covert: these strongly influence linguistic behaviour and choices.

I would be very interested in a collaborative project to conduct a full sociolinguistic survey. It could have several elements:

   a. A survey of language maintenance and shift in the Cook Islands
      - Questionnaires and self-reports
      - Participant observation of linguistic practices
      - Semi-structured interviews, focus groups

   b. A survey of language attitudes
      - Questionnaires and self-reports
      - Semi-structured interviews
      - Discourse analysis of media reports etc.

   c. Assessment and analysis of language change, language mixing and dialect levelling
      - Participant observation
      - Semi-structured interviews
      - Linguistic analysis of oral and written language practices

   d. A survey of the use of CIM in social media
      - Extent, types of posts, topics
      - Linguistic analysis of online language practices (e.g. language mixing? Standard/non-standard usage and spelling?)

*Scope: I suggest starting with Rarotonga, then if resources permit moving on to Aitutaki, Mangaia, Atiu and the rest of the Southern group (then Northern group?).*

2. **Repatriation of records held abroad**

Before producing detailed proposals, it will be necessary to discuss objectives with Cook Islands-based colleagues. In the interim I suggest:

   a. Review of catalogues and holdings in London, PARADISEC (Australia) and New Zealand (and anywhere else)
b. Assessment and prioritisation of records according to importance, relevance, condition
c. Digital scan or copying of key records for inclusion in a local digital archive.

3. Language documentation and corpus creation

As noted in section 6, there appears to have been little documentation of oral traditions and even less of language in everyday life. Now is just the time to make such recordings of Cook Is. Maori languages, while there are still fluent speakers of all ages. It is proposed to carry out:

a. Video and audio recordings of natural language and oral traditions, including the language practices of older and younger generations, men and women, social groups, etc.
b. Transcription, annotation and analysis of relevant sections (usually 10-25% of the total) for inclusion in reference and learning materials.
c. Preparation (curation) of the recordings for inclusion in accessible local archives; this could include bite-sized segments, subtitles on videos, etc.

4. Language education

I do not propose to duplicate the work of the Education Ministry or UNESCO by conducting large-scale research into mainstream education or literacy. However, small-scale research such as lesson observation or interviews as carried out by Edwards can make useful contributions to understanding practices on the ground.

I feel it would also fill a gap to focus on opportunities and facilities for learning CIM as a heritage/second/foreign language. Such research would investigate:

a. The extent of demand
b. The needs, wishes and expectations of (potential) learners
c. Development of facilities/materials for formal and informal learning
d. Teacher training for language maintenance and revitalisation
Appendix: Records of Cook Islands Maori held in London

There is a list of Oceania holdings in SOAS library at:  
http://www.soas.ac.uk/library/archives/specialist-guides/regional/oceania/

The following are all held in the main library unless stated:

a. Language reference and teaching materials

E Rar 413.21/748346  LONG LOAN
RefE Rar 413.21 /722993  REFERENCE ONLY
ISBN/ISSN  0-7286-0230-x

Buse, Jasper with Raututi Taringa, edited by Bruce Biggs and Rangi Moeka’a: Cook Islands Maori dictionary with English-Cook Islands Maori finderlist. Canberra : Dept. of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University Pacific linguistics Series C; 123, 1996. viii, 712p : ill, map ; 26 cm
RefE Rar 413.21/744805  REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE  Includes bibliographical references (p. viii)
ISBN/ISSN  0-85883-415-4

CWML F19  REFERENCE ONLY
[NB: e-book available free of charge via Google Books]

CWML F242  EA85.32 /437570  EA85.21 /38826  REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE  One copy is interleaved.
Parallel text in English and Rarotongan.

  vii, 151, [1]p : ill ; 23 cm.
IE Rar 415/738226

CWML X273  REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE  Author was missionary of London Missionary Society.
NOTE  Bibliog. (p. 151-[152]). - Index.
SUBJECT  Rarotongan language -- Textbooks for foreign speakers

b. Missionary records

Council for World Mission records:
http://archives.soas.ac.uk/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=CWM&pos=1

Archive guide at
http://archives.soas.ac.uk/CalmView/GetDocument.ashx?db=Catalog&fname=CWMguide+(public).pdf (several references to Cook Islands)

Ko te Karere : te pepa o te London Missionary Society
Main Library: Periodicals not for loan
CWML F7: Nos. 9 (1899 Aug) - 18 (1901 Jan); 1923 Jul - 1924 Jun
CWML F327: 1924 Jul - 1925 Jun, 1925 Jul-Dec, 1926 Jan, Feb (2 copies), Mar (2 copies), Apr, May, Jun, Oct; 1934 Aug
‘Fugitive papers, edited in Mangaia’
CWML F7: Nos. 1 (1897 Mar) - 8 (1899 Apr); CWML Y215: nos. 1 (1897 Mar) - 8 (1899 Apr).
Bound with: Te karere, koia oki te pepa Society, nos.9 (1899 Aug) - 18 (1901 Jan).

E tuatua no te moni o te Atua = being an account of the monies raised by the Church on Mangaia from November 1894 to May 1895, estimated at the rate of ten Chilian dollars to one pound sterling. Mangaia (Cook Is.): printed at the London Missionary Society's Press, 1895. [ii], 9p.
CWML F345 REFERENCE ONLY

c. Christian literature

CWML F171 EB84.542 /73479
NOTE Reprint of ed. of 1836.
Tr. by John Williams, Charles Pitman, Aaron Buzacott, all missionaries of London Missionary Society.

Te Bibilia Tapu ra, koia te Koreromotu Taito e te Koreromotu Ou / kiritiia ei tuatua Rarotonga. Lonedona : Te Societi Bibilia no Beritani e no te pa Enua Katoa, 1855. Bible. Rarotongan. 2nd ed. 2 v. in 1.
EB85.178 /233092 LONG LOAN
CWML F172 REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE Title on cover or spine of some copies: Tuatua Tapu.
Slightly corrected version by Wm Gill (LMS) & T. W. Meller, of 1851 edn prep. by A. Buzacott with T. W. Meller & Kiro.
References: Darlow & Moule 7671; Dance 503.

CWML F1 MMSL P-CO01 EB85.87 /39828 REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE N.T. has separate t.-p. with title: Te Koreromotu Ou, a to tatou atu a te ora a iesu Mesia ra ...
3rd CWM library copy has p. 1-264 only.
References: Darlow & Moule 7671; Dance 503.
Some CWM library copies have presentation inscription by William Gill; one is inscribed "Lilian M. Harbutt from her father". Copy EB85.155 (published 1855-1856; 150, 106, iv, 96 p.) includes commentaries in Rarotongan on St. John's Gospel and Corinthians.

Gill, William, 1813-1878: E tatua no te tupu anga o te Ekalesia a Jesu mai tona mate anga / i tataia e Misi Gilo. Lonedona : i neneia e Yates ma Alexander, 1876. [vi], 148p : ill.


Henderson, Mrs: E tuatua ui i te tuatua no to tatou atu, i tataia e Mataio / i kiritia i Mrs & Miss Buzacott; no roto i ta Mrs Henderson's Scripture lessons ... Rarotonga (Cook Is) : printed at the Mission press, 1856-1857. 2 vols.


Watts, Isaac, 1674-1748: Aronga ui e akakite i te tu o te Korero Motu Taito e te Korero Motu Ou / i tataia e Isaac Watts ... ; kiritiia ei tuatua Rarotonga. Rarotonga (Cook Is.) : roromiia i te rominga a te au Misionari, 1844. [i], 32 p.
CWML F254 REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE Bound with: E ui na te au tamariki, & other Rarotongan catechisms 1844. Bible. -- Examinations, catechism. Rarotongan text.

CWML F178 REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE Bound with: E ui na te au tamari, & other Rarotongan catechisms 1844.

E au imene ei akapaapaa anga i te Atua, i te reo Rarotonga. 5th ed. Malua, Samoa : LMS Printing & Bookbinding Establishment, 1922. 335p.
CWML F240 IE Rar 264/437571 CWML X271

E au imene ei akapaapaa anga i te Atua i te reo Rarotonga. Lonedona, Beritane : i neneiia e Misi Gilo i te neneianga Misi Clowes, 1855. 286p.
CWML F237 REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE Inc index.
SUBJECT Hymns, Rarotongan

CWML F122 ER1115/76193 REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE Songs given in "the native language" (Rarotongan?) with English tr.
HTA398.2/758616

Hill, W. M. E au tua no Maui, translated from English into Rarotongan by Taira Rere [Tales of Maui. Rarotongan.] New Zealand : Islands Education Division, 1967. 51p : ill.
IE Rar 398.2/620215 LONG LOAN
HTA398.2 /758604 LONG LOAN
NOTE in English?

HTA398.2 /607341

HTA398.2 /758605 LONG LOAN
NOTE Folklore of Atiu Island, Cook Islands, with a chapter on the historical sites. In Cook Islands Maori and English.

Morgan, Teupokoina Utanga: Te ma’ara’anga : te ‘imene e te pe’e / na Teupokoina Utanga Morgan. Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies: Cook Islands Extension Centre of the University of the South Pacific: South Pacific Creative Arts Society, 1986. vii, 59 p : ill ; 21 cm
HTF782 /758614 LONG LOAN
NOTE Songs, Sacred vocal music, Rarotongan. Summary notes in English

E au tautua taito no Manihiki / koikoii uriia e kua etitaia e Kauraka Kauraka ; toroia te au tutu e Joseph Chambers; tauturu etita, Rangi Moeka’a. Suva, Fiji : Institute of Pacific Studies and the Cook Islands Extension Centre of the University of the South Pacific, 1987. xiii, 82 p : ill. ; 21 cm
HTA398.2 /758600 LONG LOAN
NOTE Bibliographic refs (p. 82).

E au tua taito no te kuki airani / akatikatikaia e e akapapaia no te neneianga e Tira Rere. New Zealand : Islands Education Division, 1967.
IE Rar 398.2/620160
NOTE Cook Island legends written by Cook Islanders in the Maori language

HTA398.2 /758605 LONG LOAN
SUBJECT Folklore -- Cook Islands -- Atiu Island
NOTE Text in English and Cook Islands Maori
Available to download as PDF from www.atiu.info/index.php/download_file/-/view/203/

E ture, no Rarotonga nei, i akatikaia e te ui ariki e makea, karika, tinomana, pa, e kainuku. Rarotonga (Cook Is.) : printed at the Mission Press, 1879. 38 p.
CWML F184 REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE MS title on cover: Laws of Rarotonga.
Te au ture enua i akatikaia i te uipaanga o nga ariki, e nga kavana, e nga rangatira, e nga mataiapoi, ma nga hau e toru o Manihiki. = The laws regarding land agreed to at the meeting of the high chiefs, governors, sub-chiefs and chiefs and the three land courts of Manihiki.  [Cook Islands?, s.n., ca.1896.] 6 leaves.

f.  School materials and readers

E buka numero i te reo Rarotonga no te tamariki apii. Lonedona : London Missionary Society, [ca.1895?]. 128p
CWML F140
NOTE Both CWM library copies have MS note "W. N. Lawrence".
Suggested date is from MS note in 2nd CWM library copy.
Contents: Arithmetic (MS note in CWM library copies).
Text language: Rarotongan

E manga tuatua rekareka na te au mapu e te au tamariki kite / i kiritia e Barakot no roto i tetai tuatua papaa i tapaia'i e Pleasant pages. 1856.
CWML F241   REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE MS note: First lessons in natural history in Rarotongan.

E manga tuatua rekareka na te au mapu e te au tamariki kite / i kiritia e Barakot no roto i tetai Tuatua papaa, i tapaia'i e Pleasant pages. Rarotonga : printed at the Mission Press, 1873. [ii], 116 p. : ill.
CWML R386   REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE Barakoti seems to be A. Buzacott.
SUBJECT Natural history

E tuatua ai akakite i te au mea o te rangi : koia oki te ra e tona au palaneta ma te au etu ave e te au etu piri rangi ma te au rangi etu. Rarotonga (Cook Is) : printed at the Mission press, 1856.  [ii], 102 : ill, frontis
CWML F229   REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE MS note: First lessons in astronomy in Rarotongan

CWML F233   REFERENCE ONLY

Te tuatua apii : na te tamariki. Lonedona : S. W. Partridge & Co, [ca.1890]. 32p : ill
Periodicals not for loan
SUBJECT Rarotongan language -- Readers (Primary)

Harris, George Alfred, 1844-1917: E lamepa iti = A small lamp : for school children : na te tamariki noo apii. Auckland : C. M. Murray, [1900?] [ii], 65 p ; 18 cm
CWML F52   REFERENCE ONLY
IMPRINT Auckland : C. M. Murray, [1900?]
NOTE  Includes grammar and vocabulary. Rarotongan and English parallel texts. MS note on cover reads "Cook Islands vernacular"; MS note on t.p. reads "Same language as Rarotonga"

Dagenham Store: Pam Pacific 6/620214      LONG LOAN
NOTE  Published in association with the South Pacific Commission Literature Bureau

Te tuatua apii : o te Kuku Airani. Wellington, School Publications Branch, Education Department
NOTE  Above title of v.1:5: "Keep this for your own library".
Cook Islands school journal

Rere, Taira:  E au tua ma te uianga : na te Form III e te Form IV New Zealand : Island Education Division, 1967.
IE Rar 418/620159      LONG LOAN

h.  Other

HTA782.42 /758606      LONG LOAN
NOTE  Without music.

HN909 /228824      LONG LOAN
CWML E.15/9      REFERENCE ONLY
NOTE  Author, a Rarotongan, was Christian missionary (London Missionary Society) at Tuauru, New Caledonia (1842-), Mare, Loyalty Is. (1845-), Manua, Samoa.

HTA810 /460015      LONG LOAN